



The Scoop



A Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 6—Spring 2014

Guidelines for Excavation Requests

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Photo courtesy of Pillari Brothers Construction, Farmingdale, New Jersey. Flagger Louis Flowers works out of Laborers Union Hall #199.

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Advantages of White Lining Your Proposed Job Site

Before you call in your next Miss Utility ticket, try spending the time to pre-mark your dig area in white paint. This Common Ground Alliance (CGA) Best Practice is one of the easiest tools you can use to increase the efficiency of the Miss Utility process. Excavators who take the time to "white line" their job sites create a win-win situation for both themselves and the locators marking their jobs. Even clear and accurate information relayed verbally or in writing to one person may not be clear to another. White paint on a job site eliminates the guesswork. Not only do the locators have a site location on paper, but they also have a clearly marked excavation area, thus avoiding any misinterpretation and allowing for more accurate locates.

Sometimes it can prove rather difficult for excavators to effectively communicate the exact locations of their dig sites to the Call Center. Marking your job in white paint can drastically decrease the amount of time it will take to explain the exact location of your dig site. Exact site information is not limited to the address. It also includes specific descriptions within the site address such as front, back, right, or left side (when facing the structure); directions (north, east) from a describable and non-moveable point of reference; and accurate distances from known points.

White lining makes the job easier to understand for locators, too. The locators are looking for specific information that lets them know where to mark. White lining around a proposed excavation area tells them where to spend time finding underground utilities once they arrive on site. Because the locator has a clear indication of the excavation area, less time is spent on areas where excavation will not occur. This gives the locator the time to accurately locate underground facilities that need protection during excavation—making your work site safer.



To make the most effective use of this technique, it is important to understand some standard rules and critical limitations governing white lining:

1. The extent-of-work text on the Miss Utility ticket trumps the white line because white lining could be changed.
2. If the ticket has extent-of-work text and the area is white lined, the white line serves only as an indication of a proposed work area or path. Follow the text.
3. Only white paint, flags, or stakes should be used for white lining. For example, white flags or white stakes could be more effective markers on active construction sites or at sites with dirt, sand, or mud.

White Lining, continued on page 3

President's Message



Dear Friends,

Our January Annual Membership Meeting, which the City of Dover graciously hosted at the Pitts Center, was the most attended in years. I presented the yearly wrap-up of Miss Utility of Delmarva activities, membership status, damage reports, budget details, and other pertinent information. All attendees enjoyed a delicious breakfast and received a Miss Utility of Delmarva folding bag chair.

We elected three board members from the general membership. Congratulations to Paul Elwood (Premier Locating), Solomon McCloskey (Eastern Shore Natural Gas), and Wendy Stack (W Locco, LLC). The board also elected officers to lead Miss Utility of Delmarva for the next two years.

One of our duties is to educate the public about safe digging practices and the Maryland and Delaware laws as they apply to underground utilities. We held monthly educational meetings throughout Delmarva and attended many trade fairs, conferences,

local community festivals, and other events to spread the "Safe and Lawful Excavation" message. It befuddles me that we still have damages because the digger never submitted a ticket (33 percent of damages) or because the excavator hit a marked line (56 percent of damages). Clearly we need to do better getting the word out and holding those perpetrators' feet to the fire.

We rolled out ITIC 2.0 (Internet ticket submission) and a mapping upgrade with great success. We thank those companies that hosted a training session and Dora Parks for her countless trips to the Eastern Shore to conduct the training. ITIC usage was at an all-time high in December at 75 percent of tickets submitted. Please try it if you have not yet logged on. It is easy and allows you to enter an ITIC ticket any time of the day.

Special thanks to all the companies that hosted a Miss Utility meeting last year. We hold our meetings at various locations to make it easier for everyone to attend at least some meetings. As you examine the composition of our organization, you will see our members are based throughout the Delmarva region and represent a cross section of utilities, locating companies, and excavation companies. Government agencies and concerned citizens also attend and provide their perspective.

Although we post the year's meetings on our web page, we sometimes have last-minute changes in venue, so be sure to check for updates prior to heading out.

In November, the board held a planning session to refocus and redirect our efforts on four strategic initiatives: Bylaws and Policy,

Law Change, Grant Monies, and Energizing Participation.

We have already started making some progress. We submitted the required forms to request a PHMSA grant that will allow us to expand our public awareness initiatives.

Every year we also recognize outstanding locators and excavators. Last year we hosted the Fifth Annual Locator Achievement Award Banquet. The sixth annual banquet will be held on April 24, again at Harrington Raceway & Casino Gold Room. We will acknowledge an outstanding excavator for the fourth straight year at the Greater Chesapeake Damage Prevention & Training Conference (GCDPTC) in October.

If you have never attended or have not sent employees to GCDPTC, you are missing an outstanding opportunity to stay up-to-date on damage prevention, locating techniques, and legal requirements and challenges, as well as a chance to network and talk with others in your field. This excellent conference also won't break your budget.

Finally, I hope everyone will participate in Safe Digging Month this April. This program is now observed nationwide, and we hope to get the Safe and Lawful Excavation message out to everyone.

