

## City of Columbus – City Code Chapter 903 Excavation/Occupancy Right-of-Way Excavation Permit Inspection Requirements

March 31, 2021

When excavations or directional borings of any size or type occur within the public right of way of the City of Columbus, a Right-of-Way Excavation Permit and associated inspections must be obtained and performed in accordance with Chapter 903 of Columbus City Code.

The responsibility for inspecting work performed under the Chapter 903 Right-of-way Excavation Permit code is typically managed by two divisions in the Department of Public Service: Design and Construction or Infrastructure Management. The division responsible for performing your permit related inspection depends on the following criteria:

### Division of Design and Construction – Construction Inspection Section

- Non-City of Columbus owned utility construction/reconstruction projects
  - Excavation trench  $\geq$  100 feet in length
  - Directional boring  $\geq$  1000 feet in length
  - Work in close proximity to Pre-Stressed Concrete Waterlines > 20" in diameter
- Capital improvement projects for the Department of Public Service
- Public roadway improvement projects required in association with a private development
- Capital improvement projects by other city departments

### Division of Infrastructure Management – Right-of-Way Investigation Unit

- Non-City of Columbus owned utility construction/reconstruction projects
  - Excavation trench < 100 feet in length
  - Directional boring < 1000 feet in length
  - Small cell antenna installations and associated infrastructure

*The division performing required inspections will be noted on the approved permit. Please note the inspection related requirements for each below.*

## Inspections Performed by the Division of Infrastructure Management's Right-of-Way Investigation Unit

While the Right-of-Way Excavation Permits inspected by the Right-of-Way Investigation Unit are typically smaller in scale, they make up the vast majority of excavation permits issued in the City of Columbus. Various inspections required in association with this permit type include:

- **Micro Cell Preliminary Site Inspection – (Small Cell Antennas Only)** - When a 903 Right-of-Way Excavation Permit application that includes the proposed installation of a small cell antenna is received, the Permit Section shall request a Right-of-Way Investigator to make a site visit to confirm the viability of the proposed location since this is a condition of permit issuance. Their findings shall be reported to the Permit Section. *(If the site is acceptable, the inspector shall map the proposed small cell antenna location using the city's field mapping application.)*



- **Preliminary Site Visit with Permit Contractor** - Contractors unfamiliar with the City of Columbus roadway restoration requirements and/or those with advance inspection related questions should schedule a Site Visit with a Right-of-Way Investigator prior to beginning construction operations. This meeting is not required but highly recommended. A minimum of 24-hour advance notice is required. All Site Visit requests may be scheduled online using the city's on-line permitting portal at <https://portal.columbus.gov/permits>, or by calling the Right-of-Way Inspection phone line at (614) 645-5550.
- **Pre-Backfill Inspection** - When the contractor has completed underground work and is ready to begin backfill operations, a Pre-Backfill Inspection is required. This inspection should be requested before backfill operations begin and should be scheduled using the city's on-line permitting portal at <https://portal.columbus.gov/permits>. Inspection requests should be submitted prior to 2 p.m. the day before the inspection is needed. Inspections scheduled after 2 p.m. may be performed up to two days afterwards.
- **Concrete Form Inspection** - If construction requires the removal of concrete sidewalk and/or driveway approach, a Concrete Form Inspection is required prior to the placement of new concrete. This inspection should be scheduled using the city's on-line permitting portal at <https://portal.columbus.gov/permits>. Inspection requests should be submitted prior to 2 p.m. the day before the inspection is needed. Inspections scheduled after 2 p.m. may be performed up to two days afterwards.
- **Roadway Base Inspection** – When construction has taken place within the roadway pavement limits and backfill operations have been completed, inspection is required to verify the backfill is ready for surface course paving, or concrete placement. This inspection is required before paving or concrete placement operations may proceed. It should be scheduled using the city's on-line permitting portal at <https://portal.columbus.gov/permits>. Inspection requests should be submitted prior to 2 p.m. the day before the inspection is needed. Inspections scheduled after 2 p.m. may be performed up to two days afterwards.
- **Restoration Compliance Inspection** - Following completion of all permit-related construction operations, a Restoration Compliance Inspection shall be scheduled by the contractor. This inspection should be scheduled using the city's on-line permitting portal at <https://portal.columbus.gov/permits>. This inspection is essential to ensure the city right of way has been returned to its proper condition, the permit has been closed out in our system, and to initiate any permit bonding refunds. Inspection requests should be submitted prior to 2 p.m. the day before the inspection is needed. Inspections scheduled after 2 p.m. may be performed up to two days afterwards.

### **Inspections Performed by the Division of Design & Construction's Construction Inspection Section**

The permits associated with these inspections are of greater scale and/or complexity and require a more significant inspection presence during their performance.

**Plan Submission** - When your Right-of-Way Excavation Permit is received and you are notified that your inspections will be performed by the Construction Inspection Section, you will be advised to deliver three (3) 11" x 17" copies of your approved construction plans and a copy of your permit to:

Division of Design & Construction  
Privately Funded Construction Section  
1800 E. 17<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Columbus, Ohio 43219

Please be sure to include your preferred contact name and contact information in your transmittal letter.

**Please note:** Due to current pandemic conditions, a delay may occur between plan delivery and plan distribution to inspection personnel. Please deliver your approved plans as soon as possible after receiving your permit, preferably within 5 days of your permit being issued. The Construction Inspection Section will enter your project information into their inspection tracking software system and prepare to begin scheduling your inspections. Your contact person will be notified when the Construction Inspection Section is ready to begin receiving your inspection requests.

**Scheduling Inspections** - These permits require daily site inspection when work is being performed. Consequently, regular communication on when you intend to work must be provided to your assigned inspector(s). Before beginning any work, you must complete and submit a Private Utility Inspection Request Form to [privatedevelopment@columbus.gov](mailto:privatedevelopment@columbus.gov) prior to 2 p.m. the day before you intend to begin work. Or you may call (614) 645-0433 and provide the information listed below. The same 2 p.m. deadline for scheduling next-day inspection requests applies.

Your Name:  
Your Contact #  
Company Name:  
Excavation Permit #:  
Date Inspection Needed:  
Type of Work Being Performed:  
Contact Person on Site:  
Cell Number of Contact Person:  
Additional Comments:

Communicating your intention to continually work on site once started should be conveyed to your inspector each day. If you intend to suspend work, please advise your inspector. If they show up on your job but you are not working, you will be billed for their time.

Before restarting suspended work, you must submit a new Private Utility Inspection Request Form to [privatedevelopment@columbus.gov](mailto:privatedevelopment@columbus.gov), or call (614) 645-0433 prior to 2 p.m. the day before you intend to start work again.

The same required inspections listed under inspections by the-Right-of-Way Investigation Unit shall also be performed as part of the Construction Inspection Section's daily site inspection responsibilities.

**Inspection Fees** - Fees for the inspections performed by the Construction Inspection Section are a cumulative amount based on the hourly inspection rate multiplied by time spent on site performing inspections. You will be billed by the Department of Public Service, Office of Support Services, at regular intervals during your project for these inspection services.