

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](#)):

Hi everybody. Welcome to the Safety Moment podcast with your host myself, Mike Sullivan. My guest today is a gentleman who really needs no introduction, but I'm going to introduce him anyway. Mr. Glenn Cookie Cook from, sorry, energy Queensland or what is it today?

Glen Cook ([00:33](#)):

Yeah, energy Queensland today. Yes.

Mike Sullivan ([00:35](#)):

Energy Queensland out of Australia. And Cookie is our second time on the podcast. We're going to be talking about a variety of things here. I mean what Cookie has done for the industry, the overhead assets industry in Australia, and what's been happening abroad with that local, sorry, look up and live application, his recent trip to the great White North to help us celebrate utility safety Partners, Alberta one call's 40th anniversary and a variety of other things that you've done. Cookie, you're kind of all over the place and especially in your own country, but you've also been racking up the miles in the last couple of years post Covid and anyway, welcome to the Safety Moment podcast, my friend. It's good to see you.

Glen Cook ([01:17](#)):

Yeah, thanks Mike. I'm happy to be here, mate, as always.

Mike Sullivan ([01:21](#)):

And once again, I'm speaking into the future. So you have no idea all this, it's already happened for you.

Glen Cook ([01:26](#)):

Yeah, absolutely.

Mike Sullivan ([01:30](#)):

What are you up to these days? I mean, you're traveling all over the place, you're promoting the goodwill, the good word I should say, for Energy Queensland, look up and live and what's happening in your world, what's really anything different or is it more of the same?

Glen Cook ([01:46](#)):

Look, it's more of the same. People sort of ask me, I am going each day and I usually give the same answer. I'm saving lives one day, one person at a time, I should say. Sorry, it's still morning here. I'm struggling with

Mike Sullivan ([02:00](#)):

How many coffees have you had? I had had a breakfast meeting this morning I think I had in total today. Nor do I lie about six coffees and I'm still feeling it.

Glen Cook ([02:09](#)):

No, I sort of always say to people, yeah, I feel like I'm saving lives one person at a time because you sort of getting face-to-face to people is the only real way to get the message across social media. And I think podcasts are a really good way of doing things too. But yeah, I do enjoy,

Mike Sullivan ([02:30](#)):

I'd like to think so. It's certainly added to our suite of awareness materials.

Glen Cook ([02:34](#)):

Absolutely. But I still feel like face-to-face is the best way to get there, but it's just so hard to travel a country as large as Australia's just similar size to Canada and the US I suppose. We live on a very big island here, island continent as they say. But yeah, I suppose at the moment sort of concentrating on the lookup at live app's been obviously very successful. It's actually up for another Australian award at the moment. It's been nominated at the Australian Health and Safety Awards as best adaption to technology. So we managed to get it pretty much nationwide here in Australia. And we're transferring the ownership of Lookup and Live to before you dig Australia. So because it's become a national product and a lot of the other power line owners are all members of the, before you Dig Australia

Mike Sullivan ([03:37](#)):

Makes total sense and the users can really benefit from having it all in one place.

Glen Cook ([03:42](#)):

Yeah, that's right. And before you dig Australia, it's got some funds to inject some more capability into the lookup and live app, such as offline capabilities, more features like alarms. There's so much more to be done. It really is still sort of a concept,

Mike Sullivan ([04:03](#)):

So to speak, for the three or four people in the world who don't know what the Lookup and Live app is now, you've done a lot of work promoting that application in the elevator speech. What is Lookup and live application? What is it first of all?

Glen Cook ([04:19](#)):

Well, it's a mapping application, so it maps power lines,

Mike Sullivan ([04:23](#)):

Overhead power lines,

Glen Cook ([04:24](#)):

Yeah, just basically maps all the overhead power lines of the onus. You're in Australia that want to be members of it, which is pretty much nearly all of them at the moment. We've got 17 different power line odors that are on there, including some rail networks. So yeah, it's just any power line company wants to map or put their infrastructure onto the map. It helps people adequately plan their work near power lines before they even get off site.

