

Announcer ([00:02](#)):

You are listening to the Safety Moment Podcast by Utility Safety Partners. Safety is always a good conversation and it's a click away. Here's your host, Mike Sullivan.

Mike Sullivan ([00:15](#)):

Today my guest is Mell Greenall. She is the CEO from Before You Dig Australia, there are so many similarities between Utility Safety Partners and Before You Dig, I don't think there was enough time in this podcast for us to explore all of them. So without further ado, let's get right into it. Mell, thanks for joining us today on the Safety Moment podcast and here we are today. Right now for you it's Friday and for me it's Thursday, so we're doing the time travel thing today on our podcast, which is so if you can tell me what the lottery numbers are for Alberta, that'd be great.

Mell Greenall ([00:53](#)):

Well, we did put in the Powerball as a team ticket, so we've put it on the risk register that if we win, there may be a mass exodus from my team as we all become millionaires on the same night.

Mike Sullivan ([01:04](#)):

Wouldn't that be nice? Well, I mean nice for you and the team, but not so much for the digging community in Australia. No, Mell, thanks for joining us today. This is a real treat and I really appreciate you joining us and I just want to talk to you about what it's like to be the CEO of Before You Dig Australia, I know you're going to be implementing some changes and expanding services and I know you have some new people on the board. Yeah. Tell me a little bit about yourself though before you got involved in this wonderful world of damage prevention. What did you do?

Mell Greenall ([01:35](#)):

Well, I'm a country girl, so my parents are beef farmers in regional Queensland and I grew up on a farm riding horses and running amuck with my brothers and career-wise, did I ever say that my goal was to grow up and be CEO of Before You Dig? No, but I absolutely love it. I've come up through executive leadership roles in the construction sector with master builders and Institute of Architects. I also spent some time in the drilling community. I looked after the Australian Drilling Industry Association on the east coast here. So I've always had that really grassroots love of making a difference for the guys and girls out on site and working each and every day and the importance that they do in keeping our communities connected and allowing us to turn our tellies on at night and do podcasts. I've always loved that role and I'm really grateful that everything that I've learned has actually really come to fruition here at Before You Dig, in terms of our change program and what we're hoping to achieve in terms of damage prevention

Mike Sullivan ([02:39](#)):

And the damage prevention goal, we have this goal that there'll be no damages. We never really get there, but we get closer, we get closer all the time and there's so many moving parts in what we do or just the initiating phase, somebody requests to locate and then the process just starts to unravel and it touches so many parties throughout the whole lifespan of a locate request from the idea to the planning to the initiating locate request to getting marks on the ground if they are going to get marks on the ground and having a safe excavation and the new project being completed or whatever the case is that created the locate request in the first place. There's so many people that it touches and everybody has

to get it right for there to be no damages. And like I was talking to somebody else earlier today, the side of the business that we're responsible for, there's been a lot of changes, a lot of changes over the years on the notification centre side of things, but on the locating and marking, well maybe not so much it's a different and you're going to see something very different when you're coming here and I'm going to talk about that a little bit later.

[\(03:52\)](#):

I will. We jam a year's worth of excavation into about seven or eight months if we're lucky. This is a El Nino year, so we're having a very mild winter seven degrees here. That's mild by the way. It's not a few weeks ago it was minus 45 with a windchill. And we might get that again, if you're lucky, you might get that again. This, we all have to get it right and I actually, I got to tell you a little story actually. I love a story. Before You Dig Australia, you've been predominantly on the web for years. For years the locate and 95 plus percentile. And a number of years ago I was working on legislation on the national side of things and we wanted the shift from the call that click Before You Dig. And we were actually, I was trying to bring in three digit dialing into Canada 8 1 1 like the US because that's where so many of the pipeline companies that transmission pipeline companies that deliver product to the us, they have their own companies in the us, they want to be able to have a broad public awareness program that was cross border.

