



FAQs on NJUG Publications

Question:

I have recently completed an NRWSA supervisor's course, and during the course I discovered several discrepancies with my company's specifications. Currently the distance between any marker tape and apparatus installed has a minimum requirement of 150mm according to HAUC. Can you please advise me if this distance is likely to change? I ask this as many other regional electric companies have stated that their specifications are correct yet they are far less than this distance mentioned in this instance.

NJUG response:

The only relevant NRSWA qualifications are as defined in the Statutory Instrument 1992 No. 1687 - The Street Works (Qualifications of Supervisors and Operatives) Regulations 1992. Schedule 3 details the units of competence for supervisors and Schedule 4 the qualifications for supervisors. The regulations are being reviewed but they will not be changed for some time yet, therefore the current qualifications are valid. Any reference to marker tape is industry specific and is not part of the qualification process. NJUG Publication Volume 1 may be of some assistance to you.

Question:

Are you able to advise on a preferred layout for services for a "services corridor" within my private self-build boundary? In simple terms I have a number of services to run in a fairly tight soft-dig area and would like some advice on appropriate segregation. Could you please consider the attached and advise on whether you believe this is a sensible cross-section.

NJUG response:

NJUG's guidelines in Volume 1 give preferred separations.

Question:

A): Are there any guidelines relating to specification, colour coding and positioning of underground pipework used for the distribution of heat (utilizing hot water) for a district heating scheme as a new development?

B): Is there a process for agreeing access to underground heating mains with a local authority for a new district heating development with adopted highways?

NJUG response:

NJUG has no guidelines on these particular issues, but would refer to the following comments from the ENA Cable and Accessories Panel as advisory.

A) Heat from the pipes would have a direct and adverse effect on cable ratings and dry out the surrounding ground. A spacing of at least 3m between pipes and cables would be required. CBS



(Cement Bound Sand) should be used as a backfill but not foamed concrete as this has a high TR (Thermal Resistivity). There is concern over the identification of the pipes. The insulation used has a black finish and could be mistaken for a cable and cut / spiked with resulting safety issues. Other comments from industry are:

1. The biggest issue is in relation to the effect the heating pipe(s) will have on any cable circuits in the close vicinity. Even with an outside surface temperature of only 40 degrees centigrade, this will seriously de-rate any cable circuit within a 3 metre radius of the pipe.
2. Unlike water and gas, power cables are adversely affected by external heat sources, which in worst case scenarios can cause cables and joints to fail prematurely.

B) NJUG is not aware of any such process and advises that authorities be approached individually as each may well have its own requirements.

Question:

I work within utilities and have a question regarding the information required when submitting the closing of an excavation using the grid reference. We have been told that the grid reference needs to be taken in the centre of any small excavation less than 10m which makes sense. My question relates to trench work greater than 10m. The information supplied to us states that a grid reference point needs to be taken at either end of a trench. My understanding of this suggests that if we dug a trench say 200m long then we only need one grid reference at either end yet some say that each different surface is deemed as a separate reinstatement. This question is causing a lot of debate and dependent on who you speak to you get a different answer. I would appreciate it if someone could clarify this point as to whether a continuous trench only requires a reference at each end.

NJUG response:

A section 70(4A) permanent reinstatement notice must include a reference point (Ordnance Survey Nation Grid reference point to a resolution of one metre). Also required are the dimensions of the reinstatement, the date on which the reinstatement was completed and the method of reinstatement.

Regarding reference points there is no requirement to differentiate between surface materials in any one continuous trench. However, the dimensions relate to the method of reinstatement which will be different between surfaces –

- (i) The centre of any reinstatement that does not exceed 10 metres in length; and
- (ii) Each end of any reinstatement that exceeds 10 metres in length.

Question:

I have downloaded a copy of NJUG Guideline Volume 1 & 2 and have read through both of them and have a number of queries. Having also got a copy of the Water Regulations Advisory Scheme's Regulations Guide which details that the separations detailed in NJUG's Guidelines relate to permeable pipe I would like to know whether if the pipe is impermeable what the recommended spacings are and whether there is a separate set of guidelines or a relaxation of the spacings for impermeable pipework. I would also like to know whether NJUG's guidelines only apply to publicly maintained areas, and what guidelines apply for pipework buried under private property. I understand from reading through your guidelines that there are instances where the water board or gas board may need to encroach on/into private property and in this instance your guidelines should be followed but what are the NJUG's regulations for buried pipework in private property and or for areas where public transport is not regularly occurring?