Mike Sullivan ([04:56](#)):

So a person who's going to be doing any kinds of work, whether it's excavation or moving heavy equipment, whatever that might be, they can see now obviously spatially from an overhead perspective, they can see the power line, they can see the limits of approach, they can see the kilovolts, they can see a lot more than just the location of these lines. They see all the information that the company will allow them to see. Right,

Glen Cook ([05:21](#)):

Absolutely. Well, anyone listening now, I would encourage you just to type in look up and live.com. You'll see a map of Australia pop up and you'll see lots of red lines popping up all over the country. That's where all the power lines are. If you start zooming down to what you want to have a look at, we'll type in an address of your work site. So I'm doing a lot of work at the moment with the Crane Industry Council of Australia. So a lot of crane companies use the lookup and live app for job planning and planning their lifts. So they can just type in the address of where they're going to do a lift. They can already see what power lines are around on, and it might be a 66,000 volt line. It's like, whoa, we might want to watch you out for that one. So it gives a voltage of a line and then we give, there's a yellow dotted line that is the exclusion zone or an area that you can't operate in. So it just gives them an idea of where they can't operate and if they do need to operate within that zone and they're adequately trained and they've got advice from the power line owners and then using safety observers to watch them operate just allows people to come up with a practical plan to work there. And it absolutely has been working. How many

Mike Sullivan ([06:43](#)):

Years ago did you create this application? Did you have this idea?

Glen Cook ([06:48](#)):

I had the idea of when apps started coming out, to be honest. So okay, I do these talks and I speak face to face to thousands of people every year. And I was having a beer with my boss, Sarah Smith one day, and I said, we're still missing something. We come in and scare people a little bit, and people, their jaws drop and the whites of their eyes pop out because I'm talking about fatalities and I've been involved in many fatalities. That's how I got so passionate about this. And we knew that there was 25 overhead power line strikes to one underground power line. So the ratio was 25 to one, and

Mike Sullivan ([07:32](#)):

In Australia it was the awareness factor about 25 to one the other way. So there's, in terms of promoting bird utilities and safety work in your bird utilities

Glen Cook ([07:43](#)):

Because what I'll be talking about exclusion zones and safety observer for overhead, but we also promote before you dig Australia message, so you need to get your plans and put control measures in place to find the cable and find all the infrastructure underground before you bring the machinery. So we had a planning tool for underground, but we had no planning tool for overhead. That's

Mike Sullivan ([08:06](#)):

Right,

Glen Cook ([08:06](#)):

That's right. So I went, we need an app that helps people plan for overhead infrastructure. So that was in 2016, come up with that. And then

Mike Sullivan ([08:22](#)):

The applications on mobile devices, smartphones and everything, that has just mean it's proliferated beyond what anybody's expecting. Now if you look at an application like that on a mobile smart device, the maintenance of that, it's actually quite expensive dealing with Apple or Android or Google, whatever, it's quite expensive. And we had an application for a little while to put in a locate key request with a mobile app, and it was always behind everything that we were doing. Apple was very difficult to deal with, but it seems to me that the information in the lookup and live application doesn't require updating as much perhaps as buried utilities. So once you get it in there, you can work with that kind of delay with Apple or Android.

Glen Cook ([09:13](#)):

Yeah, I mean with the mapping side of it, you could update that as much as you want. So we have members that update their data weekly, but I'm

Mike Sullivan ([09:25](#)):

Talking more in the terms of when Apple updates its operating system. That's a bit of a challenge,

Glen Cook ([09:32](#)):

But we haven't really had to have touched the lookup and live app since we've got it out in 2020. Oh,

Mike Sullivan ([09:41](#)):

That's good. That's good.

Glen Cook ([09:44](#)):

Basically when Covid,

Mike Sullivan ([09:45](#)):

That's probably because you're working in the future, right? What's coming before That's right.

Glen Cook ([09:49](#)):

Okay. I knew exactly what Apple wanted, so it developed all we needed.

Mike Sullivan ([09:54](#)):

I'm going to send you all my investments.

Glen Cook ([09:55](#)):

That's it. I can tell you who's going to win next year. Stanley Cup, mate.

