

Safety Flash – Incident with Property Damage

Incident: The crew was driving 18-inch D-stakes for roadway concrete forms when they ran into soft ground and needed to switch to 36-inch D-stakes. Two D-stakes penetrated one conductor of a three-conductor, direct-buried energized electrical feed.

Possible Contributing Factors

- The ground was soft and the crew needed to use 36-inch D-stakes to stabilize the forms.
- The crew was aware that OUPS had previously marked the area, but still began work without re-establishing the markings when they were no longer visible.
- Electrical lines were believed to be within the limits of the road. Early on, the team identified that the 8-foot utility easement was not centered under the 20 foot-wide road. The architect was notified during design meetings, but did not shift the road far enough to center the easement under the road.
- Construction documents didn't show the easement and drive on the same drawing and were not overlaid to show relative locations to each other.
- The electrical conductor was not deep enough because design grades changed between the time when the conduits and the road were installed.
- There was no composite as-built drawing posted for review in the trailer when the Notice of Excavation (NEO) form was completed.
- The contractor began work before the NOE was properly completed and signed by RLI because they perceived it to be a formality.
- The contractor proceeded because they felt pressured by the schedule.



Primary contributing factor

- The contractor began work before the NOE was properly completed and signed by RLI because they perceived it to be a formality.

Possible Solutions

- Follow RLI's utility locating procedures, including a properly completed NOE, before starting work.
- Make sure as-built drawings are current and available in a central location.

Action plan

- The as-built drawings were updated.
- The NOE and utility locating procedures were reviewed with subs in a stand-down.
- A daily foremen's pre-task planning meeting is being held with subs to review work activities and eliminate conflicts.

Keep improving

Your health and safety are our core value on every project. If you see a way we can support you in keeping our job sites safe, see your supervisor or contact: Jim Philo, 419/654-2043; Rich Franklin, Michigan, 734/679-7283; Alan Doane, Cleveland, 440/429-0639; or Mark Hoffman, 419/360-9280.