



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

The Scoop

A Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 4—Spring 2012

President's Message

Meet new Board President Brad Ebaugh and learn about his plans for 2012.

Page 1

Safety First

Learn how to recognize and avoid amputation hazards. Page 2

Meeting Minutes

Missed the meetings? Catch up with key issues from December, January, and February member meetings. Page 2

Board Members

Meet two of the newest members of Miss Utility's board of directors.

Page 3

Calendar

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

In Memoriam

WALTER G. ROBBINS

Past President and Business Manager of
Miss Utility of Delmarva

February 26, 1927-February 21, 2012

President's Message



Dear Friends:

I have been serving on the board of Miss Utility of Delmarva as the Delaware Electric Cooperative representative for the past several years. In January, I was elected president, replacing Dave Kertis of Delmarva Power. Dave continues as a board member, and I hope to carry on many of the improvements and projects he initiated during his tenure.

I am blessed to be working with a talented group of enthusiastic board members and officers. Thomas Matich, City of Milford, was installed as the new vice president; Jason Lyon, City of Dover, will continue as secretary; and James Crowley, Easton Utilities, will continue as treasurer.

Congratulations to Judy Lonsdale (Verizon), Paul Elwood (Premier Utility Services), and Tony Gersitz (AAGG). They were elected for two-year terms on the board. Past presidents Bud Swift and Dan Scalone were appointed to serve another term as honorary board members.

Many thanks for all the hard work and time donated by all these committed board members. What an honor to help lead such a talented and dedicated group of damage prevention professionals.

We have planned an aggressive schedule of events for 2012 to share the message about the importance of lawful and prudent excavation practices with professional excavators, homeowners, school children, and the general public. We will be visible at conventions and expos, the State Fair, community events, schools, fire departments, company safety meetings, and our own Greater Chesapeake Damage Prevention and Training Conference. We encourage your participation in the planning and execution of these events. As an all-volunteer organization, we need everyone's help to spread our "Miss the Utility" message.

In 2012, we also plan to pursue an update to the Delaware Code, Title 26, Underground Utility Damage. We believe such an update will add teeth to the enforcement provisions, comply with U.S. Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous

Materials Safety Administration guidelines, and get the law more in line with Common Ground Alliance best practices. We have obtained input from facility owners, excavators, contractors, and locating companies to put together a fair and equitable law that everyone can live with and that still protects workers, the public, and the utility infrastructure. We meet regularly and welcome your input. Contact a board member (contact information listed on the Web site) so your ideas, suggestions, and participation may be woven into this effort.

This April, Miss Utility of Delmarva will once again participate in Safe Digging Month, a national program designed to spread our message about the importance of safe excavation practices. Look for our message on the Shore Birds' marquee on Route 50 and our presence at Arbor Day events, and watch for the governor's proclamation.

You can help us spread the word, too. We need your ideas, participation, and input. Our meeting schedule is on the Web site. We'd love to see you!

Sincerely,

Safety First

Guard Against Amputation Hazards by Frank Dobson

Every year, thousands of workers lose fingertips or fingers, hands, feet, and other body parts due to workplace accidents. Although amputation injuries can occur during a variety of activities and while using many types of equipment, most amputations occur through compression, crushing, or when body parts are caught between or struck by objects.

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

Always Think Safety!



High-Risk Activities

Amputations occur most often when workers operate unguarded or inadequately safeguarded equipment such as the following:

- Mechanical power presses
- Power press brakes
- Powered and nonpowered conveyors
- Roll-forming and roll-bending machines
- Food slicers and meat grinders
- Band saws, table saws, and portable saws
- Drill presses
- Milling machines
- Shears, grinders, and slitters

Take Steps to Work Safely

The most important way to prevent amputation injuries is to **teach workers to recognize and avoid amputation hazards**. Employees must receive training in following safe work practices and operating equipment safely. Management must establish administrative controls to ensure that all safety systems are in place and all equipment is properly guarded.



The best way to prevent amputations caused by stationary or portable machinery is with machine safeguarding:

- **Guards** provide physical barriers to hazardous areas. They should be secure and strong, and workers should not be able to bypass, remove, or tamper with them. Guards should not obstruct the operator's view or prevent employees from working.
- **Devices** help prevent contact with points of operation and may replace or supplement guards. Devices such as fail-safe switches or deadman switches can interrupt the normal cycle of the machine when the operator's hands are at the point of operation.

Photos courtesy Frank Dobson

Meeting Minutes

December Highlights

1. Facility Owner Concerns

John Hughes reported an incident when a contractor severed and tried to repair an underground Verizon utility. Only authorized contractors are permitted to repair Verizon infrastructure. The contractor in question does not usually have a representative at the monthly meetings and should be encouraged to send one. Dave Kertis reported an incident when a contractor submitted a ticket reading "may have hit gas line." The contractor did not realize such incidents should be called in as emergencies. Mr. Kertis contacted the contractor and explained the protocol.

