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OCTOBER MEETING DRAWS RECORD CROWD

Large Turnout for October Meeting 1 A near record crowd of RAMCA members attended the October General Membership Meeting held on October at the Sheraton South. Nearly 80 members heard comments from Chesterfield County's Utility Department regarding newly adopted water valve procedures. In addition, members were treated to a presentation by representatives of RAMCA member **J.E. Liesfeld Contractor, Inc.** and Hanover County dealing with the dumping of earthen material on agricultural land. **Rain for Rent** was the Associate Member Dinner Sponsor.

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November's General Membership Meeting will feature the Annual Business Meeting of the association. Members will hear reports from the President, Treasurer, all committee chairmen, and the Executive Director. In addition, the election of the 2008 Board of Directors will also be held. The room is filling up again this month, so make your reservation NOW!

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RAMCA MEETS WITH CHESTERFIELD UTILITY DEPT.

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A growing number RAMCA members have expressed concern over the past few months that despite their best efforts and intentions, they may not have a current set of Chesterfield County utility specifications. This situation has led to confusion and potential disputes when the contractor bids and installs work based on what he believes are current specs, only to find otherwise at inspection time.

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RAMCA President Dave Cosby (**Sovereign Paving Inc.**) and Steve Rhyne (**Rhyne Contractors, Inc.**) along with RAMCA staff met with representatives of the County's utility department in late October to discuss ways to fix this communication problem. As a result of our discussion, the County plans to communicate with all registered contractors and inform them that they can purchase a current, complete copy of the County's utility specifications in a three-ring binder, and/or access the current specs on line. In addition addenda changes to the specs will similarly be made available. Watch your-mail in the next few weeks for more information from the Chesterfield County Utility Department regarding this important improvement in obtaining current utility specifications.

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SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN THE WORKPLACE SEMINAR

RAMCA member Sands, Anderson, Marks, and Miller will be offering a program entitled *Substance Abuse in the Workplace* on November 29th at The Place at Innsbrook. Drug and alcohol use remain a major workplace issue. This session will discuss workplace policies and legal requirements associated with this ever-present issue. For more information and to register point your browser to www.SandsAnderson.com and click on Substance Abuse in the Workplace.

ANOTHER GREAT GOLF EVENT

The annual Jack Bargamin Memorial Golf Outing was held on September 13th at beautiful Independence Golf Course, and the usual big crowd showed up to compete, eat, and catch up with friends. When the dust had settled, the winners were:

FIRST PLACE

First Flight

Team - William T. Cantrell, Inc.

Players - Rick Rowland, Bill Cantrell, Liston Laine, Bill Farmer

Second Flight

Team - Water Works, Inc.

Players - Ed Overman, Jeff Tyler, Mark Collins, Brian Higgins

Third Flight

Team - Vulcan Construction Materials, LP

Players - Todd Miller, John Smack, Jay Gammon, Jordan Wiegard

Fourth Flight

Team - Southers Concrete, Inc.

Players - Fonzy Southers, Sr., Tony Southers, Fonzy Southers Jr., Kevin Pruitt

SECOND PLACE

First Flight

Team - HD Waterworks Supply

Players - Keith Young, John Huran, Joe Sanders, Preston Mitchell,

Second Flight

Team - Branscome-Richmond

Players - Johnny Glazebrook, Brian Conrad, Andy Rader, Toney Osterbind

Third Flight

Team - James River Equipment Virginia, LLC

Players - Nick Hall, Tony Stone, Tommy Dry, Jim Erbesti

Fourth Flight

Team - Blakemore Construction Corp.

Players - Stan Parcell, Lee White, Mike Farmer, Jim Minnick

GOLF RESULTS, CONT.

CLOSEST TO PIN WINNERS

First Flight – Mike Lee

Second Flight – Mark Collins

Third Flight – Tony Stone

Fourth Flight – Tony Southers

LONGEST DRIVE WINNERS

First Flight – Bill Farmer

Second Flight – Dave Burgess

Third Flight – Jordan Wiegard

Fourth Flight – Fonzy Southers, Jr.

Special thanks to Carter Machinery Co.Inc. for managing all signage for this event and to the many individual member firms who contributed great gifts to the raffle drawing, especially our Beverage Cart Sponsors **Draper Aden Associates** and **Hanson Pipe and Precast Inc.**, and our Grand Prize Sponsor, **Blakemore Construction Corp.** Please see the enclosure for a list of all the great companies who helped make this event a success.

