

# Specifications and Installation Requirements for Underground Service for Residential Developments

December 12, 2005

# NOVEC Requirements for Underground Residential Developments

# 1. Scope

This specification details NOVEC's requirements for Underground Residential Developments. Underground conduit installations shall be governed by this specification and any supplemental NOVEC specifications.

## 2. General

This specification describes excavation and backfill of trenches and the installation of conduit, sweeps, couplings, adapters, end bells, solvent cement (glue), pull string, pull boxes, manholes, ring risers, manhole frames and lids, transformer pads, box pads, secondary pedestals, handholes, meter risers, ground rods, ground rod connectors, bare copper ground wire, conduit plugs, warning tape, and stub markers.

## **Construction Requirements**

### 3. Trench

Easement boundaries, street, lot, and trench lines shall be staked before any trenching is started. Construction plans specifying trench locations and depths shall be followed at all times. **NOVEC approval shall be required for any changes to construction plans**. Trench excavation shall include the excavation of any and all obstacles encountered, the removal and disposal of all debris including submerged and buried timber and piling, and all pumping that may be necessary for draining the excavation.

- a. Trench location shall be in as direct a line as possible from the distribution facility to the customer service entrance.
- b. The bed shall have a uniform pitch and the trench bottom shall be solid and relatively smooth, or undisturbed earth, well tamped, and free of any debris that may be detrimental to the conduit. Excavation shall be of a size and extent to permit proper installation of conduit and structures, as required.
- c. Minimum burial depths specified for all electric conduit shall be maintained during all phases of construction.
- d. The minimum burial depth shall be thirty (30) inches, measured vertically from the final grade to the top of the conduit for all conduit. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawings *ID-CI*. When conduit is located under roadways, cover shall be a minimum thirty-six (36) inches as required by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Depth shall be measured from the top of the conduit to the top of the road surface. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawing *ID-RC1*.
- e. Sweeps in the conduit run shall be installed only by design. All changes require written NOVEC approval.

- f. Adherence to OSHA, VOSHA and/or any local, state and national codes or ordinances shall be maintained at all times.
- g. All areas disturbed by construction shall be restored to a condition equal to or better than that which existed before construction. Special care shall be taken to prevent damage to existing buried structures and facilities.

# 4. Joint Trenches

Whenever practical, NOVEC will allow gas, telephone, cable television, and/or any other wire service facilities in a joint trench with NOVEC facilities sized to accommodate all facilities. A joint use agreement is required between all utilities for a joint use trench. The joint trench shall be excavated and backfilled to NOVEC's and other joint trench occupants' specifications. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawings *ID-JUT1*. Customerowned fuel lines, including natural gas, oil and propane lines are not permitted in the joint trench. Water, sewer, sanitary, or storm drain and other wet utility piping are not permitted in the joint trench. Non-NOVEC facilities shall **not** be installed underneath of any NOVEC equipment pads or pull boxes.

# 5. Bedding

Three (3) inches of bedding is required in the bottom of all trenches. Bedding is defined as dirt, sand or stone dust. Soil containing occasional rounded rocks ½" diameter or less is acceptable. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawings *ID-CI*.

# 6. Conduit

Depths to the top of conduit to final grade shall be a minimum thirty (30) inches. In the event proper depth of conduit cannot be achieved, or where foreign objects threaten to interfere with the installation of conduit, a Concrete Protective Cover of the conduit may be used. Written approval is required for the use of Concrete Protective Cover. For additional information on this subject, refer to the Concrete Protective Cover section of this document. When conduit is located under roadways, cover shall be a minimum thirty-six (36) inches as required by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Depth shall be measured from the top of the conduit to the top of the road surface. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawing *ID-RC1*. Unique conditions will be addressed in the NOVEC construction plan.

- a. The number and size of conduit for each application shall be installed as shown in the construction plan.
- b. All conduits shall be gray, electrical grade, rigid, Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) Schedule 40, heavy wall, sunlight resistant that conforms to NEMA TC2 Specifications and shall be permanently marked at regular intervals with the manufacturer's name or symbol, size, "SCH 40" and "PVC".

