



**CALL MISS UTILITIES**

**WARNING!**

**MAKE SURE YOU HAVE  
POTHOLED THE  
LIVE LINE**

# **Abandoned Underground Utility Line Congestion**

**ABANDONDED LINES  
MAY BE IN AREA**

**A REPRESENTATIVE  
WILL HELP YOU WIN  
3 HOURS**

**DIG WITH CARE**

**LOOK AT THE TICKET CODE**

**A CONTRACTOR'S  
PERSPECTIVE**

# PRESENTER: ROBERT “BOB” MEADS, PRESIDENT

R&M Consultants & Project Management, LLC  
Virginia Beach, VA

## Purpose of Presentation

- To share how I have seen our right-of-ways become grossly overcrowded in my 50 plus years working in the heavy underground sewer and water industry
- To show examples of how abandoned underground utilities have created safety hazards and lost production (\$) on several large road projects I have managed.

## Purpose of Presentation (Continued)

- To ask for the help of everyone in this room to partner and find solutions to stop leaving abandoned lines in the ground before they cause a serious accident in Virginia .

# WORK IN MY INDUSTRY IS DEEP

- Sewer lines in the eastern part of Virginia are at the bottom of the spaghetti mess of buried new and abandoned lines.
- Most sewer lines in the area are between 8 to 25 feet deep.
- We have to pothole and protect all communication lines, electrical lines, petroleum lines, and gas lines to get to the bottom.

# Examples of Deep, Heavy Underground Construction



18" Sewer Replacement – 10 FEET DEEP  
Warwick Blvd, Newport News

# Examples of Deep, Heavy Underground Construction



18" Sewer Replacement – 10 FEET DEEP  
Warwick Blvd, Newport News

# Examples of Deep, Heavy Underground Construction



12" Sewer Force Main at NIGHT – 8 FEET DEEP  
Warwick Blvd, Newport News

# Examples of Heavy Underground Construction



42” Storm Water System - Beside Electrical Transformer  
Virginia Beach

# Examples of Heavy Underground Construction



Ea. Joint - 6ft long by 12ft wide by 10ft high Storm Water Culvert  
16 TONS EACH  
Norfolk, VA

# Examples of Heavy Underground Construction



12” Sewer Replacement – Parallel to Gas  
Kill Devil Hills, NC

# Examples of Heavy Underground Construction



Extra Large Sewer Manhole and Pipe

# Examples of Deep Heavy Underground Construction



42" Sewer Force Main – 10 TO 20 FEET DEEP  
Indian River and Kempsville Road

# Examples of Deep, Heavy Underground Construction



Replacement of Extra Large Sewer Manhole  
City of Norfolk

# Examples of Deep, Heavy Underground Construction



Emergency Sewer Repair – 14 FEET DEEP  
City of Norfolk

# Examples of Heavy Underground Construction



58" X 91" X 8' LONG ELIPTICAL – 9 TONS PER JOINT  
Warwick Blvd, Newport News

# I Started in The Construction Business in 1958



# We Did Not Have to Deal With Congested or Abandoned Lines



# Look at the mess we have to deal with today



Can you tell if these lines are live or abandoned?

# Look at the mess we have to deal with today



Can you tell if these lines are live or abandoned?

# Look at the mess we have to deal with today



Can you tell if these lines are live or abandoned?

# Look at the mess we have to deal with today



Maybe these guys can figure it out?

# My last project with Suburban Grading & Utilities, Inc.



We expanded 3 Miles of Lynnhaven Parkway from a 4 lane divided to a 6 lane divided highway w/ turn lanes. We installed a total of 19,000 linear feet of underground sewer, water, & storm drain.

We ran into many, many conflicts on this project with newly installed and abandoned lines

- A new underground **BULK FEEDER POWER DUCT** was relocated directly in line where the new piling on the bridge retaining wall was to be installed.
- I'm not sure who paid for it, but our work on this portion of the construction came to a halt and the duct **HAD TO BE RELOCATED AGAIN** so we could complete our work.

