

THE DAMAGE PREVENTION  
**JOURNAL**  
*Ohio's Safe Digging Resource*

2021 Issue 3

8 1 1 M A G A Z I N E S



This issue is dedicated to  
**Locating Gaps**





**Just One Reason to  
Know What's below**



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from the desk of

## Roger Lipscomb...



Improvise, adapt, overcome is an unofficial mantra of the United States Marine Corps. Although, simple, these words are also a powerful embodiment of Ohio's utility and excavation industry's efforts to safely maintain our network of critical underground utility infrastructure and continue moving projects and development forward during the unprecedented times we are living in.

Like many other organizations, today's ultra-competitive, resource-short labor market is creating challenges for OHIO811 and as such, attracting and retaining employees to process locate requests has become a struggle. Fortunately, our online locate request tools, i-dig, e-dig and ticket updater

are an easy, quick and resource-friendly alternative to communicating your non-emergency excavation requests 24/7/365.

To this end, we are working diligently to increase industry-wide utilization of these tools, especially i-dig, which was designed to serve the needs of the professional excavator. These efforts have been promising, as March, April and June rank among the highest months ever for excavation requests submitted via i-dig. Yet...still more is needed. We are urging those who are not currently utilizing this free resource to consider doing so. Not only will it allow you more control with managing your locate requests, it will support our ongoing efforts to maintain and continue improving the level of service that the industry has become accustomed to from OHIO811.

Additionally, I wanted to thank everyone who participated in the OHIO811 Annual Membership Meeting and accompanying networking events. This year's meeting was extremely well attended and once again it provided an opportunity for our membership and industry partners to network, share ideas and learn about OHIO811's damage prevention and public safety endeavors.

As we look forward to fall, evidence continues to suggest a very strong finish to this year's excavation season. Year to date, locate requests have surpassed the record-breaking volumes seen in 2020 and 2019. While extremely encouraging, this growth must be supported by our shared commitment to exploring new and different ideas that perpetuate the safety of all Ohioans and the integrity of our essential underground infrastructure.

As always, I would like to extend specially thanks to all of the advertisers, staff and partners who support and produce the Damage Prevention Journal. It is because of your continued dedication to safety that we are able to protect Ohio's citizens and underground infrastructure.

**Roger Lipscomb**  
President/Executive Director

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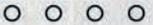
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## Ohio's Damage Prevention and Utility Coordinating Councils Meeting Schedule

### Northern Ohio Damage Prevention Council

When: First Wednesday of each month at 9:30 AM.  
Where: The Illuminating Company, 6896 Miller Rd., Brecksville, Ohio  
Contact: Vita Moore, Chairperson  
[vsmoore@firstenergycorp.com](mailto:vsmoore@firstenergycorp.com)

### Northwest Ohio Damage Prevention Council

When: Second Thursday of each month at 11:00 AM  
Where: Toledo Edison, 6099 Angola Rd., Holland, Ohio  
Contact: James M. Finucan III [jfinucan@nisource.com](mailto:jfinucan@nisource.com)

### Central Ohio Damage Prevention Council

When: Third Wednesday of each month at 9:00 AM  
Where: The Builders Exchange of Central Ohio  
1175 Dublin Rd. Columbus, Ohio @ the Builders Exchange  
Contact: Steve Buskirk, Chairperson  
[sbuskirk@franklincountyengineer.org](mailto:sbuskirk@franklincountyengineer.org)

### Miami Valley Utility Safety Council

When: Second Wednesday of each month at 9:00 AM  
Where: Montgomery County Water Services,  
1850 Spaulding Ave., Kettering, Ohio  
Contact: Jim Wooten, Chairman  
[jim.wooten@centerpointenergy.com](mailto:jim.wooten@centerpointenergy.com)

### Eastern Ohio Damage Prevention Council

When: Fourth Thursday of each month at 9:30 AM  
Where: OHIO811, 12467 Mahoning Avenue,  
North Jackson, OH 44451  
Contact: Kyle Peyton, Chairman, [kylepeyton@usicllc.com](mailto:kylepeyton@usicllc.com)

### Southwest Ohio Utility Safety Council

When: First Tuesday of each month at 1:00 PM  
Where: Symmes Township Facility, 8871 Weekly Ln,  
Cincinnati, OH  
Contact: Ray Courts, [rcourts@ksenergyservices.com](mailto:rcourts@ksenergyservices.com)

### Southeast Ohio Utility Coordinating Council

When: 2021 Meeting Dates: 2/2, 5/4, 8/3, 11/2 at 9:00 AM  
Where: Washington Electric Cooperative, 440 Highland  
Ridge Road, Marietta, Ohio  
Contact: Matt Hennis - [matth@oups.org](mailto:matth@oups.org)

### Richland County Utility Coordinating Council

When: 2021 Meeting Dates: 1/27, 4/28, 7/28, 10/27 at 9:00 AM  
Where: Columbia Gas, 1021 N. Main, Mansfield, Ohio  
Contact: Chuck Green - [chuckg@oups.org](mailto:chuckg@oups.org)

### Stark County Utility Coordinating Council

When: 2021 Meeting Dates: 3/2, 6/1, 9/7, 12/7 at 9:00 AM  
Where: Beaver Excavating, 2000 Beaver Place Ave. SW, Canton  
Contact: Matt Hennis - [matth@oups.org](mailto:matth@oups.org)

### Northwest Ohio Quad Utility Coordinating Council

When: 2021 Meeting Dates: 1/20, 4/21, 7/21, 10/21 at 9:00 AM  
Where: Bryan Municipal Building (2nd Floor – Mayor's  
Conference Room), 1399 East High St., Bryan, Ohio  
Contact: Jack Bennett, [jackb@oups.org](mailto:jackb@oups.org)

### Southern Ohio Utility Coordinating Council

When: 2021 Meeting Dates: 1/19, 4/20, 7/20, 10/19 at 11:00 AM  
Where: City of Jackson Fire Department, 166 Pearl St., Jackson  
Contact: Jason Broyles, [jasonb@oups.org](mailto:jasonb@oups.org)



## Announcement

OHIO811 and our partners remain committed to providing the highest level of Damage Prevention education and training opportunities. Ohio's Damage Prevention and Utility Coordinating Councils are currently conducting their monthly or quarterly meetings using either a fully virtual or hybrid model that provides for in-person attendance (social distancing, masking and other Covid-19 related requirements are strictly enforced) or participation through a video conferencing platform.

Please reach out to your OHIO811 Liaison for additional information and assistance or contact the listed DPC/UCC representative if you are interested in participating.

OHIO811's Liaisons remain available to meet with current and/or prospective members as well as to deliver Safety Talks either in-person (at your discretion and following all safety protocols) or via video conference. Please visit [www.OHIO811.org/liaisons/](http://www.OHIO811.org/liaisons/) more information about how our Liaisons can assist you or to schedule a free Safety Talk for your company.



