



**Recommended Marking Guidelines  
For Underground Utilities**

**New Mexico  
May –2006**

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## **Introduction**

Throughout the United States and many other countries specific color codes are recognized when identifying different utilities, thanks to the American Public Works Association (APWA). The basic color codes developed by the APWA help us identify the type of utility marked no matter where excavating is taking place in the state, country or in many cases the world.

New Mexico would like to take this concept another step forward. The intention of this book is to introduce a standardized marking practice for all locating technicians in the state of New Mexico. This will benefit all individuals in the excavating community where not only a specific color will identify what utility is buried, but the type of markings will consistently identify detailed characteristics of the buried facilities across the state.

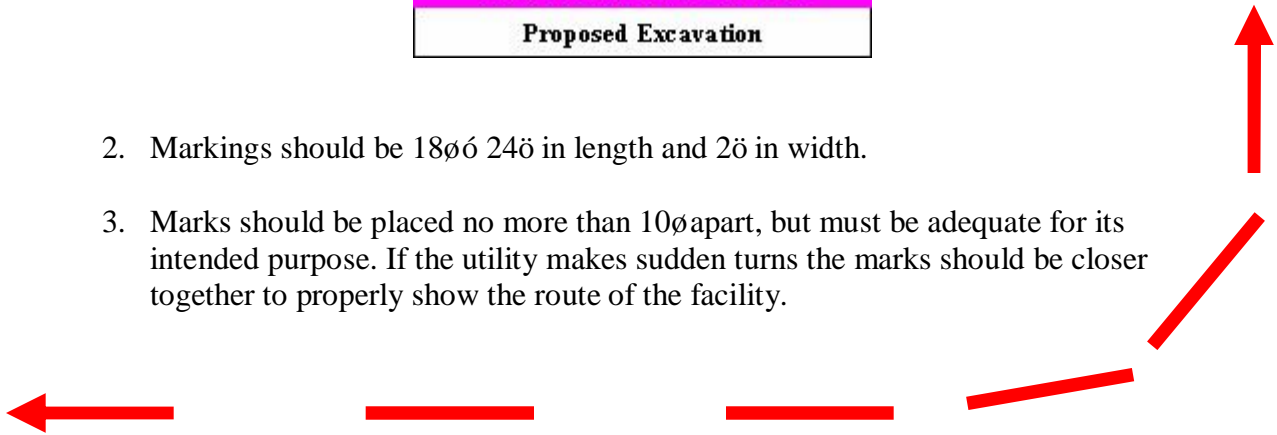
The drive to improve damage prevention begins with better information, accuracy and consistency in communication between excavators and operators of underground facilities.

## New Mexico Underground Utility Marking Best Practice

1. The American Public Works Association color codes shall be used to mark all buried utilities. Markings of a facility shall be in the appropriate color to identify the facility marked. The centerline mark in the applicable color shall be placed in accordance to all state laws.

Electric
Gas-Oil
Communication/CATV
Water
Reclaimed Water
Sewer
Temporary Survey Markings
Proposed Excavation

2. Markings should be 18" x 24" in length and 2" in width.
3. Marks should be placed no more than 10' apart, but must be adequate for its intended purpose. If the utility makes sudden turns the marks should be closer together to properly show the route of the facility.



4. The appropriate marker type should be used according to the terrain and site conditions. Example: Flags and paint in grass areas and in dirt areas. Flags, stakes and whiskers in heavy traffic areas, etc.
5. The owner of a facility should be indicated by initials or by name in letters 6" high at the beginning and end of the locate. On long locates the facility owner should be indicated every 100'

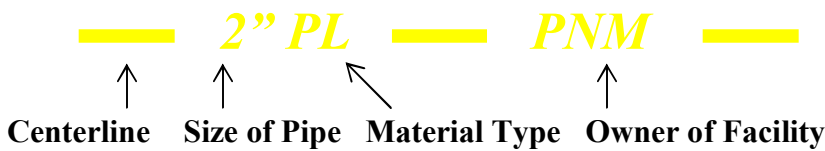


6. Arrows should be used to indicate the marked facility continues outside the one-call ticket area, but should not be relied on as to the direction of the utility.

