

Another Illinois Prevailing Wage Act Update: CCTV Inspection of Sewer Pipes Is Now Covered Work

Labor & Employment Law Update

By Jeffrey Risch on July 21, 2025

In handling thousands of disputes and controversies under Illinois's ever-expanding prevailing wage law for 25 years, there are no surprises anymore—particularly over these past several years where we have seen the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act (IPWA) expanded to include very specific non-construction related tasks as “public works”—and thus, covered work under the state's notorious prevailing wage law.

The primary “test balloon” that ushered in the expansion of covered works under the IPWA occurred in 2023, when the legislature amended the law's “public works” definition to include the removal, transportation, and disposal of human waste from a waste water treatment plant to private land. Since then, we have seen a steady expansion of the IPWA through the addition of specific non-construction tasks to the “public works” definition. For example, “power washing” was added in 2024. However, the latest change is a real head-turn!

Effective June 30, 2025, “public works” is expanded to specifically include:

- **Sewer inspection projects that use a closed-circuit television to identify issues in a sewer system, such as cracks in pipes, root intrusion, blockages, or other structural damage.**

What's interesting about the particular piece of legislation that created this latest expansion of covered work under the IPWA is that it faced a mountain of opposition, primarily from Illinois municipalities and villages with limited budgets that are facing a 30 to 50 percent increase in costs tied to inspections that help ensure underground sewer systems are in good shape.

In light of the heavy opposition that looked to kill the legislation from advancing, the Illinois Legislature stopped progressing the original Bill (HB1247) and at the last minute over Memorial Day weekend snuck the change into another piece of legislation titled “WORK COMP-TIMING REQUIRED.” And so... the opposition was not tuned in to the last-minute passage. In fact, the original bill appeared to the public to be dead.

BOTTOM LINE

For the first time, prevailing wage mandates under the IPWA specifically include workers who simply *inspect* a fixture/structure. While this inspection is clearly tied to the use of closed-circuit television technology for sewer inspections, other industries performing inspections of systems, infrastructure, machinery and equipment to try and identify potential problems for possible repair or replacement should be on their toes.

Another
Illinois
Prevailing
Wage Act
Update:
CCTV
Inspection
of Sewer
Pipes Is
Now
Covered
Work