[\(04:58\)](#):

So 8 1 1 would've been great. Anyway, it didn't work. We didn't get 8 1 1 here in Canada. And you know what? It was a happy circumstance actually we moved to the web, but it was a gentleman that from Australia I was talking to one day at a conference in Orlando and he said to me just like this, Mike, forget the web. Sorry Mike, forget the phone, forget the phone. I said, we are at like 96 or 7% Australia on the web. I remember saying to him, but the company name is Dial Before You Dig, how does that work? And he said, well, that's hence the change. But know it was that advice and it was a very quick conversation but stuck with me and it was that advice that said, you know what? Yeah, I'm going to shift this. So it was bad news. We didn't get 8 1 1. I'm going to shift gears here and we're going to push option B, which was the web. And now across Canada, collectively notification centres are just under 90% on the web, which is in a very short amount of time. And in Alberta here we're about the same, just about 90% on the web. And I have your people, your colleagues in Australia to thank for that. So thank you.

Mell Greenall [\(06:18\)](#):

You are very welcome.

Mike Sullivan [\(06:19\)](#):

I don't think you knew that story. No, there you go. The world is a very small place and we all help each other out.

Mell Greenall [\(06:27\)](#):

Well hopefully I can aspire you with some more digital change with some of our plans that we'll be unveiling this year here in Australia.

Mike Sullivan [\(06:34\)](#):

Well, I'd love to hear it. Do tell what? Do you have a

Mell Greenall [\(06:37\)](#):

Plan? Yeah, so as you know, we've gone from Dial Before You Dig to Before You Dig. And part of that process was winding down the six state-based businesses and bringing us into a national organizational structure so that we could really rapidly change and evolve to meet the needs of the sector here in Australia. So yes, we've always been online since the early nineties now and really ramped up how we pushed data through the system. But this year we're actually launching, it'll be just after I get back from Canada back to Australia, we'll be unveiling our collated response service. So when we've done online in the past or up until now, you would launch your address and pop it in and you would end up getting about 12 to 15 emails back from the utilities in your area, most inner city you're going to get about 16 responses back, roughly about 30 attachments with plans and safety information and permitting.

[\(07:32\)](#):

And we just realized that that wasn't cutting it with our sector that use our service. So we nicknamed it the email hell process and trying to keep track of all of those plans coming through. So we're actually launching a new collated response viewer where you'll actually get all of your responses in real time in a portal where you can download a single pack, you can actually interact with some of the maps online and drill in a bit more detail, direct feedback loops to the utility owners in terms of further assistance or help. So all of that's going to be within one portal now, making it a lot easier for our users to engage with the information and really make sure that they're putting safety front and centre. And one of the things I'm really passionate about here, and I'm sure the trends are the same, I'd love to understand a bit more about particularly your construction sector and the guys and girls out on site is we know that English is often second or third language here in Australia.

[\(08:27\)](#):

We've got lower literacy rates in that sector, particularly with the guys and girls in those more hands-on roles, trade roles. And we know that they're not going to read 156 pages of stuff, safety clutter as I call it. And so I've really been this year working really hard with our members across Australia to address how do we get back to the basics and make our plans and our safety informations the three Cs, clear, concise, consumable and consumable for that grassroot operator so that they're not having to troll through multiple PDFs and attachments, they can get to the information right upfront and making sure we're keeping people safe. And so that's part of our engagement platform across the utilities is around let's strip everything back, let's get back to the grassroots, let's get back to putting safety first. And that's really starting to transition through into the industry. And our second very exciting tool that we're starting to launch is a new user and member portal and our new damage data dashboard, which I'll be able to give you guys a bit of a snapshot around how we're looking to present damaged data here in Australia with the aspirations of copying your very famous dirt report that gets circulated every year. We're hoping to launch Australia's first Dirt report this

Mike Sullivan [\(09:43\)](#):

Year. Well Dirt report. And it is a great report. It answers some questions but it also creates a lot more questions than in answers I find because it's the nature of how it's assembled and I'm hoping for Australia's sake that it might be a case of the early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese and you capitalize on what North America might have done better with the dirt report. I mean we're all very proud of it, but for the casual observer, they'll look at the dirt report and say, Mike, why does Alberta have so many damages compared to say British Columbia or I said, well, we have about 75 different reporting members who report damages, whereas other provinces might have four or five. So it's a bit of a paradox that you promote awareness of the dirt report, you want people to report their damages and when they do, your damages go up because there's more damages being reported

because you did the right thing and however it looks like your performance is not very good because they have more damages.