- c. All conduits shall be carefully aligned and laid to a uniform grade.
- d. No conduit shall be laid which is cracked, damaged, or contains any roughness which would injure the cable jacket.
- e. All joints shall be made with solvent cement in accordance with NOVEC specifications.
- f. Minimum radial separation between electrical conduit and gas facilities shall be twelve (12) inches.
- g. Conduit shall enter pull boxes, box pads and pedestals as shown on NOVEC Installation Drawings *ID-PBL*, *ID-PBS*, *ID-PSB*, *ID-PSB1* and *ID-PEB*.
- h. Conduits shall be terminated in pull boxes and manholes with end bells.
- i. A polyolefin pull string, including five (5) feet of slack shall be installed in each conduit and secured to conduit plugs at each end. Pull tape shall be required in lieu of pull string in all pulls in excess of 250 feet

# 7. Cutting Conduit

A fine-tooth saw should be used to cut conduit. The conduit must be cut straight and cleaned of burrs.

# 8. Solvent Cement Welding

- a. Clear or gray regular bodied PVC cement may be used on conduit four (4) inches and smaller in diameter. Clear or gray medium bodied or all weather PVC cement shall be used on conduit six (6) and eight (8) inches in diameter.
- b. The chemicals used in solvent welding of conduit are intended to penetrate the surface of both the conduit and the fitting, which after curing result in a complete fusion at the joint. The over-use or under-use of such chemicals shall be avoided as such use will result in leaky joints or a weakened conduit system.
- c. Inspect solvent cement container for date. Cement over 12 months old <u>shall not</u> <u>be used</u>.
- d. Surfaces to be cemented shall be cleaned by wiping off all dust, dirt and moisture from these surfaces.
- e. With a non-synthetic bristle brush or dauber, apply an even coating of cement to the outside of the conduit and the inside of the socket. Make sure that the cement is applied to the entire depth of the socket. If some evaporation of solvent from the surfaces to be joined is noted, reapply cement, before assembling.
- f. It must be emphasized that most joint failures are caused by dry joints where an insufficient coating of solvent cement is applied, or when solvent has evaporated due to high temperature conditions.
- g. Workfast!!
- h. In cold weather (below 40°F), use a primer to soften the joining surfaces before applying cement and allow a longer cure time. All weather or quick set cement may be used in lieu of primer when temperatures drop below 40°F.

- i. Slip conduit straight into the fitting with a slight twist until it bottoms. Hold the joint for 15 seconds (one minute in extreme cold weather) so that the conduit does not push out of the fitting. Do not twist or drive pipe after insertion is complete.
- j. Newly assembled joints should be handled carefully until the cement has cured the recommended set period. Set periods are related to the ambient temperature as follows:

60ºF	to	100ºF	1/2	hour minimum
40⁰F	to	60°F	1	hour minimum
20⁰F	to	40°F	2	hour minimum
0⁰F	to	20ºF	4	hour minimum

- k. Clean off any bead or excess cement that appears at the outer shoulder of the fitting. Excess cement allowed to remain in contact with the material can cause weakening of the material and subsequent failure.
- Solvent cans should be kept covered and away from excess heat and flames when not in use. Quart cans are generally the largest practical size to use since the solvent dries rapidly. Use only solvent cement as furnished or recommended by the conduit manufacturer. Solvent cement thinner shall **not** be used for thinning cement which has thickened.
- m. Minimum trench widths may be utilized by assembling conduit above ground (allowing for weld cure period) and lowering the preassembled conduit bank into the trench.

# 9. Handling

To minimize accidental mechanical damage, conduit should not be left exposed in an open trench longer than is absolutely necessary. In transporting long lengths of conduit, provision should be made to support the full length to avoid damage due to excessive overhang.

# 10. Cover

A minimum of three (3) inches of cover, measured to the top of the conduit, is required to cover all conduits. Cover is defined as dirt, sand or stone dust. Soil containing occasional rounded rocks  $\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter or less is acceptable. The material should fill the voids around the conduit.

NOVEC red "warning" tape shall be installed in the entire length of the trench directly over the conduit on top of the cover.

# 11. Backfill

- a. Spoils from the trench may be used as long as it is free of debris or other material that may damage the conduit system or cause settling.
- b. Backfill shall not contain ashes, cinders, shale, frozen material, loose debris, vegetation, or rocks larger than six (6) inches in any dimension.
- c. Trenches should be immediately backfilled following conduit system inspection and approval by NOVEC.
- d. Backfilling shall be accomplished in a continuous manner from one structure to the next, and shall not be placed over any open-ended (unplugged) conduits.
- e. All Backfill shall be mechanically compacted to the density of the surrounding undisturbed soil by means available to prevent settling. Mechanical compaction shall not be within twelve (12) inches of conduit.

