

# UNDERGROUND FACILITY LOCATOR POSITION PROFILE

The Province of Alberta is working in partnership with the Government of Canada to provide employment support programs and services.

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## **1 OVERVIEW**

Underground Facility Locators (aka: line locators or utility locators) locate and mark underground infrastructure (e.g., communication and alarm cables, gas, oil, water, and sewer pipes). Locating and marking underground infrastructure helps prevent damage to underground infrastructure during ground disturbance activities (e.g., construction) by indicating the infrastructure's location. Locating and marking existing underground infrastructure may also be required when designing and planning new infrastructure. Underground Facility Locators perform this task when requested (e.g., by one-call program operators, excavators, and underground facility operators). The specific requirements for an Underground Facility Locator role may vary by a position's seniority level and employer.

Underground Facility Locators may be hired as full-time employees, contractors, or seasonal employees, depending on need. The average starting hourly wage is \$23/hr, with the potential to make more than \$40/hr.

## **2 WORKING CONDITIONS**

Underground Facility Locating is generally a physical job that requires frequent walking and bending. Although it depends on the specific position, some employers require that individuals be able to lift 20 kg (44 lbs) or more.

Although it can vary by position and employer, Underground Facility Locators should expect to work outside in different weather conditions (e.g., snow and rain), temperatures, and terrains. Some positions may require travel, working in remote locations, and overnight stays. Additionally, many positions require an individual to work alone.

Many Underground Facility Positions also work on an on-call basis. This means that an individual may be required to work at odd hours, sometimes late at night or early in the morning, or on weekends.

Performing hazard assessments (i.e., identifying, assessing, and managing hazards) is a large part of an Underground Facility Locator's everyday work because doing so helps to manage the risks of the working conditions.

## **3 RESPONSIBILITIES**

Although it can vary by position and employer, Underground Facility Locators are generally responsible for:

- Completing underground facility locates using the appropriate locating methods and equipment.
- Following relevant federal, provincial, and municipal regulations and industry best practices and standards.
- Taking appropriate safety measures, such as completing visual inspections and hazard assessments, per industry and/or client requirements or standards.
- Troubleshooting problems during locates.
- Obtaining the information necessary for completing locates, such as maps, records, or plans.
- Communicating effectively with relevant stakeholders and team members, per industry and/or client requirements.
- Accurately documenting locate information.

Typically, employers provide a work vehicle and the relevant equipment for the job, which the Underground Facility Locator is responsible for using and operating safely.

## **4 SKILLS & TRAITS**

Underground Facility Locators generally benefit from having the following skills:

- Verbal and written communication skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Organizational skills
- Computer skills
- Problem-solving skills

Additionally, Underground Facility Locators benefit from having the following traits:

- Safety consciousness
- Situational awareness
- Attention to detail
- Ability to stay calm in stressful situations
- Ability to work alone and in teams
- Physical capability

## **5 EDUCATION**

Although it can vary by position and employer, Underground Facility Locators generally need minimal formal education. Some employers may require a high school education; however, many positions only require that the individual be able to read, write, and follow instructions.

## **6 RELEVANT BACKGROUNDS**

There are many entry-level positions for Underground Facility Locators, and certain employment backgrounds may have knowledge and skills that transfer into Underground Facility Locating and therefore may be of interest to employers. This includes backgrounds such as:

- Construction
- Utilities
- Energy
- Surveying

## **7 CERTIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Most positions require a driver's license. Additional certifications and qualifications can vary by position and employer; however, the following certifications and qualifications may be considered an asset by employers:

- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)
- Standard First Aid Certification
- Utility Locator Training (e.g., the Utility Safety Partners' [USP] endorsed training as part of the ALP)
- Advanced Line Locating Online Training (provided by Locate Management)

- Advanced Line Locating Hands-on Training (e.g., Underground Facility Locator Training Program, provided by Locate Management Institute, Damage Prevention Technician Training by Ontario Regional Common Ground Alliance [ORCGA])
- Ground Disturbance Training
- Construction Safety Training System (CSTS) or Pipeline Construction Safety Training (PCST)
- Common Safety Orientation (CSO)
- H2S Alive Safety Certification (for industrial applications)

Additional certifications and qualifications may be required based on specific projects and situations. Some employers may provide training for certifications and qualifications.

## **8 POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS**

Organizations that hire Underground Facility Locators include:

- Underground Facility Locating companies
- Facility owners (e.g., Enmax and Telus)
- Surveying/Engineering companies
- Excavating companies
- Underground Facility Locating equipment providers
- Underground Facility Locator training providers

Many potential employers are listed on the CAPULC (Canadian Association of Pipeline and Utility Locating Contractors) website: <https://www.capulc.ca/Locate-a-Locator>

## **9 ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Some companies have different position levels for Underground Facility Locators (e.g., junior, intermediate, and senior). Senior positions require more experience and skills and may require additional responsibilities, such as performing quality assurance on locates. Furthermore, some individuals may move into roles that hire and/or manage Underground Facility Locators, or they may open their own businesses.

Additionally, Underground Facility Locating roles may provide experience that helps individuals move to other related roles, such as:

- Damage prevention roles (at facility owners or excavating companies)
- Surveying roles
- Training roles
- Safety roles
- Equipment supply roles

Some of these roles may have additional education requirements.

## **10 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Additional information and resources for Underground Facility Locating may be found on the websites of region-specific Common Ground Alliances (listed below) and the following additional websites:

CAPULC: <https://www.capulc.ca/>

Locate Management Institute: <https://locatemanagement.com/en/>

### **Common Ground Alliances**

Canadian Common Ground Alliance: <https://www.canadiancga.com/>

British Columbia Common Ground Alliance: <https://commongroundbc.ca/>

(Alberta) Utility Safety Partners: <https://utilityafety.ca/>

Saskatchewan Common Ground Alliance: <https://scga.ca/>

Manitoba Common Ground Alliance: <https://www.manitobacga.com/>

Ontario Regional Common Ground Alliance: <https://orcga.com/>

Atlantic Canada Common Ground Alliance: <https://www.atlanticdigsafe.ca/>

(Quebec) Info-Excavation: <https://www.info-ex.com/>