



New White Lining Technologies Reduce Costs and Enhance Public Safety

LOCATING AND MARKING

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White lining is endorsed by the Common Ground Alliance (CGA) and is a mandated procedure in some states, yet it is not always practiced when excavators prepare a dig site. In today's economy, when cost containment is critical, the expense and inconvenience to excavators of pre-marking a dig site sometimes obscures the benefits of this CGA Best Practice. However, there are promising new technologies that are designed to address the common obstacles of excavation pre-marking. These tools deliver cost savings and public safety enhancements to support broader adoption of white lining.

Today's Reality: Physical White Lining

Physical white lining requires an excavator visit to the dig site to pre-mark the area with white paint, or an equivalent means. While this practice is known to reduce damages, it adds costs to an excavation job. Recent proposals in some states requiring excavators to remove locate marks after completing a project further complicate the physical white lining decision.

The Virginia One-Call Pilot Project: Electronic White Lining

In 2005, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) convened a meeting of underground stakeholders that resulted in the Virginia One-Call Pilot Project. The purpose of the project was to research and deploy new and existing technologies that could facilitate communication amongst excavators, one-call centers, facility owners and locators. The pilot's first phase focused on the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates to specify the area of an excavation locate request. Through the use of GPS-enabled communication devices and software developed in partnership with Virginia Utility Protection Service (VUPS), excavators created electronic white lines that were transmitted to the one-call center.

The results of the Virginia project were encouraging. The specificity of electronic white lines reduced the average size of locate areas and resulting notifications. These outcomes can lead to lower costs throughout the one-call ecosystem and improved public safety.

Virtual WhiteLine™: Enhanced Electronic White Lining

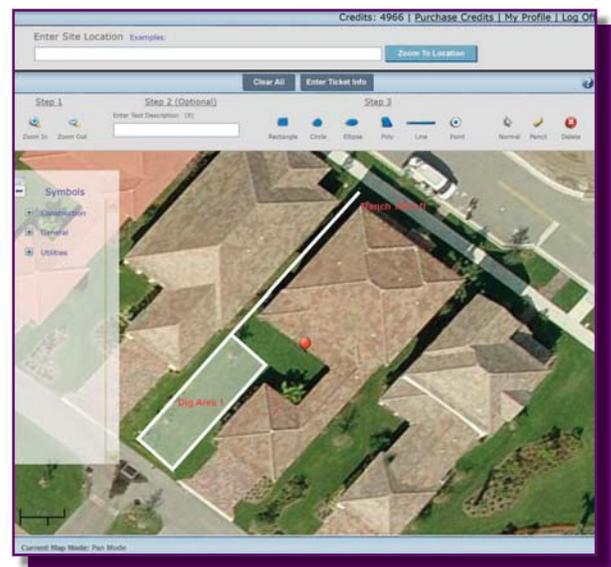
Virtual WhiteLine is an evolution of the Virginia pilot. Through the addition of high-resolution aerial imagery, this enhanced electronic white lining tool allows stakeholders

to view the landscape and define the boundaries of a dig site remotely.

Enhanced electronic white lining works in conjunction with existing one-call systems by providing a link to the application during the internet ticket entry process. When an excavator clicks on the link, an aerial image of the excavation location is generated based on the data contained in the one-call ticket. The excavator then draws a white line on the image to delineate the proposed dig site. The completed Virtual WhiteLine is attached to the locate request ticket and is distributed to utility locators. Once on site, a locate technician is able to access the one-call ticket data as well as the "marked up" image and know precisely where the excavator plans to dig.

Enhanced electronic white lining claims all of the cost and public safety benefits as the pilot in Virginia, but further reduces excavator expenses by minimizing the need to travel to the dig site. Fewer white line trips diminish the carbon footprint of an excavator's enterprise and improve profitability through more efficient asset utilization. Enhanced electronic white lining is also a resource for excavators to use as public criticism of over-painting intensifies.

New technologies lower the cost of white lining for excavators while simultaneously enhancing public safety. These tools provide attractive alternatives for pre-marking, which can encourage adoption of this damage prevention best practice.



VIRTUAL WHITELINE EXAMPLE

