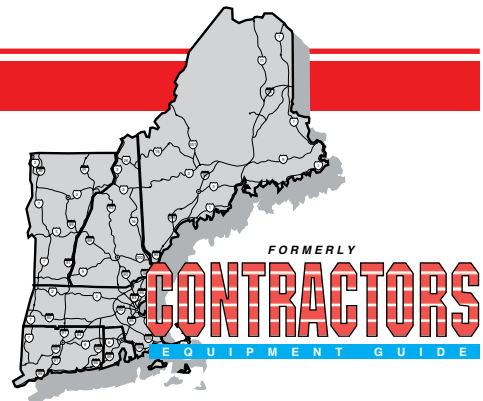


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Maine Drilling & Blasting's 46 Years Embracing Growth, Change

By Jay Adams
CEG CORRESPONDENT

On March 3, 1966, Ted Purington Sr. and his wife Judy borrowed \$2,000 with three co-signors to form Maine Drilling & Blasting (MD&B). "Operation central" was located around their kitchen table in Gardiner, Maine. From the kitchen, the business grew into the barn and then into a secondary tin building at the family home. In 45 years the business grew from a small kitchen table investment to successfully and safely performing more than 1.5 million blasts.

The Company began with a single jackhammer for a drill. In the early days Ted, Judy and a few close friends shouldered most of the responsibilities. Judy sacrificed her career as an RN to become the office manager while also raising five children. Ted Jr., Bill, Jim and Tom eventually became involved in MD&B in different capacities.

Quickly, Ted established a reputation for exceptional quality and as Ted's relationships with area contractors grew, so did MD&B. Hard work, honesty and quality of services were the bedrock upon which the Company was founded. In the very beginning MD&B served the construction market working on everything from house foundations to roads and bridges. In the late 70s and early 80s interstate highway and municipal sewer projects provided numerous out-of-state opportunities. The Company has expanded throughout New England, the Northeast, into Pennsylvania and all the way down to Virginia.

"We've always worked to grow regional markets with local people," explained CEO and President Bill Purington, "that means local employees and resources for supply and distribution. We've made it a point to commit to a local presence wherever we go. That's how we started, that's how we operate today."

MD&B is the leading provider of drilling, blasting and related specialty services in the United States. It is one of the largest of its kind in North America. With the controlled use of explosives, MD&B drills and blasts rock to fashion foundations for homes, business developments and bridges, carves out roadways, mines raw materials for concrete and asphalt, diverts rivers and streams, prepares the earth for the construction of hydroelectric projects, pipelines and wind towers, creates the holes in which to set utility poles and even sculpts ski slopes.

Getting Growth Right

The company's rapid expansion up until the early 80s tested MD&B's resources. In response to the challenge, in March 1982, the last son to join the business, Bill Purington, became general manager. With his brothers, Purington helped modify the business plan and led a re-organization.

In 1986 MD Drilling & Blasting was founded as a subsidiary to serve the southern New England market. By year-end in 1989, the Company had established seven operating divisions and grown to fifteen million dollars in annual sales.

"Our goal was not to be the biggest drilling and blasting company in New England," said Bill Purington, "rather our actions were part of our long-term family business plan to be the premier and most respected blasting contractor in the Northeast industry."

In 2011 MD&B celebrated its 45th year of growth, coupled with safety and success, in the drilling and blasting industry. The Company is proud to currently employ approximately 400 of the industry's best.



Photo courtesy of Maine Drilling & Blasting
MD&B drilling at Stetson Wind Turbine Project, Danforth, Maine, which consisted of 38 wind towers accessed with 9 mi. (14.5 km) of road. In the background is Mount Katahdin, the highest mountain in Maine at 5,268 ft.



Photo courtesy of Maine Drilling & Blasting
In 2000, a \$32 million renovation of Maine's historic State House and State Office Building, located in Augusta, called for the replacement of a 150-ft. (45.7 m) walking tunnel. The Maine Drilling & Blasting Company was called in to remove approximately 3,000 cu. yds. (2,294 cu m) of rock from an area directly below the 110 year-old landmark.

Growing Services

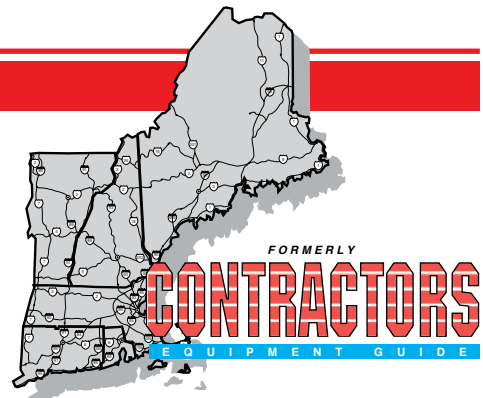
Over the past 46 years, MD&B has continued to provide an ever-widening variety of services to their customers. In 2002, they established an engineering department to enhance technology for their drillers and blasters while also providing improved project quality and better customer support.



Photo courtesy of Maine Drilling & Blasting
MD&B introduced electronic detonator technology in Brox Industries' Dracut, Maine, quarry to provide advanced control for a blast that used 70,000 lbs. (31,751 kg) of explosives in an area in which \$20 million in immovable quarry structures existed within a 225-ft. (69 m) radius of the blast. Post blast, there were just under 130,000 tons (117,934 t) on the ground, almost 100 percent crushable, with no damage to any structures and no complaints from area residents.

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Next Generation Joins Firm, Reorganizes During 1980s

Electronic Detonator Systems (EDS) deliver precise timing down to one to two millisecond intervals. In 2003 MD&B deployed its first regular use of EDS and is well positioned to evaluate, deploy and maximize EDS over a wide range of applications.