(10:52):

So it's a bit of a paradox. We've tried to justify that. We've tried to normalize that by providing additional information. This is how many reporting entities are in each province. And so something to look at as well. And when you're in town here, bending people's ear might not be a bad idea. It is a great tool, it is a fantastic tool, but it's only as good as the data that gets put in and that's the hard part is engaging the members, the bird utility owners and above ground too. And we want to bring that kind of data into the report, getting them to report their damages and being a member of the common Ground Alliance is all well and good when you can't be a member part of the team part of the time, you have to be there all the time. And that's a bit of a sticking point with me as you can probably tell over too many years of being exposed to it and it's a great information, but you got to read between the lines. So having that damaged information though is wonderful. Going back to your first point where you're doing all this work on the email hell that you mentioned, I guess that's really a necessity though because locating and marking in Australia, it's performed by the excavator, correct? It's the digging community that's doing that and that's always been the case, correct?

Mell Greenall (12:23):

Yes, it has been. And the reality is I don't see that changing because of the culture of industry here and because it's the precedent now.

Mike Sullivan (12:32):

I think you got it right by the way. You don't want change that. You don't want to change that. Yeah. Think you definitely got

Mell Greenall (12:39):

It right. No, fantastic.

Mike Sullivan (12:39):

Great. And we're trying to emulate that to

Mell Greenall (12:41):

Degree. I'll write that down. Look, and it is, I think there's pros and cons for both processes. There's elements of the Australian community that says we should be doing it like the US and North America as it should be on the utilities versus the utilities pushing back and saying, well no, there's so many elements of groundbreaking activity to try and have a locator on every job site. And it is one of the challenges here in Australia is what is a skilled and qualified locator look like? What is appropriate level of marking and locates is Betty digging in a front garden for a rose garden versus a major civil construction project doing kilometers of road work and everything in between. So I think there's a real piece of work to do here in Australia around what is best practice and what is reasonable to expect of our very large and diverse community that's breaking ground on a given day for them to undertake risk assessment, engage a locator In terms of the DIY market at home, which we do see approximately a third of every one of our plans request is going into residential homeowners, agricultural homeowners into that space versus our tier one, tier two construction space, which are using it for a very different purpose.

[\(14:00\)](#):

And one of my learnings over the last two years is how do we start to evolve Before You Dig services to actually represent those varying elements of the market rather than expecting our traditional referral service to be a one size fits all? Because I think we're at that tipping point where we have enough learnings now to know that it can't. Our engineering community, our design community government planning agencies need a very different relationship with utilities and Before You Dig in terms of digital access 3D modeling, they want interactive planning and tools that they can bring into their own modeling systems versus the traditional shovel technician as we call them here in Australia, who are just literally on the tools and need to dig a hole. And I think we have to evolve now to meet the needs of a digital world. So we need to look at how do we bring in interactive digital tools online as well as keeping the grassroots community engaged to still want to have a PDF plan. So there's a bit of space there for us to continue to grow and invest in our digital capability.

Mike Sullivan [\(15:10\)](#):

You know that utility safety partners users clicked Before You Dig 90% of all locate requests in 2023. That is amazing. We processed just under 500,000 locate requests in 2023 and 90% of them came through the web. Thank you for doing that. As we move into the heavy digging season of 2024 and you don't want to wait to speak to an agent, you can put in a locate request online@utilitiesafety.ca or click Before You Dig.com and then select the province of Alberta and you won't have to wait for any agent to help process that, but they will be standing by on chat if you need them. Click Before You Dig 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Is this really the essence of the presentation you'll be delivering in that?