Mike Sullivan ([10:01](#)):

Oh yeah. Well you didn't send me any information this year didn't work out so well that regard. No, and this is a very long elevator ride, by the way. We're still in that elevator. This is the elevator speech. We're still going in the elevator, but it's interesting. And now Australia had originated there, originated with you, but now it's not only there. I know that Saskatchewan Power, Sask power, they have it, and here in Alberta it's going to be done. We have allocation of funds to bring it into Alberta. Now I know that a number of our overhead asset companies, power line companies are anxiously awaiting it. And one company in particular, we couldn't get it fast enough. I mean it's going to take a little while, but we will be working with, I won't bother seeing all the names, but we'll be working with everybody very soon to bring that into fruition. I

Glen Cook ([10:59](#)):

Think the beauty of it too, Mike, is going back to the elevator pitch is when you zoom down onto the power line, it tells you who owns it, right? Well

Mike Sullivan ([11:08](#)):

That's right.

Glen Cook ([11:09](#)):

It tells then there's contact too, right? Yeah. It tells you who owns it and how that company wants to interact with you. So if you need advice, there's a quick link to click on, goes back to their website and fill out the form to get the advice. Or if you need some power on markers for example, or you need to know the rules or legisl, it's all working. It's all there. It's beautiful. Yeah,

Mike Sullivan ([11:35](#)):

I'm so familiar with it now because you and I have talked before and so to me it's just so obvious why wouldn't we do this? But for those who are not familiar with it, like you said, go to look up and live.com and play with it. It's an excellent product. It's a safety product that's out there. If you are an overhead Power line company and you see this, we'll have cookie's information in the show notes and you can reach out to him and you can work with Cookie and anybody else to bring that to wherever you are. And this sort of leads me to the next part of our conversation here. You and I have known each other for a couple of years now, or quite a while. I can't remember what year it was when I went to the Oceania. Oceania

Glen Cook ([12:19](#)):

Was 2018. That

Mike Sullivan ([12:21](#)):

Was okay, 2019.

Glen Cook ([12:24](#)):

We were talking before that

Mike Sullivan ([12:27](#)):

In the past, the future and everything. Yeah, yeah, yeah, that's right. And that was the only time we first met each other at Equilibrium in Time. But I remember that and you spoke to me about the app again,

and it just became so obvious this is something we need to do. And here we are five years later. It takes time to for these things to come around. But Sask Power, like I said, they've been using it. We are going to bring it into Alberta and it's going to compliment what we're already doing in Alberta. So for those who are not familiar, what we have done, this goes back to our unification with Alberta, sorry, Alberta Common Ground Alliance and the Overhead Assets Promotions campaign. Where is the line going back about three and a half years ago, we took over the mandate of where is the line to promote overhead power, line safety.

[\(13:22\)](#):

And we began a pilot that when a person puts in a locate request, if they are working near an overhead power line, the person who is making that locate request will get information saying, heads up, you're working near an overhead power line and here's the information you need to know. And now it also creates a bit of triage for those utility owners, overhead asset owners, which has become somewhat burdensome. There's a lot of triage there that was not anticipated. But if we can compliment that process, which is showing very high dividends in terms of the amount of information that's going out. But if we can compliment that with a lookup and live app, I am very confident that it will reduce the amount of triage for those utility owners because the person will now get the information saying, Hey, you're working your hover head power line.

[\(14:22\)](#):

Click this link. It'll bring you to the app, it'll show you where you're working. You can see all the information that you just said. Now here's the owner, here's the voltage, here's the limits of approach, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. And if you need regulations, anything like that, if you need safety information related before you begin your work, you can do it right then and there. So that to me has been wonderful. And then as we are getting close to celebrating our 40th anniversary, which the amalgamation of these three juggernauts, Alberta Common Ground Alliance, Alberta One, where's the line? I wanted to bring you the guy who dreamed up this look up and live. I wanted to bring you to Alberta so you could speak about that. And so you came to Canada, was your first time in Canada back in February, the perfect time to come to Calgary, Alberta? Right now it is 30 degrees here in Calgary today, above zero when you were here was 30 degrees. But the other way, I had a little minus sign in front of it. And so that was a bit of a, I mean, just to talk about that for a second, how did that feel? Because it wasn't that cold when you got here.

Glen Cook [\(15:31\)](#):

No, well, I think

Mike Sullivan [\(15:33\)](#):

It was above zero actually.