I look forward to a safe and productive year and welcome your attendance and participation.

Sincerely,

Safety First

Traffic Control—Flagger Duties and Safe Operations

by Frank Dobson

Note: This article [from Part 6] addresses the most common traffic control device that most drivers encounter as we travel our nation's roadways: the flagger. A version of this article first ran in the March 2010 issue of The Scoop. It is reprised here due to the critical nature of traffic control safety.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration has issued the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), which covers Parts 1, 5, and 6 for streets and highways in the United States. The purpose of this manual is to provide guidance for safe traffic control during construction and maintenance operations on these streets and highways.

The flagger's duties are to protect the construction/maintenance workers and to provide safe, courteous, and authoritative directions to traffic seeking passage through the work area.

The flagger's uniform during daytime work is a vest, shirt, or jacket of fluorescent orange or a fluorescent yellow-green color as defined within the standard. For nighttime work, similar outside garments shall be made of retro-reflective materials in either orange, white, silver, or yellow-green, or a fluorescent version of these colors and shall be visible at a distance of 300 meters (1,000 feet).

Flaggers must be alert and on their feet at all times while on duty and face oncoming traffic. They must always stand in a highly visible location but never directly in the path of an approaching vehicle. Flaggers must stand either on the shoulder adjacent to the road user being controlled or in the closed

lane prior to stopping road users. Flaggers should stand alone and never in a group of workers. In certain instances, only one flagger is required (for example, during minor shoulder repair). In such instances, a single flagger should generally operate from the roadway shoulder, directly opposite the work zone and in a position highly visible to approaching traffic from either direction.

Source: ATSSA Flagging Handbook

Remember: You Only Need a Few Minutes More to Do the Job Safely—and Your Life Is Worth Every Minute.

Always Think Safety!

Frank Dobson is president of Dobson Associates Human Performance/Safety Consultants. Visit his Web site at www.dobsonassociates.com.

New USPCD Board Members

Meet Steven Keyser

Steven Keyser recently joined the Miss Utility board of directors as the representative for Chesapeake Utilities. "I'm looking forward to this service," he says, "because as a line locator, I believe I can offer a unique perspective on issues that come before the board."

Currently a supervisor with Chesapeake Utilities, Steven first learned about careers in the utility industry in 2005 when he saw an ad from Utiliquest offering to train people as line locators. Despite having no prior experience in the industry, Steven discovered he had an innate affinity for the work. "I love being a line locator, because it takes me outside all the time," he says, "and every day brings a new challenge."

After seven years with Utiliquest and a brief stint with Premier Locating, Steven accepted a position as a line locator with Chesapeake Utilities in 2012. In less than a year, he earned a promotion, and he now supervises seven other locators. Although he still does locating in the field, his primary responsibilities are training and overseeing the other locators, performing audits, handling special projects, and investigating utility damages.

As he begins his work with the board, Steven says he would like to see Miss Utility offer more education to homeowners on the importance of calling 811 before they dig. "They think they are just putting a small plant in the ground, only digging 4 or 5 inches—but that's all it takes sometimes to cause a problem."

A lifelong resident of Dover, Steven enjoys spending time with his children, especially when they go outdoors for activities such as cycling or ziplining. A self-described computer geek, he also enjoys the challenges of troubleshooting computer problems for his family and co-workers.



Photo by Cathy Johnson

Meet Wendy Stack

The owner of W Locco, LLC (Wendy's Locating Company), Wendy Stack recently accepted a position on the Miss Utility board of directors. "It was an honor to be asked to stand for election," she says.

As the driving force behind W Locco, which she founded in 2011, Wendy oversees all aspects of the operation, including safety, scheduling, contracts, and employee training and testing. She also headed Underground Locating Services (ULS) from 2003 to 2011.



Photo by Alton Stack

Wendy has a long history in the utility industry, a career she embarked on when she was living in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and struck up a friendship with a locator who eventually became her husband. After that, she left behind her work as an industrial supervisor and restaurant manager and switched her focus to utilities. Her first job was as an office dispatcher, but she quickly moved into management positions, which brought travel and education in many different states and companies. Before founding ULS, Wendy spent twelve years as a senior supervisor with Utiliquest where she oversaw eight supervisors and their day-to-day utility locating operations. She was also responsible for training, damages, and the office staff.

"Throughout my career," Wendy says, "safety comes first, and my main focus has always been on training." That passion for safety and training makes her commitment to Miss Utility a natural fit. She has been a faithful attendee at monthly meetings in Maryland and Delaware since joining Miss Utility in 1993, and she currently serves on the Public Awareness Committee for Delaware USPCD.

As she begins service on the board, she hopes to find ways to bring excavators and locators together. "Education is key—not just for excavation contractors," she says. "We need to reach out to locators and make them aware of all changes within the law that will affect their day-to-day involvement and dedication to protect lives and utilities. We forget about utility locators, and they're the responsible ones."

Wendy is married to Alton Stack. She enjoys being outside boating and fishing and spending quality time with her animals.

