Horizontal Directional Drilling Requirements Subcommittee

4/21/2026

10:00am

Attendance: Kevin Campbell, Bryon Bedel, James Mandera, Melvin Henson, Micheal Burroughs, Michael Guastella, Matt Hines, Patrick Murphy, Scott Mergler, Larry Harvey, Joshua Dress, Brent St. Clair, Davy Myers, Alex Du De Voire, Joseph Dragovich, Jake Wright, Thomas/Stephen/Andrew, Deborah Harris, Russell Johnson, Mike Wartko, Dominick Belsar, Danielle Giannantonio, Justin Freudeman, Blake Ross, Don Huck, Gregory Vergamini, Stephanie Kromer, Elizabeth Pyles, Matt Gaugler, Mitch Cory, Jim Collins, Greg First, Chriss Russ, Brian Hickman, Casey Fritz, Lawrence Hampton,

James Mandera started the meeting at 10:01am

Reviewed meeting minutes from the previous meeting.

James Mandera- We are looking at clarifying the duties of an excavator.

Reviewed language proposed during the last meeting to the group.

We want to clarify as well about distance a utility is away from your bore path when you have to pothole that utility as well when you are parallel to it.

James Mandera reviewed language proposed in regard to potholing parallel facilities.

On d) no trenchless technologies utilized within the tolerance zone of any parallel existing facility. There was some push back on this. If the group doesn't like this, we can eliminate D.

James Mandera reviewed comments from the last meeting.

The intent here is to anyone who is directional drilling, these rules would apply.

Discussion around adding additional language around what potholing is, and what people should be doing.

Something else we talked through, we crafted some language to add an exemption around gravity sewer mainline crossings. If we can verify depth of gravity sewer depth with popping

manhole lids upstream and downstream and can verify you have at least 5 feet of separation, you can cross that gravity sewer without potholing.

Reviewed that if the clearance is 3ft, the exemption would still apply but added language around having to camera the line and do some verification.

Any thoughts or conversations around any of this?

James Mandera made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Justin Freudeman seconded.

Justin Freudeman- talking about part d, no trenchless technologies, this is in conflict with what is already in the law.

James Mandera- Good point, and my legal team has expressed there isn't anything that we can do currently to keep someone from drilling in the tolerance zone.

Minutes passed unanimously by the group.

James Mandera- want to open it up to the floor now.

Any discussion needed around adding "Plus 12 inches"

The last time we got together, we went through that in a lot of detail. Thought we agreed that the 12 inches was added to make sure we had sufficient clearance. Thought we discussed having to actually spot hole the line regardless of depth.

James Mandera- If you go to the depth of your installation, plus 12 inches, why would you have to go deeper?

The example that comes to mind is in the event of a mis mark, if you dig down to the depth of the new facility, plus 12 inches, and don't see the facility, you may hit that line because the line isn't marked correctly.

Can't be certain you are clear if you haven't found the line.

If you pothole every crossing, depth of install plus 12 inches, and do that throughout the bore, you have essentially cleared the area.

I follow what you are saying, we always ask excavators to put eyes on our gas lines. If the line is mismarked, and you ask the excavator to keep digging deeper to find it, they may never find it.

Think there are some additional steps to help verify the location of the facility. If I dig down and don't see the utility, then I don't know for sure to know where that line actually is. Maybe there needs to be an additional call to the center to get the line located.

If I'm doing a 4" conduit, if I only go down 12", my clearance is still less that 12 inches due to the size of the conduit.

Are we taking into account to the reamer size as well?

The intent is when the new facility is in the ground, we have at least 12 inches of clearance below that. I think number 1 reads correctly,

If we need to add language to clarify we can, as I read it, installation depth of the new facility.

Remember that the 12" clearance will apply in any direction, whether vertical depth or horizontal location.

I think that addresses some of your concerns as well on proper potholing. It has to be large enough for someone to watch the drill go through, and verify that clearance has been achieved.

Will the plus 12 inches apply to around the tolerance zone as well.

There is nothing currently saying that you can't drill in the tolerance zone. I don't think that this group wants to go in that direction either. If we can get the 12-inch clearance 360 degrees, it sounds like we would feel better about that.

Where I am at, I would like to see language that the 12" is beyond the tolerance zone, if you haven't' actually daylighted the facility.

That would ask for people to pothole a large area around the utility, and that would be a big pothole. I would imagine the excavators may not like that.

Wouldn't be a huge fan, essentially, you are just expanding the tolerance zone, which will require a lot more work that may or may not add value.

Any thoughts from excavators on the call?

Can we include something around 12 inches around the intended path in regard to the size of the pothole?

Adding 12" to the outside of the facility makes sense.