Mell Greenall [\(16:08\)](#):

Yeah, absolutely. I want to walk through a bit of that. How do you change an industry? I think it's really, I always say to my team and our stakeholders, the 18 months of merging six businesses into one and bringing cultural change and the change in behaviors and output and activity in my team is the easy part. And a lot of people would go like, what are you talking about? That sounds horrible, but it was, it's really easy to change yourself and to change the culture within your own bubble. Our challenge now here in Australia is how do we evolve and change as a utility and infrastructure owning community and how do we bring everybody in that journey? It's one thing for our national network providers in telco or some of the larger electricity providers to go, yep, we're ready to change. We can evolve our GIS capability and we're ready to go, but we've got 700 utility providers here in Australia and I need to bring everybody on the journey.

[\(17:03\)](#):

I need to go. How do we step off PDF as the norm for a plan to an interactive digital map? And what are those milestones that as a community we can commit to? And I'm not sure how this would compare to the Canada and the us, but I've been really intrigued around the silos. So when I first came into the role and I'm very much a people person and a collaborator, I was really intrigued to see that even within say the four main sectors, electricity, water, telco, they weren't talking to each other. And then within the sector itself, the various electrical providers didn't necessarily know their peers or their counterparts. And I think part of that change profile is how do we bring us together as a collective and how do we build the relationships and create a pathway that we're all excited about that everybody from the executive down to the IT teams and everybody in between can rally behind and how are we going to achieve that together versus it's one thing for me to say, yep, this is the path, but if otherwise I'm just a girl running alone in the dark, that doesn't make sense.

[\(18:05\)](#):

I need everybody to run with me.

Mike Sullivan ([18:07](#)):

And that takes time. It's not easy, it's not easily done overnight. Similarly, we have for Alberta utility safety partners, we have about 850 members that are with USP and that varies. It goes from 875 down, eight 20 depending on mergers and acquisitions and divestitures, that type thing. It happens all the time. Alberta's a very pipeline, oil and gas heavy province. And so there's a lot of that and it happens with the economy, but you're absolutely right bringing everybody together and not just internally but externally as well and trying to engage the board as well as this is the direction we need to take and they need to buy in. You don't snap your fingers, it doesn't happen overnight, it takes a long time. You have to plant the seed and you got to water it and let it grow. And sometimes it can take a couple of years before you actually achieve what you want to. Then you may deviate along the way. That's just the nature of things or you have to move with whatever the circumstances might be, but as long as you never lose sight of that goal, that's the key thing. You have to have that goal and then making sure you have the right team to get there. And it sounds like you have that team in place.

Mell Greenall ([19:29](#)):

Oh, I'm very lucky. I have an amazing team that I've rallied behind the course and I think it's also, you have to have that resilience. And over the course of my career, you have to believe in your purpose enough that even on the hard days, on the days where you just want to rip your hair out, it feels

Mike Sullivan ([19:49](#)):

Like

Mell Greenall ([19:49](#)):

It's falling apart. Never happens. It

Mike Sullivan ([19:50](#)):

Never happens. I have

Mell Greenall ([19:53](#)):

All my hair. I do feel very lucky that mine, I have a very well-paid hairdresser to make sure mine stays in place. But I think if you believe in your purpose, and I think we're very lucky to work in a space where our purpose is to make sure people go home safe and that's what gets you through those hard times is that this is worth it because I know on a given day making sure thousands of people get home safe, we process 2.2 million referrals a year. That's incredible. In Australia it's a huge amount. And then the flow on of those people teams that are using those plans. So we have a lot to be proud of and we have a lot to want to work hard to do better. There's a lot of motivator there to be the best we can be.