We ran into many, many conflicts on this project with newly installed and abandoned lines

- On the other side of the bridge, a **LARGE COMMUNICATION CABLE** was relocated directly in line where the new piling on the bridge retaining wall was to be installed.
- We had to stop and allow the cable company to **RELOCATE THEIR LINES AGAIN.**
- These are just 2 of the many conflicts we experienced.

This is a snapshot of a project I managed in Newport News with Suburban Grading & Utilities, Inc.



We expanded 1 ½ miles of Warwick Blvd. from a 4 lane divided to a 6 lane divided highway with turn lanes. We installed a total of 26,000 linear feet of underground sewer, water, & storm drain on this project.

Photo Taken  
1-24-2007

Approximate centerline  
of our storm drain  
installation

We paralleled and  
protected a **marked  
abandoned 2" gas  
line** for over 100' in  
our trench path



Old active,  
marked gas line  
running under  
Warwick Blvd.

Photo Taken  
1-24-2007

Tracer Wire

Newly installed  
**unmarked** line

Marked abandoned  
2" gas line



Most Excavators Try to Do the Right Thing..... But .....  
Occasionally Accidents Happen



**It's Not Our  
Fault!!!!!!!!!!**

# We Have Preconstruction and Ongoing Meetings

Pre-Planning



Crew Meetings



We Pothole

We Pothole

We Pothole

We Pothole

Gate 1 was closed for the day and we had a valid Miss Utility ticket with proper marks.

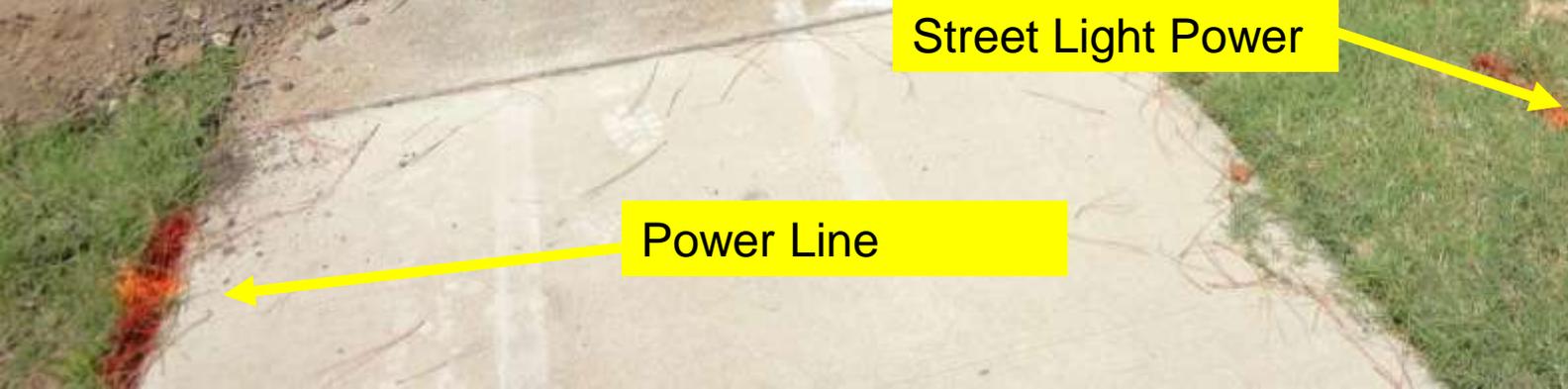
Communication



Multiple Potholes

Street Light Power

Power Line



We Pothole

We Pothole

We Pothole

We Pothole



**Pothole #2**



We Pothole

We Pothole

We Pothole

We Pothole

We hand dug an located 1 communication line, 1 street light power line, and 1 regular power line in this area