# DIG

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# Remembering Charlie Lang

When reflecting on leadership it is often said that great leaders put the interests of others at the center of their decisions. Truer words could not have been written to describe Charlie Lang (1929-2021), who passed away earlier this year.

“I have nothing but the greatest respect for him as a person and a leader!” said Bill Foor, a long-time friend and colleague. “To me, his entire being was for the betterment and growth of OUPS and Call Before You Dig in Ohio.”

Charlie grew up in Granger Township in northern Ohio and graduated from Granger High School. It was during this time that he developed a love for photography and electronics that would remain with him throughout his life.

After high school, Charlie joined the US Army Signal Corp where he became Private First Class and was awarded both a Good Conduct and Operational Medal prior to his honorable discharge in 1953.

Charlie soon embarked on a distinguished 33-year career with AT&T, eventually earning the position of Operations Manager. Also during this time, Charlie represented AT&T and the telecommunications industry on the Ohio Utilities Protection Service Board of Trustees.

In 1985, after many successful years on the Board, and having retired from AT&T, Charlie was selected to become Executive Director of the Ohio Utilities Protection Service. Through his leadership, our organization experienced significant organizational growth.

Charlie was instrumental in relocating call center operations from our original location in downtown Youngstown, to the Belmont Avenue site, which would serve as our home for nearly 18 years. Additionally, Mr. Lang created the foundational elements of what is now our Information Technology and Mapping and Membership departments.

Mr. Foor added, “In reality Charlie really led the growth of OUPS. He was the driving force to get the Center moved to Belmont Ave and drove the move to digitized mapping and new computer systems. He was an exceptional leader of his team.”

Perhaps Charlie’s greatest achievement though, was his unending effort to create a supportive and positive workplace for our employees. Kelly Peck, Manager of Member Services, OHIO811, recalled one such moment. “One of our employees had a family member who needed a ride back to college. Charlie recognized the family was in a tough spot and drove in from Medina, picked the student up and then drove her all the way back to college.”

Charlie Lang’s legacy will be forever remembered by those who knew him and should always be celebrated by those who have benefited from his vision, passion and commitment to damage prevention, public safety and the Ohio Utilities Protection Service. 



# 2021 Builders Exchange Meg DeWerth Industry Impact Award



Photo courtesy of Builders Exchange of Central Ohio

*Joe Igel, Mary Logan So and Mary Tebeau, Executive Director, Builders Exchange of Central Ohio*

**O**HI0811 would like to recognize Mary Logan So as being the 2021 recipient of the Builders Exchange Meg DeWerth Industry Impact Award. This prestigious award recognizes a person, company or project that has made a significant contribution to improve health and safety in the local construction industry. Logan So is Director of Safety and Employee Development at the George J. Igel & Co. in Columbus, Ohio.

Mary has devoted nearly 20 years to advancing and improving safety training and development opportunities in the construction industry. Her contributions are numerous and include writing the curriculum for a safety and health program being taught at The Ohio State University through the Construction Management Program and serving as a member of the construction committee for the Ohio Safety Congress for nearly a decade.

Logan So's desire for improving safety extends to underground damage prevention as well. She represents the Contractor industry group on the OHIO811 Board of Trustees and serves as the Board's Vice-Chair. Mary is also very active in the Ohio Underground Damage Prevention Coalition, a dedicated group of leaders working to create and advocate for legislation to improve areas within Ohio's excavation and damage prevention laws.

OHIO811 is extremely grateful for Mary's hard work, dedication and passion for improving the health and safety of the hard working men and women who are helping to build Ohio's future. 



# Out and About



The OHIO811 Interactive Education Trailer was front and center at the 46th Annual CenterPoint Energy Dayton Air Show. The event welcomed over 40,000 attendees who were treated to demonstration flights from the Air Force Thunderbirds and were able to get up close and personal with military aircraft such as the F-16 Falcon, A-10 Thunderbolt and many others.



A special  
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Illumi



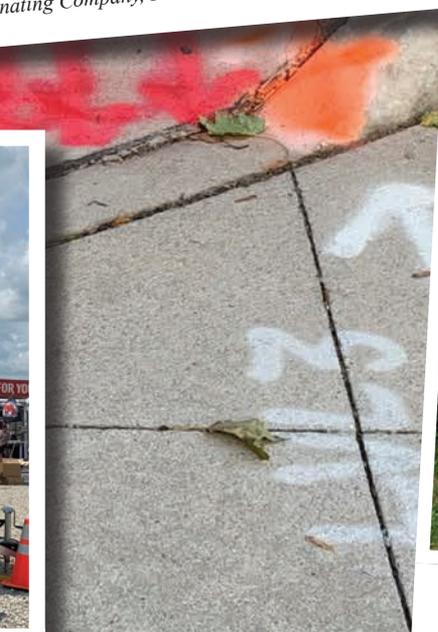
Eldora Motor Speedway welcomed a record crowd in July to their Annual Kings Royal Weekend. The OHIO811 Educational Interactive Trailer and Liaisons, along with volunteers from CenterPoint Energy, were onsite to remind race fans of all ages the importance of notifying 811 before any digging project.



Special thanks to the sponsors of our trailer: CenterPoint Energy, Marathon Pipe Line, Ohio Edison, The Marketing Company, First Energy and Columbia Gas.



OHIO811 was a proud sponsor of the Ohio Contractors Association's Cleveland Chapter Sporting Clay Shoot. Proceeds from the event, held at the Hill 'N Dale Club in Medina, directly benefitted the Cleveland Chapter's Scholarship fund.



This marker post, near a shooting station on the course at the Hill 'N Dale Club, serves as a great reminder that buried utilities can be found anywhere!!!

# OHIO811 Hosts 49th Annual Membership Meeting



OHIO811 hosted our Annual Membership Meeting August 18th- 20th in Columbus, Ohio. After a year in which so many meetings and events were either cancelled or done virtually, this year's return to an in person format delivered a first-class experience and a chance to connect with industry peers.

Roger Lipscomb, Executive Director for OHIO811, was thrilled to be able to host this meeting. "We are beyond excited that we were able to safely bring our membership, industry partners and guests together." He added, "Last year, it was a tough, but necessary decision to host this meeting virtually. Fortunately this year, we were able to return to our traditional format which allows everyone the opportunity to rekindle old relationships and begin some new ones."

The three day event was kicked off with a welcome reception and dinner at the Embassy Suites in Columbus, where folks were able to catch-up, enjoy dinner, and most importantly, prepare for Thursday's golf outing and sporting clay competition.

