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When do I need to get a license from the railroad?

Any new installation on railroad property or right of way will need a license.

Maintenance of existing lines can be handled based on language in the existing agreement.

Additions or betterments to existing facilities may require amendments or new paper agreements

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Where do I go to get the license?

- Railroads website
- Most have electronic processes, and some are still paper-only
- You will need:
 - Design Plans, P.E. stamped preferred.
 - Include profiles of the infrastructure
 - If attaching to existing poles – existing agreement and permission from Pole owner

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Application Processing

Application Fee – Some railroads have an application fee

Typical Review Steps:

- Engineering Review
- Exhibit A preparation
- Signal Review (only in certain circumstances)
- Roadmaster or local review

Draft Agreement

- Send to the owner for execution

Railroad Executes

Standard processing time: 4 - 6 weeks

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Construction Scheduling

Once you have a good idea of when you will be on railroad property:

- Contact the railroad to schedule flagging – details in your agreement
- Construction Observation may be required – details in your agreement
- Utility and/or signal locates
- Contractors on site will need to complete Contractor Orientation and have sufficient PPE
- Proper insurance levels need to be current
- Installation location and specs in the permit must be followed to avoid delays

Typ. Spec. Requirements – Fiber Optic

Underground

- Must be within rigid (steel or HDPE Sch 80, SDR-11 or SDR-9) conduit across the right of way
- Depth below base of rail for Horizontal Directional Drill – 12'
- Depth below ditch – 6'
- Handholes on the right of way—Place as close to the right of way as possible; prefer off the right of way.

Overhead

- Height above top of rail: Min. 27' (NESC +3' for <750 volts)
- Existing poles—Overlash existing wires to maintain current clearance, or place them above lowest wireline if possible
- New poles on the right of way—Place near RW lines; prefer off right of way if possible.
- Xing angle should be near 90 degrees to track to minimize span length over tracks.
- Cannot be installed within 500 feet of any railroad bridge, or 300 feet from the centerline of any culvert or track switch area

Common Hurdles & Tips

- Go Underground -12'+
 - Railroad prefers underground wire at public crossings
 - avoids low wires, maintenance issues, signal issues, etc.
- Public Right of Way
 - Provide proof of public right of way (plat dedication, ordinance, etc.)
 - Distance to centerline should be less than half the width of the public right of way
- Revisions Delay Progress
- Application must agree with Plans
- Pole Attachments
 - Best to provide the existing agreement for the wireline
 - Need permission from the existing wireline owner
- Right of way width discrepancies

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Questions?

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