

Locates – One Goal, two challenges

By: Jeff Morris
October 2021

We all know that locating utilities is a vital exercise for the convenience and safety of communities and operators. That’s why many companies have a strategy when it comes to obtaining locates.

Some companies dedicate one person to the task of submitting locates, while others share the responsibility across their project managers or estimators. In general, the goal for every new locate is the same. Acquire and organize all the locates for each jobsite as quickly and efficiently as possible, so these can be printed for the crew and the work can begin.

Two complications

While the goal is simple, accomplishing it can get complicated. This is because people who submit new locates have two variables to deal with. The first variable is mostly out of their control, namely, ensuring locators will locate each utility within the required turnaround of 5 business days. This issue continues to call for attention, and from the contractor’s perspective, solutions cannot come fast enough. When you speak with contractors about locates the chorus is the same, “What can you do to fix the late locate issue?” Thankfully organizations like the ORCGA and Ontario One Call are constantly working at this problem, and we encourage them in their effort to find creative solutions.

The second variable that makes the locate process complicated is within the contractor’s control, namely, organizing the paperwork, dates, and statuses for each jobsite. On this front, there is a solution called EasyLocates. It’s an online software app that is integrated

Status	Calendar	Request Details	Documents	Related
✓		(BCTW01N) CLI FOR BELL CANADA		
		Alternate Locate		
✓		(ENTW01N) CLI FOR ENBRIDGE GAS		
		Alternate Locate		
⊘		(ENVMTW1N) CLI FOR ENBRIDGE GAS		
		Notification Sent		
✓		(THTW01N) CLI FOR TORONTO HYDRO		
		Alternate Locate		
✓		(ROGTOR01) PRO-TECH FOR ROGERS		
		Alternate Locate		
⊘		(TORTSW01) PVS FOR TORONTO TRAFFIC SIGNALS		

with Ontario One Call and designed to track all the tickets and paperwork for each jobsite.

Contractors submit locates like normal, and simply approve new locate messages as they come in from locators. A jobsite package with all of the paperwork for each ticket is automatically compiled and can be printed with a click of the mouse.

There is no need to flag emails or print separate pdf's or combine pdf's. It also tracks expiry dates, so you know exactly when to submit for relocates. EasyLocates is an innovative solution that is affordable, and easy to implement. Most new users are up and running in about five minutes.

Try something new

Most of us are aware that the late locate issue needs constant attention. It's the variable that is out of the contractor's control and we're thankful to the team at the ORCGA, Ontario One Call, and locators who continue to grind away at finding solutions. In the meantime, you can still beef up your locate strategy by implementing EasyLocates.

Go to the website to see the software in action and sign up for a free trial – www.easylocates.com