Mike Sullivan ([20:38](#)):

We provide services not only to Alberta but to neighbouring Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Those are the two provinces to the east of Alberta. And collectively we're almost the same. We've provided 2.2 million notifications, not the incoming but the outgoing. And we've processed, I guess on the inbound of just under 900,000 locate requests for the three provinces. And that's a population of, I'll say maybe 6

million people if not a little bit less than that. And that's again, usually within an eight month span is when the heavy construction season is in play. So there's a lot of similarities here between Western Canada and Australia. I want to talk a little bit about the locating and marketing side. And the reason I want to talk about that is, and you may have seen on LinkedIn, we've been promoting our alternate locate provider process. We've been talking about it for a long time.

[\(21:36\)](#):

And when we were moving towards this option for the digging community, we did look at Australia, we looked at New Zealand, we looked at British Columbia and other parts of the world that we're doing locates a little differently than we have. Traditionally it's been the utility owner that locates pipeline company, the distribution asset transmission pipelines, they locate and we knew that the distribution assets, so gas, telecommunications, electricity, they're on every ticket, almost every locate request that comes in, every notification that goes out there on it. And there had been some work over the years to create consortiums of these utility owners that would send out one locator to locate all utilities, which was going to enhance things dramatically and speed things up. But it also created this bottleneck, this artificial bottleneck that nobody really contemplated at the time because now the contracts went out. Yeah, it certain locate service providers that could do the locates, but it took everybody out of the picture, everybody else out of the picture that could locate, but you can't now because you don't have the contract.

[\(22:46\)](#):

So that was creating locate delays. When we have locate delays in this environment that is heavily influenced by the seasonal changes here, the climate, those delays can be very costly and if they are really long, that's a problem. So we started looking a couple of years ago, maybe even longer, but at different options and how locates are managed in Australia was at the top of the list. And when you brought in Before You Dig, brought in the, I can't remember the name of it now, but the locating training process that was for a certified locator and I talking with Rob bro and others who were heavily involved in that, they said Mike at the time, this isn't gone back a few years, but at the time he said we haven't had any damages where there are a certified locator was on site. And that stuck me again, like the click Before You Dig side going, years before this stuck with me.

[\(23:50\)](#):

And we began looking at that and about two and a half years ago, we initiated a project with subject matter experts in that distribution assets space and we created a training program. That training program will be offered soon and very similar to what we do with ground disturbance training. A training provider will have to be certified or endorsed to deliver this training. And basically it gives a person their driver's license. Now there's more they have to do to be able to drive a car, but they've got their driver's license and they'll have to go through an assessment protocol to be that contract locator. So the digging community can now go to a resource on our website and select a locator. They'll pay for it, but they'll get it done and probably have, I'm thinking now, it's just me thinking about this, but much the same way.

[\(24:44\)](#):

We've determined that locate requests on the web are less likely to result in damage. I believe, and this is putting myself out there a little bit, but I believe that in time the data will show that a locator that was selected by an excavator and onsite with the excavator doing the locates, communicating with the excavator at all times, I believe that would also result in less damages and it will become a best practice. I have no doubt in my mind that this will be the case because you're creating a situation where there's constant communication where there can't be anything but constant communication. So we're at the

very early stages right now, but what this will look like down the road I think is very good and on tip of the hat to Australia and other places around the world that this is just the way business has done for helping us get here. So I'm looking forward to that. This is the hard part right now because we're just before launch, there still seems to be a mountain of work to do, but we're closer now than we ever have been. That never ends, never happens. Oh no, no. As I was joking with the team the other day, it's just another just in time production, right? We'll get there, but it's a big change. And one of our neighboring provinces out East Ontario has been through similar, and this is just I think the natural flow of things to come

Mell Greenall ([26:19](#)):

Certainly is we still see a very, there's a skill shortage at Australia. I think most countries, particularly in construction post covid, we are still trying to recover in terms of skill sets and skill development. I think there is absolutely no doubt that a locator, a skilled quality locator absolutely drives down the risk of damage. But the problem we have in here in Australia is we don't have a national accessible skillset because we are still trying to ramp up how do we make this skillset accessible? How do we make it available in regional communities? And I think there's still a lot of work to do here in Australia around does locating need to become a qualified trade here in Australia similar to a plumber, similar to a sparky, and what would that pathway look like so that we've got more qualified people on site every day as part of a construction crew and embedded into those teams long term. So I think we have done some great work in the past, but I think we've still got a lot of work to do to ensure that this just becomes an everyday practice, not just on the jobs where we can get somebody out to it. We want it to be on every job.

