

2007

MANITOBA *Oil & Gas Review*

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LINE ALERT

Makes Excavating Line Crossings Safer

By Karrienne Scott

Excavating line crossings is a potentially life threatening task that is undertaken by excavator operators every day. Although regulations and best practices have become more prevalent over the years, nothing has been implemented to help with the actual excavation of a line. The only tool historically available has been the use of care and caution. With over twenty years of excavating experience, nine as a hot line operator digging on underground utilities almost daily, the stress and damage caused by line strikes motivated Keith Barry to do something about it. He designed LINE ALERT, a panel that begins to guide an excavator 36 inches away from the utility being exposed.

Here's how it works: after locating the line and daylighting it, the LINE ALERT panel is inserted on top of the line using an insertion tool. A bright yellow ribbon is attached to the panel, and is visible above ground, creating a marker once the hole is backfilled. Having been fabricated for various soil types, the panel can then be left buried for up to 90 days. When it comes time to excavate the line, the panel shears off as the excavator bucket passes through it, leaving behind a highly visible colored reference as to the range of depth, and an actual measurement in inches, remaining to the buried line.

Ralph Caballero, Subsurface Utility Manager for DRMP, experienced LINE ALERT in action at the CGA Excavation Safety Conference in Orlando, FL where a live dig was set up to demonstrate the product. Ralph was impressed by what LINE ALERT means to the industry. "When the mar-

ket gets a hold of it and really uses it, it will be the next best thing since above ground utility markers," said Mr. Caballero. He not only commented on the safety aspects of the product, but he also saw it as being a real time saver for excavators as well. "They (excavators) don't have to get off of their machine to start hand digging, it takes away the guesswork...it's going to cut their digging time in half at least."

The Office of Pipeline Safety web site indicates that "the leading cause of gas distribution system incidents has been external force damage during excavation work near pipelines". A consistent and reliable process that provides accurate measurement of the depth remaining to the buried line is very much needed.

Clearly, there is a need for a new way to excavate over known lines. LINE ALERT is a highly effective solution for improving safety when exposing located lines, and is designed to work consistently and reliably in field conditions. It comes complete with a complementary online training and certification course, and is a cost efficient safety precaution that pays for itself in time and peace of mind.

For further information on how LINE ALERT can improve your excavation safety and efficiency, please call 204-480-1845 or visit their website at www.line-alert-panel.com.

Karrienne is a strategic planner with Static Interactive who provides support services to companies in Winnipeg, MB. ■

LINE ALERT™



Reduce Risks in Line Crossing Excavation with LINE ALERT

A single pipeline accident has the potential to cause a catastrophic disaster that can both kill and injure people, cause serious service disruptions and result in significant property damage, loss of work opportunity, community disruption, ecological damage and insurance liability.

static
interactive

For more information or to purchase LINE ALERT visit our website at www.line-alert-panel.com
Or, contact our Canadian Distributor
Bison Fire Protection Inc. Rob Read Ph. 204-237-3473

LINE ALERT:

- Makes it safer to excavate over an underground line
- Gives a constant visible guide to the distance from an underground line at all times
- Warns an excavator as he/she gets closer to the underground line
- Creates a much safer dig site by virtually eliminating the need to probe and by reducing the amount of time laborers spend in the ditch
- Potholed/Daylighted lines can be backfilled immediately, thereby reducing open hole hazards

