

Horizontal Directional Drilling Requirements Subcommittee

7/21/2026

10:00am

Attendance: Kevin Campbell, Jason Broyles, Jana Bruen, Tony Holland, Alex McCann, Bradley Shoemaker, Bryon Bedel, Davy Myers, James Mander, Michael Tom, Shawn Hudgel, Chris Glass, Blake Ross, Scott Mergler, Kyle Mangione, Griffin Weasel, John Kelly, Deborah Harris, Stephen Thomas, Patrick Murphy, Mike Lawson, Michael Guastella, Brian Hickman, Jim Collins, Melvin Henson, Collin Crigger, Joseph Dragovich, Greg Vergamini, Russell Johnson, Brian Holden, Chris Russ, Daniel Petrozziello, Jimmy Stewart, Dominick Belser, Jon Dorsey, Lori Wade, Garry Lee, Seamus Mulligan, Michael Lamdin, Greg First, Larry Harvey,

Meeting opened at 10:00am

Review of previous meeting minutes.

Motion to accept minutes from James Mander

Second from Brad Shoemaker

Minutes passed unanimously

Reviewed current language along with proposed language with the group.

Update from a statewide look, most are aware, utility strikes due to directional drilling are a central focus, and has is a point of focus from the state legislature due to some recent damages, please know this topic is very important and is a focal point for the state legislature especially from the north east side of the state. Big push to get legislation passed with HDD, if the OUDPC can't get legislation that is acceptable, the legislatures will do it themselves with or without input from the industry. Need to keep working diligently on this topic.

If we are a group can't come up with some language that we can all live with, and get it passed at a state level, then the state legislature may make rules that none of us are in favor of.

The way we have things worded in non-destructive manner is confusing, understand what we are trying to do, but think we need to explain it better. Pertains to impact an excavation would pose to underground utilities.

Open to adjusting so it is clear, but need input to see what would make it less confusing for everyone. If you have ideas, you can put it in the chat or email it.

What about does not pertain to the disturbance of hard surfaces or roadways?

Goal was to make sure non-destructive manner doesn't mean that the road cannot be cut or dug in.

Moving onto duties of an excavator dealing with HDD.

Received from feedback about 12" in all directions not being clear.

Think a diagram would be good. Have examples that can be sent.

This was discussed last week, the diagrams would be in the excavator manual, and not in the ORC.

Maybe a minimum of 12" in all directions unless facility owner requests more?

Talking about installation, as of now, it already indicates that 12" is the minimum clearance.

If the utility owner requires something different and have a private easement, then the utility owner needs to be able to let them know how far to stay away.

This isn't private easement, if you are in an easement, then they lay out the rules in that easement.

What is being discussed is already covered, when working around a hazardous material pipeline, then special notice requirements are needed.

Would like to see put in, unless that particular section applies.

Would that be better to put in B, and not in 1. That was it applies to parallel and crossing.

Think it would have to be in A, since that is where it all begins.

Reviewed what section A says in the ORC.

Think that requirement is much larger than HDD, also applies to open cut as well.

Not sure where to draw the line in what we are looking at. Thinks prior section needs to be reviewed as well.

Having heartache with going into so much detail with this portion and not including that.

It is addressed in another section, and adding it here doesn't change the law. Need to look at the law as a whole.

The concern is people picking and choosing the sections of the law that they read, and not be familiar with the law in its entirety.

You could reference many sections as reminders, but not sure where to draw the line.

Want to provide clarity, not more confusion.

Mentioned a question around plus 12" in all directions, would it be clearer if it was vertically and horizontally.

Not opposed, think that was direction we were going.

What about diagonal? I think in all directions covers it.

Agreed, just trying to make it clearer.

Want to leave it in all directions.

Think the tough thing is we are not exposing a facility plus 12", calling out that we are exposing to the depth of the new installation, plus 12".

Some confusion around whether we are to expose the facility, or just making sure there are no facilities in the area exposed with depth of install plus 12". Think it is confusing as written.

We are discussing crossing facilities. If its at 24", and plan to cross at 30", have to pot hole to the depth of new install, plus 12" to ensure proper clearance.