Mike Sullivan ([27:31](#)):

The similarities around uncanny. For years there has been an objective to have locating become a designated occupation in Alberta, which would be recognized by the government as a trade. And this is going back at least a decade, at least a decade. And to date, it hasn't come to fruition. However, there is a presentation that you might want to take in when you're in town because you're strolling into town, you might as well just hang around for a bit and see some stuff. But at our conference there's, I was

Mell Greenall ([28:07](#)):

Going to do some meetings

Mike Sullivan ([28:09](#)):

At the conference. There's a presentation called the Damage Prevention Professional and being delivered by Debbie Shelley from Global Training and Jeff Mulligan from Aztec training. And it's something that I've talked to both of those folks for a couple of years now. They're part of the training field and this training standards committee we have, and they said there's damage prevention, it needs to evolve. It has evolved dramatically over the years, but it needs to evolve in the same way that health and safety has the same way that environmental studies and environmental sciences has, there are so many elements of damage prevention to consider if you're going to go into that field. It's not just locating and marking. It's not just being a land analyst for pipeline crossings or crossings in general or a ground disturbance supervisor. There's so many things involved in this and we want to work together to identify what those areas of work are and develop a training protocol or program that a person can enter into the damage prevention field and become that damage prevention professional.

([29:25](#)):

And the designated occupation for locating and marking is part of that. It absolutely is part of that, again, the challenge here is the climate. Our seasons, because there is such a push during the digging season, kind of like the baseball season or maybe cricket season or rugby for the digging community, there's a lot of locating marking going on between end of March, April till about November or maybe depending on the weather, and then it just falls off. So a person who is going into that field, I'm going to be doing locating, I'm only going to be working for eight months of the year until I'm really good at it, and then I'll be working full time. What am I going to do for those other months that I'm not working? So it's a very big challenge. It's a really big challenge. And I think moving towards this alternate locate provider option, because an excavator can choose this option and say, well, I'm going to do this or I'm going to go with a conventional route where the utility is going to locate. I think going this way will provide those locators who are good to be perhaps picked up by an excavating company, a ground disturbance company. And when in the off season they'll still have employment doing something else. It might broaden their horizons, but it's a different animal. And just because of the seasonal changes here, but it's interesting, you're facing the same objectives

Mell Greenall ([31:00](#)):

And I'd love to hear your thoughts and obviously talk to the community when I'm there. I also think we have a culture of inefficiency when it comes to locating. So we go out and we mark up these locations and wonderful work's done, but then where does the information go? Because then in six months time we go back and we remark the same space and the surveyors come out in Australia, we have the surveying community will come out and mark it up, document it, and then that job gets done and all that information gets lost. And I also think there's part of evolving in terms of damage prevention and the circular economy of information around how do we capture that information and make it accessible so that here in Australia, in my street, I live in inner city, Mellbourne, the council will come out and mark up, they want to asphalt the footpath and then six months later the water guys are there because they want to do drainage works. And then six months later there's someone building a new apartment building and so it all gets done again. So we've remarked the assets haven't moved, they're not jumping around down there in the dance

Mike Sullivan ([32:09](#)):

And nothing new has gone on the ground. So we

Mell Greenall ([32:11](#)):

Lose nothing. All that has been is that surface level. So I do think as an industry we have to look at how do we utilize the information, the great information that's out there and has been captured and all the hard work's been done, how do we make that better, more accessible and can be shared across work sites, across industry so that we're not wasting time here in Australia. The construction community at the moment, I've got skill shortages. We're running on 2% margin on a lot of jobs. They're doing it, it's really tight in terms of, and every day, every minute costs hundreds of thousands of dollars. And here we are remarking the same footpath seven times in a year. We can do better than that. I genuinely believe with today's technology and the greater fostering of collaboration and trust across our industry, we can do better. I absolutely believe it.

