



The Scoop

A Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 2—Fall 2010



Photo courtesy Frank Dobson

President's Message

Dave Kertis writes about the summer of 2010 and the Greater Chesapeake Damage Prevention Training Conference. **Page 1**

Safety First

Learn about safety guidelines for working with portable ladders. **Page 2**

Profile

Meet Delmarva Power locator Phil Morris. **Page 2**



Photo courtesy Delmarva Power

Meeting Minutes

Missed the meetings? Catch up with key issues from June, July, and August member meetings. **Page 3**

Calendar

Read about upcoming conferences and events of interest to the professional excavator. **Page 4**

President's Message



Dear Friends:

We just completed a summer that posed many challenges for those of us who work in the construction industry. I'm proud to say that, as usual, we looked out for one another and got the jobs done as safely and efficiently as possible under some very difficult conditions.

Early in the season, we faced extreme heat and drought. These conditions not only led to difficult work situations, they also caused serious health-related concerns. Those of us

working in confined spaces and underground had to work safely and carefully, test holing and excavating to make sure no one got hurt and the utilities were not damaged. We also had to be particularly alert for signs of dehydration and heat stroke.

As summer went on, many storms passed through our region, knocking down trees and causing many utility-related outages. Once again, we worked together safely to get the utilities back on for our customers.

We at the USPCD believe that safety should always be one of our industry's top priorities. As a result, we're constantly seeking the best safety training and certification opportunities to share with you—which brings me to the Greater Chesapeake Damage Prevention Training Conference (GCDPTC) for this year.

The USPCD is a title sponsor of the 2010 GCDPTC, which will be held October 20-22 at the Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel in Ocean City, Maryland.

Training sessions will cover the following topics:

- Update 2010: New and Proposed Damage Prevention Legislation & Regulation

- Damage Prevention 2020: The Future of Damage Prevention
- Regional Benefits of Common Ground Alliance National Initiatives
- Beyond Just Dollars: The Human Cost of a Damage
- Federal Damage Prevention Initiatives
- Advancements in Call Center Operations: Mapping You to the Excavation Site
- Keys to Getting to a Better Locate

Full information about the conference training sessions along with sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities can be found at the following site: www.missutility.net/gcdptc. Registration is now open at www.gcdptc.eventbrite.com.

We hope to see you at the conference in Ocean City this fall. So BE SAFE and continue to look out for one another when you're on the job.

Sincerely,

Dave Kertis

Safety First

Portable Ladder Safety Tips by Frank Dobson

Each year since 1971, falls have ranked as number one or number two on the OSHA list of the top ten citable offenses for all U.S. industries. Work on ladders is a common activity leading to falls.

Workers tend to fall from portable ladders because they do not observe the following safety guidelines or because they try to use the ladders in ways contrary to their designed purpose. These safety precautions apply to work on stepladders, straight ladders, extension ladders, and combination ladders.

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

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

- Read and follow all labels/markings on the ladder.
- Avoid electrical hazards by looking for overhead power lines before handling a ladder. Avoid using metal ladders near power lines or exposed energized electrical equipment.
- Always inspect the ladder prior to using it. If the ladder is damaged, it must be

removed from service and tagged until it is repaired or discarded.

- Always maintain a three-point contact (two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand) on the ladder when climbing. Also, keep your body near the middle of the steps and always face the ladder while climbing.
- Use ladders and appropriate accessories (ladder levelers, jacks, or hooks) only for their designed purposes.
- Keep ladders free of any slippery material on the rungs, steps, or feet.
- Do not use a self-supporting ladder (stepladder) as a single ladder or in a partially closed position.
- Do not use the top step/rung of a ladder as a step/rung unless it was designed for that purpose.
- Use a ladder only on a stable and level surface, unless it has been secured (top or bottom) to prevent displacement.
- Do not place a ladder on boxes, barrels, or other unstable bases to obtain additional height.
- Do not move or shift a ladder while a person or equipment is on the ladder.
- Ensure that extension or straight ladders used to access an elevated surface extend at least three feet above the point of support. Do not stand on the top three rungs of a straight ladder or extension ladder.

- Place the base of the ladder a quarter of the working length of the ladder away from the wall or other vertical surface (four to one) to achieve the proper angle for safely setting up a ladder.
- Secure a ladder that is being used in any location where it cannot be displaced by other work activities. If the ladder cannot be secured, erect a barricade to keep traffic away from the ladder.
- Be sure that all locks on an extension ladder are properly engaged.
- Do not exceed the maximum load rating of a ladder. Be aware of the ladder's load rating or the weight it is supporting, including the weight of any tools or equipment.



