



The Scoop

A Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 3—Winter 2011

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Photo courtesy Rick Giammaria

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We Need Your Votes!

Come to the monthly meeting on January 19 and help us fill three vacancies on the board. Each USPCD member organization is eligible to cast one vote. You can find the list of current members at the following Web site: www.missutilitydelmarva.com. Find the names of our nominees in the Meeting Minutes article on page 3.

President's Message



Dear Friends:

As 2011 comes to a close, I hope that you all can look back on a safe and productive year. I know that Miss Utility of Delmarva had a good year. As always, we set high goals for our organization, and I am happy to list some of our accomplishments.

April

We held our third annual Locator Achievement Awards program.

We again supported Common Ground Alliance's Safe Digging Month with a live news piece on WBOC-TV16 and a radio segment on WDEL-1150. We published articles in newspapers and on Web sites; sent out e-mails publicizing Safe Digging Month events; and sponsored many activities in the City of

Wilmington. Delaware Governor Jack Markell again issued an official proclamation designating April as Safe Digging Month.

This year we also formed partnerships with local firehouses in Delaware and Maryland to promote the importance of calling 811.

November

We presented our first Dig Smart Award in Delaware to Teal Construction in recognition of the work of an outstanding excavator.

We held our third annual regional conference: the Greater Chesapeake Damage Prevention Training Conference (GCDPTC). See the article on page 3 for details.

Ongoing Events

Throughout the year, we advertised information about Miss Utility and 811 services in Ace Hardware stores.

We also ran programs at minor league baseball parks with the cooperation of two local teams: the Wilmington Blue Rocks and the Salisbury Shorebirds.

2012 Plans

We have scheduled the ceremony for the fourth annual Locator Achievement Awards in April at Dover Downs.

We have already begun making plans for the fourth annual GCDPTC for the fall of 2012.

We will continue to update provisions to the Underground Utility Damage Prevention and Safety Act and the accompanying handbooks.

We plan to offer more educational opportunities to excavators, locators, facility owners, and others connected with the excavating community.

Perhaps most importantly, facility owners, excavators, locators, and contractors have been working together to develop a new law that includes enforcement guidelines, establishes clear penalties, and meets the needs of all parties. PHMSA, the PSC, and OSHA all support this work. Our goal is for this law to increase safety, reduce damages, provide education, and reduce down time.

I am very excited about what we accomplished in 2011 and what we have planned for 2012. We look forward to our continuing work with the excavating community to make Delmarva a safer place to live and work.

I wish you and your families a SAFE and happy holiday.

Sincerely,

Dave Kertis

Safety First

OSHA Guidelines: Portable Generator Safety by Frank Dobson

In recent months, our region has experienced quite a few power outages due to hurricanes and major thunderstorms.

When we lose power in our homes and workplaces, we turn to portable generators to temporarily supply us the power we need to protect our home food supply and our work operations. Portable generators are internal combustion engines that are used to generate electricity and are commonly used in disaster response. They can be dangerous if used incorrectly.

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



Major Causes of Injuries and Fatalities

- Shocks and electrocution from improper use of power or accidentally energizing other electrical systems
- Carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from the generator's exhaust
- Fires from improperly refueling the generator or inappropriately storing fuel

Safe Work Practices

- Inspect portable generators for damage or loose fuel lines that may have occurred during transportation and/or handling.
- Keep the generator dry.
- Maintain and operate generators in accordance with the manufacturer's use and safety instructions.
- **Never** attach a generator directly to the electrical system of a structure (home, office, or trailer) unless the generator has a properly installed transfer switch, because this creates a risk of electrocution for utility workers.
- Always plug electrical appliances directly into the generator using the manufacturer's supplied cords. Use undamaged heavy-duty, three-pronged extension cords that are grounded.

- Use ground fault circuit interrupters per the manufacturer's instructions.
- Before refueling, shut down the generator. **Never** store fuel indoors.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Symptoms of CO poisoning include dizziness, headache, nausea, and fatigue. CO is a colorless, odorless, toxic gas. Many people have died from CO poisoning because their generators were not adequately ventilated.