The OHIO811 Annual Golf Outing was held at Bent Tree Golf Club in Sunbury, Ohio. 72 golfers tackled the challenging Dennis Griffiths-designed course that stretches over 167 acres of naturally wooded rolling terrain and is rated as one of the best courses in central Ohio. Winning this year's event, was the foursome of Matthew Kovach, Dennis Husk, Kyle Peyton and Derrick Campbell. Sweeping the longest drive and closest to the pin skill holes was Logan Erb.

Meanwhile, more than 50 men and women confronted the state-of-the-art sporting clay course at the Cardinal Shooting Center in





Golf winning team: Matthew Kovach, Dennis Husk, Kyle Peyton and Derrick Campbell

Marengo, Ohio. Often described as “golf with a shotgun”, sporting clays is a shooting competition designed to mimic various hunting scenarios. As shooters progress through the course, they shoot at a series of clay targets thrown from unique and challenging stations.

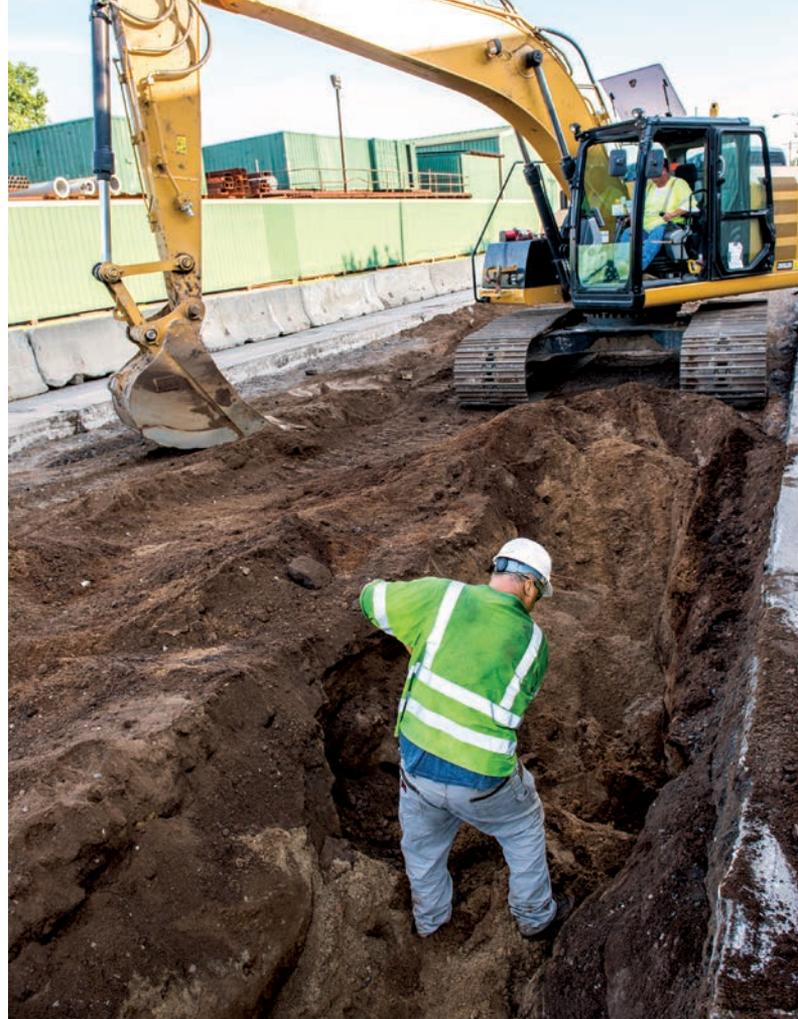
Winning the team competition this year was Scott Rotunda, Mitch Richard, Drew Greer and Sam Handziak. Individually, Mary Logan So was the highest scoring woman, while Scott Templeton outpaced the other men.

Thursday evening was highlighted by the Annual Membership and Trustee Dinner. Nearly 120 guests made this one of the most attended dinners ever! During the after dinner presentation, Roger Lipscomb provided a review of OHIO811’s accomplishments throughout 2020 and a preview of many of the damage prevention and public safety initiatives planned for the future.

*CONTINUED ON PAGE 18*



High shooting scores go to Scott Templeton and Mary Logan So



## ***Don't make a dig mistake***

As an excavator, you have projects to complete and deadlines to meet. But when it comes to working around buried utilities, there's always time to dig safe. One wrong move can lead to a cut utility line and that means costly project delays, fines and the potential for serious injuries.

At CenterPoint Energy, we're committed to being your safe digging partner. That's why we offer no-cost excavation safety training. Our training covers state and federal regulations, identification of underground facilities and excavation safety best practices, all so you can finish your work safely and on time.

**To schedule your training session, email [PublicAwareness@CenterPointEnergy.com](mailto:PublicAwareness@CenterPointEnergy.com).**





# Locating Gaps Caused b

**A**n argument can be made that the most important part of any underground construction job is one of the first things that should be done: accurately locating the utility lines on time.

There are several factors that can and will impact the locator's ability to achieve the goal stated in the first paragraph. One factor could be the depth of the utility line creating weak signals, bleed-off and a host of technical limitations. It certainly could be staffing issues. One of the complaints I hear most often from excavators is the locating companies need to hire more people. Of course, just hiring more people is not necessarily the answer because the training and experience

necessary to turn people into locators take time... lots of time. So, in that scenario, while you would have people hired, you would not have the productive locators necessary to keep up with the increased call volume demand.

One factor that impacts timely and accurate locates and that often goes unnoticed until it hits the proverbial fan recently came to light while investigating a complaint against a locator submitted by an excavator. The complaint simply stated was that his (the excavator) locate requests were routinely not being responded to in a timely fashion. Upon investigating the complaint, it was determined that the excavator routinely renewed more than 80 locate requests in a subdivision as

allowed by current law. Why renew 80 tickets over and over you ask?

There were a couple of reasons. First of all, that's the way he'd always done it. Nobody had really complained before and because nobody had complained in the past, there was no reason to change his behavior now. And then the second reason was because he wasn't exactly sure where he would be called to work in the subdivision on any given day, his habit was to renew the tickets as required by law, so there would be no delay in getting a new home hooked up to the utilities.

Unfortunately, there was a delay because while the law required locates to be made within 48 hours, it was



# y Lack of Communication

impossible to do so, especially in light of a 20% increase in ticket volume.

So, the excavator was frustrated that his locates were delayed and the locator was equally frustrated because most of these tickets had been located many times and with no apparent end in sight.

Instead of trying to arrive at a solution to the issue, frustration and finger-pointing became the norm, then personalities got involved and when that happens the process usually gets less efficient, and it did.

The threat of enforcement seems to get people to the table but at the end of the day, what keeps them there is the bottom line. Out in the field, stakeholders are

looking for solutions to real problems and oft times the solutions are provided by the same stakeholders looking for solutions.