Glen Cook [\(15:34\)](#):

Above zero is still cold for me. Anything under about 14 degrees Celsius for I wasn't

Mike Sullivan [\(15:39\)](#):

T-shirts in a short and shorts,

Glen Cook [\(15:41\)](#):

I'm all rugged up in a big jumper that you led me

Mike Sullivan ([15:49](#)):

For everybody who's out there now. He wasn't wearing a big onesie. A jumper is a hoodie or something like that, A jacket. And I lent cookie a down coat I have, which was I think quite welcome. You probably wouldn't be here today talking to us if I hadn't

Glen Cook ([16:10](#)):

Done that. No, I was extremely cold. I must say when I first got there, it was bearable. And then once it got below zero and I seen it snow for the first time, that was quite exciting. I woke up one morning and he text me going, you must be enjoying the snow. And I've go, what? It's snow. And went to the window, opened it up, and there's snow coming down everywhere. So I put all my jacket on and went outside and as we call a beanie, but I've seen fan out here, it's a, it's called. So I had my lookup and lip tu on and went and took a few videos of myself and back, ran back saying This is very cold. And then, yeah, I still remember it was minus 15 or something. I walked downstairs just to go for a walk and I walked out in the dorm and sort of looked at me funny and I took about 20 steps down the road and came quickly running back and the dorm and said to me, he goes, I was wondering where you going Mr. Cook?

Mike Sullivan ([17:12](#)):

Are you lost?

Glen Cook ([17:13](#)):

I'm like, that is cold.

Mike Sullivan ([17:15](#)):

It is cold. And it got colder when, but here you are your first time in Canada. And we had our 40th anniversary at the beautiful BFF Springs Hotel, which is, there's no other place like it on earth and people from all over the world, I mean you name it, the four corners of the planet, they will come to BFF and they want to see the Bath Springs. If they can stay there, wonderful. But most can't. And there are tours of Banff and here you are, you come to Canada as a guest and you get a chance not only to see beautiful Calgary, downtown Calgary and stay at the Paler Hotel where you were, but then you got a chance to go to Banff and stay at the Banff Springs Hotel and be part of our 40th anniversary. So that not every trip is going to be quite as grand as that. But you were quite fortunate to be able to do that.

Glen Cook ([18:03](#)):

Oh, absolutely. And I want to thank yourself and Utility Safety Partners for bringing me across. I was very well looked after, so I say that van was just amazing. It's like a dream or something. Yeah,

Mike Sullivan ([18:17](#)):

It is.

Glen Cook ([18:18](#)):

When we were driving into town there, it just felt like a Christmas movie. It's just amazing how beautiful it actually is. I would love to see it in the summer, mate. So maybe you could bring me back again.

Mike Sullivan ([18:32](#)):

Yeah, I'm sure we'll get rid on that.

Glen Cook ([18:35](#)):

But yeah, no, it was amazing. It really was amazing. And like I said, I've never seen snow before, and just to understand by being there how difficult Snow makes life just makes life hard

Mike Sullivan ([18:49](#)):

Or we're used to it. But you're right. I mean you can be white knuckle driving. There was a little bit of that going on when we got down. Yep. And

Glen Cook ([18:59](#)):

I was on the lookout for Bigfoot, but you didn't find one mate,

Mike Sullivan ([19:01](#)):

We didn't see one. No know. Start your day off right with the perfect Daily Dose. There are currently 11 5,000 doses I guess that subscribe to the Dig Daily Dose. And you can do so too by looking on Twitter or X at the Dig Daily Dose. And this is great if you have a need to secure content for tailgate meetings or safety meetings. This is damage prevention information that comes at you every day. So go there and check it out at the Daily Dose on Twitter or X,

([19:45](#)):

You came to dance, you were part of our 40th anniversary, and you gave that presentation with Cliff Mial. And what we are trying to do, and I think mission accomplished, is to show everybody out there, whether it's the heavy users or our members and anybody in between that, yes, we've been Alberta One call and now we're utility safety partners, that we were promoting safety in terms of excavation, safety, ground disturbance, best practices, that type thing. But now it was the most obvious thing, and it kind of blows me away actually, that it took us so long to realize this. It was the most obvious thing to put these two together overhead and below. And this was not the first attempt. There was a number of years ago, the former incarnation of the board of directors, they asked me, can you reach out to the Where's the line group? And it just didn't click. For whatever reason, it didn't click. And by this time, it sure did.

