

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2008 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 127  
Economic Matters

(Delegate Beidle)

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**Public Utility Companies - Employees - Notice and Identification**

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This bill establishes notification requirements for a “utility employee” before entering private residential property to perform maintenance or inspection of a “utility facility.” Utility employees must make efforts to determine if a resident is home before entering private residential property, knock on the front door or main entrance, and post notice of the visit before leaving. Utility facility employees are required to wear clear identification, and vehicles must be clearly identifiable and display a phone number. “Utility facilities” include nine company types: cable, electric, gas, sewage disposal, steam heating, water, telegraph, telephone, and telecommunications. The bill excludes meter reading services.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. The bill pertains exclusively to private sector activities.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** PSC regulates gas, electric, telephone, water, and sewage disposal companies. PSC awards franchises to these companies to serve retail customer needs. Companies install property and equipment on private property to supply, support, or discontinue a set of customer services. A company’s authorized agents and employees access the customer’s premises to supply and maintain service or to terminate service and

remove any or all company property. A company accesses customer premises only to the extent needed to access its property.

Title 20 of COMAR does not require that agents of public service companies to carry specific identification or wear identifying badges or uniforms. PSC advises that there is no requirement by tariff or regulation that agents of public service companies present specific identification to enter a premise.

**Background:** Specific public service companies under the jurisdiction of PSC do have established internal protocols with respect to identification and notify customers via publications and web sites of these protocols. For these companies, authorized employees that visit customer premises for any purpose are furnished with an identification card, and customers are advised that they should refuse admission to persons not having proper identification.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Public Service Commission, Office of People's Counsel, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 29, 2008  
mcp/hlb

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