In this specific situation, it was necessary for a commitment to be made by both parties to one another. "Hey, if I do this, can you do that?" The excavator who wants no delays saw the benefit in changing how he called in locates. The locator saw the benefit in going the extra mile with the excavator who was making a good faith effort to minimize unnecessary work for the locator. These two stakeholders on different sides of the fence created a solution for themselves

that might not work anywhere else or for anybody else and that's ok.

Will there still be frustrations? Of course there will be but they'll continue to work through them because they resolved this one. The first one is always the hardest one and it will build a level of trust that will culminate in respect for one another.

What both were looking for was a solution to an impossible situation. What they found was the solution to their problem that nobody else could provide.

Hey, if the mountain were smooth, you couldn't climb it. What are you looking for? 



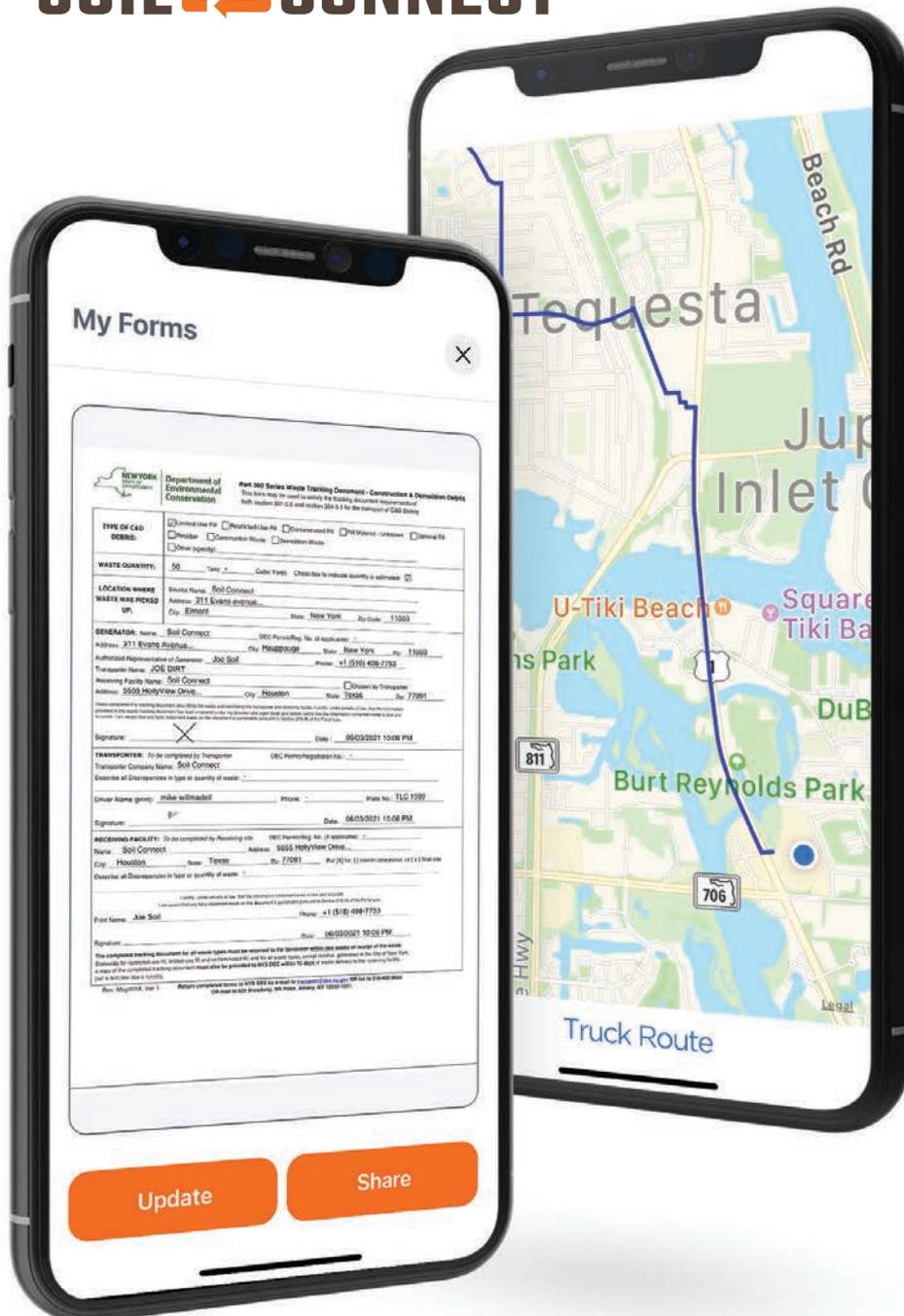
# New Products to Market

## Soil Connect Launches First-To-Market, Patent-Pending eRegulatory

*The only app that will help companies comply with all municipal environmental requirements*

By Michael Downes  
811 Magazines

### SOIL CONNECT



With life returning to normal after the COVID-19 pandemic — and the economy on turbo — construction of all kinds is ramping up across the country.

Utilities and roads are being upgraded, warehouses and skyscrapers are under construction and homebuilders can't keep up with demand.

With all that activity, the question arises, what happens to all of the excess dirt from these projects — and other materials like asphalt millings and concrete?

If records aren't kept to prove where they are dumped, land owners, general contractors, and trucking companies all can face stiff penalties, including felony charges in some states.

Soil Connect, a leader in leveraging technology to make construction-related dirt transactions easier, recently launched a new product that will revolutionize the regulatory side of transporting dirt and other construction materials, according to the company's founder and CEO Cliff Fetner.

Cliff's vision for Soil Connect is a one-stop shop for any and all of your dirt needs. The eRegulatory product is the next in their toolkit that helps users solve issues with paper manifests and regulatory needs.

"This is something we knew we had to tackle, because, as everybody knows, municipal and environmental laws only get stricter," Cliff said.

The new technology will help landowners, general contractors, builders



and trucking firms comply with federal and state record-keeping requirements, while streamlining the process of transporting the materials and keeping everyone safe.

## The backstory

The idea for eRegulatory came to Cliff after a local news story about an unscrupulous trucking company.

“A couple of guys got caught taking materials where they weren’t supposed to,” he said. “They were hired to take contaminated soil from New York to a dump in Pennsylvania, but they decided they didn’t want to drive that far, and the material wound up in a park. The State of New York rewrote the laws to make that a felony.”

He said most states require trucking companies to deliver landscape and construction debris to different facilities anyway, and most states require a manifest that lists where the dirt originates, the name and company that transports it, and who receives the dirt.

“The whole system is antiquated. For years, these have been manual, hand-written manifests,” Cliff said. “We digitized the entire workflow, capturing information on where the truck starts, what highway they get on, each turn along the way, and ultimately where the dirt gets dumped. One of the biggest benefits is that by documenting this information, eRegulatory will help mitigate risks for not only owners of land builders, but insurance carriers as well.”

