

## **A Chat with the Honourable Grant Mitchell**

For almost seven years between 2013 until 2020, I had the opportunity and pleasure to work alongside Senator Grant Mitchell as we developed damage prevention legislation that would govern federally regulated underground energy and utility infrastructure. At the time, there were a few horses in that legislation race; the Team working on bill S-229 and the Technical Committee working on CSA Z-247 – Damage Prevention for the Protection of Underground Infrastructure. The general consensus was one of those thoroughbreds had to win - the bill would pass third reading in the House of Commons or the CSA Standard would be incorporated by reference in existing regulation. Either way, Canadians would finally secure a legislative process whereby critical buried energy and utility infrastructure would be protected by existing ClickBeforeYouDig processes across Canada.

To this day, it blows my mind how none of that came to pass. But, we did move the damage prevention needle forward and work does continue.

If you've been listening to Alberta One-Call's "[Prairie Podcast](#)" series, you might have heard the most recent edition where I spend time chatting with retired Senator, Grant Mitchell. If not, and you're curious on the legislation journey we embarked on, [this episode](#) provides a lot of the details told by two pals enjoying a trip down memory lane.

I had the opportunity to meet the Honourable Grant Mitchell in 2013 and begin working with him shortly thereafter to develop the legislation. It was one of the most interesting projects of my career – and I've been involved in some really neat stuff over the last 30 years. There is a captivating energy when you're inside the walls of the Parliament buildings and it's impossible not to be absorbed by the history and tradition told by the many paintings, monuments and photos adorning the hallways. Even the bullet holes into the stone walls outside the Parliamentary Library left by the 2014 tragedy purposely remain as a testament to history.

The Parliament buildings are closed now as they undergo an overdue 10 year overhaul. I probably won't have the chance to visit, let alone, work inside those walls again but, the work to secure damage prevention governance continues with Public Service and Procurement Canada and the Canadian Common Ground Alliance – and we're closer to that reality than you might think.

*Mike Sullivan – President, Utility Safety Partners (operated by Alberta One-Call Corporation)*