

SOP – Fiber Infrastructure Damage & Incident Reporting

Department: Fiber Department **Applies To:** Fiber Department, all City departments/employees, contractors, and other parties involved in City fiber infrastructure incidents

Effective Date	_____	SOP No.	FIBER-001
Responsible Department	Fiber Department	Version	Revised

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to establish a consistent process for reporting, documenting, investigating, communicating, and resolving incidents involving damage to City of Pharr fiber infrastructure.

This procedure is intended to:

- Ensure fiber damage is reported immediately.
- Prevent delays in communication with affected residents or businesses.
- Establish clear responsibility for incident follow-up.
- Ensure claims are properly documented and routed.
- Minimize service interruptions.
- Improve communication between the Fiber Department and other City departments.
- Create a consistent record for Fiber, Risk Management, Finance, Legal, and departmental leadership when necessary.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to any incident involving actual or suspected damage to City fiber infrastructure, including damage caused by:

- City employees or City vehicles/equipment.
- City contractors or third-party contractors.
- Utility, excavation, moving, construction, or other operational activities.
- Residents/property owners.
- Accidental, unknown, or natural causes.

Examples include:

- Fiber lines being cut or damaged.
- Fiber conduit being damaged.
- Fiber cabinets or equipment being struck.
- Damage caused by mowing, excavation, construction, or heavy equipment.
- Damage to a resident's or business's property associated with City fiber work.
- Service interruptions resulting from physical damage.

3. Guiding Principle

If there is damage, there must be communication.

No employee or department should assume that someone else has reported the incident. The employee who becomes aware of the damage must immediately notify their supervisor and the Fiber Department.

The Fiber Department is responsible for coordinating the technical response and ensuring the incident is documented and routed to the appropriate City department(s).

4. Immediate Incident Reporting

When damage is discovered, the employee or department responsible for the activity, or the employee who becomes aware of the damage, must immediately:

- Stop work if continuing the activity could cause additional damage.
- Ensure the area is safe.
- Notify their immediate supervisor.
- Notify the Fiber Department through the designated reporting channel.
- Provide the location of the incident.
- Provide a brief description of what occurred.
- Provide photographs/video when available.
- Identify the City employee, vehicle, equipment, or contractor involved.

Damage must be reported even when it appears minor. Minor damage can result in service interruptions, repair costs, or resident claims.

5. Designated Reporting & Documentation

To eliminate uncertainty about where incidents are reported, the Fiber Department will maintain and publish a designated reporting method before this SOP becomes effective.

- **Fiber Damage Incident Report:** A standardized incident report should be used for all known or suspected fiber damage. The final form will be identified in the SOP implementation materials.
- **Designated Email/Reporting Channel:** The Fiber Department will identify the official email address or electronic reporting channel and include it in the final employee-facing version of this SOP.
- **Incident Log Owner:** The Fiber Department Supervisor/Manager, or formally designated Fiber staff member, is responsible for ensuring the incident is entered into the centralized Fiber Damage & Incident Log.
- **After-Hours Reporting:** The Fiber Department will establish and publish an after-hours reporting contact/process for incidents requiring immediate attention.

Until the designated electronic reporting process is published, employees must notify their supervisor and the Fiber Department directly and must not delay reporting while waiting for a form.

6. Fiber Department Responsibilities

A. Technical Assessment

The Fiber Department will determine:

- Type of infrastructure damaged.
- Location and severity of damage.
- Number of customers potentially affected.
- Whether emergency repair is required.
- Whether additional City departments need to be involved.

B. Documentation

The Fiber Department will document, when applicable:

- Date and time.
- Exact location.
- Description of damage.
- Photos/videos with time stamp, when available.

- Equipment involved.
- Employee or contractor involved.
- Work being performed at the time.
- Estimated repair requirements.
- Service interruption.
- Customers affected.

7. Why the Communication Chain Matters

The purpose of the communication process is to ensure that residents and businesses receive timely information and do not have to contact multiple City departments to determine what happened or where to direct a claim.

A resident or business should have a clear path from initial report through technical review, claim handling, and closure.

Standard Communication Flow: Employee/Contractor → Supervisor → Fiber Department → Appropriate Department(s)/Risk Management → Resident/Customer

Once a resident reports damage related to City fiber operations, the receiving employee or department must ensure the report is immediately routed to the appropriate department and documented. The receiving employee is not responsible for determining final liability.

8. Resident/Customer Claims

If a resident or business reports property damage allegedly caused by City fiber operations, the employee receiving the complaint will:

- Obtain the resident's name and contact information.
- Obtain the property address.
- Obtain the date/time of the alleged damage, if known.
- Document the description of the damage.
- Document any available photos or other supporting information.
- Forward the information to the Fiber Department and Risk Management through the designated process.
- Provide the resident with the appropriate City contact information/process for submitting a formal claim, when applicable.

Employees should NOT:

- Promise that the City will pay for the damage.
- Admit liability on behalf of the City.
- Tell the resident that the City is responsible before an investigation is completed.
- Tell the resident that 'someone else will take care of it' without actually forwarding the information.
- Discard or fail to document information received from the resident.

9. Internal Claims / Incident Notification

When an incident may result in a claim against the City, Fiber Management will review the incident and determine whether Risk Management must be notified. This determination should not be left to the individual employee who initially reports the damage.

IMPORTANT ? RISK MANAGEMENT NOTIFICATION: Risk Management must be notified of every reported fiber damage incident, including incidents that appear minor or have no known resident claim. The Fiber Department is responsible for ensuring the notification occurs and is documented in the Fiber Damage & Incident Log. Notification does not mean the City has accepted liability; it ensures appropriate review and documentation.