Next year's two RAMCA memorial golf outings will be held at Royal New Kent and Mattaponi Springs so don't get too "rusty" over the winter months!

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 8th Annual Business Meeting and Election of 2008 Board of Directors

Sheraton South Hotel

January 19th General Safety and Competent Person Seminar

Holiday Inn Koger Center

February 16th Annual Installation of Officers Banquet

Hermitage Country Club

First Aid/CPR Seminar

Holiday Inn Koger Center

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

RAMCA is pleased to welcome **Carousel Signs & Designs** as our newest Associate member. Please take time to meet and welcome Messers. Jay Foley and Chuck Burnette to the RAMCA family when you see them at an upcoming RAMCA event.

GET OUT AND VOTE

On November 6th Virginians will have an opportunity to elect all 140 members of the Virginia General Assembly. Although state legislators passed a transportation funding plan at their last session, much is left to be done as you can see by reviewing the enclosure from Virginians for Better Transportation. Do yourself and your company a big favor and exercise your democratic right to vote. More importantly, encourage your employees and their families to do likewise. And most important of all, find out what your legislator's position is on continuing to address the state's long term transportation funding needs. To determine who your legislators are, visit the RAMCA website (www.ramca.info) and click on *Quick Reference Links*, then go to *Virginia Government Websites* and click on *Who's My Legislator*.

SOCIAL SECURITY *NO MATCH* REGS NOW IN EFFECT

The Department of Homeland Security's final regulations dealing with Social Security no-match letters took effect on September 14, 2007. These regulations create a "safe harbor" from a finding by the Department of Homeland Security that employers had constructive knowledge of undocumented workers on their payroll as a result of receiving no-match letters. However, the safe harbor only applies if companies follow the guidelines outlined in the regulations. "Safe-harbor" steps a "reasonable" employer should take upon receipt of a no-match letter. Under the regulations, an employer who receives a no-match letter from the SSA or DHS will not be deemed to have "constructive knowledge" that an employee is an unauthorized worker if the following "safe-harbor" steps are taken:

1. Within 14 days of receipt of the no-match letter, the employer would have to:

a. Check the employer's records to determine if the discrepancy is because of a typographical, transcribing or similar clerical error in the employer's records or in its communication to the SSA or DHS. If there is an error, the employer should correct its records, inform the relevant agency, and verify that the corrected name and SSN match agency records. The employer should also make a record of the manner, date, and time of the verification; or

b. Ask the employee to confirm that the information the employer has in its records is correct if the employer did not find any error in its own records. If the employee provides corrected information, the employer would correct its records, inform the relevant agency, and verify that the corrected name and SSN match agency records. If the employer's own records are correct, the employer should ask the employee to resolve the discrepancy with the relevant agency. In both instances, the employers should make a record of the manner, date, and time of the verification.

2. If the discrepancy is not resolved within 60 days of receipt of the no-match letter, the employer may reverify the employee's work authorization and identity by completing a new Form I-9. The employer and employee would have 3 days to complete this form (or within 63 days of receipt of the no-match letter). An employee cannot use a document containing the SSN or alien number that is the subject of the no-match letter to establish work authorization or identity or both. Additionally, all documents used to prove identity or both identity and employment authorization must contain a photograph.

3. If the no-match is not resolved and the employer cannot verify the work authorization and identity of the employee, the employer must choose between terminating the employee or facing the risk that DHS may find that the employer had constructive knowledge that the employee was unauthorized to work, and is therefore in violation of immigration laws. There may be other procedures that an employer could follow in response to a no-match letter that would be considered "reasonable" by DHS, but unless the employer follows the "safe harbor" procedures outlined in the rule, there is a risk that DHS may find the employer had constructive knowledge that the employee was unauthorized to work. Additionally, DHS notes that even if an employer follows the safe-harbor procedures outlined above, it would not preclude DHS from finding that an employer had "actual" knowledge that an employee was unauthorized to work. In this instance, the burden would be on the government to prove that the employer had actual knowledge.