Mike Sullivan ([33:05](#)):

I agree. When you're talking risk and consequence, right? If you can manage the risk, then there's no consequence. So that's really what it comes down to. And I see it happening here. There are areas we

have a lifespan of a locate that it can be so many days or weeks, whatever the province decides on, but if the conditions of the locate are met, it could be indefinite. Now, is it ever, are those conditions always met? Very rarely. In fact, I'm not sure they've ever been met, but they could be. If you had somebody on site who is managing this on a regular basis and managing the marks, it could be indefinite, but I don't think it can ever, I don't think it's gotten there. But interesting that we're facing a lot of the same challenges. And so now you're coming to Canada, you're coming to Alberta, you're coming to Banff, Alberta, which as I think I've mentioned, we're very lucky.

[\(34:02\)](#):

We are so fortunate to live here where we do with Banff, Alberta. It's just an hour and a half north of us here in Calgary. And people from all over the world come to Banff just to see Banff, Alberta, the Rocky Mountains, and yet we take it for granted. Hey Mike, when's the last time you went? Oh, 1980. It's like I don't go on often, but when I get there, the first thing I say is, why don't I come here more often? So you're coming to Canada for the first time and you're coming in February, which is interesting, but you know what?

Mell Greenall [\(34:37\)](#):

Someone rudely time the conference there. I know

Mike Sullivan [\(34:39\)](#):

Some jerk plan the conference in February, but the reason why we did is because it's the off season and we're trying to get more people. If you do this in May or June, you're not going to have anybody there because we're all busy working. But we've been having a very mild winter, not 38 Celsius, but it's 10 some days, usually five a few weeks ago minus 45. But hopefully it won't be like that. When you're here, what are you looking forward to seeing and doing when you're here?

Mell Greenall [\(35:09\)](#):

Definitely snow. Being a country Queensland girl, our winters on the farm, we would get to two degrees was the coldest, which is not snow, it's hot. It would still get up to 27 degrees during the day. That's

Mike Sullivan [\(35:24\)](#):

Rough how you managed.

Mell Greenall [\(35:25\)](#):

I've never really had a cold winter, even here in Mellbourne. Mellbourne's a little chillier, but certainly not to that extreme. So I'm actually really excited about seeing snow. I have loaded up on the beanies, the gloves, the scarves, jumpers. I've gone out and so I can wrap myself up and I want to make snowman, and I know that sounds really

Mike Sullivan [\(35:44\)](#):

La No, it doesn't. I want to make

Mell Greenall [\(35:46\)](#):

A snowman.

Mike Sullivan ([35:46](#)):

It's very poetic actually.

Mell Greenall ([35:47](#)):

And what's that thing you guys do? The snow? Snow

Mike Sullivan ([35:50](#)):

Angels. Oh

Mell Greenall ([35:50](#)):

Yeah. I think I've seen, yeah, I want to give that again.

Mike Sullivan ([35:53](#)):

To keep our taxes low, we have to prove that we've done snow angels twice a day for the duration of the summer. We have to take pictures and send 'em to government.

Mell Greenall ([36:03](#)):

Send it in with your taxes.

Mike Sullivan ([36:04](#)):

Here we go. Here's my obligatory snow angel for the day. No, I totally get it. I totally get it. And seeing Banff, I guess you've gone online, you've taken a look at the Banff Springs Hotel. It's a castle in the Rockies. It's an amazing building and the town of Banff is interesting. And if you have time, going to Lake Louise is just about 40 minutes down the road. Just remembered a drive on the other side of the road when you're here, if you're driving a car.