- **Never** use a generator indoors.
- **Never** place a generator outdoors near doors, windows, or vents.
- If you or people around you show symptoms of CO poisoning, get to fresh air immediately and seek medical attention.

Photos courtesy Frank Dobson

Cleared/No Conflict ... Or Is It?

One of the consequences of having an increase in business construction activity is the increased potential for damage to underground facilities. Of particular concern are contractor relationships and communications when multiple contractors are working on the same site, but not at the same time—an issue that was raised at the September USPCD meeting and that I brushed aside until it caused a problem in my own backyard.

My story goes something like this: I needed both new underground electric service and a new natural gas line. All utilities submitted locate requests. The gas contractor came first, installed the gas line and meter, and marked the site with yellow flags. The crew chief completed his company's required pre- and post-excavation checklist.

Before the electric contractor arrived, a storm washed away the gas contractor's flags. The electric contractor had a "marked" status on his ticket, and he began digging at the transformer heading toward

the meter socket, cutting through the half-inch PE 60 psi gas service. The excess flow valve shut down the flow of gas, and the operator shut down his trencher and called 911 and the gas company.

Who is to blame for this incident? Who pays for the repair?

In my situation, neither the gas contractor nor the electric contractor believes they are responsible. Was there something one or both could have done to avoid this incident? The answer is yes.

CGA Best Practice 5-10, Locate Verification, provides guidelines for contractors.

Practice Statement: Prior to excavation, excavators verify they are at the correct location and verify locate markings and, to the best of their ability, check for unmarked facilities.

Practice Description: Upon arrival at the excavation site prior to beginning the excavation, verify that the dig site matches the one call request and is timely. Verify that all facilities have been marked, reviewing color codes if in doubt. Verify all service feeds from buildings and homes. Check for any visible signs of underground facilities, such as pedestals, risers, meters, and new trench lines. Check for any facilities that are



Photo by Jim Crowley

not members of the one-call center and contact someone to get them located. Use of a pre-excavation checklist is recommended by insurers and practiced by responsible excavating contractors.

So take time to look around for signs of mismarked or unmarked facilities before you start to dig. You may prevent *my* story from becoming *your* story.

GCDPTC a Resounding Success

More than 300 participants from around the region came together at this year's Greater Chesapeake Damage Prevention Training Conference (GCDPTC) to learn and share best practices in preventing underground utility damages. Miss Utility of Delmarva, Miss Utility of Maryland, District One Call, and more than 15 other organizations sponsored the conference, which took place from November 2 through 4 in Ocean City, Maryland, at the Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel.

Over the course of three days, participants attended training sessions and perused exhibits presented by 30 industry vendors. The 811 Bike, created by Paul Jr. Designs for One Call Concepts, was also unveiled for the first time. The bike will tour the country to promote the 811 phone number and encourage people to learn about damage prevention best practices.

The conference's training sessions focused on effective underground utility damage prevention, including new technologies for communicating with the one-call center and an update on the Maryland Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Authority. The following training sessions were offered at this year's conference:

- Beyond Just Dollars: The Human Cost of a Damage
- Damage Reporting Applications—Benefits of Digital Records
- Federal Damage Prevention Initiatives
- Miss Utility 101
- One-Call Smartphone Application
- One Maryland Broadband Network Update
- OSHA/MOSH Update

- Regional Benefits of the Common Ground Alliance
- Understanding Natural Gas

In addition to the training sessions, the conference included a keynote presentation by Mr. Eric Giguere of Safety Awareness Solutions. Mr. Giguere recounted his harrowing experience of being buried alive when a trench collapsed on him at a construction site. He delivered a powerful safety message to conference attendees through his story.

The GCDPTC also introduced the Maryland Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Authority, which will soon begin hearing complaints and assessing penalties for those who violate state law. Authorized by the passage of the new Miss Utility One Call Law by the Maryland General Assembly in 2010, the nine-member authority reported on the progress it has made since its kickoff meeting in May of this year.

"On behalf of the entire 2011 Greater Chesapeake Damage Prevention Training Conference Committee, I would like to thank our sponsors, exhibitors, speakers, attendees and Paul Jr. Designs for making the conference's third year an overwhelming success," said Matt Ruddo, conference committee chairman. "The level of participation and engagement seems to grow every year, thanks in no small part to the dedicated damage prevention community in our region."