The patent-pending eRegulatory app, which is the first-of-its-kind in the market, makes all of that information available in real-time to all stakeholders — the sending and receiving companies, as well as the trucking company. It can be made available to regulatory authorities in the event of an audit to prove the materials were handled responsibly.

The product’s beta testing took place in New York, where Cliff’s family has been in the construction industry for generations. The revolutionary

eRegulatory product is currently available in the New York Metro Area, with plans for rapid expansion in the next few months. As an introductory offer, Soil Connect is giving users the opportunity to try it free for the first 14 days.

Cliff, who founded the company and launched their first product in 2018, said feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from the construction companies, excavators and trucking companies who have signed up in the last few months.

“We are documenting every step along the way, and as long as the truck driver does what he’s supposed to do, the company has less risk because it’s all documented,” Cliff said. “They get updates the second the truck route is complete.”

## Lessons from COVID-19

As regulations surrounding the pandemic begin to wane, lessons learned during that time have changed how we interact with each other, and some changes may have a lasting effect. One of the other Soil Connect offerings — a necessity during the pandemic — turns out to have benefits beyond preventing the spread of the disease.

The first product Soil Connect launched was eTicketing, and it has had major benefits during and after the pandemic.

“What’s interesting about eTicketing is we are digitizing the entire workflow,” Cliff said. “The old method for keeping track of dirt coming and going is all hand-written tickets. At the end of the week, someone collects and reviews all these pieces of paper and uses them to generate invoices. It’s so labor intensive.”

On the other hand, eTicketing digitizes workflow, and depending on the size of their operation, users can save thousands of dollars a week, a month or a year in administrative costs.

During the darkest part of the pandemic, work on mission-critical infrastructure projects proceeded as planned, but with

additional precautions for workers. Soil Connect’s eTicketing app helped keep truckers and excavators safe by not requiring a pen-and-paper signature, or any other personal contact.

As it turns out, keeping truckers in their cab helps protect them from other hazards, too.

“In the middle of COVID, we created a contactless eTicketing product to keep drivers away from everybody in the field,” Cliff said. “We quickly realized it’s safer overall to keep the driver in their truck.”

Cliff reached out to the insurance industry and found out more than 80 percent of truck driver accidents and injuries happen within 25 feet of the truck.

“With the old paper system, they have to jump out of the truck to get a signature and fall over a rock and get injured,” he said. “The contactless eTicketing feature was designed just for COVID, but it’s just safer. And it’s been well received by the trucking industry.”

And with the quick ticket feature, truckers can create a ticket right from their phones in the cab. They can also login and make changes to a ticket without having to call back to the office and print out yet another sheet of paper.

## No risk to try

Cliff said Soil Connect is giving new customers a 14-day free trial of each of their software offerings, on top of the always-free Soil Connect Marketplace — the soil clearinghouse that started it all.

“The Marketplace is free, and eTickets and eRegulatory are free for the first month. We are really trying to innovate the old school world. We use the term ‘gently disrupt’ to describe our revolution,” Cliff said. “We’ve been doing things the same way for a thousand years. I can’t begin to tell you how many times I’ve heard ‘I’ve been doing this the same way for 40 years’ and now the technology is here to make everyone’s job easier.” 

# “What Do You Mean We’re Not Covered??”

*Gaps that can – and will – take you out!*

By Virginia Reames  
The Policy Center



**S**o, probably you have had insurance ever since you started in business, right? You covered all that equipment as you bought it. It was financed, and insurance went right along with the rest of the paperwork and payments.

Same with your building, shop, yards. You got them all covered – just like the bank wanted.

Your contracts usually stipulate that you have a certain amount of liability coverage, and you probably have to add those businesses either as Certificate Holders or Additional Insureds. The banks and the companies you contract with keep pretty good track of all this, so you don’t really need to, right?

Everyone knows you have to have auto coverage and you also have a lot of power units financed, so, again, you got everything covered just like you should have. Done. No problem.

Well, so far, probably so good.

How long ago did you first get insurance on those buildings you have? Did you get insurance on what the bank financed – even though you got a really good deal on the building because it needed some work – which, maybe, you did yourself? You might have a problem.

Equipment – same thing. Do you have enough coverage on say, your backhoe, to go out and replace it if it got stolen tomorrow? Or would you have to throw

in some extra money to get the same thing?

Vehicles, of course, have comp and collision unless they are older and paid for. Auto insurance is fine – no issues there in any way. Really? Are you willing to bet everything you have?

Liability? You have whatever the State, or agent told you that you need, or whatever the contract says you need to carry. You’re careful. You do whatever you’re supposed to do. And you have an umbrella – so this area is all good. Not necessarily, unfortunately.

Let’s start with the liability issue. IssueS! (No – that’s not a typo).

Before you find out the hard way, are you aware that NO insurance pays if the insured is found to be in violation of the law – or doing something illegal? Obviously, if you crash your truck into the bank to rob the place, you can skip filing the auto claim for damages to the truck – but that’s obvious. What may not be so obvious is if you fail to call 811 – or if any of your subs fail to call before digging – all damages that occur because you (or they) hit that fiber optic cable and knock out 911, the fire and police department, the shopping center whose registers fail to work, etc. – all those damages? Your insurance is going to decline paying. You’ll get this multi-paragraph letter duplicating the policy language – telling you exactly which page and how far down said page of your policy the language may

be found – outlining how coverage is excluded if a law is violated. The law says you MUST call 811 before you dig. It frequently also states that if 811 is not called, and damages occur, liability remains with the contractor.

That means you are on the hook for the whole amount of damages! If your sub failed to call 811 even though you told him to – well, that’s still on you because it was your contract. And that sub? Billy Bob from down the road? He’s a sole proprietor and even if he did carry insurance, it wouldn’t pay anyway. (HE didn’t call 811 – which, if he had, we wouldn’t be talking about it)

Besides, he’s gonna take bankruptcy! He’s probably already heading for the lawyer’s office.

But, never mind – you’re not in the digging business anyway, so none of this applies – your General Liability is fine. You don’t have customers walking into your office – nothing.

Got company vehicles? No? Got a secretary? Anyone go to the bank or post office on company business? You have no vehicles, so they drive their own, right? They have insurance, so if anything goes wrong, it’s on them. Sorry – no. Not if they are running an errand for the business or for you as the business.

See, if they have an at-fault accident on the way to the bank or post office or wherever they are going on company business – once their personal liability coverage is used up (which it will be -

quick - state minimums being pretty low) the balance of the damages comes back on you-the business. To illustrate the impact, let's slide them into a school bus, one dark and stormy afternoon. No one's hurt, but the kids got thrown to the floor, so everyone goes to the ER – just to be certain. That \$100K/\$300 (topside) liability your employee has on their personal vehicle is – GONE. Fast. Let me see – 40-some kids in the ER...