([36:34](#)):

I did go to Australia a couple of times and the first time I was with my wife and we rented a car and driving in Sydney I thought was going to be the worst, but it was not bad at all. I just followed everybody else. But when we got on the open road, I really had to think. I really had to think. I remember we were coming out of a, I think it might've been like a McDonald's parking lot somewhere just to get their free wifi. And when we were getting onto the highway, my wife said, okay, you're good. And I didn't go. She says, Mike, you're good. I said, I'm just not ready yet. I got to wrap my head around this short left long or whatever it was. But it was a challenge. So I don't know if you're renting a car while you're here, but if you are,

Mell Greenall ([37:23](#)):

Take note of that one. I hadn't yet decided on the car option. I'm also staying, I have taken a couple of days personal time after the conference, the weekend after to go and stay at Canmore at your recommendation. I've booked a little condo down there and so yeah, I was sort of hoping to see. We also do, I ride horses, gang girl from the bush, so I was hoping to see whether or not there was potentially a day ride that I could book.

Mike Sullivan ([37:46](#)):

There is, I can even send you some information if you're interested. Hope please do. There's lots and most of the bears are hibernating at that time, so you should be fine. But you'll have guides. They're used to it and the black ones look cuddly and sort of the big gray grizzly ones. But trust me, they're not cuddly. Just stay still, do what you're told. Yeah, you'll be fine. You'll be fine. Canada's a little different. Not everything here can kill you, which is a little different than Australia. Great. It's a little different.

Mell Greenall ([38:19](#)):

We are survivors here. Everything will kill you here.

Mike Sullivan ([38:22](#)):

Here. It's not as bad, but we're looking forward to hosting you, Mell. Looking forward to seeing you. And I have to look back at your itinerary again. It may very well be that you'll be jumping in my vehicle with me and heading to Beff.

Mell Greenall ([38:36](#)):

Yeah, I certainly have.

Mike Sullivan ([38:37](#)):

So that way you don't have to worry

Mell Greenall ([38:39](#)):

Alongside our good friend Cookie. Yep. Yeah. So no, I'll be there with Cookie as most you guys know as the overhead expert. Another thing that you guys may not know is that look Up and Live is coming to live with Before Dick, so I'll look up and Live App and Cookie has joined our board and yeah, we're really excited to now move into that more holistic approach for all things safety, for all things energy and infrastructure.

Mike Sullivan ([39:03](#)):

And again, another similarity when we unified with Alberta One Call, where's the line? The Alberta Common Ground Alliance. We took on the overhead assets as well and we're still growing there. We have more work to do, but I'm confident it's going to make a difference as well. Fantastic. Well thanks for joining email. Thanks for joining me on the podcast today. This is always a lot of fun to talk to people from all over the world and then to get together face to face and in person here in a few weeks. A lot of planning and a lot of hard work by a lot of people and it's almost here. So looking forward to seeing you,

Mell Greenall ([39:39](#)):

I'm sure it'll be fabulous. And I think one of the things I'm learning is we're so much more similar than we think we are. We might be kilometers apart, but the similarities are definitely that.

Mike Sullivan ([39:48](#)):

And I hope you've packed your 1980s costume. There will be a prize for best costume,

Mell Greenall ([39:52](#)):

Get the hair crimp off.

Mike Sullivan ([39:53](#)):

Yeah, my colleagues and my family and my wife, they got all kinds of ideas for me, but I haven't decided yet. I think decision will likely be made for me when the time comes. Oh,

Mell Greenall ([40:03](#)):

I can't wait to see it. Yeah.

Mike Sullivan ([40:06](#)):

Well, we'll see you very soon. Thanks so much.

Mell Greenall ([40:08](#)):

Thanks so much for having me.

Mike Sullivan ([40:13](#)):

That's going to wrap things up on the Safety Moment podcast. I want to thank our producer stories and strategies, and I hope you choose to follow this podcast on any directory you're listening on. And please do leave a rating. You can follow us on Twitter at Utility Safety, and we're also on Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook. If you'd like to send us a note, maybe you have an episode idea, email us at info@utilitysafety.ca and put podcast in the subject header. I'm Mike Sullivan, president of Utility Safety Partners. Please remember, one click costs you nothing. Not clicking could cost you everything.