

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2000 SESSION

CHAPTER 779

An Act to amend and reenact § 56-257 of the Code of Virginia, relating to separation standards for underground utility lines.

[S 445]

Approved April 9, 2000

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 56-257 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 56-257. Manner of installing underground utility lines.

A. Every corporation organized for any of the purposes enumerated in § 56-256, in laying any pipe or conduit in any of the public roads in the counties, or in any of the public parks, streets, avenues, or alleys in the cities or towns of this Commonwealth, to be used for the purposes of such company, shall install such pipe or conduit with minimum clearance as may be specified by the Commission but in no case to exceed three feet or, where said pipes or conduits cross, twelve inches from any other underground structure to allow proper maintenance and to protect against damage that might result from proximity to other structures operator, as defined in § 56-265.15, having the right to install underground utility lines, as defined in § 56-265.15, except interstate gas pipelines subject to regulation by the U.S. Department of Transportation, shall install such underground utility lines in accordance with accepted industry standards. Such standards shall include, as applicable, standards established by the National Electric Safety Code, the Commission's pipeline safety regulations, the Department of Health's waterworks regulations (12 VAC 5-590-10 et seq.), and standards established by the Utility Industry Coalition of Virginia.

In addition to the requirements of this section, each pipe or conduit shall be installed with sufficient clearance, or shall be insulated from any source of heat, so as to prevent the heat from impairing the serviceability of the pipe or conduit.

B. The Commission shall promulgate any rules or regulations necessary to enforce the provisions of this section as to those operators that do not comply with such accepted industry standards.

C. This section shall not authorize the Commission to order action by, or impose penalties on, any county, city or town. However, the Commission shall inform counties, cities and towns of alleged violations by the locality of the accepted industry standards or regulations adopted under this section and, at the request of the locality, suggest corrective action.

2. That the State Corporation Commission shall publish for comment the first set of regulations required pursuant to the provisions of this act on or before January 1, 2001.

3. That the provisions of this act amending § 56-257 shall become effective on July 1, 2001.