Talking about expose and confirm at each crossing point, to depth of new install, plus 12", it doesn't say anything about finding that existing utility. Is that wrong?

Think that is right, don't need to spot if it is 10', and you are drilling at 3 ft.

Still some feeling that it is saying you have to spot the line itself.

Agree that it is confusing the way it is written. But does say, to the installation depth of the new facility. That's how I read it.

If it confusing to us, it will be confusing to people in the field. Want to make it clear for everyone. Could be a homeowner who has to deal with this too.

What we are discussing now is already in the law, so how have we been navigating it so far?

Most of interpreted it as potholing to the depth of the new install, plus 12”.

Can't we just have it say that then?

Moving to the depth of the new install plus 12” to the beginning may help clear it up.

May need to table this and discuss more and work with the wording.

Discussed next section 1 (a-c)

Not sure a-c should be in the law, think it should be in an excavator guide. To much detail in the law, don't think it is in the right place. Some agreement with the group.

Run into excavators potholing facilities, no one monitors the drill at the pot hole, and the line gets hit, or the drill path in the pothole is not verified. Someone needs to be watching that.

Feel like this goes back to a conversation earlier, putting too much in the law and telling them how to do their job. Do need to make sure the utilities stay safe.

Why have the 12” clearance but then not have someone verify that the clearance is achieved? Think we should require folks to monitor the drill through the pot hole.

3781.30 (3), speaking to excavating with mechanized equipment in the tolerance zone, it could be interpreted that it pertains to this as well.

Would not be direct repetition, but it very similar.

This is specific to potholing as well. This is how you operate safely.

Tolerance zone is right to left (horizontal), not about vertical distance from the facility.

Are there still people monitoring the pull back with this as well? Damages happen with the pull back as well, is it assumed that it needs to be monitored on the pull back as well?

So saying the (B) only applies as the drill goes through the first time, and not on the pull back? Intent was as it enters and exits was supposed to cover that.

When using a reamer, you should monitor both times. Do have an issue legislating for people who don't do their jobs. A lot of people doing their best, and making sure they are working safe. Don't want to legislate every single issue there is out there. Want to caution trying to legislate our way out of every single issue.

Would adding drill head/reamer help so it gives the perception of it being both ways?

Could, as long as everyone understands the verbiage.

Simplify with excavation equipment?

Sounds good.

Point of caution, we are writing this for the bad players, and they are not in on this conversation. Trying to keep that in mind. Most of us are doing what they need to keep everyone safe.

Goal is to avoid damages, and want to make sure that we accomplish that. If we are already doing these things, then should be no issue putting it in the ORC

Should keep it more simple, and not so specific. As long as what we want accomplished is achieved, then why control means and methods.

The bad players don't necessarily read or follow this law anyway.

Experienced a couple damages recently that involved a reamer, and damage on the pull back. So I agree it needs to be in there.

Don't want to be too descriptive in the law, so every time technology changes, the law will need to be updated. If you get this descriptive in one place, you have to do it in other areas of the law, don't think it is a good path to go down.

Some agreement from the group on that point. Could point to the excavator manual since we revise that every 2 years, and it is easier to change than the law.

We need to find a solution to what is happening out in the field, if we don't want to go down this path through legislation, what can we do to get this taken care of with what is going on out in the field.

Other states have done a manual that is provided by 811, and is handed out. This would allow us to put the specifics in there, and the law can say, per the guidelines provided by whatever body you want to put that out there, whether it is the OUDPC or the DPC's.

If we don't come up with something, we may end up having someone at the state house writing it for us.

If the manual is referenced in the law, then it would still be enforceable. Have to make sure it is enforceable so there is some teeth behind it. As long as it is covered somewhere, and is enforceable, then that is good.

The review process is not spelled out in the ORC. Have to agree if it is going to be law, no matter where it sits. If the excavator manual is deemed as law, I would struggle taking it out of here, and putting it there. Many excavators consider the excavator manual as guidelines, not law. We would be handing a different body to change law.

Reviewed how the excavator manual, and the marking standards are reviewed.

Would not have the same industry representation in that review, as we do in the OUDPC.
May not be the people we want discussing the legislation portion.