Unveiling the 811 Bike
Photo by Rick Giammaria, PEPCO Holdings

Meeting Minutes

September Highlights

1. Tom Hoff, One Call Concepts

Mr. Hoff discussed the current status and new code of conduct for the Maryland Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Authority (MDDPA). The group has its own Web site, www.mddpa.org, and e-mail address, info@mddpa.org.

2. Facility Owner Concerns

Abuse of emergency tickets continues to be an issue, and Dave Kertis is addressing this concern with companies as needed.

3. General Locate Issues

The group addressed problems that can arise when more than one contractor is working on the same property. See article by Jim Crowley on page 2.

4. Public Awareness

The Public Awareness Committee continues to be an active presence in the community. Members had tables at the Delaware Rural Water event on August 26 and the City of Newark Days on September 18.

October Highlights

1. Facility Owner Concerns

The group discussed need for more education on issues that can arise when work on one property affects an adjacent property. John Hughes noted that Verizon has policy of notifying owners of properties adjoining properties where its contractors are working.

2. One Call Concepts

The group discussed problems that have arisen as OCC switches from using ADC maps to Kappa's new grid system. Paul Elwood suggested that OCC produce its own maps, and Brad Ebaugh suggested switching to a latitude/longitude system. Dora Parks noted that such options are either too expensive or not practical at this point. She said that OCC may consider adopting a latitude/longitude system in the future.

3. Law Enforcement Committee

The committee met on October 5 to review the Maryland enforcement provisions in the new law to see how we might incorporate them into the proposed Delaware law. Anyone can now report an infraction or highlight a problem in the locating/excavating community on our Web site at www.missutilitydelmarva.com.

November Highlights

1. Facility Owner Concerns

Dave Kertis noted that tent companies do not call Miss Utility when using tent stakes. Brad Ebaugh said that he has given presentations to tent companies, which generally do not seem to be aware of the Miss Utility Law. Judy Lonsdale noted that several excavators have cut and then repaired service wires without contacting Miss Utility. She will follow up to educate them on the proper protocol.

2. Locator Concerns

Wayne Williams stressed the importance of proper white lining, which helps the locator complete the job more easily and accurately. Brad Ebaugh noted that locators are able to mark tickets as "more information needed."

3. Board Elections

Election of new board members will be conducted at the January 19, 2012, meeting. One ballot will be collected from each organization. Nominees are Paul Elwood, Premier Locating; Tony Gersitz, honorary member (incumbent); Bud Swift, honorary member (incumbent); and Judy Lonsdale, Verizon (incumbent).

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, December 15

City of Newark
220 Elkton Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Thursday, January 19

J. W. Pitts Center
10 Electric Avenue
Dover, Delaware 19904

Thursday, February 16

Hilton Garden Inn
1706 North DuPont Highway
Dover, DE 19901

Thursday, March 15

Delmarva Power/Connectiv
Conference Center
4100 South Wakefield Drive
Newark, Delaware 19702

	August	September	October
Damages	44	36	46
Tickets	83,805	83,471	80,583
Percentage (damages / tickets)	0.053%	0.043%	0.057%

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

What is an Emergency Ticket and what kind of response should I expect?

Maryland and Delaware laws and Common Ground Alliance agree that an emergency is a sudden or unforeseen occurrence involving a clear and imminent danger to life, health, or property; the interruption of essential utility services; or the blockage of transportation facilities that requires immediate action.

USPCD members have agreed to try and respond to bona fide emergency tickets within two hours. Required response time, however, is the same as it is for any other excavate ticket.

You must not call something an “emergency” to mitigate poor planning. If excavators submit an Emergency Locate Request for a job that is not an emergency as defined above, they disrupt the locate workforce and all the excavators that submit their tickets properly. USPCD is actively tracking emergency tickets and will be contacting and educating excavators that violate the intent of the law. If this does not stop the bogus emergency requests, we will ask OSHA and the PSC to take legal action.

Get ‘Er Done Tip: If your locate job is in a development, provide the lot number, 911 address, and development name. This will help the locators and make it easier for them to find your excavation site and clear the ticket.

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

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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.