

Design Advisory

From Mark Van Port Fleet, Engineer of Design

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Index: Chapter 9 of
Road Design Manual
109.03 of Standard
Specifications for
Construction
Utility Coordination
Manual – Real Estate

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Design Advisory should
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Utility Coordination Documentation

The 2003 Standard Specifications for Construction, 109.03, provides conditions for determining when a contractor may receive additional compensation for project delays due to a utility not moved according to the contract. When such a delay occurs, it is important for the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to have performed and maintained documentation of appropriate utility coordination efforts to prevail in recouping costs from a utility.

Comprehensive utility coordination documentation during the project's design phase should include:

- Letters used to distribute plans, utility response documents, meeting minutes, letters notifying the utility of specific conflicts and any other relevant documentation.
- Communication efforts to share the project's Notice to Bidder – Utility Coordination document with the utility when utility work will be performed during the MDOT construction project.
- Letter that provides the utility with notice of their legal obligations to relocate facilities in conflict with the construction project, in accordance with Section 15 of Act 368 of 1925. (See Procedure 1802.02 of the Utility Coordination Manual, Preliminary Plan Distribution.)

It is not possible to prevail in construction project delay claims against a utility without supporting documentation. Therefore, it is critical to create and maintain utility coordination documentation that provides specific responsibilities, commitments, and time frames associated with the construction project.