Photo courtesy Frank Dobson

Locator Profile: Phil Morris

"I learn something new every day."

So says Phil Morris, a Delmarva Power facility locator with more than fourteen years' experience in the locating business. After an eight-year stint in the United States Marine Corps, Phil wanted to find a job that would be both challenging and offer a daily change in scenery. Within a month of leaving the Marines, Phil met a friend working as a locator at a construction site. After learning a bit about the job, Phil wanted to know how he could get started in such an "easy" career.



Photo courtesy Dave Kertis

A few weeks later, he enrolled in a six-week course for locating telephone, gas, electric, and cable TV wires for a locating company in New Jersey. He quickly discovered that locating was definitely not as easy as it first appeared, nor was

it the type of position to be taken lightly. Phil stayed with that company for four years, gradually rising through the ranks as a locator, lead locator, damage investigator, and eventually a supervisor for fifteen employees in a four-county area.

When opportunity knocked, Phil accepted a position as an outside project engineer/locator for a company based in northern New Jersey. The company was responsible for designing, building, and protecting a major fiber optic network for the EZ Pass system on Interstate 95 that covered Maryland to New York, the Atlantic City Expressway into Atlantic City, and the Garden State Parkway from Cape May to New York. Phil was with that company for nearly two years when a scandal involving the parent company forced his employer to file for bankruptcy and prompted Phil to start looking for a new job.

He uploaded his resume onto an Internet job search site, and his extensive experience caught the attention of a Human Resources recruiter for Delmarva Power. After a telephone interview, Phil was quickly hired to be a facility locator for Gas and Electric.

"Eight years later, here I am doing what I love," says Phil. "No matter how long I've been doing locating or construction projects, there is always someone who has more experience or there is that one job that reminds me that no job in the construction business is a 'normal' job."

Meeting Minutes

June Highlights

1. Fiber Optic Repair Demonstration

Billy Miles and Bill Russell gave a step-by-step demonstration of splicing for underground installation of fiber optic cabling. Although it is not difficult to repair cables, the process is labor intensive and expensive, thus reinforcing the importance of ensuring that people call before they dig.

2. Excavator Concerns

Mike Leager of Leager Septic raised numerous concerns about his inability to reach the locators at a particular project site in New Castle. Because his company does not have Internet access, he does not always receive information about his projects in a timely manner. Matt Ruddo said that Miss Utility could send information to the company's fax number. People suggested that he also could call in a meeting ticket to air his grievances with the facility owners.

3. Facility Owner Concerns

Judy Lonsdale mentioned that Highland Development Corporation has called in a large volume of locate tickets in Millsboro. Brad Ebaugh contacted the company and suggested it use design tickets instead.

4. Public Awareness

Miss Utility representatives handed out more than 300 frisbees at the Safe Summer Kid's Day in Camden, Delaware.

5. One Call Concepts

Matt Ruddo reviewed the monthly report and noted that Internet Ticketing (ITIC) accounted for 60 percent of May tickets. The Maryland One Call Law was signed May 20 and will go into effect October 1, 2010.

July Highlights

1. Presentation on Damage Manager Software

Kelly Ruddo introduced a web-based software program, "Damage Manager," that will be added to the standard ticket management program and can be customized to meet each company's needs.

2. Facility Owner Concerns

In response to concerns about "short notice" tickets, Dave Kertis plans to address the issue with the companies involved.

3. Locator Concerns

The group discussed the importance of communicating information more clearly on tickets to avoid the confusion that has arisen regarding directions for marking properties. Stan Beckett discussed locate ratings for work on state roads in Maryland. The Maryland Department of Transportation sends inspectors to evaluate work sites and determine if locators are wearing the proper clothing and have erected sufficient barriers to ensure safe completion of the work. Dave Kertis is working with Staking University near Chicago on a two-day seminar for locators.

4. Public Awareness

Representatives from USPCD attended the Maryland Municipal League meeting and plan to attend its August convention. The group discussed ways to promote greater awareness of the 811 system.

5. October Conference

Half the exhibit hall spots have been reserved, sponsorships are filling up, and 120 people have registered to attend the GCDPTC in Ocean City, Maryland. Tony Gersitz indicated that we still need a presenter for the session on the proposed law change in Delaware. Judy Lonsdale volunteered to be session moderator.

August Highlights

1. One Call Concepts

Dora Parks demonstrated a new application in ITIC that allows verification of specific locations on a map. Users need Internet Explorer 7 or higher, Firefox, or Java. Two consecutive grids on the map can be covered by one ticket; grids that touch diagonally cannot be combined onto one ticket request.

