Abandoned Lines Discussion Group
September 30, 2022

Participants on virtual meeting: Dave Berens, Clayton Heitz, Jeff Kursman, Lori Wade, Matt Hennis, Les Schell, Steve Buskirk, Yancy Deering, Charles Schaffer, George Gillespie, Jim Mandera, Joe Marinello, Nick Vranak, Scott Lucas, Scott Tustin, Chuck Muller, Jason Broyles, Joel Johnson, Mary Logan So, Blake Ross, Seamus Mulligan, Mike Wilson, Andrew Corder, Deanna DeWitt, Greg Bennett, Kyle McLeod, Matthew Steele, Brian Hickman, Debbie Harris, Jim Collins, Mitch Croy, Brian Holden, Elizabeth Pyles, LeAngela Pierce, Rob Latham, Tyler Shelton, Travis Bullock, Jim Wooten

-Opening statements by Jeff Kursman.

-Open Discussion:

Jason Broyles: spoke to research done on current legislation in the various states across the United States. As well as the CGA also not having a good solution on how to deal with abandoned lines.

Scott Tustin: Abandoned gas lines that aren't gas lines. Cases in past found that expired plastic gas pipe being offered by supply houses to be used as conduit, typically telecommunications and coax lines.   This creates a potential issue because pipes that look like gas is possibly being used as conduit. Seamus Mulligan stated that Easton, OH is full of this issue, (gas pipes being used as electrical conduit and sprinkler systems).   Also, lines that get abandoned and left in ground then another company uses it as "existing" conduit to run their facility.

Lori Wade: Spoke to gas companies that are removing lines from maps as they get abandoned so they can not always give verification to whether it is one of their abandoned lines or not.

Scott Lucas: 220 miles of abandoned gas lines currently being refitted for water transport. Please go to www.ucononline.com/news/2022/september/study-finds-220-mile-gas-pipeline-ready-to-be-converted-into-water-transport-system for more information on this. Supporting the issue brought up of abandoned lines getting repurposed can potentially increase the issues in the field.

Mary Logan So: Noted that one of the biggest problems is no one wants to take responsibility for identifying or taking ownership of an abandoned line when they are found in the field. What is a reasonable and safe step that everyone could take moving forward to help alleviate the hazard to workers and citizens.

Joe Marinello: agrees that utilities could take a more proactive approach moving forward to assisting with the issues in the field. Let's make the process from the utility's response approach

more proactive and less reactive since there is high probability that they will end up in the field to deal with the situation anyway.

Other conversations that took place were:

- Should OHIO811 start to track found abandoned lines? More sophisticated excavators can help to provide info from the field.

-Should utilities be forced to send a person when an abandoned line is found. Then excavator and utility can provide information back to OHIO811.

-Should legislation include 1) Track abandoned lines moving forward, and 2) No utility can use another utilities facility without written permission. (Jason Broyles pointed out that CA requires that that facility's ownership is transferred to the utility utilizing the facility—thus, the utility that abandoned the facility is no longer liable, but the new utility is).

-Could a new marking be developed into the universal marking standards to indicated that the gas pipe is being used as conduit for a different utility? Jason suggested the marking standards committee could possibly address this without specific legislation

-Plumbing supply companies are selling "expired" gas pipe to other utilities (poly pipes must be in the ground by 18-24 months (UV exposure). It was expressed that this practice should not be permitted to occur due to the safety hazard it creates

-Utilities should keep abandoned facilities on "as built" maps (and re-add found abandoned facilities).

-Environmental concerns with releasing a contaminate when cutting an abandoned line (PCVs).

-Possible creation of a sub-discussion group to plan training for contractors in dealing with unknown abandoned lines. (Create best practices)