SCC PILOT PROJECT ENDS - IMPLEMENTATION PHASE NEXT

RAMCA has been working with the State Corporation Commission, representatives from the federal government and a broad range of interested parties in an effort to test and implement the use of GPS technology in the ticket call-in and locate process. Virginia was chosen as the location for the Pilot Project through the active participation of key stakeholders. Virginia was recognized for its pipeline safety leadership, existing damage prevention laws and active enforcement processes. From 1996 through 2006 excavation damages to gas distribution pipelines in Virginia were reduced by 50 percent. Additionally, coincident with the implementation of the Pilot Project, VUPS (the call center in Virginia) developed and implemented enhanced mapping capabilities that enabled the Pilot Project to be conducted.

Phase I of the Virginia Pilot Project focused on the application of global positioning system (GPS) technology to improve the locational accuracy of locate requests submitted by the excavator to the one-call center. The Project Team utilized existing cell phone, Internet and GPS receiver technologies combined with the development of specific software applications and enhanced one-call processes. Two approaches were tested. One involved the use of GPS-enabled cell phones to capture GPS coordinates and transmit them to VUPS. These were held in a suspend server for later retrieval and completion by the excavator using an Internet connection. The other approach involved the use of more accurate GPS receivers coupled via Bluetooth technology to Pocket PCs having Internet access. The excavator connected online directly to VUPS's web ticket entry system and created the locate request ticket using the GPS coordinates. Custom software applications were developed to support both approaches.

Further work is planned for the Virginia Pilot Project. Phase II will involve the application of GPS technology to locating instruments and the development of electronic locator manifests. Phase III will involve the integration of GPS and mapping technology on excavating equipment.

Several additional data points were analyzed to determine the efficiencies gained from the VA Pilot Project.

3-Hour Notices: The Virginia Damage Prevention Act allows for a "3-Hour Notice" in the event that an excavator identifies clear evidence of an unmarked facility. The data shows a relative 56.78% reduction in 3-hour notices.

Cancelled Locate Requests: The data shows a relative 36.51% reduction in cancelled locate requests.

Positive Response Codes: VUPS utilizes a Positive Response System that incorporates codes as a response from facility locators. The following positive responses for test versus control tickets were compared as a metric for efficiency.

- *Code 60* is utilized when the locator and excavator agree to a marking schedule typically extending the marking period beyond the normal 48 hours. The data shows a relative 66.22% reduction in Code 60 responses.
- *Code 91* is utilized when the locator responds that there is an incorrect address. The data shows a relative 32.60% reduction in Code 91 responses.
- *Code 93* is utilized when the locator responds that the scope of work is larger than allowed by Virginia law. The data shows a relative 100% reduction in Code 93 responses.
- *Code 94* is utilized when the locator responds that the marking instructions are unclear. The data shows a relative 91.80% reduction in Code 94 responses.

The above data suggests that the Pilot Project provided a more efficient locate request process, ensuring that locate requests were processed in a more timely and accurate manner.

RAMCA Officers

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SCC IMPLEMENTATION PHASE, CONT.Excavator Feedback

During Phase I, 25 users from 11 companies submitted locate requests using the Project technology (equipment and processes). Individual users submitted from 1 to 987 tickets. The number of tickets submitted by individual companies ranged from 4 to over 1,600.

Meetings were held with participating excavators to get their feedback on the enhanced one-call process and the equipment being used. Some of the key messages received from the excavators include:

- Excavator participation in the Pilot Project has been beneficial.
- Additional time in the field to accurately submit tickets translates to improved overall efficiencies and quality.
- Device form factor and functionality are important considerations.
- Use of a dedicated device is acceptable.
- The equipment and processes should be as simple as possible for ease of use.
- Technology produces accurate mapping of GPS coordinates.
- A user support/help desk is necessary.
- The enhanced processes could be integrated into excavator work management systems.
- Expand implementation of the technology to other geographical areas.

This technology should accommodate other types of tickets such as 3-hour requests, re-marks and updates.

- Provide excavator ability to view positive response on the handheld equipment.
- Provide ability to print ortho-photographic map.
- Provide excavator ortho-photographic maps with the facility locate lines overlaid (i.e., Phase II).

The pilot project demonstrated that the application of GPS technology in electronic white-lining can be of significant benefit to the one call process. The 8.04% reduction achieved in the outgoing notification tickets generated by the Pilot tickets is considered significant and is projected to result in significant savings in locate costs if applied throughout Virginia. RAMCA will continue to work with all affected parties on the application of this technology, and believes that in the next few years a growing number of excavators will voluntarily take advantage of the benefits it offers.

CHECK OUT THE RAMCA WEBSITE:
www.ramca.info