In 2004 MD&B became the first contractor in the country to construct and operate its own bulk explosives blending and loading plant. Pumping bulk emulsion instead of loading sticks or hauling tube reduces manpower and related loading injuries. Shot patterns can be expanded and hole sizes can be reduced, which increases drill utilization. The use of bulk allows for a more efficient shot. MD&B has since continued to develop its in-house program to advance bulk throughout quarry and construction applications to produce further productivity gains.

MD&B also has engineered proprietary distribution solutions, such as its BulkSkid and Micropumper. The Micropumper is a mini-bulk system located on a trailer package that is hauled by the blaster with his truck enabling bulk deliveries for smaller construction projects. This smaller capacity pump improves efficiencies, increases the ability to utilize bulk and provides greater economic value to customers. The BulkSkid, which is pulled by a large dozer, allows bulk to be deployed on large remote projects without road access.

Through its commitment to the energy market, MD&B has furthered its abilities with Rock Bolt installations and testing. Rock bolts can be a large issue, most notably stabilizing foundations for wind towers and anchoring rock faces. Over the years, MD&B has completed many rock bolting, rock anchors and rock dowels for all types of jobs.

Most recently, the evolution of the energy market has provided many opportunities for MD&B to pursue larger projects with high-production demands and schedules, bringing the Company into the national arena. As development in the Marcellus natural gas field accelerated in 2010 and 2011, so did MD&B's activity in the area. During 2011, its Mid-Atlantic Construction Division safely completed fifteen projects for some of the region's leading natural gas developers. MD&B has impacted the construction success of a number of wind tower projects throughout the Northeast working on approximately 96 percent of the commercial wind energy projects in New England.

Standing Apart Starts With Safety

MD&B has always prided itself on reaching new and higher standards for safety. "It's about a safety culture," said Senior Vice President of Explosive Operations Mitch Green, "we make it our business to exceed industry safety standards from pre-blast surveys to seismic monitoring, from job hazard analysis to zero incident tolerance. Our success is directly related to our focus on safety."

Employees are proud that MD&B currently exceeds all of the industry safety standards. From the first step on site, and their first day of new hire training, safety is instilled in all employees.

"We are committed to providing the industry's safest work environment," said Safety Manager Rick Galletta, "We have

worked hard to develop a strong Safety Culture where our employees are empowered to address safety concerns as they arise. We believe that all incidents are preventable and that we can work with zero accidents."

Driving Future Success

Maine Drilling stands out because of three primary reasons:

"Number one is our team; we have the best people in the industry. Number two is our ability to get the job done safely, meet difficult schedules and deliver a quality drilling and blasting job for a competitive price in most any drilling and blasting application. Number three is the efficiencies of services that our departments are able to provide to complement our drilling and blasting operations," noted Executive Vice President, Ted Purington Jr.

Ted Sr. has formally retired, but still plays an active, on-site role on select projects in MD&B's Eastern Division. The two youngest sons, Jim and Tom Purington, have left the Company to develop their own business concerns. Will, third-generation son and namesake of Bill Purington, works in the Company as an Assistant Project Superintendent, having started with MD&B as a field laborer. However, there will be no Purington successor in the Company's future ownership. Instead, Maine Drilling & Blasting is driving its success through employee ownership.

"Our employees are the ones primarily responsible for the success of Maine Drilling and Blasting... Creating an ESOP (Employee Stock Ownership Plan) [in 2004] was an important step to us all," stated Bill Purington. The ESOP, a qualified retirement plan, gives employees a meaningful stake in MD&B at no cost to them and those who meet plan qualifications receive ownership interest in the Company. Ownership creates an even greater standard of service. Employees conduct themselves with a higher standard of professionalism and proficiency, handling business situations with the respect, responsiveness and responsibility of business owners.

"Working like an owner is a mind-set and includes fully embracing both how you do your job and how you think about your job," said Bill Purington. Currently qualified employees own 30.5 percent of MD&B.

For the last four years MD&B has reorganized, reshaped and redirected its efforts to continually manage a profitable outcome through the worst economic period since the Great Depression. All of these efforts have allowed the Company to persevere into its 20th consecutive year of profitability.

"Your reputation is only as good as the quality of work you do," said Green, "This is a hard-working industry... you constantly have to put in 100 percent."

MD&B's culture is represented by its core values: respect, fairness, honesty and responsibility. By setting expectations and ground rules that support these core values, MD&B reaf-



Photo courtesy of Maine Drilling & Blasting

The Millennium Pipeline, Phases I and II, encompassed a combined 87 mi. (140 km) of 36-in. (91 cm) gas line installed by Precision Pipeline with MD&B performing all blasting for the right of way and trench. Production was achieved despite the rugged terrain just below the Catskill Area in New York state.



Photo courtesy of Maine Drilling & Blasting

Drilling 10 ft. (3 m) of rock through 60 ft. (18.3 m) of water from a barge in the oil terminal berth, Portland Harbor, Maine, to improve access for larger tankers.

firms its foundations of "honesty and hard work," guiding how employees conduct themselves and their business.

(This story also can be found on Construction Equipment Guide's Web site at www.constructionequipmentguide.com.)

CEG



Photo courtesy of Maine Drilling & Blasting

To improve blast efficiency, MD&B engineered a proprietary skid to transport bulk explosives to remote locations, such as on Kibby Mountain, Maine.



Photo courtesy of Maine Drilling & Blasting

Ted Purington Sr. and his crew at a safe distance from a blast in the early days, late 1960s.