

County Code Section 361-1 et seq

§ 361-1

TITLE III - LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

DIVISION 6

REGULATIONS FOR PUBLIC UTILITY UNDERGROUND FACILITIES

CHAPTER 1

REGULATIONS FOR PUBLIC UTILITY UNDERGROUND FACILITIES

361-1. DEFINITIONS.

Whenever the words or phrases defined in this section are used in this chapter, they shall have the respective meanings assigned to them in the following definitions:

(a) Commission. "Commission" means the Public Utilities Commission of the State of California.

(b) Clerk. "Clerk" means the Clerk of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors.

(c) Director. "Director" means the Humboldt County Director of Public Works.

(d) Underground Utility District or District. "Underground utility district" or "district" means that unincorporated area in the County within which poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures are prohibited as such area is described in a resolution adopted pursuant to the provisions of Section 361-3 of this chapter.

(e) Poles, Overhead Wires and Associated Overhead Structures. "Poles," "overhead wires" and "associated overhead structures" mean poles, towers, supports, wires, conductors, guys, stubs, platforms, crossarms, braces, transformers, insulators, cutouts, switches, communication circuits, appliances, attachments and appurtenances located aboveground within a district and used or useful in supplying electric, communication or similar or associated services.

(f) Utility. "Utility" includes all persons or entities supplying electric, communication or similar or associated services by means of electrical materials or devices. (Ord. 652, § 1, 11/26/68)

361-2. PUBLIC HEARING BY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.

The Board may from time to time call public hearings to ascertain whether the public necessity, health, safety or welfare requires the removal of poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures within designated areas of the unincorporated area of the County and the underground installation of wires and facilities for supplying electric, communication or similar or associated services. The Clerk shall notify all affected property owners (as shown on the last equalized assessment roll) and utilities concerns by mail of the time and place of such hearings at least ten (10) days prior to the date thereof. Each such hearing shall be open to the public and may be continued from time to time. At each such hearing all persons interested shall be given an opportunity to be heard. The decision of the Board shall be final and conclusive. Prior to holding such public hearing, the Director shall consult all affected utilities and shall prepare a report for submission at such hearing containing, among other information, the extent of such utilities participation and estimates of the total costs of the County and the affected property owners. Such report shall also contain an estimate of the time required to complete such underground installation and removal of overhead facilities. (Ord. 652 § 2, 11/26/68)

361-3. BOARD MAY DESIGNATE UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICTS BY RESOLUTION.

If, after any such public hearing, the Board finds that the public necessity, health, safety and welfare requires such removal and such underground installation within a designated area, the Board shall, by resolution, declare such designated area an underground utility district and order such removal and underground installation. Such resolution shall include a description of the area comprising such district and shall fix the time within which such removal and underground installation shall be accomplished and within which affected property owners must be ready to receive underground service. A reasonable time shall be allowed for such removal and underground installation, having due regard for the availability of labor, materials and equipment necessary for such removal and for the installation of such underground facilities as may be occasioned thereby. (Ord. 652, § 3, 11/26/68)

361-4. UNLAWFUL ACTS.

Whenever the Board creates an underground utility district and orders the removal of poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures therein as provided in Section 361-3 hereof, it shall be unlawful for any person or utility to erect, construct, place, keep, maintain, continue, employ or operate poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures in the district after the date when said overhead facilities are required to be removed by such resolution, except as said overhead facilities may be required to furnish service to an owner or occupant of property prior to the performance by such owner or occupant of the underground work necessary for such owner or occupant to continue to receive utility service as provided in Section 361-7 hereof, and for such reasonable time required to remove said facilities after said work has been performed, and except as otherwise provided in this chapter.

(a) Exception, Emergency or Unusual Circumstances. Notwithstanding the provisions of this chapter, overhead facilities may be installed and maintained for a period not to exceed not to exceed thirty (30) days, without authority of the Board, in order to provide emergency service. The Board may grant special permission on such terms as the Board may deem appropriate, in cases of unusual circumstances, without discrimination as to any person or utility, to erect, construct, install, maintain, use or operate poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures.

(b) Other Exceptions. This chapter and any resolution adopted pursuant to Section 361-3 hereof shall not apply, unless otherwise provided in such resolution, to the following types of facilities:

(1) County facilities or equipment installed under the supervision and to the satisfaction of the Director.

(2) Poles or electroliers used exclusively for street lighting.

(3) Overhead wires (exclusive of supporting structures) crossing any portion or a district within which overhead wires have been prohibited, or connecting to building on the perimeter of a district when such wires originate in an area from which poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures are not prohibited.

(4) Poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures used for the transmission of electric energy at nominal voltages in excess of 34,500 volts.

(5) Overhead wires attached to the exterior surface of a building by means of a bracket or other fixture and extending from one location on the building to another location on the same building or to an adjacent building without crossing any public street.

(6) Antenna, associated equipment and supporting structures used by a utility for furnishing communication services.

(7) Equipment appurtenant to underground facilities such as surface-mounted transformers, pedestal-mounted terminal boxes and meter cabinets, and concealed ducts.

(8) Temporary poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures used or to be used in conjunction with construction projects. (Ord. 652, §§ 4, 5 and 6, 11/26/68)

361-5. NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNERS AND UTILITY COMPANIES.

Within ten (10) days after the effective date of a resolution adopted pursuant to Section 361-3 hereof, the Clerk shall notify all affected utilities and all persons owning real property within the district created by said resolution of the adoption thereof. Said Clerk shall further notify such affected property owners of the necessity that, if they or any person occupying such property desire to continue to receive electric, communication, or similar or associated service, they or such occupant shall provide all necessary facility changes on their premises so as to receive such service from the lines of the supplying utility or utilities at a new location, subject to the applicable rules, regulations and tariffs of the respective utility or utilities on file with the Commission.