Glen Cook ([20:47](#)):

I do remember having a conversation with you at the Oceanic Opera 2018 saying there's no difference. It's all about damage prevention. It's like if we get damage prevention, you get the safety outcome. So the lookup and live message or where's the line message sits with the underground safety message and then to see you go back and just sort of make it happen. I'm sure it was a lot harder than that, but

Mike Sullivan ([21:15](#)):

Oh no, I just snap my fingers and Hey, look what I'm doing. No, yeah, no, it takes a lot. I mean, it takes a village and you got to sell an idea. And it's interesting, an idea that was kind of shelved a good almost 10 years ago, all of a sudden was a great idea, but it sure helped when we get to the point where board members are saying, you know what we need to include, where is a line when we do this unification? So having the board say that, you know what? We need to do this. It all of a sudden became, I won't say easy, but it became obvious that we needed to do something.



Glen Cook ([21:55](#)):

Look at Mike, you're leading the world because as far as I know, there's no other company that really doing the underground and above together. And most power line companies or owners of infrastructure don't concentrate on the overhead stuff. It's actually cheaper to rectify. So power line gets hit, falls to the ground, we send the crew out, we find it, we fix it, it powers back on within a couple of hours. So the damage is not costing a lot of money. It costs lives. Like in the us there's two fatalities every week with a non-electrical worker hitting overhead power ons, right? But the damage to underground infrastructure is just a lot, for lack of a better word. So a lot of people,

Mike Sullivan ([22:48](#)):

But there aren't as many fatalities, I don't think.

Glen Cook ([22:50](#)):

No, there's absolutely not. No. So

Mike Sullivan ([22:52](#)):

The fatalities for overhead assets compared to, I hate to measure this, it's a horrible way to measure things. So forgive me if anybody takes offense to this, but it is a metric and it is documented metrics, the fatalities with respect to overhead assets and coming into contact with those versus fatalities or even injuries. You look at that too with respect to bird utilities is far greater for overhead assets and interesting, as you say, you can see them, they're right there. And yet unfortunately, the internet, social media is full of examples of a person, whether they're moving a ladder or anything, and they're electric. It's an awful thing to see.

Glen Cook ([23:38](#)):

Going back to our elevator pitch again, that's where I ask people, if you're about to dig, what do we do? And then people look at you funny. And in Australia they say, we do it before you dig. And I said, yeah, what is it? Before you dig and they look at you blankly again. I'm like, it's the start of a very simple plea. Yeah, what do we do for overhead? People look at you funny again, and they go, oh, you see it and you start working. I said, so you do a risk assessment and there's a little box that you tick for power lines tick. You haven't implemented any control measures to actually,

Mike Sullivan ([24:16](#)):

No, you don't have a

Glen Cook ([24:16](#)):

Plan. So there's no plan, right? So that's where the concept become a reality because we're now helping people do a before you dig for overhead. So it's just putting in those control measures that you need to make your job safe. Safe. Exactly. Like a one call. So that's the beauty of, it's just allowing people to adequately find That's it. It's that easy.

Mike Sullivan ([24:43](#)):

That's right. That's right. No, anyway, hats off to you for seeing this and being this visionary that sometimes the most obvious things are staring right at us and nobody sees it. Nobody. They can overhead power line. Nobody sees it and then somebody says, well, how point if we do this next thing?

You know, this person's a genius. How did that happen? So yeah, hats off to you for doing that. And everybody can benefit from this. When you say Alberta, our utility safety partners, we're leading the world and what we're doing combining the overhead and below, I thank you. It's not, it's just something that seems obvious we have to do, and it's not costing basic. Try and find the amount that's costing more on the ledger. It's almost, you can barely detect how much it's going to cost given the overall budget of say, utility safety partners because you're using the existing process to initiate a plan or initiate awareness. It's nothing. You're not doing anything different. And when you can do that, you're off to the races. So can

Glen Cook ([25:58](#)):

Bring I of you leading the world shouldn't say that you're the only company. There is another company now they called before you do Australia. There you go. Doing exactly the same thing, right? It was great to have Mel Green, all the CCEO was, it

Mike Sullivan ([26:12](#)):

Was really good to have. She made a huge impact.

