Utility Accommodation Policy

POST FALLS - LAKES - EAST SIDE -WORLEY

Associated Highway Districts
Kootenai County, Idaho

UTILITY ACCOMMODATION POLICY

1. General Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this Utility Accommodation Policy is to provide consistent standards for installing, relocating, adjusting, operating, and maintaining utility facilities within the rights-of-way (ROW) controlled by the Associated Highway Districts (AHDs).

AHDs recognize that roadway rights-of-way are primarily for transportation purposes but may accommodate utilities when such use does not compromise safety, future roadway needs, or the integrity of the roadway system.

2. Authority

This policy is enacted under the AHDs' statutory authority to regulate public rights-of-way within their jurisdictions.

3. Definitions

Terms used in this policy include:

1. **Utility** – Any facility providing electricity, communications, water, sewer, gas, broadband, or other services.
2. **Permittee** – Any utility owner or operator seeking authorization to install, adjust, or maintain facilities within AHD ROW.
3. **Right-of-Way (ROW)** – Land or property interests held by AHD.
4. **Associated Highway Districts (AHD)** – Joint standardization entity represented by East Side Highway District, Worley Highway District, Lakes Highway District, and Post Falls Highway District. Current contact information for each entity can be found here:
    - East Side Highway District – (208) 765-4714
    - Worley Highway District – (208) 664-0483
    - Lakes Highway District – (208) 772-7527
    - Post Falls Highway District – (208) 765-3717

4. Applicability and Scope

This policy applies to:

1. All utility installations, relocations, adjustments, repairs, replacements, operations, and maintenance activities within AHD ROW, regardless of the entity performing the work.
2. Adjustments or relocations resulting from AHD, utility, or other capital projects.
3. Emergency repairs and aerial utility work that affect AHD ROW or require traffic control review.

5. Permit Requirement

5.1 Permit Required

1. Utilities must obtain a written permit from the AHD before any installation, relocation, or earth or roadway disturbing maintenance activity.
2. Issuance of a utility permit constitutes a warranty period of 2 years from the date of installation by the utility to repair trench or pavement settlement as directed by AHD at no cost to AHD.

5.2 Permit Application Components

Applications shall include:

1. Plans, drawings, and profiles, drawn to scale, showing facility type, location, site features, right-of-way limits, offsets from traveled way, depth of cover, crossings, trench limits, bore or receiving pits, and pavement restoration details.
2. Traffic control plans consistent with MUTCD standards, including proposed dates and duration of traffic changes, lane restrictions, and closures.
3. Construction timeline, construction methods, and any requested deviations from these standards.
4. Contact information for responsible utility personnel and emergency contacts.

5.3 Emergency Repairs

Utilities may proceed with emergency repairs without prior permitting but must notify AHD immediately and follow with a permit application as soon as practical.

6. Design and Installation Requirements

6.1 General Standards

Utility installations must:

1. Ensure the safety of the traveling public.
2. Not impair roadway function or maintenance.
3. Not conflict with planned roadway improvements.
4. When utilities are installed within the Area of City Impact (ACI), AHD approval and permit are still required, and the installation must comply with either AHD standards or City standards, whichever is more stringent.
5. It is the utility company's responsibility to research and document public right of way limits and install facilities within the public right of way. Utility companies must obtain private easements for installations outside the public right of way on private property.

6.2 Location Standards

1. Utilities should be placed outside the clear zone as defined by the AASHTO Roadside Design Guide .
2. When right of way does not exist to locate the utility outside the clear zone, above ground obstructions should be placed as far away from the traveling public as possible, and behind the roadside ditch. Above ground utility facilities should not be installed within 10 feet of the traveled way, unless approved by the Director.
3. Where feasible, underground utilities shall be installed so as to not disturb the roadway and traffic flow to perform maintenance or expansion operations.
4. Utility providers shall coordinate opportunities for joint trenching where practical and mutually acceptable.

6.3 Crossings

1. Utility crossings should be installed perpendicular to the roadway, except where engineering justification supports an alternate alignment.
2. Unless specifically authorized by the utility permit, all underground crossings of roadways and approaches must be installed using trenchless methods. If, due to site conditions, a trenchless method is found to be unconstructable, the permittee must document the issues and receive approval from the Director to proceed.

6.4 Longitudinal Installations

1. Longitudinal placement within the ROW is allowed when it does not interfere with roadway function or planned expansions of the roadway and/or utility.
2. Install longitudinal utilities outside the roadway prism and as near to the right of way as possible. When utility type or site conditions justify installation within the roadway prism, the permittee shall document the reason in the permit application and minimize impacts to future maintenance and operations.
3. Adequate service lines or points of connection shall be provided to limit future connections within the travelway.

6.5 Depth of Bury

Minimum utility depth of cover shall be at least 4 feet within the roadway prism, and no less than 3 feet outside the roadway prism, unless approved by the Director.

7. Construction Requirements

7.1 General Construction Practices

1. Construction must follow standard engineering practices and minimize disturbance to AHD ROW.
2. All utility companies, or contractors working for utility companies, are required to identify the

name of the utility company at the work site.

3. Utility trench/backfill patches will match the existing roadway section as to the type of material used and thickness or dimensions.
4. Trenches / splice pits shall not be left open or exposed overnight without proper traffic control and safety devices in place.
5. Tracer wire is required to be installed for all gas main and water main installations.
6. AHD may require clay cutoff “dams” around conduits and in the trenches when groundwater flow, seepage, or spring development along the utility line is anticipated. This applies to both bored and open cut installations.

7.2 Protection of Public and Property

1. Permittee must maintain safe work zones, restore any disturbed areas, and protect existing utilities.

7.3 Inspection

1. AHD reserves the right to inspect all utility work before, during, and after construction. If utility installations deviate from this code and/or the approved permit, the utility company shall relocate their facility to comply with the code and/or approved permit before resuming other utility installations. AHD reserves the right to hold utility permits until a utility compliance issue is resolved.

8. Relocation and Adjustment

8.1 Required Relocation

1. If AHD roadway projects require utility relocation, utilities must relocate at their own expense unless otherwise governed by separate agreements or state law. AHD may issue a written relocation notice establishing a required relocation schedule. Failure to meet the required schedule may result in withholding future utility permits until the relocation obligation is satisfied, to the extent allowed by law.

9. Fees, Insurance, Bonds, and Indemnification

9.1 Adopted Fee Schedule

1. Permit fees, inspection fees, roadway closure fees, and other fees shall be governed by the applicable AHD adopted fee schedule.

9.2 Utility Permit General Provisions

1. Bonding, insurance, indemnification, warranty security, and related permit conditions shall be governed by the applicable AHD utility permit general provisions.
2. Applicants shall comply with all bonding, insurance, and indemnification obligations stated

in the issued permit.

10. Changes or Updates to this Policy

1. AHD reserves the right to revise or update this policy to align with state and federal regulations. If this policy conflicts with state or federal regulations, the state or federal regulation shall be held.

11. Appendices

1. Utility Permit Application Templates
2. Utility Plan Sheet Examples