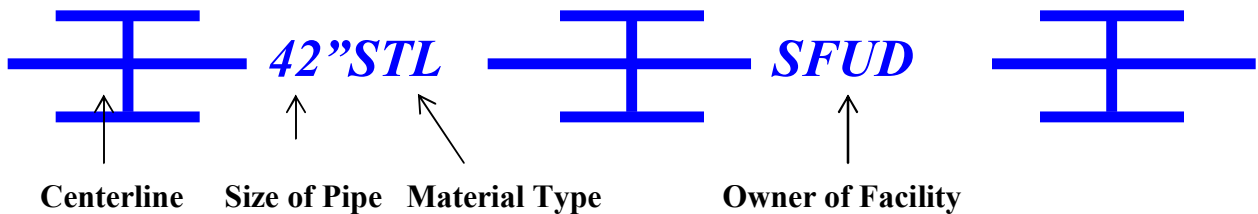
7. When known, the total number of lines in the ground for the same utility will be marked individually or with a single mark. If a single mark is used the number of cables will be indicated at every other mark.



8. When Known, the size and material of all pipes 20 or greater, but less than 120 will be indicated at every other mark.



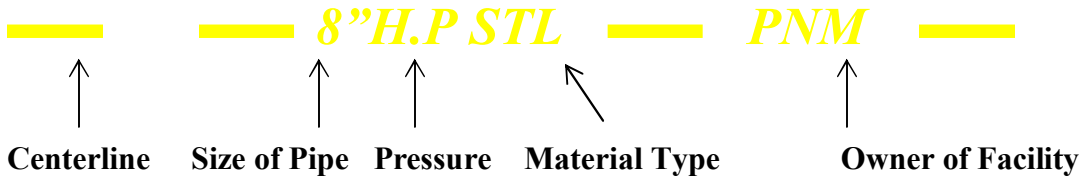
9. Pipelines of 120 or greater will be marked using marking indicating an "oversized" facility. The approximate size and material of pipe will be included at every other mark.



10. A conduit system or duct bank will be marked indicating the approximate edges of the duct structure with two parallel lines connected by a marking resembling a diamond.



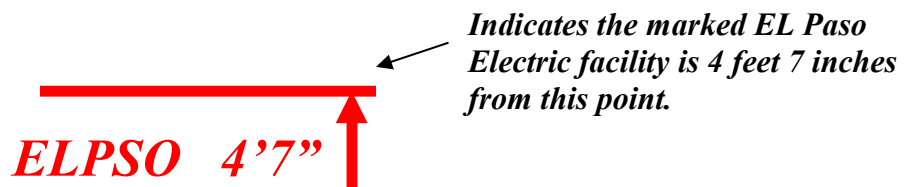
11. When known, the pressure of a gas facility will be indicated. The gas pressure will be labeled with low pressure (L.P.), intermediate pressure (I.P.) or high pressure (H.P.).



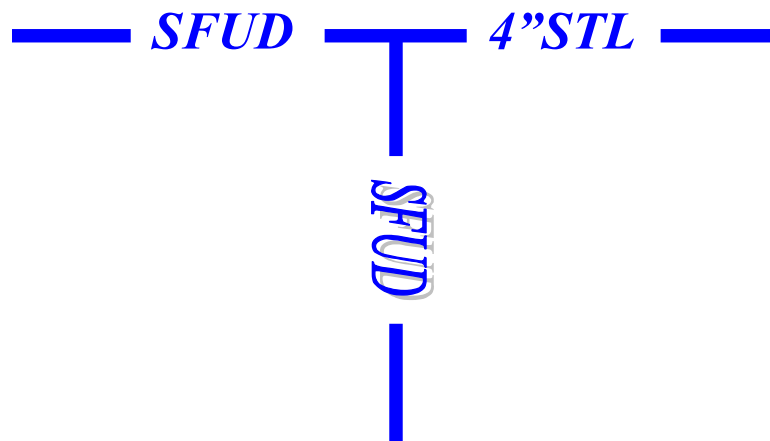
12. If known, termination points, dead ends and stub outs should be indicated. The marking will look like the letter T with drop downs.