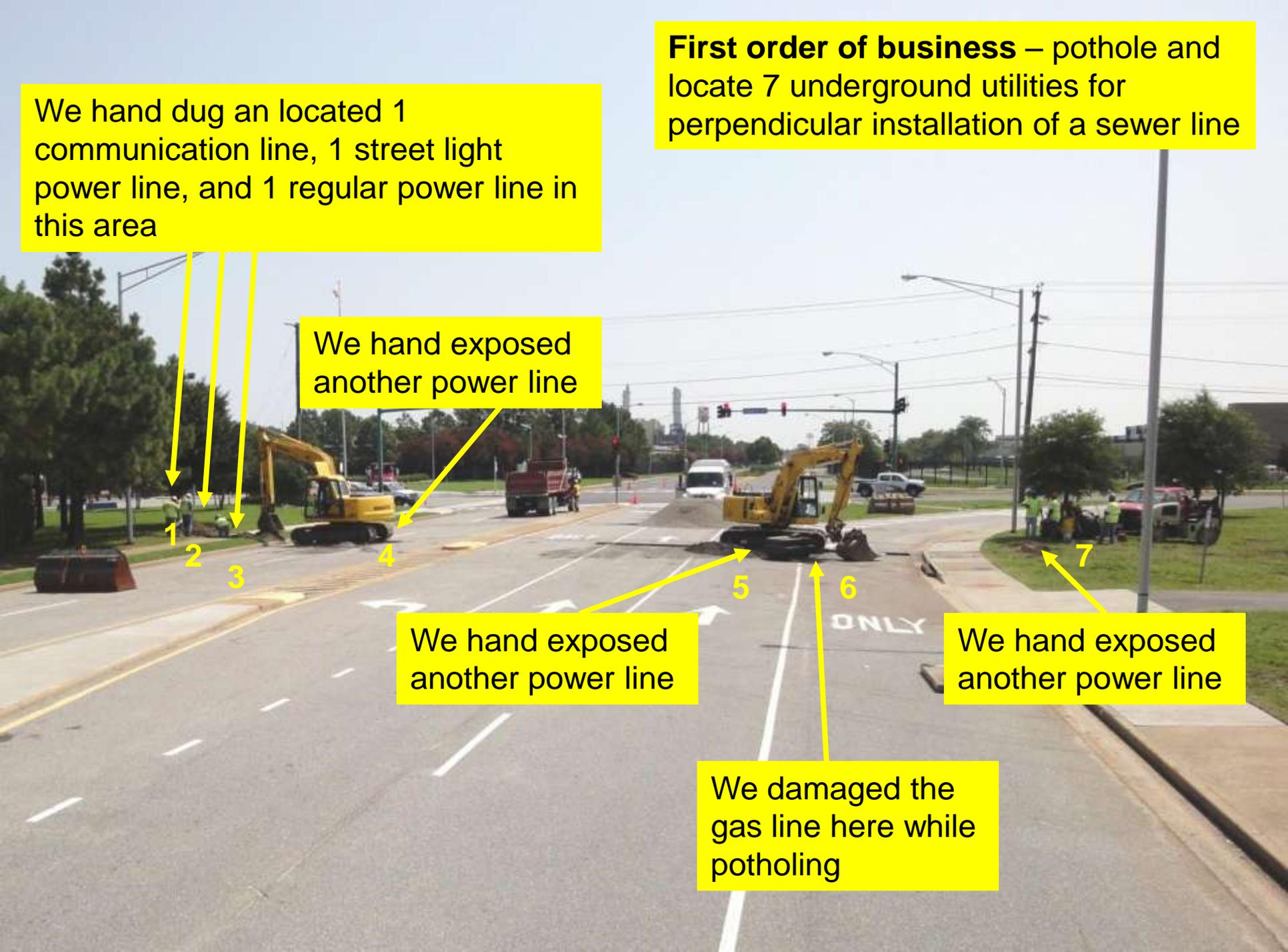
**First order of business** – pothole and locate 7 underground utilities for perpendicular installation of a sewer line

We hand exposed another power line

We hand exposed another power line

We hand exposed another power line

We damaged the gas line here while potholing



# We Try to Keep Charlie From Having A Mental Breakdown



**We Train all Our People To Respect The Marks**



**It's The Law**

**If We Had A Crystal Ball  
Maybe We Could Find The Solution**



# I Never Want to Tell An Employee's Family That Their Loved One is Never Coming Home Again



Everyone in this  
room has a stake  
in solving the  
abandoned line  
problem

# Partnering

Is

The

Only

Solution!