If we put a-c in the excavator manual, then we need to add language saying that is law.
Concern over making the excavator manual itself law. Could become very complicated.
The point here for this group is to get something in the law the help make HDD safer. Could live without a in the law, but think b and c needs to be in there. Something along these lines needs to be put in so its not done for us with the state legislature.

If the excavator manual doesn't need changed, then we don't have to change it. Still feel like we can't get this descriptive. That section could be worked up, or we could have a separate manual for just the HDD requirements. If the language gets drafted in there, and could show that to the statehouse, and we could get the manual ready to go when this goes through. We are all concerned about safety, just getting to descriptive for state law.

Not sure that we need to have c if we have b in there. Should be in communication already if it is being monitored.

Some concern as well, as written, think they would have to have a team member at each pot hole. That is a lot of man power, May need to reword it so it is clear that it would not be the case.

Puts a lot on the contractor the way it is worded, and is still confusing.

We have people monitoring the pot hole if there is something there, as we go through, we will pass it and see it, but on the way back through, its almost pointless if there is nothing there, unless we are using a reamer.

May need to clean this language up so it is clear that you don't have to have a person at each hole at the same time.

Monitoring the pot hole is only while the bore head is at or near that particular pot hole.

This puts teeth behind it for those who don't do things the right way, and its an effort to get those people to change their behavior. Is this going to cause more delay for those who do this the right way?

How fast does the typical bore head travel, does a spotter have time to stop a drill head if they are within the 12".

It can be slowed down, if you are monitoring the drill head, you know you are coming up on that hole and are slowing it down as you approach that hole. You'll see water before you see the drill head.

How do we make sure that the spotter is qualified, and how are the potholes happening?

Just reiterating the previous point that they have to monitor if they are drilling in the tolerance zone.

Thought b and c were redundant as well, think that b covers it.

Intent of the two is different, one is monitoring, and one is ensuring direct communication. If those doing it feel it is redundant, then it is worth looking at.

Moving onto how often to pothole a line that you are running parallel to. No distance away from a parallel line for potholing is given. So, a line 70' away per the ORC now has to be potholed. So, this change is to define what the expectation is for spotting parallel facilities. 3-5 feet away, every 100', within 3 feet, every 50'.

The 5' is based on the tolerance zone, not the utility itself. 3-5 ft or within 3 ft of what? Needs to be defined as the tolerance zone.

Those distances need to be clarified as the edge of the tolerance zone, and not the mark on the ground.

Also, should say the outer limits of the tolerance zone so it is known.

Other states have from the outermost edge of the utility. Covers multiple facility types and sizes. In a joint trench, would be the outside edge of the outer most utility.

Do we need to know the size of the bore head, or reamer size. Is it from centerline, or from the outer edge? Would like to see that if you are within 12", then it needs to be spotted more often.

That wasn't added because you can't be within 12" per the ORC now.

To be within 12", you have to have prewritten authorization from the utility owner.

These fixed distances are arbitrary, and do not differentiate between HDD projects, could have many unnecessary potholes, pavement restoration etc. These costs will increase expenses, without improving safety. Think it should be more around site specific factors.

Not sure why the excavator would determine that and not the utility?

The field conditions are unknown for the excavator, and the purpose is for confirming that the existing utility location is verified. The utility can shift location, and the excavator is not

aware when that happens. Want to know where existing lines are so they can be avoided. How do you weigh the cost of safety.

When talking about the costs, every excavator will incur those costs. This gets figured into the bid process. Could increase the cost from what it is today, but it will be shared throughout the industry. Will not create a situation where you lose bids because someone isn't going to do it the right way, because everyone will have to do it this way. Will also slow projects down across the board for everyone.

It's not the cost that's the problem, it's more the unnecessary potholing, the 5' tolerance is a little too much. Think it can still be done safely without the excess potholing.

Current legislation calls potholing when paralleling, because there is no max distance away. So, this would create less potholing.

Do like that we are trying to define it, since it is wide open right now, and feel this helps the excavator as opposed to hurting the excavator.

Thank you everyone for being on the call, will take the suggestions and reword some of the things we discussed, and will circle back again at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35am.