NJUG response:



1. We do not have any different spacing rules for different pipe materials in the water industry. All should be *impermeable* and therefore the NJUG Guidelines should be taken as the rule for ALL pipes.
2. The NJUG guidelines apply to the public highway but are equally valid for private estates. Utility apparatus in private grounds are subject to unique wayleave agreements between the landowner and the individual utility company. The specification for proximity is the matter for the individual companies but the NJUG guidelines are recommended.

Question:

I am being pursued by a utility company for the cost of repairing a cable I have damaged whilst working on my driveway at home. Do you have any advice for me?

NJUG response:

Whilst recommending that the NJUG guidelines apply to public and private land, there is no specified depth of cover or line of lay off of the public highway, it is down to the specification of the individual utility company.

NJUG would recommend that you contact the individual company concerned to ask what their normal depth of cover is for drives and gardens. There are no Health and Safety guidelines regarding depth of utility apparatus, the onus is on the excavator to obtain plant records prior to digging and to excavate with caution.

Question:

1. Do any of the NJUG publications cover details of the running of Fibre Optic cables?
2. Which legislation covers the regulations for the laying of Fibre Optic cables through sewers?

NJUG response:

Fibre Optic cables through sewers do not come under street works and therefore do not form part of NJUG's guidelines. One could approach the local authority, which may have various subway agreements with utilities.

Question:

I understand that NJUG has advised on the sizing of inset inspection covers, but I have not been able to find any information about this on the NJUG website. I would be most grateful for any details of how to obtain a copy of this aspect of streetscape guidance.

NJUG response:

All our public-facing advice guidelines are located on our website and available for free download (after accepting a disclaimer). They can be located in the Publications section. NJUG cannot advise on the sizing of inset inspection covers as the specification of such covers is company specific.

Question:

I have checked through the NJUG publications Volumes 1 – 4, but could not find any reference to infill inspection covers. I have also checked through the previous NJUG publications without success, but we understand that this topic has only recently been developed. Does NJUG cover this topic within its publications?

NJUG response:



Inset covers are in fact unique to each highway authority and utility. Their specification has to therefore be agreed individually by both parties (i.e. the authority and the asset owner).

Question:

I have a situation where a new gas main, water main and HV electricity cables are being run in a common (private / non-adopted) footpath to serve a new development. The gas company (an independent connection provider) laid their main first. The water company are next in line to lay their (180mm) main, but are refusing to do so on the basis that the gas main is not laid in accordance with NJUG guidelines. At this stage I do not know the relative position or depth of the gas main and whether the water company contractors are refusing to lay the main because it's physically impossible, or due to it not complying with the guidelines.

1. Are NJUG 'guidelines' actually for guidance or mandatory?
2. Is it reasonable for a utility to object in such circumstances?
3. Do NJUG offer an arbitration service?

NJUG response:

1. NJUG guidelines are advisory only.
2. On development sites water is traditionally laid first as it is the deepest utility under normal circumstances. As long as there is sufficient lateral space to allow separation between the water main and the gas main, where it goes in the hierarchy of utility apparatus is not vital. NJUG would recommend that the respective utility management representatives discuss the issue with the developer.
3. NJUG does not offer an arbitration service, although if the dispute were between an authority and a utility, the disagreement could be taken to the relevant regional HAUC.

Question:

1. Does the use of identical colours with different meanings really fit NJUG's criteria on Best Practice?
2. Do NJUG members' companies discuss these types of proposals with other member companies before implementation?
3. If not how is Best Practice accomplished?

NJUG response:

Our publications are the only NJUG "journals" applicable to anything affecting NJUG guidelines. HSG47 requires excavators to recognise danger and act accordingly. Colour is irrelevant as it merely gives an indication of the possibility of live apparatus beneath the surface be it communications, gas, water or electricity they all have to be treated with exactly the same caution when excavating. There are no compromises with safety.

1. We have no control over the commercial aspects of any utility, if two utilities use the same colour we report it in our publications.
2. All data from member companies is discussed in the NJUG Publications Group.
3. We encourage best practice but have no control over the commercial aspects of any utility.