You know I'm gonna tell you – but you should have carried something called Hired & Non-Auto on your GL. That's what that little \$150 premium (OK maybe \$250 annual) buys you – protection from what happened above. This coverage should always go on a commercial auto policy – but you don't have any business vehicles! So now what?

Make SURE your commercial agent puts that coverage on your GL. If you do have commercial vehicles – then it goes on that policy! Don't leave home without it! This is an easy gap to fill. HE won't think to ask – but it's your money. BE sure it goes on – somewhere!

Since we're trying to close gaps – did we ask how long ago you bought and insured that building? If it is written Replacement Cost (and we hope it was), have the values been updated to reflect current building costs to replace it if was a total loss? OR, tell me you don't reduce the amount of coverage as your bank loan gets reduced (yes, people do it!).

For Replacement Cost, your building has to be insured to 80% of its replacement cost (if the policy is written with an 80% factor – it could be written 90%.) That's the cost to build it back, just like it is right now – NOT the price you can get if you sell it – whether up or down makes no difference. Just what it will take to build it back as it now is. If it isn't, then in the event of a claim, the company will reduce the amount of your payout by the percent you are out of coinsurance (yes, it's all in the fine print right there in black and white. Every property policy has it in there.)

As an example, let's say you paid 25% down at the time of purchase, and financed the rest. The bank wants the policy to reflect their interest – which is what they have loaned to you. Let's say it is a \$100,000 building and the bank financed \$75,000. It's fairly new, so your policy was written Replacement Cost, which is right, but the bank told the agency/your agent/you it had to be insured for \$75,000 at least, with them as mortgagee, etc. And your building is underinsured from day one. Now, let's say you have a \$40K loss. In today's money and construction costs – it will take \$125,000 to redo your building, so you won't get the full \$40K to repair your building. You should be insured to \$125K but are only at \$75K – making you off by 40%. You will only get \$24,000 instead of the \$40K you need. Close that GAP. Up your coverage on that building to reflect today's costs to rebuild!

In fact – close all those gaps! Take an afternoon and go visit your agent. Make sure he knows what you have, what it's worth – and what you don't have (using your personal vehicle, for example)– and by the way, it's much much safer to have all your coverages with the same agent. Don't have your property coverage over there, and your vehicle coverage over here – it's too easy to leave yourself falling through a gap! 



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-  To help you **SMELL** a leak from a gas line or appliance, a familiar odor like rotten eggs is often added to natural gas.
-  A leaking pipeline might also make a hissing sound you can **HEAR**.
-  Or you might **SEE** blowing dirt, bubbling water or an unusual area of dead vegetation.

**Suspect a natural gas leak?**  
First move your feet! Then call  when you are down the street.

Also remember to call OHIO811 by dialing 811 at least 48 hours before digging on your property. And if you suspect a gas leak – walk away, right away. Once clear of the area, call Dominion Energy Ohio at **1.877.542.2630**. For more information, visit [safegasohio.org](http://safegasohio.org).

 **Dominion Energy**

Learn more at [dominionenergy.com](http://dominionenergy.com), keywords **Natural Gas Safety**.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

The week culminated with the Membership's business meeting on Friday morning. The meeting kicked off with OHIO811 Board of Trustees standing and ad-hoc committee reports. During these reports, each of the Committee Chairs provided an overview of highlights, activities and accomplishments that their respective committees were involved with in 2020. Attendees also received an accompanying report of Center activities from Mr. Lipscomb during his President's Report.

Immediately following the Annual Membership Meeting, the OHIO811 Board of Trustees held their 3rd quarter Trustee meeting. Highlighting this meeting was the election of two Officers, an At-Large Executive Committee member, and three Audit Committee members. Elected to serve two-year terms as Chairman and Secretary was Steve Schaffer and Steve Buskirk respectively, Seamus Mulligan was elected to the At-Large Executive Committee seat. Elected to serve

staggered three-year terms on the Audit Committee was Sid Pomeroy, Russ Johnson and Brian Lewis. Congratulations to all!

Although there was a substantial amount of business conducted during the three days, Mr. Lipscomb offered that the Annual Meeting is far more, "The Annual Membership Meeting is, and always will be, more than just a business meeting. It provides those who are passionate about damage prevention and support OHIO811's mission of promoting public safety through the protection of Ohio's underground utility infrastructure, the opportunity to network, share ideas and learn about damage prevention and public safety efforts across Ohio and throughout the Nation." 



Shooting competition winning team: Drew Greer, Scott Rotunda, Mitch Richard and Sam Handziak.



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# TRENCH WARFARE?

By Joe Igel

**A**s I have written in past articles, I began my construction career in the mid-1970s. One of my earliest tasks, as I have also mentioned, was calling in all locate requests. Since then, technology has refined the process, allowed us to narrow the parameters needed for marking, provide more accurate excavation information, screen tickets more accurately, communicate more effectively online, and so on. The process today, in my mind, barely resembles the antiquated way that we did the locate process in the 1970's.

This begs the question, does this technological advance improve the environment we work in? And if our answer is "yes", how do we measure that? Can we simply look at the number of "hits" or should we try to see near misses as well? Should we look at human and financial costs of tragic damages? Can we look at civil suits and the total fines? Does insurance claim data clarify the matter? And with the increased number of states having enforcement provisions, does their data provide insight? It is probably impossible to arrive at a definitive conclusion.

Importantly, are there also limitations on what technology can resolve. Are old, poorly mapped, or unmapped lines an issue for locators, for screeners? If a tracer wire has decayed or broken, can technology provide resolution? If field changes during the installation were

necessary and the as-builts were not submitted, does technology provide an answer? I believe it still comes down to the human element.

When I was in high school and college, I debated competitively. We often used a trite statement to degrade our opponents' statistics, suggesting that they used them much as a drunken person uses a lamppost, for support rather than illumination. Is that the quandary we face today?

As I reflect on this, I do believe that the environment has changed since I started. As my interest in avoiding damages grew, my expected role in the company also grew. When I started, the relationship among the parties (the excavators, the utility owners, the contracting authority, the third-party locators, and so on) was adversarial. I would attend meetings that were intended to bring excavators together with utilities and yet hear "gossipy" kinds of conversations from utility workers making fun of and ridiculing excavators. Every meeting I went to with fellow excavators ran the risk of turning into a gripe session on utilities and their lack of cooperation in the process.

