

Strategic Underground Program – Dean’s Testimonial

I can actually recall a couple of big storms: one was Fran when we first moved in and we were without power for four days and then the other one was Gaston. It washed out the infrastructure and then we were out of power for over eleven days. Anytime we heard a storm coming, we would start preparing because we're on a community well system and the supplier didn't have generators. So, when you lost power, you lost water too. We'd fill the bathtub up, so we'd have water and then I'd dig out the generator because we've lost a lot of frozen food in years past and didn't want that to happen again. When we got the notice that Dominion was looking to put our power underground my wife and I were extremely happy because a lot of the outages were due to tree branches or whatever hitting the overhead lines. We went and listened to it and were very excited to talk it up with neighbors especially those that might have been reluctant to give easements. I actually was asked to sign two easements; one to go across the front that was presented at the very first meeting. But, because projects are always in flux, they changed the routing. So, I had to sign an easement on the side of the property to help service my neighbors. They did a very good job of marking our utilities. As a matter of fact, they probably went overboard to safeguard everything. We had flags, we had paint. People would come and talk to me to say what they were doing during the process itself. The contractors came and met with me when they saw me outside working and told me what about the project time frame and asked if I have any concerns. If I raised a concern, they addressed it immediately and to my satisfaction. The folks were extremely professional, courteous and great communicators. They always let me know what was going on with the project as far as when they started doing their splice pits and boring. There was a couple of areas behind the garage where they had to do a splice pit and in my neighbor's backyard, but they backfilled that. We've had had a lot of rain and settlement and they actually came back and added more dirt to level it back off as well as re-seed and put straw down. The contractors that were doing this were fantastic. I can't say enough. They treated us with respect and when I did have an issue when they were laying the cable initially and I called him up, the supervisor came out and I showed him what my concern was. He got the team out here probably within an hour and resolved everything. The Dominion supervisor came to see as well so the follow-through was fantastic. One of the things that I was impressed about this was the communication. We got a letter in the mail saying that there was going to be a community meeting at the local school. The folks that were there answered our questions, they had the blueprints and the routes laid out. Then, as the project went on, we got a letter saying we're going to start on this date. When the time came to cut over the service, we'd gotten a notice on the front door saying with that time frame. While the contractors were great, I did have a few questions that I addressed to Dominion and I used email to do that to the project manager and she replied back not the same day, the next day. The only thing I can say is what took Dominion so long to do this? This was great - I mean it really was. Any community or older subdivision that has overhead power, if Dominion comes to you, I'd highly recommend that you get on.