I would agree with that.

Michelle Holdgrave- this is something I would have to take back to out group.

The ORC requires there to be 12 inches of clearance, just adding some language to clear things up.

Moving on to B.)

Throwing this out to the group, are we comfortable with the proposed footages (10 & 5)

Why would I have to pothole if I am outside the tolerance zone at all? I understand it is to prevent damages.

Basically, to verify things are where the locates say they are.

As the law reads now, you could be 100' away, and technically you would have to pothole that to verify, so this will shrink it down.

Mike Burroughs- Comment around understanding why to pothole outside the tolerance zone, from my experience as a locator, the equipment is not always 100% accurate, will never know for sure unless you pothole and see the facility.

I don't disagree with you, but we trust the marks enough to cross it, but not to not pothole it if it is parallel outside the tolerance zone.

Just because you see the paint there, you should always verify and never trust it 100%. Taking the extra time as an excavator to verify is always a good idea.

Don't disagree.

Kyle- being 10' away, the marks are there, I don't feel like we should have to pothole that. If we aren't going to physically see a facility potentially when we cross it, then why take the time if you are 10' away from it.

The question is, is 10' the right number, it sounds like maybe it is too big.

I feel like if it is inside the tolerance zone, then that's when we should be worrying about it.

Is the reason for it in order to shorten up the potholing every 100' inside the tolerance zone.

The thing about it too, if you pothole at the beginning and end as well, if we do discover a mismark. Are we going to go back and pothole in between now? At that point that damage has potentially already happened.

The way the language is now, the parallel requirements are infinite. So, this would clean that up.

I don't see this out in the field really as it is now where they pothole at the beginning and the end.

I completely agree, mainly because the way it is written today is too broad, Don't expect to have someone potholing a facility 50 ft away. It seems like A) is out from how it sounds, and possibly even B.)

Patrick Murphy- My thing is, if you run parallel to our main lines, you may hit secondaries.

Well, if you aren't marking those, that risk would apply regardless of what we put here.

Not sure where the potholing should occur if the secondary lines aren't marked anyway. This is more for potholing located facilities. We as a group would need to discuss it but think it is separate from what we are discussing here.

Kyle- whatever the footage is, to take the confusion out, if you are inside the tolerance zone, then pothole every 50'. If we parcel it out, it may create confusion. If you make it all the same, it will eliminate confusion.

Davy- what PA did, to simplify, if using trenchless technology, use best practices written by the CGA. Then all that is covered, and things are simplified. And that's a nationwide best practice.

James- That's a good point, and I will look into that. Do you know what they are off the top of your head?

Davy- I did send an email to Jason, and I can send one to you as well. It also has references in the back that can be added to it. Good practices guidelines etc.. If paralleling within 5 ft, utility exposed every 100' to verify clearance. There is some other language in there as well with minimum clearances as well. It covers a lot of these things in there, and it is a national standard.

James- It is a great point. If we went off of that, we would eliminate A, and keep B and C. They drew the line at 5', not 10'.

Any other feedback? Opinions?

Dominick- Talked with oversight with directional drilling, want to take this info and run it back to them. They were open to the language we had and didn't have any major concerns.

I appreciate that, and that is good insight to have.

I don't think we need to dwell on this, good conversation, sounds like we will delete A, and possibly keep B, and definitely keep C. At the very least I think we need to keep C.

Would it read easier if the facility is within 3 ft of the marked facility? What happens inside the tolerance zone?

Will make a note to wordsmith that, and if you come up with something that reads better, shoot me a note.

I think both B and C, we say 5', and then 3', that keeps it simpler.

Michael G- Will be taking it back to my group to discuss as well.

Are you involved in the gravity sewer main line?

Micheal- Contract lobbyist for rural water association.

Think this has been great conversation, we will move on to the next topic to be discussed.

The other thing I want to have a discussion around is the non-destructive manner definition. The intent of the term pertains to utilizing "air and water" vac trucks. Had some lawyers from cities and municipalities as not being able to break up asphalt in the road. Currently, potholing is required when you cross, so if they do not allow you to do that, then there is a conflict. One portion of the law would have to be broken in order to get the work done. The language in red is a starting point to verifying that. Anyone have any thoughts?

Any other conversation around anything we have talked about so far?

Someone brought up that is could be sidewalks as well?

Should we add roadways and hard cover?

It could also come into play with driveways as well. Roadways and hard surfaces good with everyone?

Moving on to the sewer crossings.