It truly felt that we were engaged in trench warfare, both sides firing upon each other, but neither side discussing the real issues, attempting to see if a peaceful and amicable resolution was possible. And this probably was

motivated by the incentives. Insurance companies, obviously, wanted to keep claims down. Given that a hike in claims or claim amounts would increase insurance costs, so did the other parties. Everyone "bled" their company colors, and that was the issue. Playing the long game did not enter the discussion.

But the attitudes are, from what I witness today, more constructive, more focused, and more of a cooperative nature. Changes in the dig laws that were unthinkable years ago are being made. As violation complaints come before our enforcement board, I feel confident that they are a fraction of where they would have been 45 years ago. While some of the nuances might escape them, the number of people who understand the process has grown, largely due to a concerted educational effort. And I genuinely believe that we are improving the environments for our employees. The key is, that we need to use statistics, current technology, virtually anything we can obtain or employ, not to necessarily "support" our decisions or policies but to "illuminate" paths to continue this improvement, to reach out to the elements that still do not see the entire picture, and to make things even better. 

*Mr. Igel recently retired as vice president of the George J. Igel & Co., Inc. after working there for more than 35 years.*

# Closing the Gap

## Could Be Good For Safety



By Larry Cole, Ph.D.  
TeamMax

**Y**ou don't have to close the gaps that I'm describing in this article, but it could promote physical and psychological safety for you and others if you did!

We're blinded by our own vision because we see what we want to see. Think about that statement for a moment. Our thinking is the culprit and creates gaps that can be detrimental to our safety, the safety of others and our personal and professional impact.

Let's start with a safety procedure. Suppose you believe a particular safety procedure is the best. What you see with that safety procedure is driven by your thoughts....it is the best. Now here comes the gap. It is possible that an alternate procedure could be even safer than your selected one, but you won't see it, because your thoughts are controlling what you see.

A similar example occurs with the reluctance to try a new equipment or technology. Some people like and want to continue using the old in spite of the fact the new technology is improved. Again, thinking blinded the vision and created a gap.

The gap we're discussing brings me to this point — the perception others have of you is more important than your self-perception. Unfortunately we have a positive bias to think we're better than in fact we are. Remember perception controlled by our thinking creates our reality!

Let me tell you about Tom (not his real name). I was asked to help him control his anger. Everyone was a victim of his emotional outbursts, consequently morale and production plummeted with his work crew. Obviously the emotional outbursts created a safety hazard for everyone. The challenge was that he didn't see himself as expressing anger instead only doing what he needed to do to get the job done.

His vision created a major blind spot and a gap that he wouldn't cross. He continued rationalizing his behavior as he told me several times that he acted just like his mother. I even asked if I could talk to his mother about changing her behavior thus he would automatically change and close the gap between what he saw as opposed to what others saw. After a 25 year career with the company he was released because his vision, driven by his thoughts, prevented him from realizing that he was a safety hazard. Yes, interpersonal skills can be a safety hazard and, unfortunately, there are too many of these examples in the workplace.

Closing the gap requires several psychological characteristics. First, is the willingness to accept responsibility of your behavior. Your mother is not controlling your behavior, your freedom of choice is.

Second is the willingness to believe the truth as reported to you by others, because these people know the

reputation you've created with your behaviors that you may not see, i.e., a blind spot.

Third is the willingness to ask others what you can do, e.g., using a different safety procedure or changing interpersonal performance to close the gap. In doing so, accept the fact that you are guilty until proven innocent! Hopefully those you ask will offer solutions. If not, you're being told another story you may not want to hear but should! If not — another gap is created that could derail your career as it did for Tom. Remember you see what you want to see and hopefully you want to see what others see about you.

Fourth is implementing the suggestions offered to work more safely. Last, but certainly not least, is securing feedback about the progress you are making.

Fact: Peak performers seek feedback from every source and prefer to know what is not working well before learning what is working well. You probably know why — because the former is richer with learning improvement ideas than are compliments. Closing the gaps allows the elite performers to improve their performance on their journey to excellence and being incident and injury free. 

*Larry Cole, Ph.D., is founder of TeamMax a consulting company that helps people work together. Please send questions and/or comments to Larry at teammax100@gmail.com.*

# What Makes a Great Line Locator?

By Bob Nighswonger



If we stop and take a look at the characteristics of great line locating technicians, we can identify a few common traits. Anyone performing line locating should be able to operate their line finding equipment by the book. This is considered Locating Basics 101. A person off of the street can be taught to operate a piece of locating equipment in a few hours, but if that's all they know, then they only know just enough to be dangerous. It's like teaching a person to use a hammer or saw and calling them a carpenter. A great locator is a person who can not only use the equipment but also prevent damages well beyond operating equipment. Damage prevention minded locators can juggle a very tricky schedule to keep up with the demand, have heightened sense of their surroundings, excellent reasoning skills and be a great communicator.

## **Schedule Juggler**

We all would like to be the master of our schedule, but often times we fall short. A great locator is a great juggler of time. We can try to predict but can't control the number of 811 requests that are called in on any given day. We can try to predict but can't control exactly how much time each job will take to complete. When faced with such a short deadline to complete a locating job, time is a precious commodity. A typical day in the life of a locating technician requires a line locator to create a productive route to try to cover the ticket load and often re-route throughout the day when called to an emergency or if one job that should have taken twenty minutes to complete ended up taking two hours to complete due to a variety of problem locate scenarios.

## **Good Eyes**

The most important tool in a locator's arsenal is his eyes. A good visual of the jobsite is one of the most important

steps of a line locate. A visual inspection is used to first evaluate any safety hazards that may be present onsite, visually confirm the dig area and read the facts and clues combined with reasoning to determine how the area is piped and wired and if there may be other lines on the site that may present troubles. A good visual site survey may also identify if there are additional lines buried on site.

## **Good Communicator**

As a locator, about 9 out of 10 times, the details provided on my locate tickets were enough information for me to find the jobsite, identify the dig area and locate my lines. The fact that I normally left the shop in the morning with around 20 tickets per day meant that 1 or 2 of my locate tickets would take a follow-up call to clarify the information provided by the caller. The call normally clarified the location of the site and or dig area. A common problem faced by myself and many of my fellow locators is a contact phone number that doesn't work or the contact person calling in the ticket has no idea where the dig site is or even the name of the foreman assigned to the job. Often times I spent more time trying to find the location than I did locating the lines on the site, especially when locating in states that did not require white markings. It's during times like these that being a good communicator is especially important.

The hammer does not build the house, the carpenter does. The line locating equipment does not prevent line strikes, the operator of the equipment does. A great line locator is damage prevention minded and will go that extra mile to ensure no line strikes. 

*Bob Nighswonger is the President and CEO of Utility Training Academy.*

by John Jacobi

## Gaps in Damage Prevention

**L**ast issue, I talked about using GIS to collect, archive, access and manage data regarding existing underground utilities - things like buried pipelines, buried electrical cable, and buried communications cable.

