

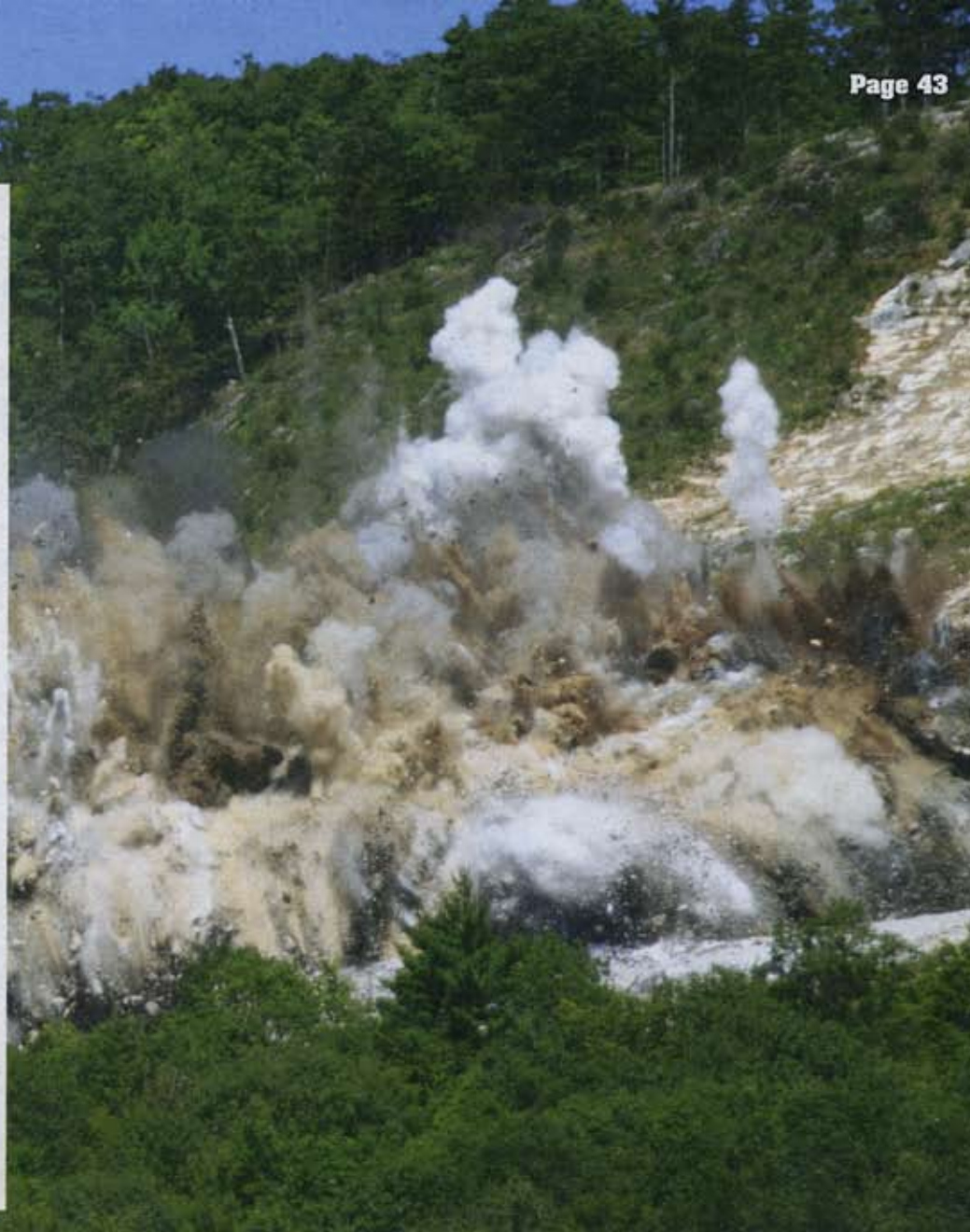
## Maine Drilling & Blasting Celebrating 45 years of local service

**I**t all started with service. Hard work, honesty and quality service were the bedrock upon which Ted Purington, Sr. and his wife, Judy, founded Maine Drilling & Blasting (MD&B) in 1966. The Gardiner, Maine-based company provides drilling, blasting and related specialty services to the construction and quarry markets, and this year celebrates its 45th anniversary.

