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MISS-DIG FLAG COLORS

House Bill 5230 (Substitute H-1)
First Analysis (12-15-93)

Sponsor: Rep. Alma Stallworth
Committee: Public Utilities

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

Public Act 53 of 1974, which regulates the "Miss-Dig" program, requires that public utilities be notified when construction is to take place near underground utility facilities. The act also prescribes certain colors for physically marking the approximate location of an underground facility, depending on the utility and type of product. Thus, "safety red" is used to mark underground electric power distribution and transmission facilities, as well as municipal electric systems. "High visibility safety yellow" is used to mark gas or oil distribution and transmission facilities and dangerous materials or product lines. "Safety alert orange" is used to mark telephone and telegraph systems and police and fire communications, "safety precaution blue" to mark water systems, and "safety green" to mark sewer systems and storm drains. Underground cable television facilities are marked with "safety brown." Cable television representatives have requested a color with greater visibility so as to better prevent damage to their lines.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would amend the act to change the color coding for cable television from "safety brown" to "safety alert orange" and the coding for sewer systems from "safety green" to "safety brown." A new flag color would be added, "high visibility safety pink," for land survey monumentation. The bill also would require that all safety alert orange flags include the name or type of company (that is, telephone and telegraph systems, police and fire communications, or cable television) that owned the underground facility to be marked.

MCL 460.708

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

There is no information at present.

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The switch in color of markings from safety brown to safety alert orange will make it easier to recognize the existence of underground cable television facilities and help to prevent damage from construction projects. The bill would also provide separate colors for sewer systems and storm drains, which now share flag colors. An additional marking would be required for land survey monumentation.

POSITIONS:

Representatives of the Michigan Cable Television Association and of Detroit Edison indicated support for the bill before the House Public Utilities Committee. (12-9-93)