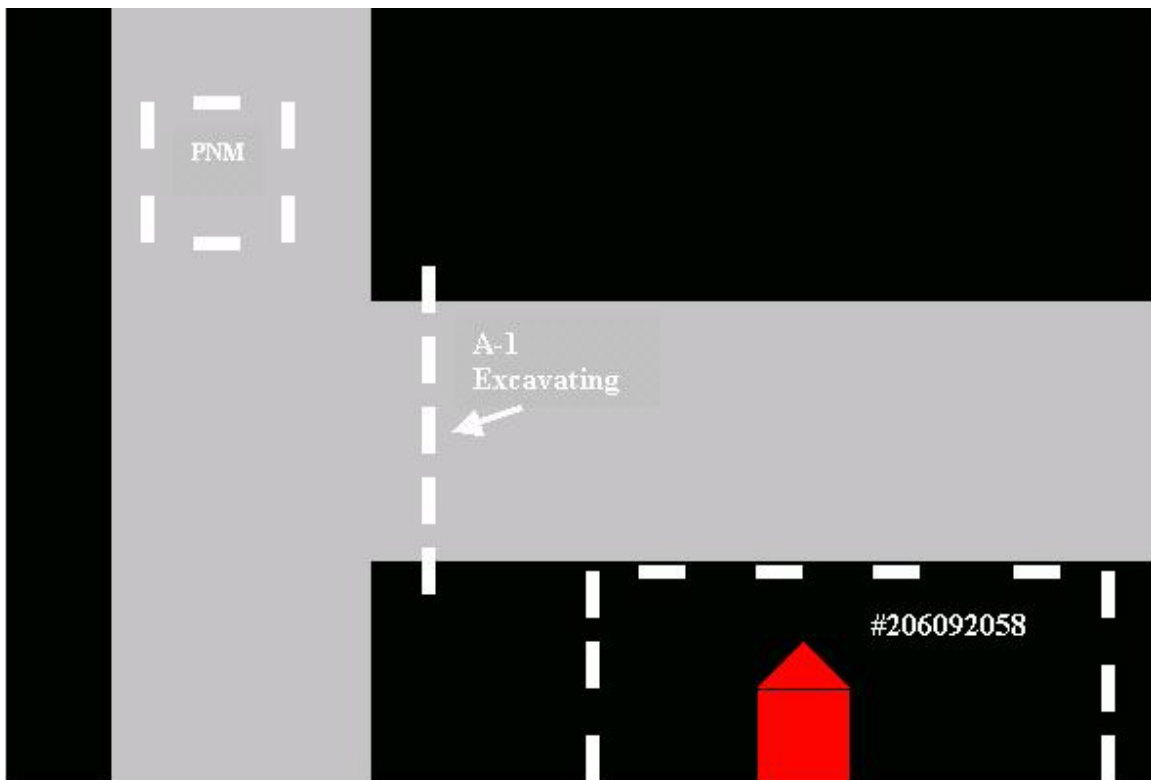
13. When there is a strong likelihood marks will be destroyed, offsets should be used. The offsets will be indicated on a permanent surface and placed parallel to the marked facility. The distance from the marked center line to the offset will be identified as well as the facility owner. (**This does not replace the rule and regulation that makes it the excavator's responsibility to offset the utility markings that may be destroyed during the course of excavation**).



14. On Lateral connections the marks shall show where the connection exists and the direction of the lateral.



15. Marking errors shall be corrected by the locator/operator and communicated to the excavator as soon as possible after the discovery of an error. Appropriate methods will be used to remove or cover up the erroneous marks (Example: Black paint is used to cover up errors on paved areas, marks placed at the wrong address or location should be completely removed, landscaped areas such as on decorative rocks, fences, or on buildings should be cleaned up). **If a utility damage occurs all marks will be preserved. The marks will not be covered or removed until all parties (excavator, contractor, locator, operator, etc...) have documented the damage and completed their investigation.**
16. The excavator shall be responsible to clean up all accurate utility markings associated with their one call ticket upon the completion of the work.
17. In the event of work taking place in a heavy traffic area such as an interstate or major intersection. The excavator is responsible in providing a spotter, barricade or warning lights for the locator/operator during the locating of the facilities.
18. All contractors/excavator shall white line the proposed excavation area as it was described on their one call ticket. This will be done the day the one call request was made. The white lining will be identified by the excavator/contractor as their marks that are associated to a specific one call request by placing their company initials or ticket number in white paint at the excavation site.



White Lining Examples:

**Definitions:**

Conduit/duct ó A single enclosed pipe (Channel, tube or cylinder) containing one or more lines or cables.

Conduit system/duct bank ó A structure containing two or more conduit/ducts.

Operator ó Any person who owns, furnishes or transports materials or services by means of a utility line.

**Material Type Abbreviations:**

AC = Asbestos Concrete

CI = Cast Iron

CPR = Copper

C.W. = Creosote Wood

DI = Ductile Iron

FO = Fiber Optic

FM = Forced Main

H.P. = High Pressure

I.P. = Intermediate Pressure

L.P. = Low Pressure

PI = Plastic Insert

PL = Plastic

PVC = Polyvinyl Chloride

RFC = Reinforced Concrete

SCC = Steel Cylinder Concrete

STL = Steel

TC = Terra Cotta

W/STL Wrapped Steel