

<b>JBLM Directorate of Public Works (DPW) ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION</b>		
<b>Procedure: Joint Base Lewis-McChord DPW Excavation/ Dig Plan Document ID: JBLM DPW Excavation/Dig Permit Standard Operating Procedure</b>		
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# JBLM DPW Excavation / Dig Permit Standard Operating Procedure

1. References:

a. Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 19.122.030 Excavator and facility operator duties before excavation

b. Fort Lewis (FL) Reg 200-1 (Environmental Protection and Enhancement)

c. Army Regulation (AR) 200-1 (Environmental Protection and Enhancement)

d. AR 420-1 (Army Facilities Management)

e. FL Reg 350-30 (Joint Base Lewis-McChord Range Regulations)

2. Purpose: Establish local policies and procedures regulating and requiring the use of digging permits on Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM).

3. Applicability: This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) applies to all organizations and activities operating on JBLM, to include Joint Base Command directorates and offices; Active Duty, Reserve and National Guard Component commands and units; civilian agencies; and other tenant organizations. This includes the 62nd Airlift Wing and other Air Force elements on McChord Field under their identity as the Joint Base "Supported Component". This SOP also applies to activities in JBLM family housing areas.

4. General: Every excavation on the installation has impacts on safety, environment and operations. The primary purpose of this SOP is to establish a uniform set of rules for digging permits. A utility strike affects life, health, safety, security and preparedness. The digging permitting process is the only authorized method for assessing risks. Failure to comply with the requirements of this SOP will invoke an immediate "stop work" order until compliance is verified.

a. Several agencies on JBLM approve a digging permit application. No excavation starts without an approved digging permit, with an emergency permit as the exception described in Paragraph 6g. For projects with a government employee who is a Program Manager (PM), the PM will issue the completed permit to the contractor.

5. Digging is any intrusion into the surface of the earth. This includes but is not limited to the placement of tent pins, excavation of utility lines, excavation for antennas, utilities and buildings. Hand digging, no more than 12 inches into the ground using hand tools, and vacuum excavation, as needed to locate utilities, is allowed without a permit. Unpermitted hand excavation shall stop if utility lines are uncovered.

a. Within the cantonment areas, driving stakes, pins or rods is not considered hand digging and requires a digging permit.

b. Within the training areas, a digging permit is required for any intrusion into

the surface of the earth on any fixed training facility and along any road out to 50 feet from the road edge. Units conducting field training exercises (CPX, STX), bivouac, or any field training in a training area will need to submit a digging permit only for digging operations (i.e. FOB/COP construction, defensive obstacles). Units erecting tents or emplacing grounding rods in the training area are not required to submit a digging permit for areas more than 50 feet from the edge of the road.

c. Digging is prohibited within all impact areas, Seibert staked areas, and environmentally sensitive areas

d. Soldiers are allowed to perform the following ground disturbing activities in a training area under the following conditions without prior approval:

(1) Dig a fighting position with the following constraints:

(a) Only using hand tools.

(b) Down to 18 inches.

(c) Not in a digging-prohibited area.

(2) Place tent stakes

(3) Place grounding rods

(4) Install pickets supporting defensive obstacles

(5) Install aiming poles supporting direct or indirect fire systems

(6) Complete set of four (4) 10-digit grids forming a bounding box around hasty fighting positions locations sent to Range Operations/Integrated Training Area Management (ITAM) for training area clearance so that Range Control can verify Soldiers properly backfilled fighting positions.

e. Digging permits are not required for the following activities: (It is still required to contact the 811 Underground Utility Locator Center (at 1-800-424-5555) for a utility locate. Locates can also be requested on the Dig Safe WA website: <https://wa.itic.occinc.com/>).

(1) The replacement of residential fencing in the same alignment as prior fencing in the same post-hole locations in military housing areas.

(2) Maintenance work on existing features such as roads, fire lanes, fences, mowed areas, active disposal areas, manmade ditches, and ponds when no new ground disturbance/excavation is proposed.

(3) Replacement of existing landscape and plant materials within the

cantonment area with native and/or regional landscapes to conserve JBLM natural resources, provided such design meets previously approved landscape design guidelines.

(4) Paving, repair, and in-kind replacement of existing streets, driveways, sidewalks, and curbing.

(5) Repair and replacement of existing water, sewer, natural gas, and communications lines in their present configuration and alignments and at the same depth and extent as previous disturbance.

(6) Installation of replacement building and traffic signs.

(7) The following Range Maintenance activities include:

(a) Signage and flagpole emplacement.

(b) Firing line, target pit and lane marker maintenance.

(c) Berm maintenance on ranges not located in environmentally sensitive areas.