2. General Locate Issues

Brad Ebaugh commended Jim Verga for training he provided Delaware Electric Co-op locators on new locating equipment.

3. Membership

The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) applied for membership and would like to start a pilot program for 600 contaminated sites in Delaware. A meeting is planned to discuss what facilities DNREC owns and determine how it would respond to

tickets. The Town of Sudlersville also applied for membership.

4. One Call Concepts

Dora Parks noted that, although One Call Concepts has reduced its staff, it continues to respond to callers in less time than what is required by its contract. The average response time is 16 seconds.

January Highlights

1. Presentation: Year in Review

Dave Kertis presented USPCD highlights from 2011 and outlined goals for 2012. Among notable achievements, he discussed locator and excavator recognition awards, safety presentations to local companies, and the work of the law enforcement committee. He also commended Thomas Matich, Tony Gersitz, and Rich Cleveland for attending every meeting in 2011. On the financial side, he noted that Miss Utility of Delmarva's assets have decreased by \$7,000.

2. One Call Concepts

Dora Parks reviewed Kappa's new mapping system. Kappa will engage a digital company to align the current maps with the new Kappa grids and anticipates the work will be completed within six to eight months.

3. General Locate Issues

Thomas Matich asked for clarification on using the National Ticket Management System (NTMS), the software program that monitors tickets for utility companies. He said that some locators believe that tickets cannot be checked/revised after they are closed out, because the ticket disappears once it has been coded. Jim Crowley asked if a backup question window could be added that requires users to confirm that they are ready to submit the ticket. Wendy Stack noted that locators are able to edit tickets after they enter information into NTMS. Dora Parks said notes about errors are sent via fax and e-mail, although some excavators say they do not receive this information.

4. Public Awareness

The committee has scaled back the number and types of giveaways ordered, thus reducing inventory and obtaining a better price on individual items. The committee sent representatives to the I Love Smyrna School District event on February 25 and the Rural Water Show in Harrington on February 28, 29, and March 1. Rich Cleveland represented Miss Utility at fire department training sessions in Smyrna on February 27. Thomas Matich asked members to visit and "like" the Miss Utility of Delmarva Facebook page.

Meet New Board Officers

Thomas Matich

Thomas Matich has worked for the City of Milford since November 2008. As the city's sole utility locator, Thomas is responsible for damage protection on all city-owned water, sewer, electric, and fiber-optic lines. He performs all in-house GPS and CAD work, maintains and updates all utility prints, and serves as the liaison for DelDOT permitting. For the past four years, Thomas has represented the city at Miss Utility's monthly meetings. He was elected to the board in 2011 and became vice president in 2012.



Photo by
Rick Giammaria

Thomas has been involved with public utilities since he was fourteen years old and started working with the Ellsworth Borough (PA) Water Department. At the age of seventeen, he enlisted in the United States Air Force and served as a communication and navigation systems apprentice.

During his career, Thomas has worked in seven states for twelve utility service providers, including Utiliquest. He has played key roles in starting five locating subcontracts and trained and managed close to one hundred successful locators. Thomas is an experienced utility excavator and has worked numerous utility construction jobs as a laborer for the Ellsworth (PA) Water Department, Georgetown (DE) Underground Locating Services, and the City of Milford. He is also a member of the American Public Works Association.

A three-time winner of the USPCD locators' safety award, Thomas coaches youth flag football for Kent County Parks and Recreation. He and his girlfriend, Nicole, reside in Hartly, Delaware, with their daughter, Alannah, and their dog, Bishop.

Paul Elwood

For the past twelve years, Paul Elwood has been a manager of operations for two different locating companies, first for Utiliquest and then, in the past year, for Premier Utility Services. At Premier, he manages three other supervisors and eighteen locators working on projects for Delmarva Power, United Water, and Comcast in Delaware, Maryland, and North Carolina. Overseeing the entire locating operation, he ensures that enough people have been assigned to the job and the work gets done properly. Paul worked his way up the ladder to his current management position, starting as a locator for Utiliquest in 2000.



Photo by Dave Kertis

In January 2012, Paul was elected to a two-year term on the board. He first became involved with Miss Utility in 2002 and served as secretary on the board of directors in 2005.

He enjoys the challenges of learning about the many facets of damage prevention and reaching out to educate contractors and homeowners. Although Paul has a passionate dedication to damage prevention in the utility industry, his first career was as an electrician. He served a four-year apprenticeship and later studied instrumentation at Delaware Technical and Community College.

Paul and his wife have two daughters and two sons. He is an avid outdoorsman and particularly enjoys fishing and crabbing.