Glen Cook ([26:14](#)):

And just to come across and network and actually have a look at what you guys have achieved in that area with your committees and just everything that you've achieved and you have been so willing to share, help Mel and us here in Australia to further develop that before you dig Safety advocate service, not just being a purely transactional type business anymore, sharing a plan. There you go. Have fun Storm the castle. It's very much an advocacy. So I'm really loving the direction that before your dig is taking here, promoting overhead, underground power and

Mike Sullivan ([26:56](#)):

Safety. That's great to hear. I'm really glad to hear that. I know, like I said, she made a huge positive impact here. Her presentations and presentations were very well attended and people talked about you guys long after you left. So that, and I made one more amazing contact, which is expanding your network. And so I'm really, I'm stoked that it was such an important trip for you here. It was important for us. And now here we are on another podcast and you do so much in terms of travel and promoting awareness and you do the one-on-one. I know you and I have talked about, oh, wouldn't be cool if you get a podcast one day and maybe that'll happen and it wouldn't be a bad thing, but it,

Glen Cook ([27:49](#)):

That's certainly something I'm thinking about because I can't travel forever. So I do think podcasts are next best thing people and sit down and listen to sort of a presentation, I suppose, but in a very relaxed way. And I'm told that Australians love to listen to podcasts, so it sort of makes sense too. In Australia, we do travel quite a lot to get to and from work, either in a vehicle or on transport.

Mike Sullivan ([28:23](#)):

Here we are, I can't believe it. This is episode 59 of the Safety Moment podcast. I am completely blown away. I mean, once you start, it's kind of hard to stop. But to think that we've had 59 episodes where we've had guests like yourself speaking about what it is that we do, keeping people safe, near buried utilities and overhead assets and that, it's pretty amazing. Just thinking about that in itself. I was sending

a link of one of our podcasts to one of my contacts today, and I was scrolling through them. We have everything on our website, links to every one of 'em on our website. And I was scrolling and scrolling, wow, there's actually a lot there. And so you have, as we talked before, it's like you're having a cup of coffee with somebody, you're spending half an hour with somebody, maybe a little bit more, and you're promoting what it is that you do and you're promoting safety.

[\(29:21\)](#):

And if that connects with somebody out there, if somebody gets the idea, you know what, I didn't know that. I didn't know that if I was digging in Alberta, I could also find out if there are any overhead power lines nearby. I didn't know that in the future we're going to be able to see more of information related to that in Alberta. And as we look here in Alberta towards legislation, that is another critical step. And legislation in a way, it's another tool. I mean, we've done a lot as other places in the world have. We've been able to accomplish a lot without legislation. But you get to a certain point, well, you know what we're about as far as we can go without it. The idea of legislation though does worry me because it also, it can lock you in time and be careful. One, those things, be careful what you ask for. You just might get it. What's the regulatory legislation world where you are

Glen Cook [\(30:16\)](#):

With power lines, you have an exclusion zone, three meters around the power line. You need to use a safety observer. And the safety observer part of it is what gets missed an extra resource. So plus I haven't identified the power on the first place, but look, the way I frame it with people is the legislation's there. But I talk in simple terms so people can understand. So I more talk about how our brain works, and as you said before, you won't see power lines. And it's purely from a human factor called inattentive blindness, where if your brain doesn't perceive a risk or a danger, it can blot out power lines. Your eyes and your brain don't work that well together. So I sort of talk more about human factors and how you will miss something that's in plain sight and then sort of just touch on the legislation.

[\(31:10\)](#):

Because legislation doesn't stop people from getting hurt, right? No. It has to be in place and you've got to have control measures in place. So yeah, it's there and I understand it and I interpret it and then put it across to people in the simplest terms so they can understand it so they don't have to read the legislation. So that's why I'm a specialist in this area, and I'm sure there's other specialists in all different areas all over that do a very similar role to myself to bring their legislation into simple terms. And that's the biggest problem, is it's written in such a way that it's hard for people to interpret.

Mike Sullivan [\(31:52\)](#):

Well, it can be, and especially for those who don't use it all the time. If you're not part of a big organization or you have people who are focused on regulatory affairs or something, or lawyers that may have access to lawyers can be a bit of a challenge. And if you have people like yourself, I mean myself, you're well versed in legislation or what it could say, what it should say, then you'll be in a better position to promote advocacy and help people use it to their advantage and legislation. Again, these are minimum requirements. These are absolute minimum requirements. And then you go to regulation, which is a little bit more stringent, but you can do that because regulations are a lot easier to change in legislation than you have and best practices on top of that. But anyway, that's all. I don't know how we went down that tangent, but I don't even just ask the question, but what's next for you? I mean, you've

been in this role for a long time. Oh, I meant to ask actually before even that one of the things that's new in your life is you're now a board member on before you dig.

