

PIPELINERS HALL OF FAME NEWS

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MD Drilling & Blasting

**Proven Results on
Demanding Schedules:
Millennium, A Case in Point**

Proven Results on Demanding Schedules: Millennium, A Case in Point



In April 2008, MD Drilling & Blasting (MD) was contracted to perform drilling and blasting activities by Precision Pipeline for the Millennium Phase II pipeline from Tuxedo to Hancock, NY. The project has been divided into two spreads; 28 miles in the south and 47 miles in the north. The schedule for the project completion was set for October 31 with a start date of April 1st. MD assembled its project management team and started preparing manpower and equipment for the project. This also included MD personnel performing over 400 pre-blast surveys prior to obtaining blasting permits in as many as 15 towns. With the company's resources and forward thinking, these activities occurred seamlessly while mobilization plans were being prepared.

Due to permitting issues, the actual work started at the end of May, six weeks after the anticipated start date. This effectively shaved away approximately 20% of the scheduled time to complete. On a project of this nature, and with its total length of 75 miles, the coordination and deployment of resources was critical.

MD started securing local magazine sites for explosives, and mobilizing supplies, blasting mats, and drills well before these items would be needed. Especially important, was the approval of a magazine site sufficient in size to accommodate the quantity of explosives required for the project. Specialized equipment was then brought in to move explosives and manpower through the alignment, as well as rough terrain drills capable of being tethered from a winch with some slopes approaching a 60-degree incline. "We're equipped for the demanding terrain that exists in the Northeast. We work as a team with the pipeline contractor to get the best possible product while maintaining the integrity of the trench walls for safe reliable operations," says MD's Division Manager, Todd Barrett.

As common with previous projects, the tree-clearing crews would need our assistance to remove right-of-way

Proving Themselves Early On

MD Drilling & Blasting also was Precision Pipeline's drilling and blasting contractor of choice for the 2007 Phase of the Millennium Pipeline. That earlier scope of work involved twelve miles of 36-inch gas line connecting Tuxedo, NY to Ramapo, NY, across very rugged terrain near I-87 through the hills just below the Catskill Area. Many areas needed to be pre-blasted above the trench to allow access for construction traffic. The ROW width and environmental constraints were significant. Often MD worked inside the pipe laying crew with no access by them back to the road. Therefore, material planning for a productive day was essential. The pipe contractor needed 1,000 running feet per day. MD had it ready for them, while adhering to the environmental constraints, as well as traffic requirements along the busy interstate highway.



rock through steep and rugged terrain so that the clearing equipment could gain access. The coordination of fuel and explosives supplies, along with getting personnel in and out, needed to be as efficient as possible. This required MD's superintendent, Jamie McKinniss, to work closely with the Precision superintendent on a daily basis. McKinniss acknowledges, "Of course, as we all know, the job is about getting pipe in the ground. So, as soon as areas are cleared, MD must safely perform at a pace to keep the pipe crews on schedule." Adding to the challenge was the fact that the permits to perform work in areas other than rock, were delayed, so the only place to work initially was in the rock sections. MD President, John Capasso, puts it in a nutshell, "With a mobilized fleet of over 200 excavators and dozers, along with a 250-plus workforce, MD is tasked with producing enough open and trench blasting in extremely steep terrain to make the contractor efficient in a very congested section of the project with limited access."

In addition, the crossing of a large section of power lines was entirely rock. The utility companies would not allow blasting within 300 feet either side of these high tension lines that feed New York City. MD used its technical resources to make a presentation to the utility companies, and by the end of the presentation, the utilities were talking with MD as to how we could safely blast in between the lines. According to Todd Harrington, MD's Blasting Technical Manager, "Selection and application of explosives play a key part in successful pipeline trench blasting. MD Drilling & Blasting utilizes only the best initiation systems, and state-of-the-art explosives delivery systems compatible with the pipeline environment." John Capasso explains, "Through our presentation, site-specific custom planning, and our performance, we were able to safely blast through an area that Precision would have had to hoe-ram. This saved weeks off the schedule."

The scope of work also included blasting both boring and receiving pits adjacent to major roadways and houses. This required closely monitored blasting activities with strict vibra-

tion criteria. These operations were performed to the satisfaction of all parties involved.

MD structured a strong, talented management team with the necessary resources, which has met or exceeded the contractor's production needs on a daily basis. Upon entering September, MD's scope of work on the southern spread is nearing an end and the north spread is well in hand for the end of October target completion. At the peak of the project, MD was staffed with six superintendents, and 14 drilling and blasting crews working seven days per week, 14-16 hours a day.

"MD has a thorough understanding of what it takes day in and out to make these projects a success for our customers, and we look forward to the next challenge," says Capasso.

For project profiles of the company's most recent pipeline projects, visit <http://mdandb.com/energy.cfm>
For more information, contact John Capasso at 800-370-0299 or jcapasso@mdandb.com

MD Drilling & Blasting: A Breed Apart

MD Drilling & Blasting, a subsidiary of Maine Drilling a Blasting, Inc., has become a major player in the Energy market, providing drilling and blasting services for pipeline projects throughout several Northeast states. Nationally recognized as a leader in the drilling and blasting industry, MD has earned its reputation as one of the safest and most experienced providers in the Northeast. Since their founding in 1966, they've performed over 1.2 million controlled blasts for highways, site development, quarries, house lots, and a host of energy-related work such as utility, marine, pipeline, wind and geothermal. Progressive decisions and quality people have enabled them to become the largest explosive user east of the Mississippi, with the majority of the volume utilized in New England and New York. Today they are par to the energy boom, experiencing major growth each year, with an inventory of 100 plus productive drills keeping them cost competitive. These experts are anxious to brainstorm the most cost-effective approach for energy projects as permits are finalized. When work starts, they understand the schedule essential to power production. As the work progresses, drill types and explosive options are constantly optimized from in-house resources.

