



Minnesota Utility Contractors Association

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March 11, 2025

Sen. Robert Kupec, Sen. Aric Putnam, Sen. Gene Dornink,
Sen. Torrey Westrom, Asst. Majority Leader Grant Hauschild,
Rep. Issac Schultz, Rep. Paul Anderson, Rep. Dan Wolgamott

VIA EMAIL

RE: HF 47/SF 908 Certification of Underground Telecommunications Installers

Honorable Senators and Representatives,

The Minnesota Utility Contractors Association (MUCA) represents over 140 companies across the state that perform utility installation services. This includes sewer, water, storm water, gas, electric, cable, telecom, and fiber optic installations.

While MUCA supports training efforts for our industry, we support the revisions in HF47/SF908 that reduce required training hours from 40 to 10. Though as trained utility installers, we still have strong concerns for the new training requirements.

When crafting the new training requirements for legislation the authors and proponents overlooked or ignored industry training that already exists for underground utility contractors. Many of the training components outlined in the training requirements already exist and are currently being satisfied through other utility construction industry certification programs.

- To MUCA's knowledge, there was no job task analysis performed to determine tasks **specific to telecommunications installation only**. The Certification Standards listed in the law are "general" in nature and do not relate to any specific tasks for telecommunications installation.
 - Example: Operating an HDD machine is a general task used to install other utilities such as gas, or electric conduit, etc. It is **not specific to telecommunications installation**. Training programs that cover this 'certification standard' already exist.
 - Example: Utility locating, traffic control, and response to 'incident strikes' are also "general" construction tasks. They are **not specific to telecommunications installation**. Training programs already exist.

While MUCA supports training for utility contractors, the requirements in current law were not developed in consultation with a sufficient number of industry organizations, nor received sufficient contractor involvement. This law needs to be adjusted to focus on **only those tasks specific to telecommunication installation** that would warrant an "additional" certification requirement.

We believe this additional certification will cause installation delays, increase the project cost for municipalities and decrease the amount of broadband installed in Minnesota.

Thank you for your consideration.

Stephanie Menning, CAE, IOM
Executive Director, MUCA

OUR MISSION

To promote the underground utility industry by
providing safety training, continuing education,
scholarships and legislative relations.

OUR VALUES

Honest Communications
Transparent Leadership
Authentic Engagement