## 12. Inspection

The conduit system shall be inspected at various stages of installation. Materials or workmanship failing to meet NOVEC standards will be rejected. No work shall be covered, backfilled, concealed or embedded in concrete until it has been inspected and approved by NOVEC. Materials delivered to the job site shall be inspected and damaged or imperfect materials shall not be used.

The inspection shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- a. All trenches and excavations.
- b. All material.
- c. All bedding, cover, and backfill material during or after installation as applicable.
- d. All equipment pads, pull boxes, ground rods and other facilities, after setting in place, but prior to backfilling.
- e. All conduit installations, including cemented joints, sweeps, bell-ends, pull tape and conduit plugs, prior to backfilling.
- f. All conduit terminations at transformer structures, pull boxes, switch locations, riser poles and other applicable locations.
- g. All backfilling operations around structures and conduit runs.
- h. Conduits shall be free of any obstructions and debris. Under no circumstances shall antifreeze or other chemicals be put into conduit.

# Failure to obtain NOVEC approval of the installation before backfilling will require all or part of the conduit system to be exposed for inspection and approval.

### 13. Pads, Pull Boxes, Box Pads, Pedestals and Handholes

- a. All transformer and enclosure pads, pull boxes, box pads, pedestals and handholes shall be **level** and installed in accordance with NOVEC Installation Drawings.
- b. Four inches of rock dust or suitable material shall be placed on top of the final grade underneath of the transformer and single phase enclosure pads. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawings *ID-PT1* and *ID-PE1*.
- c. A minimum of six (6) inches base course of # fifty-seven (57) gravel shall be placed under all pull boxes and shall be thoroughly compacted. Certain soil conditions may require removal below normal depth and subsequent additional clean fill or gravel added and compacted to insure sound base course. Installation shall be complete prior to commencing any cable pulling. Pull boxes shall be installed such that their covers will be three (3) inches above final grade. In no case shall final grade cover or hamper access to the pull box covers. Pull boxes shall only be placed within NOVEC easements. Covers shall be closed on pull boxes at all times except when cable is being pulled. Pull boxes are **not** traffic rated and shall not be driven across. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawings *ID-PBL* and *ID-PBS*.
- d. A minimum of six (6) inches of base course of # fifty-seven (57) gravel shall be placed under all box pads. Refer to Installation Drawings *ID-PEB*, *ID-PSB* and *ID-PSB1*.
- e. Pedestals shall be installed in accordance with details shown in NOVEC Installation Drawing *ID-PD1*.
- f. Handholes shall be installed in accordance with details shown in NOVEC Installation Drawing *ID-HH1*. Handholes are **not** traffic rated and shall not be driven across.
- g. A retaining wall shall be installed where slopes exist that would undermine or cover equipment (i.e., transformers) due to sharp drop-off or rise of grade. Retaining wall design will require NOVEC approval and in no case shall the retaining wall hamper door openings or placement of such equipment.
- h. In no instance shall final grades impede proper access or operation of NOVEC distribution equipment.
- i. NOVEC approved protective guards, such as concrete-filled pipe, shall be required in areas where the facilities are subject to damage.
- j. All pad openings should be covered during the construction process except when work is being performed.

# 14. Manholes

NOVEC approved manholes are required in streets or when pull boxes cannot be utilized. Manholes shall be 10' x 13' x 8' concrete and shall have solid lids and frames. Manholes shall have a minimum of thirty (30) inches of compacted cover. Ring risers shall be installed as necessary to adjust manhole frame to final asphalt grade. Conduit shall be terminated in manholes with PVC end bells flush with the inside surface of the

structure wall. All knock-outs shall be grouted around after conduit installation to seal manhole. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawing *ID-MH1*.

# 15. Ground Rods

- a. An approved <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" X 8' copperciad ground rod and ground rod connector shall be installed in the opening of each transformer and single phase enclosure pad. The ground rod shall be level with the top of the pad. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawings *ID-PT1* and *ID-PE1*.
- b. An approved ¾" X 8' copperclad ground rod, ground rod connector and #4 bare soft drawn solid copper ground wire shall be installed in each box pad. Four (4) inches of the ground rod shall extend above the soil inside of the box pad. Six (6) feet of wire shall be securely connected to the ground rod and coiled inside of the box pad. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawings *ID-PSB*, *ID-PSB1* and *ID-PEB*.
- c. The large 4'x8' pull boxes shall have an approved <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" X 8' copperciad ground rod and ground rod connector installed. Four (4) inches of ground rod shall extend through drain slot into pull box. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawing *ID-PBL*.
- d. Two (2) approved <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" X 8' coppercial ground rods and ground rod connectors shall be installed in each manhole. Both ends of the manhole shall have a separate driven ground rod. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawing *ID-MH1*.
- e. Ground rods are not required in small 4'x4' pull boxes, pedestals or handholes.