Where this originated, anytime when you cross something you have to dig down to the depth of the bore, some cities have had issues with us breaking the road in a bunch of different places when running long side services. Why are we having the break the road to pothole when we know we have many feet of clearance. We talked through creating language that if we can verify the HDD install won't impact the gravity sewer main lines

Scott Mergler- I like the intent and agree, but my scare is, it opens up opportunities for people to think well if I can do it here, maybe I can do it with ATT manholes as well. Really appreciate the idea, just concerned about making sure it is for gravity sewer only.

Would it help if we included language around not going into other manholes?

I think that would help.

If that would alleviate that concern, then I don't think that is a problem. And we shouldn't be going into non gravity sewer manholes.

In the communication manholes, things have to be vented, tested, purged.

In the CGA best practices, when existing facilities cannot be potholed, the excavator and utility owner need to meet and discuss.

You know the sewer is there, it's more so just trying to get to know the depth.

Can an excavator tell the difference between a gravity main and a forced sewer main?

Forced sewer mains don't have to have fall, so you couldn't get depth off of popping a manhole.

If there is a difference between the depths of the upstream and downstream manhole, we would take the shallower of the two. This would only apply to an HDD machine, not "bullets" and Moles"

Would the sewer owners have issues with utilities popping lids?

Matt- Sewer district- we did have a question. If excavators pop manhole lids, if the lid isn't put back correctly and a car gets damaged, who is responsible for that? And we have some oversized manholes that they wouldn't be able to open.

If you can't pop the manhole lid, then you would have to pothole. As for the liability if a sewer manhole lid isn't seated correctly, that is something I do not know. Many sewer utilities wanted notified before it is being done so someone can verify that the lid was put back correctly. I don't want to lump all that on someone either. That is something we would need a legal interpretation on as well.

Matt- We also don't allow anyone to open a manhole lid without asking.

Legally speaking, it's a mess, it's the city's lid, opened by a 3rd party. So everyone could get lumped in. Would be a good idea to have some kind of process to make sure those lids are put back correctly.

I can see that.

Steve- you all are starting to get into tough stuff. The shallower depth being used, if shooting above that's good, but if shooting below, then the shallower depth is not the one you would want to use.

Fair point, was thinking that the lines usually run deep, so didn't consider going below it. Will make a note of it.

Back to the sewer lid question, if we added a c, once depth is determined, it is the excavators responsibility to place the lid back appropriately. That way if they don't, then you have something to point back to.

I think it would help, but I do think we would need to take it back to a lawyer.

Is there anyone on the call who manages the roads? We need to take into account, they don't like their roads being busted up, weigh the risk of the lid not being put back correctly and damaging a car, to busting up the road that we don't necessarily need to.

Jeremiah Upp- I think the answer to all this could be easy. The lines we are talking about, have an owner attached to it. Simply say if the manhole is going to be opened dup to verify depth, then permission needs to be given, and have to make sure that excavator has the proper insurance to cover if something was to happen.

The owner of that sewer is going to have their own system in place and will tell them what to do.

I think what you have hear is appropriate. I think that is the best we can do and covers what we need to do on this end. Then the owner will have their processes in place.

It could go as far as you are good to go, some other places may want insurance, probably wont require a bond for that.

Michelle- One comment, we are adding a new requirement for an excavator to call someone. There is not timeline of when that person has to respond. If this is another potential for delay, maybe we should cover how long the owner has to respond.

I don't want to put the responsibility on the utility owner, if the excavator can't get permission, then they are going to have to pothole. What we are trying to put together is a process to where you won't have to do that. This would probably require the excavator to plan ahead a little bit more if you are wanting to do this. Hesitant to put language in the ORC to have that sewer owner respond in a certain amount of time.

Michelle- If the project owner is the municipality, then they can work it out.

Think there could be some issues with putting time frames on it, some are bigger, smaller, local villages. As mentioned, this is an exception, not the rule per say. If you don't get response, then you have to pothole.

John- This is an exemption, for a common goal, I think those two will work together to save time and money.

Joshua- Question for the group, with these types of jobs with the HDD work, are they using design phase and getting the plans? Is that common, or just the larger jobs?

James- That's usually the larger jobs, but for the single service replacements not usually.

Working in the sewer district, a lot of the stuff that was pointed out with liability, another concern is we have very large interceptors, the crown man be higher than that access. The plan request function is beneficial. The large diameter sewers, we don't want anyone accessing due to safety concerns. Think the design process and getting the plans is very beneficial. Would help eliminate some issues on some of the more complex parts of the system.

James- I would suspect that when the excavator calls for permission, you could have that conversation with them at that point.

If it got to that point and they contact us, yes.

Other thoughts/conversations? Coming up on our time limit here.

The first part of the exemption speaks to a 5' clearance, as long as you do a post inspection camera inspection,

Lot of good discussion today, we will work to get the notes updated with today's discussion and schedule another meeting and continue to work through it.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30am