



Streamline the Locate Request Process While Meeting MN's Legal Requirements

AUTOMATED MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

Minnesota law requires white markings for all excavations. Excavators may satisfy this requirement using **Electronic White Lining (EWL)**, provided the electronic markings communicate the same location information and level of accuracy. That means excavators are encouraged to define the precise area of excavation—no more and no less.

Automated Marking Instructions help meet this requirement by providing a consistent way to communicate excavation locations to facility operators and locators, helping improve locator efficiency, reduce utility damages, and enhance safety.

In ITIC, use the **Circle (Radius)**, **Street (Feature)**, **Property Excavation (Parcel)**, and **Route mapping tools** to automatically generate marking instructions based on the excavation area you define. In many cases these instructions will provide enough information for facility operators and locators.

Excavators should always define the precise area of excavation—no more and no less.

The following are a few suggested practices for utilizing automated marking instructions when you file a locate request.

Review Before You Submit

Before submitting a locate request:

1. Review the automated marking instructions carefully.
2. Confirm the instructions accurately describe the entire excavation area.
3. Verify the mapped excavation area, marking instructions, and any attachments are consistent.
4. Modify instructions only when necessary to accurately define the excavation area.

What does this mean for your ticket?

- Unmodified automated instructions = Ticket is released directly to facility operators.
- Modified automated instructions = Ticket is reviewed by Gopher State One Call (GSOC) before release.

Remember: operators can request a physical mark at any time. However, the waiting period for locates is unchanged and operators are still required to mark underground facilities by the start date and time on the ticket. As a result, all parties are encouraged to request and respond promptly and to communicate and collaborate to complete the marking.

Circle Tool

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Supporting Documentation

Supporting documentation can help clarify the excavation area and verify the requested location.

Examples include:

- Site maps
- Construction plans
- Engineering drawings
- Satellite imagery

Whenever possible, documentation should include:

- Clearly defined excavation limits
- Closed excavation boundaries
- Dimensions and measurements
- Distances to identifiable physical features

Note: GSOC does not review or verify attachments. Therefore, any supporting documentation should reflect the mapped area of excavation so that the correct facility operators are notified.

The excavator is responsible for ensuring all information is accurate and consistent.



Example of Effective Instructions:

“Mark the parking lot on the north side of the building.”

This may be sufficient when:

- The mapped area clearly identifies the parking lot.
- Supporting documentation matches the location.
- The referenced building and parking lot are easily identifiable.

If the mapped area, instructions, or attachments do not clearly identify the excavation area, operators may request a physical white line at any time.

Common Issues to Avoid:

Mapping Too Large an Area. Excavators are encouraged to mark the precise area of excavation—no more or no less—when utilizing electronic white lining.

Example: Mapping an entire parcel while excavation will occur only in one corner.

This may result in:

- GSOC review before release
- Locator requests for physical white lining
- Processing delays

Conflicting Information. The mapped excavation area, marking instructions, and any supporting documentation must work together to clearly identify the exact area where excavation will occur.

Examples:

- Instructions do not match the mapped area.
- Attachments conflict with the excavation area shown on the ticket.
- Excavation boundaries cannot be clearly identified.

This may result in:

- Requests for clarification
- Delayed processing
- Ticket cancellation if the excavation area cannot be determined



Need Training or Assistance?

Gopher State One Call offers in-person and webinar training. Contact: Jolena Ware or Lisa Freeman at itic@gopherstateonecall.org



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