



Minnesota Utility Contractors Association
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March 25, 2025

Senator Jennifer A. McEwen, Chair
Senate Labor Committee
3217 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for SF 908 (Kupec) Certification of Underground Telecommunications Installers

Dear Chair McEwen and committee members,

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 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 for installing broadband.

When crafting the new training requirements for legislation the authors and proponents overlooked 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.

The requirements in current law must be amended to delay the implementation date, revisit the 40-hour training requirement, and take into consideration that certification standards are already in place for installation of other utilities or Minnesota will not have the workforce necessary to complete broadband projects and places at risk the \$652 million in federal BEAD funding.

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