

Draft curriculum: Safety-Qualified Underground Telecommunications Installer Certification Program

Purpose and outcome

Purpose

The purpose of this training is to fulfill the requirements set forth in Minnesota Statutes [326B.198](#), Underground Telecommunications Infrastructure, to ensure that installers of underground telecommunication systems (installer) are trained and qualified to perform such work. Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) recognized training providers (providers) are to ensure that installers understand the installation practices and safety procedures needed to complete underground telecommunication installation work in a proper and safe manner. This certification program will also incorporate a continuing education (CE) component for re-certification every three years, following the initial 40 hours of classroom and hands-on training.

Outcomes

At the end of this training course, which includes classroom training, field training and testing for certification, the installer should understand/know the following:

1. The need and use of utility locations.
2. The regulations applicable to excavation near existing underground utilities, including but not limited to:
 - a. Equipment excavation;
 - b. Hand digging; and
 - c. Hydro excavation.
3. The use and techniques for flagging and traffic control of the work area.
4. Occupational health and safety standards and how to properly protect workers.
5. How to avoid and/or mitigate any hazards associated with underground utility installations.
6. The requirements for working in a confined space such as in manholes, etc.
7. An understanding of horizontal directional drill operations, including the use of tracking devices to safely guide the drill.
8. The proper response for responding to a line strike or other incident.
9. Other information as needed for specifics of the installation.
10. Be able to demonstrate knowledge of course material by successfully passing the exam.

Methodology

Interactive trainings

Providers should provide effective and interactive trainings. Trainings must include an initial 40-hour “certification” course, designed with both classroom and hands-on training. The hours allotted to each method of instruction will be set/determined by providers. Best practices suggests that at least 24 hours of training be

dedicated to hands-on training, with the remaining 16 hours dedicated to classroom instruction. CE must be completed every three years to maintain certification and include four hours of DLI-recognized CE for each certified installer. Online trainings should include a synchronous (live) portion and give Installers an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered during the required hours of classroom training.

Materials provided

1. Providers must provide written and/or electronic materials that cover the topics addressed in the training.
2. Trainings and materials should be provided and conducted in a language in which the workers are proficient. Follow up materials/CE/exams should also be provided in the language in which the workers are proficient.
3. Providers should submit materials to DLI for approval and assignment of a course number at least 30 days prior to instruction of the material. These materials must include the instructor's information and their qualifications to teach the materials.
4. Materials used for training must be updated to remain current with industry standards. Submit all updated materials to DLI for approval when course materials used for instructional purposes changes.

Training sessions

- Providers must cover the required curriculum topics over the course of the initial training for certification, and the CE training sessions, in accordance with the required hours and materials for both hands-on and classroom training.
- Providers must ensure their training staff are reasonably available to answer questions during and after training sessions.

Evaluation

- Providers should evaluate their training in order to demonstrate consistent delivery of approved curriculum. This evaluation may include surveys of individuals who attend both the initial and refresher training sessions to evaluate the effectiveness of training sessions. Survey results and other evaluation methods must be made available to DLI for review upon request.

Course content

- See example of a training course outline.

Auditing of training

- DLI retains the right to audit any provider, instructor, and/or training materials to verify compliance with Minn. Stat. 326B.198 (2024).