White Lining, continued from page 1

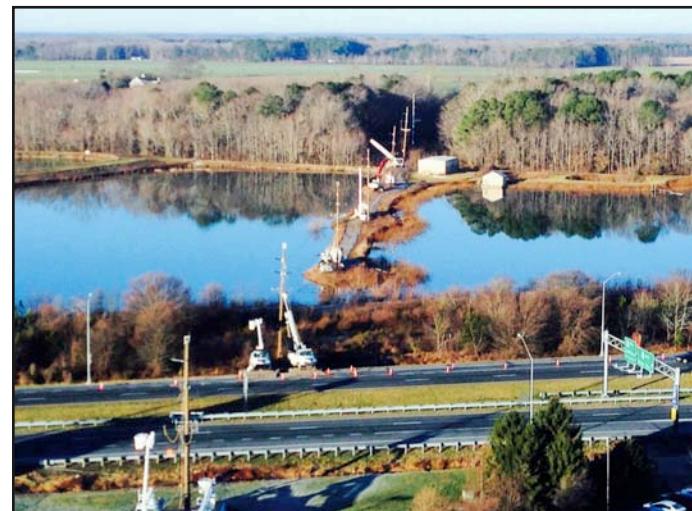
Maryland offers a good example of how this process works. In Maryland, the excavator MUST provide extent-of-work information, and the typed text trumps the white-lined area. However, the excavator should note in the Extent of Work that the site is white lined.

White lining a proposed excavation site is an integral piece in the successful completion of an excavation project. So before you call in that next ticket, spend a few minutes outlining in white the area where you plan to dig. This small planning step can reinforce the information provided on the ticket and help eliminate guesswork for the locators.

Where Are the Minutes?

You can always find the complete text of meeting minutes at www.missutilitydelmarva.com/Monthly-Meeting-Minutes/

Even better: Please come to the meetings to meet your colleagues, share ideas, and learn about our industry's best practices. Come see what you've been missing.



An ECU crew works on electric transmission poles in Berlin, Maryland.
Photo by Ken Hill, East Coast Underground

Calendar of Events

If you know of an event that would benefit Miss Utility members, please contact **Thomas Matich** at tmatich@milford-de.gov, and we will include it on our quarterly calendar of events schedule. Provide the dates, location, and any contact or registration information.

Miss Utility Meetings

Thursday, March 20

City of Wilmington
Turner Municipal Complex
500 Wilmington Avenue
Wilmington, DE 19801

Thursday, April 17

City of Milford
Carlisle Fire Company
615 NW Front Street
Milford, DE 19963

Thursday, May 15

Tidewater Utilities
1100 S. Little Creek Road
Dover, DE 19901

Thursday, June 19

Delmarva Power
Conference Center
4100 South Wakefield Drive
Newark, DE 19702

Other Events

Thursday, March 20

7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
Delmarva Safety Association
Health & Safety Conference
Wicomico Youth & Civic Center,
Salisbury, MD

Thursday, April 24

6 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
2013 Locator Awards Banquet
Gold Room, Harrington
Fairgrounds & Casino

	November	December	January
Reported Damages	34	34	25
Tickets	68,600	60,533	62,732
Percentage (damages/tickets)	0.050%	0.056%	0.040%

Are you reporting your damages? If not, why not? It is easy to do. Just go to our Web site and click report damages. Fill in the information, submit, and you are done. Even if you have no damages, please file a report. This helps improve our statistics.

Other Events, continued

Monday-Tuesday

June 9-10

MD Municipal League Expo
Powell Convention Center
4001 Coastal Highway
Ocean City, MD 21842

Saturday, June 14

10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Camden Safe Summer Days
Brecknock Park
100 Old Camden Road
Camden, DE

Ask Miss Utility

I recently noticed a utility vehicle with a bumper sticker that read "Call Miss Utility...It's the Law!" What "law" are they talking about, and who enforces this "law"?

This is a very good question. Every state has its own, specific "Miss Utility Law." In Delaware, the law is the Delaware Code, Title 26 Public Utilities, Chapter 8, Underground Utility Damage Prevention and Safety. This state law establishes a Call Center and designates the Utilities Service Protection Center of Delmarva, Inc. to provide the Miss Utility of Delmarva services as required by federal and state law. There are penalties outlined in this law, and the state enforcing agent is the Delaware Attorney General's Office.

The Maryland Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Authority (MDUFDPA) was established by the Maryland legislature as Senate Bill 911 of the law of the 2010 session, updating the Maryland Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Law, more commonly known as the "Miss Utility Law." The new law went into effect on October 1, 2010. The MDUFDPA is a stakeholder-run organization that has the ability to enforce the Miss Utility law in the form of mandatory training or fines for violators.

Do you have a question for Miss Utility?

*Send it to Thomas Matich at
tmatich@milford-de.gov.*

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Comments?

This is your newsletter. Do you like what you see? Do you have an idea for a topic that you think we should cover in upcoming issues? Please send your comments, questions, and suggestions to Thomas Matich at tmatich@milford-de.gov.



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.