- **Damage Information:** Infrastructure damaged, resident/business property damaged, estimated service impact, photographs, and repair information.
- **Customer Information:** Name, contact information, property address, description of complaint, and date complaint was received.

10. Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Primary Responsibility
Employee / Contractor	Immediately report known or suspected damage; stop work if needed for safety; provide factual information and available photos.
Supervisor	Ensure the incident is reported, work is made safe, and the involved department follows through with required documentation.
Fiber Department / Fiber Management	Lead the technical review; assess infrastructure/service impact; maintain the incident log; coordinate repairs; route the incident to appropriate departments.
Involved Department	Review the employee/equipment activity involved in the incident and address operational or procedural issues within the department.
Risk Management	Evaluate potential claims, coordinate claim documentation, and preserve appropriate claim records.
Human Resources	Advise on employee-related corrective or disciplinary action when an incident involves employee conduct, training, or accountability concerns.
City Attorney's Office / Legal	Provide legal guidance when requested or when circumstances warrant legal review.

Important: If the Fiber Department caused or contributed to an incident, Fiber Management still leads the technical review, while the involved department/management structure handles employee or operational review as appropriate. Risk Management, HR, and Legal retain their respective responsibilities described above.

11. Emergency Fiber Damage

For major fiber damage resulting in significant service interruption or affecting critical City operations, the Fiber Department will immediately notify:

- Fiber Department Supervisor/Manager.
- Fiber Director/Department Director.
- Appropriate affected departments.
- Risk Management, when applicable.
- City leadership, based on severity.

Examples of critical incidents include:

- Large-scale service interruption.
- Damage affecting multiple neighborhoods.
- Damage affecting emergency services.
- Damage affecting critical City facilities.
- Significant damage caused by City equipment.

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- The involved department reviews the employee, equipment, work activity, and applicable procedures.
- Risk Management evaluates potential claims and preserves claim documentation.
- HR advises on employee-related corrective or disciplinary action when appropriate.
- Legal provides guidance when necessary.

The review should consider:

- What occurred and who was involved.
- What work was being performed.
- Whether proper procedures were followed.
- Whether underground utility/fiber markings were present.
- Whether the employee had received applicable training.
- Whether appropriate equipment was being used.
- Whether additional preventive measures are necessary.

The purpose of the investigation is to identify the cause and prevent recurrence, not to assign responsibility prematurely.

13. Corrective Action

When an incident identifies a communication, training, procedural, or operational gap, the appropriate department, in coordination with Fiber Management as applicable, will determine whether corrective action is necessary.

- Employee training.
- Fiber awareness training.
- Updated work procedures.
- Additional signage.
- Improved utility marking procedures.
- Supervisor notification requirements.
- Equipment changes.
- Improved documentation.
- Department-to-department communication protocols.

Employee accountability or disciplinary action will be handled separately in accordance with City policies and applicable procedures. HR may advise on employee-related corrective or disciplinary action.

14. Incident Tracking Log

The Fiber Department will maintain a centralized Fiber Damage & Incident Log. The log should include:

- Incident # – unique tracking number
- Date / Time
- Location
- Department involved
- Employee / Contractor
- Cause / contributing factors
- Fiber Damage – Yes/No
- Customer Impact – Yes/No
- Service Interruption – Yes/No

- Resident Claim – Yes/No
- Risk Management Notified – date/time
- Repair Required – Yes/No
- Repair Completed – date
- Follow-Up Completed – Yes/No
- Corrective Action, if applicable
- Status – Open / Under Review / Closed

15. Communication Standards

Immediate: Damage is reported to the supervisor and Fiber Department.

Same Business Day: Incident information is entered into the Fiber Incident Log and routed to the appropriate department(s).

Within 1 Business Day: If a resident/customer is affected, the appropriate department confirms that the complaint/claim has been received and routed.

Until Resolution: The responsible department maintains ownership of the follow-up until the incident is properly transferred or closed.

No incident should be considered closed simply because the fiber has been repaired. The communication, customer, claim, documentation, and corrective-action components must also be addressed.

16. Incident Closure

An incident may be closed when all applicable items have been addressed:

- ■ Damage has been assessed.
- ■ Repairs have been completed or appropriately transferred.
- ■ Service has been restored, if applicable.
- ■ Resident/customer complaint has been documented.
- ■ Risk Management has been notified when applicable.
- ■ Required documentation has been completed.
- ■ Corrective action has been identified, if necessary.
- ■ Appropriate department leadership has been notified.
- ■ Incident Log has been updated.

17. Accountability

All City departments and employees are expected to promptly report known or suspected damage to City fiber infrastructure.

Failure to report damage or failure to communicate information regarding a known incident may result in unnecessary service interruptions, increased costs, delayed claims processing, and avoidable customer dissatisfaction.

The objective of this SOP is to create accountability without creating confusion about departmental roles.

18. Implementation Items Before Effective Date

IMPORTANT ? RISK MANAGEMENT NOTIFICATION: Risk Management must be notified of every reported fiber damage incident, including incidents that appear minor or have no known resident claim. The Fiber Department is responsible for ensuring the notification occurs and is documented in the Fiber Damage & Incident Log. Notification does not mean the City has accepted liability; it ensures appropriate review and documentation.

- Final routing/contact list for Fiber, Risk Management, HR, Legal, and other affected departments.

These implementation items are intentionally identified as required setup items because the reviewed draft did not specify existing forms, email addresses, electronic workflows, after-hours contacts, or a named log-entry owner.