2. Facility Owner Concerns

Brad Ebaugh said that USPCD will address the problem of companies submitting too many emergency tickets through educational outreach and letters to the violators from the attorney general and/or OSHA. Audience members expressed concerns about a company that uses emergency tickets in lieu of regular tickets. The locator should communicate with the excavator to resolve these issues.

3. General Locate Issue

One locator discussed a situation when he was asked to locate on a large property for a temporary electric service. When the locator requested more specific instructions, the owner did not provide any. Brad Ebaugh reminded everyone that the locator has the authority to refuse to clear a ticket until he or she receives appropriate instructions.

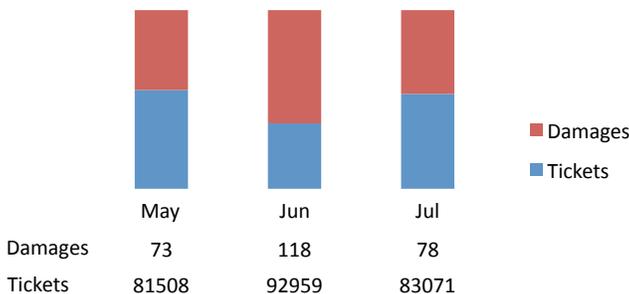
4. Public Awareness

USPCD attended both the Wyoming Peach Festival and Middletown Peach Festival. Tony Gersitz attended the Maryland Municipal League on June 28 and 29 with representatives from One Call Concepts.

5. October Conference

Vendor space is still available; 160 people have registered.

Ticket Statistics & Reported Damages—2010



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.



Downed trees and power lines led to headaches for customers and long hours of dangerous work for utility crews across our region.

Photo courtesy Delmarva Power

Calendar of Events

If you know of an event that would benefit members of the USPCD, please contact **Brad Ebaugh** at BEbaugh@decoop.com, and we will include it on our quarterly calendar of events schedule. Provide the dates, location, and any contact or registration information.

USPCD Meetings

- Thursday, September 16**
United Water
2000 First State Boulevard
Wilmington, Delaware
- Thursday, October 14**
City of Wilmington
101 Terminal Avenue
Wilmington, Delaware
- Thursday, November 18**
University of Delaware
222 S. Chapel Street
Newark, Delaware
- Thursday, December 16**
City of Newark
406 Phillips Avenue
Newark, Delaware

It's Not Too Late to Register

The 2010 Greater Chesapeake
Damage Prevention Training
Conference will be held October 20-22
in Ocean City, Maryland.

START YOUR TRAINING AT THE GREATER CHESAPEAKE DAMAGE PREVENTION TRAINING CONFERENCE

Interactive sessions will include:

- ✓ Recent changes in the Miss Utility law in Maryland and Delaware
- ✓ Technological advancements and the future of damage prevention
- ✓ Keys to getting a better locate
- ✓ Advancements in call center technology
- ✓ Federal damage prevention initiatives
- ✓ Regional benefits of Common Ground Alliance initiatives
- ✓ The human cost of a damage

A certificate of training will be awarded for every session attended.

OCTOBER 20-22 | OCEAN CITY, MD
missutility.net/gcdptc

Ask Miss Utility

How do I know if the utilities have located their underground facilities so I can start my excavation?

We work under a positive response system. An excavator submits a ticket or dig request to Miss Utility. Miss Utility notifies all utilities within the requested dig area to locate their underground facilities. The utility must provide a positive response using one of the Close Codes described in the USPCD pamphlet "Before You Dig—Get the Scoop and Miss the Utility" on the USPCD Web site (<http://www.missutilitydelmarva.com>) or the Miss Utility Web site (<http://missutility.net/delaware/ticketcheck.asp>). The excavator can then obtain the status of the locate request by visiting the Miss Utility site and entering the ticket number or calling the toll free ticket check number: 1-866-821-4226.

If excavators do not receive an e-mail or fax, they MUST call Ticket Check at 1-866-821-4226 or visit www.missutility.net to receive the status of the ticket prior to starting an excavation.

*Do you have a question for Miss Utility?
Send it to Brad Ebaugh at BEbaugh@decoop.com.*

Editorial Staff

- Bradley C. Ebaugh**—Vice President and Chair, Public Awareness Committee
- Frank Dobson**—Safety Consultant
- David Kertis**—President
- James Crowley**—Treasurer
- Jason A. Lyon**—Secretary
- Loretta S. Carlson**—Editor

Contributing Writers: Loretta Carlson, Frank Dobson, David Kertis, Jason Lyon, and Chris McMurry, MGH

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 Brad Ebaugh at BEbaugh@decoop.com.