(d) Mortar point and firing point monument markers.

(e) Training objective maintenance, not to include new construction.

6. The following requirements apply to every digging permit requested:

a. The 811 Underground Utility Locator Center (<https://wa.itic.occinc.com/> or 1-800-424-5555) must be contacted before applying for a JBLM digging permit. The ticket number provided by the 811 program is required before a digging permit request may be submitted.

b. Digging permit requests will be submitted via the Digital Dig Request form: <https://pwdev.lewis-mcchord.army.mil/DigPermitsWeb/Default>. Email and paper requests will not be processed. All requests must be submitted through the Digital Dig Request form.

c. Digging permit requests must include a map of the proposed excavation. Permit requests without a map will not be processed. Proposed digging locations must be identified in either 10-digit Military Grid Reference System (MGRS) grid coordinates or Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM). Common Access Card (CAC) holders will generate maps using the JBLM Geo Portal: <https://aigp-homeland.obs.army.mil/portal/home/index.html>. Non-CAC holders can directly contact the DPW GIS staff to generate required maps at: [usarmy.jblm.id-readiness.list.dpw-geospatial-requests2@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.jblm.id-readiness.list.dpw-geospatial-requests2@army.mil). To expedite map requests, provide the following information:

(1) Requestors contact information, including unit if military

(2) Action supported by the digging event (i.e., military training, maintenance, etc)

(3) Location

(4) Project Title

(5) Contract number and Task order, if applicable

(6) DPW Individual Job Order (IJO) number(s) or Work Order number(s), if applicable

(7) DPW Package number (DPW Projects), if applicable

(8) United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Package number (USACE Projects), if applicable

(9) Military Construction – Army (MCA) projects – Project Number (PN), if applicable

(10) If government contracts other than DPW or USACE, agency proponent information

d. The excavator is responsible for outlining the anticipated excavation area with white markings prior to creating a digging permit request. Government utility locators will locate up to 15 feet beyond the area of excavation indicated by white marks supplied by the digging requestor in the field. The box drawn by the requestor in the digging permit shows the general location but is not the official digging location.

e. JBLM approvers have 10 business days to approve each permit. Digging is not authorized until after the permit has been issued.

f. Any disapproval stops the permit process and requires resubmission.

g. An emergency permit is available only to DPW Operations and Maintenance Division (O&M), DPW Environmental Division (ENV) and Network Enterprise Center (NEC), Puget Sound Energy (PSE), American Water, and City Light & Power (CLP). An emergency is defined as a break in utility service to facilitate on the installation where immediate excavation is required to mitigate a spill response or effect repairs. Supervisors of these organizations have unilateral approval authority for after-hours excavations. Permit application and approval is allowed to be retroactive. Verbal approvals shall be noted in documentation (date/time/authorizer's name).

h. The completed permit is emailed to the requestor by the government project manager, or automatically if no government project manager is assigned. Digging permits are considered issued when all approvals are acquired, and the signed permit is sent to the submitter via email.

i. Digging permits are valid to start excavation for 30 calendar days from the date issued. The digging permit remains valid until the work is completed or until work ceases on the site for 14 consecutive calendar days, whichever occurs first. If additional work needs to be done in an area where the permit has expired, or the earlier work has been completed then another permit shall be requested.

j. The approved permit shall be carried by the contractor or unit at the site and shall be presented when requested to any government representative. Failure to provide an approved digging permit is a life, health, safety violation and requires the excavator to immediately cease any digging until the contractor or unit can demonstrate approval for the excavation.

k. The requestor or excavator is responsible for protecting any markings made in the area by utilities specialists to indicate the location of underground utilities. Utility markings will be replaced by the utility owner after a new digging permit request has been made by the contractor or unit. The requestor shall permit no new ground disturbance until the new digging permit is issued.

l. If the proposed work lines are within five (5) feet of utility markings, then the excavator is expected to hand dig or vacuum excavate to verify depth and position of the indicated utilities. Failure to locate the utilities within five (5) feet either side of where they are indicated shall halt further excavation until the area is cleared by the owner of the utility.

m. The requestor is liable for repairs to underground utilities damage by their work regardless of the condition or accuracy of above ground markings.

7. The digging permit process is not a project approval process. A digging permit shall not be requested unless the project has been approved by the appropriate authority. Housing residents must coordinate with Liberty Military Housing (LMH). Soldiers will coordinate with their chain of command. Any questions on contracted excavations shall be coordinated through the project manager and Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) before applying for a digging permit. For contracted work, the government contract number shall be provided.

8. Dig permit process questions can be directed to [usarmy.jblm.id-readiness.list.dig-permits@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.jblm.id-readiness.list.dig-permits@army.mil).