Glen Cook ([33:01](#)):

Yes. Yes I am.

Mike Sullivan ([33:02](#)):

What's that? I mean, it's quite new, right?

Glen Cook ([33:05](#)):

It's very new for me. So I'm excited to be able to help the business go forward in promoting overhead power on safety. Obviously my specialty passing on a lot of the networks to Mel and the team at before you Dig Australia, mentoring the education and awareness people to be able to speak to it because a lot of those people wouldn't have a lot of overhead power line experience or knowledge. So just helping the business bring their staff up to speed on the overhead power and safety stuff as well as the board, all from different backgrounds. Obviously I'm the only person on the board that has an electrical background and we're all different people from diverse backgrounds. So it's a really interesting group. I'm thoroughly enjoying it. It is very much something new, but I feel like very much part of something and part of something that's going to change this industry in Australia for the better because damage prevention in Australia is not like North America at all. It's probably 20 damage prevention specialists in Australia. Really? Okay. That's probably myself and a few other people like myself in airline companies. But most businesses don't have people in damage prevention like four UD. We don't have a lot of locators compared to say North America. Yeah, the industry's quite

Mike Sullivan ([34:55](#)):

Small, but the industry's a little bit different. I mean, somebody requests to locate before you dig process, it sends out a notification, but the digging community is the one that locates, they pay for the locate.

Glen Cook ([35:08](#)):

Yeah, that's right.

Mike Sullivan ([35:09](#)):

Whereas here, it's a little bit different. Now we're actually moving that. That's another podcast, but we have objectives to move in that direction, provide the option. It's not going to be like that. Here it is. We're not locating anymore. It's an option. And we're working with the digging community to make that an option for them. And we've had some challenges and because change is hard, but I do see that as being a necessary option because there's been challenges with status quo and we need to keep modifying and try and improve every time. There's no silver bullet, there's no magic bullet here. Oh

Glen Cook ([35:49](#)):

No. Particularly with all infrastructure, really. If it was easy, we would've solved this problem 70 years ago. Right?

Mike Sullivan ([35:56](#)):

Well, exactly. No, it's exactly it. If it was easy, you would've figured it out by now. We would need people like us.

Glen Cook ([36:02](#)):

You ask what's next for me? I think what's next for me is more changing the damage prevention community here in Australia, to have businesses have more people in those damage prevention type roles to think about what they can do as a business to stop damage by educating and putting more controls in place to stop that damage from happening. If we can do that, we also get the safety outcome. So you're getting the best of both worlds. So just sort of changing the attitude. I'm doing that with Energy Queensland at the moment, trying to promote the fact that we should say, have some damage prevention engineers or managers that can think of different ways to improve safety around our power lines to stop those impacts. So for example, removing lines that may be over farmland or over cultivated land that if the poles had to be replaced, for example, can they be relocated to follow the roadway instead of going straight through a paddock? Just simple stuff like that, that if we invest a few dollars, we can provide a safer network of overhead power on cables for future generations. Because if we just keep putting them back in the same spot, we're going to have to sign forever.

Mike Sullivan ([37:29](#)):

You talk about damage prevention or safety advocates like yourself, and now that there is an endeavor in here in Alberta to create a damage prevention professional curriculum path, and that would capture those types of roles, whether it's advocacy or a ground disturbance coordinator, public awareness coordinator, damage prevention coordinator, whether it's crossing analysts, you name it, and have a family jobs of these tasks, but jobs that you can get some recognition for this family of jobs. And it's something that has been talked about for quite a while, and our training of standards committee, they are working towards trying to figure out how best to do this. They had a couple of presentations at the safety seminar and there's been work since doing that. It's something that its, time has come 50 years ago, health and safety was not where it is today, and that its time had come at some point along the way.

