

Hamre, John G.

From: Prescott, Julie S.
Sent: Monday, April 07, 2014 2:56 PM
To: Hamre, John G.
Subject: FW: Case Number PU-14-138
Attachments: doc20140407132722.pdf

Hi John,

Please docket the attached letter in case PU-14-138.

Thanks,
Julie

-----Original Message-----

From: Lindskog, Travis [<mailto:Travis.Lindskog@rmcontractors.com>]
Sent: Monday, April 07, 2014 2:51 PM
To: Prescott, Julie S.
Subject: Case Number PU-14-138

Julie,
It was nice to talk to you today regarding this incident. Thank you for checking our records with the PSC last week. Attached is the RMC written response to the incident that occurred on January 15th , 2014, in Tioga, North Dakota. Please let me know if you require more information.

Travis Lindskog
Safety Director
Rocky Mountain Contractors
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Helena, MT 59604
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2 **PU-14-138** Filed: 4/7/2014 Pages: 2
E-mail response to third party damage complaint



**ROCKY
MOUNTAIN
CONTRACTORS, INC.**

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April 4, 2014

Darrell Nitschke, Executive Secretary
North Dakota Public Service Commission
600 East Boulevard, Department 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

Dear Mr. Nitschke,

Rocky Mountain Contractors, Inc. (RMC) does attempt to do their due diligence when attempting to locate underground utilities. The incident that occurred on January 18, 2014, does not reflect the standard practices that our crews typically use to protect the located services. We do attempt to make the utility visible prior to crossing it.

After speaking with Julie Prescott, I verified that RMC does not have a history of prior violations or complaints in North Dakota.

A check for the repair was issued on March 13, 2014 to Northwest Communications Cooperative and it was cashed it on March 20, 2014. RMC did assist in opening the area to be spliced to help expedite the repair.

Our General Foreman, Dan Santanen, had called in a locate request on January 6th. The ticket number is 14000733 and it was stated that work could begin on January 8th. After interviewing the crew it sounds like they had spoken to one of the locators and they were under the impression that there were only two phone lines in that area, one live line and one abandoned. Our crew had exposed one of the lines earlier while digging another hole for a power pole. At that time they spoke with the locator and he thought that the live line had been re-routed closer to the highway and the abandoned line was in the area where our crew was headed. When our crew trenched through the line they found out that there were actually three lines in the area (two live and one abandoned) with the live line, approximately 18"-24" below the surface, being placed directly over the abandoned line. Hence, the marks at the area of the dig-in indicated only one line (supposedly abandoned) as opposed to the two lines buried together.

In light of the conversations listed above and contrary to Mr. Hill's statement, the RMC's crew did not simply disregard the locates and trench through the phone lines. Mr. Clark acted upon the information that was available to him and unfortunately damaged the phone line. Mr. Clark did call Northwest Communications Cooperative immediately to report the damage.

RMC does realize that anecdotal information is not reliable and should not be acted on. We have also terminated the foreman, Mr. Clark on January 29, 2014 related to this incident as well as other performance issues. RMC would like to ensure you that we take these incidents very seriously and are talking to our crews to ensure other incidents like this do not happen again.

RMC does take pride in providing safe and quality work in North Dakota and we feel that a penalty would affect our ability to continue to provide these services and appropriately staff crews to help build a quality infrastructure for your citizens and our customers in this rapidly growing state.

Sincerely,

Travis S. Lindskog
Safety Director
Rocky Mountain Contractors, Inc.