Notification by the Clerk shall be made by mailing a copy of the resolution adopted pursuant to Section 361-3, together with a copy of this chapter, to affected property owners as such are shown on the last equalized assessment role and to the affected utilities. (Ord. 652, § 7, 11/26/68)

361-6. RESPONSIBILITY OF UTILITY COMPANIES.

If underground construction is necessary to provide utility service within a district created by any resolution adopted pursuant to Section 361-3 hereof, the supplying utility shall furnish that portion of the conduits, conductors and associated equipment required to be furnished by it under its applicable rules, regulations and tariffs on file with the Commission. (Ord. 652, § 8, 11/26/68)

361-7. RESPONSIBILITY OF PROPERTY OWNERS.

Every person owning, operating, leasing, occupying or renting a building or structure within a district shall construct and provide that portion of the service connection on his property between the facilities referred to in Section 361-6 and the termination facility on or within said building or structure being served, all in accordance with applicable rules, regulations and tariffs of the respective utility or utilities on file with the Commission. If the above is not accomplished by any person within the time provided for in the resolution enacted pursuant to Section 361-3 hereof, the Director shall give notice in writing to the person in possession of such premises, and a notice in writing to the owner thereof as shown on the last equalized assessment roll, to provide the required underground facilities within ten (10) days after receipt of such notice. (Ord. 652, § 9, 11/26/68)

361-8. SERVICE OF NOTICE.

The notice to provide the required underground facilities may be given either by personal service or by mail. In case of service by mail on either the owner or occupant of such premises, the notice must be deposited in the United States mail in a sealed envelope with postage prepaid, addressed to the person in possession of such premises at such premises, and the notice must be addressed to the owner thereof as such owner's name appears, and must be addressed to such owner's last known address as the same appears, on the last equalized assessment roll. If notice is given by mail, such notice shall be deemed to have been received by the person to whom it has been sent within forty-eight (48) hours after the mailing thereof. If notice is given by mail to either the owner or occupant of such premises, the Director shall, within forty-eight (48) hours after the mailing thereof, cause a copy thereof, printed on a card not less than eight inches by ten inches (8" x 10") in size, to be posted in a conspicuous place on said premises. (Ord. 652, § 10, 11/26/68)

361-9. CONTENTS OF NOTICE.

The notice given by the Director to provide the required underground facilities shall particularly specify what work is required to be done, and shall state that, if said work is not completed within thirty (30) days after receipt of such notice, the Director will provide such required underground facilities, in which case the cost and expense thereof will be assessed against the property benefitted and become a lien upon such property. (Ord. 652, § 11, 11/26/68)

361-10. DISCONNECTION, CONSTRUCTION, ASSESSMENT.

If upon the expiration of the thirty (30) day period the said required underground facilities have not been provided, the Director shall forthwith proceed to do the work; provided, however, if such premises are unoccupied and no electric or communications services are being furnished thereto, the Director may, in lieu of providing the required underground facilities, authorize the disconnection and removal of any and all overhead service wires and associated facilities supplying utility service to said property. Upon completion of the work by the Director, he shall file a written report with the Board setting forth the facts of the work completed and the cost thereof, together with a legal description of the property against which such cost is to be assessed. The Board shall thereupon fix a time and place for hearing protests against the assessment of the cost of such work upon such premises, which said time shall not be less than ten (10) days thereafter. (Ord. 652, § 12, 11/26/68)

361-11. NOTICE OF PROTEST HEARING.

The Director shall forthwith, upon the time for hearing such protests having been fixed, give a notice in writing to the person in possession of such premises and a notice in writing to the owner thereof, in the manner hereinabove provided for the giving of the notice of the required underground facilities, of the time and place that the Board will pass upon such report and will hear protests against such assessment. Such notice shall also set forth the amount of the proposed assessment. (Ord. 652, § 13, 11/26/68)

361-12. PROTEST HEARING.

Upon the date and hour set for the hearing of protests, the Board shall hear and consider the report and all protests, if there be any, and then proceed to affirm, modify or reject the assessment. (Ord. 652, § 14, 11/26/68)

361-13. LIEN UPON PROPERTY.

If any assessment is not paid within five (5) days after its confirmation by the Board, the amount of the assessment shall become a lien upon the property against which the assessment is made by the Director, and the Director is directed to turn over to the Assessor and Tax Collector a Notice of Lien on each of said properties on which the assessment has not been paid. The Assessor and Tax Collector shall add the amount of said assessment to the next regular bill for taxes levied against the premises upon which said assessment was not paid. Said assessment shall be due and payable at the same time as said property taxes are due and payable, and, if not paid when due and payable, shall bear and interest at the rate of six percent (6%) per annum. (Ord. 652, § 15, 11/26/68)

361-14. RESPONSIBILITY OF COUNTY.

The County shall remove at its own expense all County-owned equipment from all poles requires to be removed hereunder in ample time to enable the owner or user of such poles to remove the same within the time specified in the resolution enacted pursuant to Section 361-3 hereof. (Ord. 652, § 16, 11/26/68)

361-15. EXTENSION OF TIME.

In the event that any act required by this chapter or by a resolution adopted pursuant to Section 361-3 hereof cannot be performed within the time provided on account of shortage of materials, war, restraint by public authorities, strikes, labor disturbances, civil disobedience, or any other circumstances beyond the control of the actor, then the time within which such act will be accomplished shall be extended for a period equivalent to the time of such limitation. (Ord. 652, § 17, 11/26/68)