Minutes, continued from page 2

February Highlights

1. Presentation: Scope of FTTP/FIOS

John Hughes and Judy Lonsdale spoke about Verizon's plans for 2012. This year, Verizon has no new areas but will primarily be finishing up its license franchise agreements. They noted that Danella is Verizon's prime contractor and has responsibility for knowing and complying with Verizon's safety standards.

2. Presentation: OMBN

Dave Piccoli, the program manager for One Maryland Broadband Network (OMBN), said it would be laying 1,300 miles of fiber optics throughout the state. OMBN received a grant of \$115 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the 2009 federal stimulus package. The goal of ARRA is to provide broadband access to every home and business in Maryland. OMBN management has been reaching out to all stakeholders and plans to send project managers to future Miss Utility meetings.

3. Presentation: Eagle Trace HOA

Stephanie Lavin, director of the Eagle Trace homeowners association in Bear, Delaware, spoke about complaints from residents in her community. The primary complaints concerned excess paint left on the ground and holes left uncovered after work is complete. A representative from the responsible company said it will fix any infrastructures that pose safety hazards to the public.

4. Facility Owner Concerns

John Hughes reported damage to fiber in a local apartment community. Upon investigating the incident, he determined that the wording on the tickets was ambiguous, and he learned that the excavator allegedly taped a damaged gas main. Dave Kertis will approach the company involved to arrange an educational presentation.

5. New Business

Dave Kertis will be placing 811 stickers on the Delmarva fleet. Brad Ebaugh asked for members to help at public awareness events, such as the recent I Love Smyrna School Day and Rural Water Show. Many events are being planned for Safe Digging Month in April, and volunteers are needed to be at the Miss Utility booth to hand out information and talk to the public.

Support Our Awards Banquet

It's that time of year again: Companies in Delaware and Maryland have nominated locators who will be recognized for their exemplary safety performance at the fourth annual Locators Award Banquet. This year the banquet will be held on April 26, 2012, in the Gold Room at the Harrington Fairgrounds Casino.

Twenty-four locators from ten companies met the award criteria. Most notably, they had no at-fault cuts for the one-year period from December 1, 2010, through November 30, 2011. This truly remarkable accomplishment keeps the public safe and protects critical utility underground infrastructure. We will publish the names and photos of this year's winners in the June issue of *The Scoop* and on our Web site: www.missutilitydelmarva.com.

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, March 15
 Delmarva Power/Conectiv
 Conference Center
 4100 South Wakefield Drive
 Newark, Delaware 19702

Thursday, April 19
 Delaware Rural Water Association
 210 Vickers Drive
 Milford, DE 19963

Thursday, May 17
 United Water
 2000 First State Boulevard
 Wilmington, DE 19804-3569

Thursday, June 21
 Tidewater Utilities
 1100 South Little Creek Road
 Dover, DE 19901-4727

	November	December	January
Damages	34	28	35
Tickets	69,140	60,436	63,955
Percentage (damages/tickets)	0.049%	0.047%	0.055%

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.

Ask Miss Utility

I have noticed political candidates' signs spring up "everywhere" in the months preceding an election. When the poles holding these signs are dug or pounded into the ground, could they hit an underground utility? Are the sign installers required to contact Miss Utility?

Great questions. If you are going to excavate, you must contact Miss Utility so you can "Miss the Utilities." Delaware law defines pounding in signposts as excavation and requires a Miss Utility ticket.

Title 26 Public Utilities, Chapter 8, 802 (7) states, "Excavate or excavation shall mean any operation in which earth, rock or other material in the ground is moved, removed or otherwise displaced or disturbed by means of any tools, equipment or explosives and includes, without limitation, grading, trenching, digging, dredging, ditching, drilling, augering, tunnelling, boring, backfilling, post pounding, driving objects into the ground, installation of form pins, hammering, scraping, cable or pipe plowing or driving, but does not include the surface cultivation of the soil for agricultural purposes, such as tilling, or patch-type paving where the same, including cutback, does not exceed 12 inches in depth measured from the surface of the pavement being patched."

Installing political signs (and realtor "For Sale" signs) falls under this definition. The responsible parties must identify the underground utilities before pounding in signposts to ensure that they do not cut or puncture gas and electric lines or sever fiber optic lines. This service is provided at no charge to the excavator.

Remember: It is against the law to pound in signposts without contacting Miss Utility. Political candidates should set the example by abiding by the law and promoting public safety.

Do you have a question for Miss Utility?

Send it to Brad Ebaugh at BEbaugh@decoop.com.

Editorial Staff

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

Contributing Writers: Loretta Carlson, Frank Dobson, Bradley Ebaugh, Paul Elwood, Jason Lyon, and Thomas Matich

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



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.