# **16. Concrete Protective Cover**

The concrete for conduit protective cover shall be 3,000 PSI with a maximum of <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" aggregate. Surfaces upon which concrete is to be placed shall be free of standing water, mud and debris. Absorptive surfaces against which concrete is to be placed shall be moistened. Concrete shall be placed to cover of at least six (6) inches on the top and both sides of the conduit. The fall of concrete should be broken before it drops on the conduit. Where concrete protection of conduit is used, six (6) inches of well dampened earth shall be placed over concrete protection in the trench 2 hours after the concrete is poured. Backfilling of the trench excavation may then be completed. Backfill should be placed uniformly in layers and each layer thoroughly compacted. Backfill should be compacted to the density of the surrounding undisturbed soil.

# 17. Sweeps, Couplings, End Bells and Adapters

All sweeps, couplings, end bells and adapters shall be PVC, Schedule 40, gray, electrical grade and conform to the same specifications as the conduit. The sweeps may be factory made or bent as required. The minimum radius for all sweeps three (3) inches and less in diameter is twenty (24) inches. The minimum radius for all four (4) inch and six (6) inch diameter sweeps is thirty-six (36) inches. The minimum radius for all eight (8) inch diameter sweeps is forty-eight (48) inches.

# 18. Pull String/Tape

A polyline (polyolefin pull line that won't rust, rot or mildew) pull string, including five (5) feet of slack shall be installed in each conduit and secured to the conduit plugs at each end. The pull string will be used to pull in a bull (pulling) rope that will be required for the actual cable pull. Pull tape shall be required in lieu of pull string in all pulls in excess of 250 feet.

#### 19. Pole Riser

Conduit riser locations (quadrant) on the pole shall be designated and shown on the sketch. All risers shall be plugged above ground at the base of the pole until cable is pulled. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawing *ID-RP1*.

#### 20. Meter Riser

All meter risers shall be slip fit to limit damage from settlement. Ditch must be tamped at meter base before backfilling. Sweep at bottom of meter riser shall be resting on compacted soil. Metal locknut and plastic bushing must be installed. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawing *ID-RM1*.

### 21. Streetlighting

Streetlights shall be installed and located where indicated on construction plans. Streetlight poles will be installed twenty-four (24) inches from handhole per NOVEC Installation Drawing *ID-HH1*.

### 22. Conduit Stubs

All conduits that are extended to a location where they are not terminated (even temporarily) shall be plugged and marked with a conduit stub marker. Refer to NOVEC Installation Drawing *ID-CS1-UC*. Conduit stubs for service laterals shall extend a minimum of five (5) feet into the lot away from the mainline trench, as shown on construction plan. This will allow for connection of the service conduit at a later date.

### 23. Other Utilities

Conduit, terminal enclosures or other structures belonging to other utilities shall be located so they do not interfere with electrical installations nor impede the operation or maintenance of electrical facilities.

# 24. As-Builts

An "as-built" of the facilities documenting the separation distance between NOVEC facilities and all gas and wet utility crossings is required.



- 3. ALL CONDUIT SHALL BE INSTALLED WITHIN NOVEC EASEMENTS.
- 4. NUMBER AND SIZE OF CONDUIT SHALL BE DETERMINED BY DISTRIBUTION ENGINEERING.



SIDEWALKS ROAD SURFACE					
36" MIN. 36" MIN. TOP OF CONDUIT	36" MIN.				
PULL STRING CURB AND GUTTER					
ROAD SURFACE ROAD SURFACE	ЩЩЩЩЩ 36" MIN.				
PULL STRING OPEN DITCH					
NOTES: 1. UNDER ROAD SURFACES THE COVER TO TOP OF CONDUIT SHALL BE A MINIMUM OF 36". OUTSIDE OF ROAD SURFACES THE COVER TO TOP OF CONDUIT SHALL BE A MINIMUM OF 36" TO FINISHED GRADE AND MUST ADHERE TO LOCAL, COUNTY AND/OR STATE ROAD CROSSING SPECIFICATIONS. 2. A MINIMUM RADIAL SEPARATION OF 12" IS REQUIRED BETWEEN NOVEC CONDUIT AND GAS FACILITIES.					
INSTALLATION DRAWING FO CROSSING ROADS WITH CURB AND GUTTER OR OPEN	OR I DITCH				
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ID-MH1









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