([38:37](#)):

Environmental services, environmental sciences was not where it is today, back 40, 50 years ago. And I believe that damage prevention is in a similar place. Its time has come, it gets mentioned, whether it's in hearings for new facilities, buried facilities, but 10, 15 years ago, a public awareness coordinator didn't exist. Now they do. A ground disturbance coordinator did not exist, and now they do. So as these job families expand beyond, whether it was a land analyst or a crossing analyst locator, they expand this. It needs a home. It needs, I'm thinking in French or Mihi, a route of positions that are complimentary to one another. I'm glad the training standards committee is looking into this. It's something that another organization was looking at as well, but it kind of got, I won't say abandoned, but just kind of stopped at one point. So I'm glad that it is being done and maybe other parts of the world can start to look at that too. So there's a wide of,

Glen Cook ([39:50](#)):

Yeah, it was the first thing when I went to the Global Excavation conference in Tampa a couple of years ago, it really opened up my eyes to see the size of the damage prevention community and then the USP conference as well. And I went to some of those sessions you mentioned, and yeah, it just sort of reconfirmed with me that my way forward is to start thinking more about damage prevention than purely safety. I think safety is sort of chasing your tail a little bit. So you come in sort of after the fact

sometimes. So being on the front foot and getting people to create more infrastructure that is less likely to be impacted, or for example, we don't necessarily highlight where underground cables are. People ask for it, they get a plan, but that might be as far as they go. Whereas if we were actually out there locating it and giving people more information on how we want them to dig around our infrastructure, we can stop the damage. So that's the real way forward is to get more and more people. And we'll be talking to yourself, and I'm sure Mel's already talking to you about your standards committee to get more people involved here in Australia to sit on committees like that. If we can create them to create a damage prevention specialist here in Australia and promote some training and awareness in those areas so we can raise that damage prevention level here in Australia, we absolutely need it.

Mike Sullivan ([41:30](#)):

Well, it is such a shared responsibility, not to overuse the term, but it's true. It is a shared responsibility. Everybody wants the same thing, and we all want public worker and community safety and the integrity of those buried and overhead assets maintained. And it takes a lot of people to do that. And it's not one person's job. It's everybody's job. And we are recognizing that for a long time. But it needs to be broadly recognized and absorbed. Oh yeah, it's everybody's job. No, no. It really is everybody's job. We all have a role to play. So anyway, Hey Cookie, thanks for joining me again. I appreciate it. Always nice to have you on. It's great to connect. Always is. And I hope that we get to see each other again in person, the same time zone or whatever you want to call it in moments in time. Because right now, is it going to be cooler tomorrow? It's pretty hot right here, right now. Oh

Glen Cook ([42:25](#)):

No. It'll be 32 at least. Right.

Mike Sullivan ([42:27](#)):

Okay. Well, you'd probably bang on with that actually.

Glen Cook ([42:30](#)):

I know one thing. You won't have to shovell snow off the driveway, mate.

Mike Sullivan ([42:34](#)):

I won't. No, I haven't had to do that for a couple of weeks now, but know that's all good. Hey, thanks for joining me again. I sincerely appreciate, always good to see you, man.

Glen Cook ([42:44](#)):

Anytime. My pleasure. And I love being on your podcast. I really appreciate you inviting. Well,

Mike Sullivan ([42:49](#)):

I hope you once again promote it and you do a great job, as they say in French, don't stop. You're doing a good job.

Glen Cook ([42:59](#)):

No worries. Thanks for the translation. I needed that.

Mike Sullivan ([43:02](#)):

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That's where our, we have to have that bilingual content in Canada, right?

Glen Cook ([43:05](#)):

No, absolutely

Mike Sullivan ([43:07](#)):

Say, and everything is good. Take care of yourself. Now. I see

Glen Cook ([43:11](#)):

You, mark.

Mike Sullivan ([43:13](#)):

That's going to wrap things up on the Safety Moment podcast. I want to thank our producers stories and strategies, and I hope to choose to follow this podcast on any director you're listening on. And please do leave a rating. You can follow us on Twitter or X at Utility Safety, and we're also on Instagram and Facebook. If you'd like to send us a note, maybe you have an episode idea, you can email us at [info@utilitysafety.ca](mailto:info@utilitysafety.ca) and put podcast in the subject header. I'm Mike Sullivan, the president of Utility Safety Partners. Click to know what's above and below. One click costs you nothing. Not clicking could cost you everything.