

**Michigan Damage Prevention Board**  
**Best Practice 2014-03**  
**Offset Staking**

**MDPB Best Practice**

When offset marking and/or supplemental marking is necessary, the markings shall be on a uniform alignment and shall clearly indicate that the approximate location of the facility is a specific distance and direction away.

**PA174 Reference**

Section 3(u)

Definition of Mark -- means the temporary identification on the surface grade of the location of a facility in response to a ticket as described in section 7.

Section 7 (1) A facility owner or facility operator shall respond to a ticket by the start date and time for the excavation or blasting under section 5(1) by marking its facilities in the area of the proposed excavation or blasting in a manner that permits the excavator to employ soft excavation to establish the precise location of the facilities.

**Discussion**

Offset staking is an acceptable method to avoid the necessity to restake facilities where the proposed excavation activities will destroy the original marks. Examples are marks on pavement that is to be removed or flags in an area where surface grade is to be modified.

Another use for offset staking is to avoid placing marks in esthetically sensitive areas where the marks might mar the appearance of the landscaping. An example is streetscaping in urban areas. Offset staking has been included in the MDPB Staking Guidelines adopted in 2012.

An additional location for offset staking is when there is a risk of losing marks due to sitting or running water.

**References**

Michigan Damage Prevention Board – Recommended Marking Guidelines for Underground Utilities  
CGA Best Practices – Uniform Color Code and Marking Guidelines  
APWA Uniform Color Code (ANSI Z535.1)

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The MDPB Best Practices are presented as a general guide. The MDPB encourages all users to consult and consider not only the MDPB Best Practices, but also (i) employer practices, (ii) industry practices, (iii) federal and state statutes and regulations, (iv) building and fire codes, and (v) local laws, regulations, and ordinances.

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