Why bother? Two big reasons: underground utilities require maintenance and underground utilities **MUST** be dealt with if there is any digging nearby. The need for maintenance should be obvious. How can something be maintained if you do not know where it is? Digging near existing underground utilities can be (is almost always) dangerous because interruption of electrical power or communications can delay emergency response or shut down essential services to schools, hospitals, police departments, etc., not to mention that damaging underground electrical lines and natural gas or hazardous liquid pipelines can be fatal to anyone nearby when the damage occurs.

Natural gas or hazardous liquid pipeline operators are required to participate in one-call systems. Most, if not all, operators of underground electrical systems and underground communications systems (copper or fiber optic) also participate in one-call systems. Dial 811, answer the questions, wait the required time (usually at least 2 days unless its an emergency), obey the marks, and get on with the job. Easy. Right? Not so fast. Every state and even some cities have their own statutes and regulations. It is important that the applicable rules be followed closely. Things like wait time, depth of burial, and tolerance zones are all very important. Nobody wants to have an accident but if one occurs and the "I"s have not been dotted and the "T"s not crossed, things could get far more complicated than they otherwise would be.

What is missing? Lots of things. First, while one-call centers have been around for years (at least since the 80's), membership did not become mandatory until the late 90's and, in some states, even more recently. Let's just say there is a lot of "stuff" that was buried (pun intended) before call-before-you-dig became the law of the land. The accuracy of the old maps may leave a great deal to be desired.

In my experience, depth of burial is a real concern. State and local building codes have requirements for depth of burial. Would you bet your life that the wire you are worried about is actually 24" below the surface? The federal Pipeline Safety Regulations (PSRs - 49 CFR Parts 190 - 199) burial requirements are in the construction sections. With a few exceptions, PSR pipelines do not have to be buried at all and, even if they are buried, the depth of burial does not have to be maintained.

Different types of instruments are used to locate underground utilities. Some are more accurate than others. All must be maintained and calibrated as well as operated by someone trained for that particular instrument.

Sewers are a particular problem. Many natural gas distribution lines are installed by horizontal directional drilling (HDD). Many sewers are clay tile or PVC (i.e., non-metallic) and difficult to locate. HDD will go right through a clay tile or PVC. This is called a cross-bore and has happened with both replacement lines and new construction. The gas will be connected, and everything will be fine - until the sewer gets clogged and a plumber runs a roto roter through the sewer and severs the gas line. Natural gas is lighter than air and rises through the sewer line (sewer lines slope downward from the house or business) to the house or business. The gas will accumulate in the building until a spark sets off an explosion. This is still happening - not often, but still too often.

The instruments used to detect underground utilities each have their own unique capabilities. Soil type, moisture content, depth of burial, the presence of other underground utilities (abandoned or otherwise), and the composition of the object of concern (e.g., metallic v. non-metallic) all affect the accuracy of the marks. In urban settings, there are lots of things buried that could affect the accuracy of the marking.

In urban areas, steam may be used to heat buildings. Live steam can be extremely dangerous. I am not aware of any requirements regarding call center membership for steam utilities.

Some water utility companies are not members of 811 and as a result, will not be notified by the call center. Rupturing even a relatively small water main can cause significant service interruption. I remember watching an HDD job in an urban setting. There was a geyser at literally every corner. That had to add a great deal of expense to the job. Fortunately, no gas lines were hit.

A big problem, in my experience, has been providing the call center faulty information about where the new construction is to occur. This may have improved since I retired but "white lining" (look it up) is almost never a bad idea.

I could go on, but you should get the idea by now. One last caveat - occasionally the line locators get overwhelmed with the number of tickets called in and can't meet the regulatory deadline. My advice is to make the call as early as you can and still get the job done before the ticket expires. Use a design ticket when appropriate and use an emergency ticket only if there is an immediate threat to humans, the environment or the integrity of an underground utility.

When it comes time to start digging for whatever reason, there is no substitute for calling 811 and getting a physical locate. Even with a physical locate, it is **IMPORTANT** to make sure that the line of concern is the line that was located.

You cannot be too safe when dealing with buried utilities. 

*John Jacobi retired from PHMSA.  
For questions or comments, email:  
jjacobi@sbcglobal.net*

# Closing the Locating Gap with White Lining

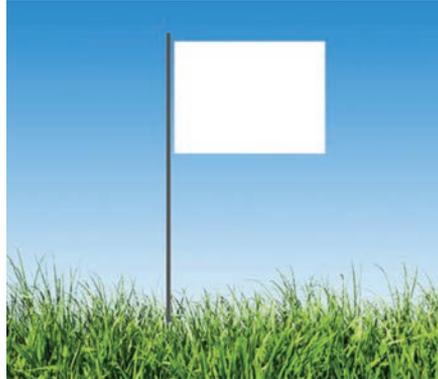
Most all would agree that properly identifying the location of an underground facility is critical in helping protect the facility. It also allows the excavator to work more confidently and cost effectively on every job site. When the excavator arrives to the job site and sees the orange, yellow, red and blue marks the message from the locator is “I’ve been here and you can depend on my marks. Dig safely and have a great day.”

White lining is just as important to the damage prevention process. By using white paint or flags, the excavator communicates a vital message to the locator. The message is “This is the area that I need you to mark. There is no need for you to waste your time locating the entire property or block and thanks for marking on time.”

When the excavator shows up to a job site, he is reasonable in expecting that the job site is marked correctly and on time. And in the same way when

the locator arrives at the proposed excavation site that has been white lined, he can focus on locating the exact location of excavation instead of trying to guess where it will take place.

Common Ground Alliance (CGA) Best Practices state, “When the excavation site cannot be clearly and adequately



identified on the locate ticket, the excavator designates the route and/or area to be excavated using white premarking prior to the arrival of the locator.”

Then follows up with, “The route of the excavation is marked with white paint, flags, stakes, or a combination of these to outline the dig site prior to notifying the one call center and before the locator arrives on the job. Premarking allows the excavators to accurately communicate to facility owners/operators or their locator where excavation is to occur.”

It has long been confirmed that white lining is an important piece of the damage prevention puzzle. The 1997 safety study “Protecting Public Safety through Excavation Damage Prevention” by the NTSB reached the conclusion that premarking is a practice that helps prevent excavation damage. Facility owners/operators can avoid unnecessary work created when locating facilities that are not associated with planned excavation.

Let’s work together to keep Ohio a safer place to live and work! 



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## Markerboard Report

### Call Center Operations\* June 30, 2021

2020		2021	
Tickets Processed	411,535	Tickets Processed	419,836
i-dig Volume	165,962	i-dig Volume	184,180
e-dig Volume	31,381	e-dig Volume	33,540

\*These statistics are current as of June 30, 2021

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