

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

POLE AND CONDUIT COMMISSION

831 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139



NOTICE OF CLARIFICATION AS TO COMMON TRENCH LETTER REQUIREMENT & RELATED PROCESSES

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Most applications reviewed by the Pole and Conduit Commission (“Commission”) require common trench letters. The Commission has noticed applicants are failing to send these out in a timely manner which has led to delay in the processing and approval of petitions thereby negatively affecting residents. The Commission is issuing this document as a clarification of the requirement and the steps it will take when the applicant fails to comply with it.

- When utility companies have a common point of attachment or route, a common trench letter should be distributed to all current providers of service in the area.
 - A common trench letter is not needed when an electric utility’s petition is requesting conduit for a primary connected service (i.e. pad mount transformers and customer stations).
 - There may be other exceptions which is why there will now be an additional approval step at the time the petition is filed to ensure that if a common trench is needed, the utility is informed upon filing.
- The common trench letter must be sent **at least one month prior to the applicant’s petition being heard by the Commission**. This means that if the hearing is on August 18, 2022, the common trench letter must have been sent by July 18, 2022.
 - A copy of the common trench letter sent and proof of date sent **must be uploaded to the application record upon filing**.
 - Proof of date sent can be in the form of confirmation from the email server as to when an email was sent or proof of mailing via first class mail.
 - Failure to upload the common trench letter or proof of date sent will result in the application not being proceeded to the hearing step regardless of the date filed. In addition, or in the alternative, it may result in the denial of the petition.
 - Common trench petitions should be filed concurrently so that they can be heard on the same day.
 - Failure to file concurrently may result in the Commission denying or continuing a matter until all other common trench petitions are filed.
- Utilities using private contractors **must** inform them of the Pole and Conduit application process and **cannot allow them to perform the work prior to obtaining a grant of location**. Utilities will be held accountable for any work being performed on their behalf on the public way without proper permits or inspections.
- When a utility company is rising on the same Utility Pole to provide services for the same property, the current utility companies who are attached to that pole must be notified. Notification must be done at least one month prior to the matter being heard by the Commission.