Over these many years, Maine Drilling & Blasting has taken the very mature business of explosives and mining and applied new technology at virtually every turn. From being one of the first drilling and blasting companies to transition to hydraulic drills back in the mid-1980s, to most recently developing applications for electronic detonator technology, MD&B innovates with the singular purpose of productivity gains to benefit the company and its customers.

Technological innovation also means engineering proprietary solutions. Over the past seven years, bulk explosive has proven to be a good example. Pumping bulk emulsion instead of hauling and loading traditional stick or bag explosives can increase efficiency exponentially by saving manpower, energy and time. In 2004, MD&B became the first contractor in the country to construct and operate its own bulk blending and loading plant.

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By creating an internal, independent distribution network, Maine Drilling & Blasting is less vulnerable to supply disruption and pricing pressures associated with the traditional relationships with manufacturers. This equates to a more stable pricing for customers and consistent, convenient product allowing production to remain on schedule. However, as it was not effective to send 10,000-lb. bulk trucks to small construction projects, the company sought a better answer. By 2007, MD&B had developed and produced a mini-bulk delivery system known as MI-CROPUMPER, which is towed by the blaster, along with primers and detonators. This smaller capacity pumper improves efficiencies, increases the ability to utilize bulk and provides greater economic value to customers.

Bulk trucks, however, couldn't traverse the terrain often required to get to large, remote shots on wind farms or ski slopes. In 2009 MD&B engineered another new delivery system to meet this challenge and boost both production and safety. The company's proprietary BULK SKID enables delivery of bulk to the most remote and isolated locations. It holds, and directly pumps, up to 10,000 lbs. of explosives. The company also specially outfitted Komatsu crawlers to transport other supplies as well as workers on and off these remote sites more efficiently, and is now deploying bulk capabilities on these same Komatsu crawlers.

Foresight that drove advancements in technology by MD&B also drives the company's assessment of business trends, which increases efficiency, productivity and raises the organization's own standards.

"Traditional drilling and blasting companies drill, shoot and call suppliers for product and maintenance," says MD&B vice president Mitch Green. "During the past 45 years, we have taken the key elements of support for drilling and blasting and strategically aligned these services by creating relevant internal departments, so that our productivity isn't enslaved by other companies' business models." The decision to vertically integrate has led to expanded services and efficiencies for MD&B customers. Bulk explosives are a good example.

MD&B's product services group delivers mobilization and distribution services to the company internally. With in-house distribution, their own rolling stock, their own bulk trucks, and 3 major distribution facilities, MD&B is able to keep an average of 15 sites active each day. The company has also created a technical services group to support its blaster training. Not only does this department provide education to blasters, it also provides public outreach and customer training. This department offers an array of specialty services for MD&B customer projects, such as electronic detonation systems, laser profiling and bore tracking to increase accuracy, safety and production. MD&B customers relate how important it is that their crews are

not waiting for some other service provider to mobilize and service a down drill. MD&B mechanics are on-site and know the equipment inside and out. This fundamental department has evolved into a diversified source of technology, knowledge and expertise that drives the company's position in the industry.

Like others, MD&B would not be complete without its own safety and risk management department, which is responsible for the overall safety of its employees and the regulatory compliance controls necessary to maintain key licenses to operate. From audits and training to in-field pre-blast surveys and initial claims mitigation, this department ensures the company's culture of safety develops and is in line with operating standards, vision and mission.

Truly unique in the industry is MD&B's engineering department, which was first formed in 2002, and currently employs an engineering staff of just under a dozen. "Almost 10 years ago, we saw we needed to be able to control and understand the scope of work... what we were being asked to bid and then build; especially on large construction projects," explains company CEO Bill Purington. "We started small, getting the plans and talking with the customers. Now we are very proud to say our customers have come to rely on our expertise for this service. We routinely build-out the scope of work for these projects, and submit bids accordingly. We've recently been able to leverage and expand this service to smaller projects as well, along with access to our engineering staff."

Quarries also benefit from this in-house engineering service. While some quarries struggle with their higher cost development work, trying to keep it in balance with the lower-cost production work to achieve balanced cost, MD&B can work with quarries through an engineered quarry plan that helps them lower their overall cost at the quarry.

MD&B has eight regional operating divisions staffed with local talent. "Our focus is still on local markets," adds Purington. "While we are interested in drilling and blasting at the highest level of large energy projects, for instance, we're still very interested in the cellar holes in our backyards. We do both. We can do a project like the Holtwood Hydroelectric Plant Expansion in Pennsylvania and also say we'll be there at your house to drill and blast for your swimming pool because of our commitment to our local core business."

