

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The ***Utility Accommodation Manual*** is established to regulate the location, manner, installation and adjustment of utility facilities along, across, or on any Transportation Facility under the jurisdiction of the **Florida Department of Transportation**.

1.2 Authority

Sections 337.401- 337.404, Florida Statutes
Rule 14-46.001, Florida Administrative Code

1.3 Scope

The ***Utility Accommodation Manual*** is used by the **Florida Department of Transportation** Utilities, Construction, Maintenance, and Design Offices for compliance review and issuing permits for utility installations as authorized under **Sections 337.401 - 337.403, Florida Statutes**, and **Rule 14-46.001, Florida Administrative Code**. Utility companies use the ***Utility Accommodation Manual*** as criteria for application for utility permits.

Since all utility owned facilities on **Florida Department of Transportation** rights-of-way must be authorized by permit, all utility design work, to the extent allowed by Florida law, must comply with the requirements herein. Therefore, District staff and consultants performing utility work on the **Florida Department of Transportation** rights-of-way must also adhere to the ***Utility Accommodation Manual***. The requirement of a permit is a statutory mechanism for documenting and controlling appropriate use of the rights-of-way.

1.4 General

The **Florida Department of Transportation *Utility Accommodation Manual*** draws upon many resources as guidelines to establish standards for utility work or placement and reimbursement costs within the rights of way. For example, see the ***US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Federal-Aid Policy Guide***. When a **Florida Department of Transportation** standard is found to be more stringent, the **Florida Department of Transportation** standard shall apply.

Disputes pertaining to utility accommodation that cannot be resolved with Senior Management in the District by mutual agreement shall be referred to the State Utility Engineer or designee for resolution or coordination. Disputes over exceptions to Non-Limited Access Policy or Criteria/Standards shall be referred to the State Roadway Design Engineer or designee for resolution. Disputes that can not be resolved in the District regarding utility accommodation across District boundaries, by intrastate utilities, shall be referred to the ~~State Highway Engineer~~ Chief Engineer or designee.

While the **Utility Accommodation Manual** governs matters concerning future location, and the manner and methods for the installation, adjustment, and maintenance of utilities on **Florida Department of Transportation** rights-of-way, it does not alter current regulations pertaining to authority for their installation, nor does it determine financial responsibilities for placement or adjustment thereof.

The presence of existing above ground and underground facilities in **Florida Department of Transportation** rights-of-way will be presumed to be properly permitted in accordance with the existing guidelines in effect at the time of their installations, whether or not documentation to that effect exists. The Permittee will relocate or adjust existing utility facilities to comply with the current **Utility Accommodation Manual**:

- (1) When transportation facility improvement projects necessitate relocation,
- (2) Analysis of crash evidence (physical or recorded) indicates a need to relocate the utility facility, unless the relocation,
 - (a) Conflicts with other standards, codes or regulations that provide for the public health and safety, or
 - (b) Will not be economically feasible for the benefit desired.

To the extent such data is necessary to comply with the requirements of the **Utility Accommodation Manual** the **Florida Department of Transportation** will make crash history available upon request. Individual crash reports, if necessary, shall be obtained by the utility agency organization owner from the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles Office.

Where the Permittee has a compensable interest in the land occupied by the facilities and such land is to be jointly owned or used for a transportation facility and utility purposes, the **Florida Department of Transportation** and Permittee shall agree in writing as to the obligations and responsibilities of each party. In any event, the interest to be acquired by or vested in the **Florida Department of Transportation** in any portion of the rights-of-way of a transportation facility project to be occupied, used, or vacated, by utilities, shall be of a nature and extent adequate for the construction, safe operation and maintenance of the transportation facility.

The **Utility Accommodation Manual** is also used to assess utility permit applications and to issue permits for work that are in the interest of public safety, protection, utilization, and future development of utilities and transportation facilities. Due consideration will be given to public service afforded by adequate and economical utility installations, as authorized under **Section 337.401, Florida Statutes** and **Rule 14-46.001, Florida Administrative Code**.

1.5 Distribution

The **Utility Accommodation Manual** is issued by the State Utilities Engineer and is furnished to **Florida Department of Transportation** personnel at no charge, upon request. For persons external to the **Florida Department of Transportation**, acquisition must be obtained by purchase at the following address:

Maps and Publications Sales
605 Suwannee Street
Mail Station 12
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450
Phone: (850) 414-4050
Fax: (850) 487-4099
<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/MapsAndPublications/>

The ***Utility Accommodation Manual*** may be viewed or printed at no cost by accessing the following web site. "<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/rddesign/utilities/files/utilities.htm>" Adobe Acrobat Reader is required to view or print the ***Utility Accommodation Manual***.

1.6 Revisions and Additions

Revisions and additions to the ***Utility Accommodation Manual*** and the utility permit form are developed in accordance with the ***Florida Administrative Procedures Act***. The ***Utility Accommodation Manual*** and utility permit form are incorporated by reference into ***Rule 14-46.001, Florida Administrative Code***.

The State Utility Engineer will also coordinate the periodic review of the ***Utility Accommodation Manual*** by affected parties, including the Utility Industry, for continued need and updating. Users of the ***Utility Accommodation Manual*** may submit any suggestions for improvement or modifications at any time to the State Utilities Engineer. Suggestions must be submitted in writing either to the below postal or internet address.

State Utilities Engineer
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street
Mail Station 32
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450
<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/rddesign/utilities/files/utilities.htm>

In order to keep the Utility Industry informed, the **Florida Department of Transportation** has created a Utility Liaison Process for **Florida Department of Transportation** Process Changes as follows:

See Exhibit "L" for a flow chart that is intended to summarily describe a process for providing a window of opportunity for the Utility Industry to access information and input on proposed changes by the **Florida Department of Transportation** that might impact them.

It is specifically noted that most changes that are employed by the **Florida Department of Transportation** are the result of changes in national standards as adopted by government or agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration, American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials, Department of Environmental Protection, etc. Utilities are encouraged to become involved in reviewing and inputting regarding proposed changes by the National Associations and Professional Special Interest Groups before they are adopted by the organizations and the **Florida Department of Transportation** is required to comply.

The **Florida Department of Transportation** will require its various offices to publish

information via the Utility Web Site regarding proposed procedural changes, standards, criteria, or rules that may affect the Utility Industry. The purpose is to standardize utility notification and provide for early involvement on issues that are being considered. Changes that impact Utilities will be conducted in accordance with **Florida Administrative Code, Chapter 120** Rule Adoption Process.

1.7 Forms

The Utility Permit (**710-010-85, Utility Permit** -See Exhibit J) may be obtained from the **Florida Department of Transportation** local Maintenance Office or the District Maintenance Office. All utility forms and agreements may be obtained through the District Utility Office or at the following internet address.

<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/rddesign/utilities/files/utilities.htm>

1.8 Training

No special training is required to use the **Utility Accommodation Manual**. However, some functions addressed in the **Utility Accommodation Manual** require persons to be skilled or certified in a particular area of expertise. (Examples of this include herbicide application certification addressed in Chapter 7, or Maintenance of Traffic setup or design addressed in Chapter 8, etc.)