

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

You're 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](#)):

Welcome to the Safety Moment Podcast. I'm your host, Mike Sullivan, and today we have a very special guest, Mr. Ron Peterson, who was the executive director for NULCA. And recently Ron penned an article that certainly got some traction in the damage prevention space and I'm going to be talking to him about that right about now. Ron Petersen, as I live and breathe, welcome to the podcast. Nice to have you.

Ron Petersen ([00:41](#)):

Great to be here, Mike. Great to be here.

Mike Sullivan ([00:43](#)):

Yep. And more ways than one, I'm sure. And we've been trying to do this for a while and here we are and I'm really glad that we finally got the chance to connect. And I wanted to get right into it. I mean, actually, I do want to get right into it, but before we do that, for anybody who doesn't know who Ron Petersen is, which is very few I'm sure, can you just introduce yourself and maybe how you got into what you're doing? Because I've heard the story and it's actually kind of good.

Ron Petersen ([01:10](#)):

Okay. Yeah. I don't know if it's good, but we'll

Mike Sullivan ([01:12](#)):

Go with it.

Ron Petersen ([01:12](#)):

I think it's good. Yeah. I am the current executive director of the National Utility Locating Contractors Association, now NOLCA. We just go by that. I got in the industry in the early '90s. I had been in insurance construction side of the adjusting thing, hated it. I looked out my back door one day and there was some guy spraying paint in my backyard and I went back there and said, "What are you doing?" He said, "Well, he explained what he was doing marketing locates." I said, "Well, do you like it?" He said, "Oh yeah, I love it." He said, "I'm out here, no supervision. I'm just doing my thing. It's different every day." And of course my next question, "What's it pay?" He goes, "Not worth a damn." And I said, "Well, what about upward mobility?" He goes, "Oh yeah, we can't keep supervisors." So I went up, applied.

([02:01](#)):

The district manager told me I was vastly overqualified and my response essentially is, "What do you care? I'm interested in what you do. And here 30, almost 35 years later, I've been a contract locator. I've owned and sold two private locate companies. I do all kinds of consulting. Unfortunately, I do expert witness work. I say unfortunately, because I wish they would never happen, but it is interesting trying to figure out what happened in an incident. It's just the whole other bad side of it that makes it tough.

Mike Sullivan ([02:37](#)):

And now you're a pod international podcast star.

Ron Petersen ([02:41](#)):

I don't know about star, but I'm doing one. You're

Mike Sullivan ([02:44](#)):

Doing one. And you're far enough away. You can't even say that Sullivan twisted my arm.

Ron Petersen ([02:50](#)):

But it was a distant twist.

Mike Sullivan ([02:54](#)):

I think I have a bit of a knack for doing that. And be of that as it may, I'm glad you're doing this and I certainly appreciate it. And you are known. I mean, in the damage prevention space, you're a known commodity and I want to get right into something that you wrote a couple of months back and it was an article that you actually reached out to me that morning and you said, Mike, I just hit publish on this article online and it was posted to LinkedIn and other places as well. And you said something to the effect, "I think it's going to have a bit of an impact and I wanted to let you know. " And I read that article and I thought it was spot on as did many others who commented on it. So I wanted to talk about that.

([03:46](#)):

I mean, just in summary, can you provide anybody who's listening here today with a summary of that article and really why you wrote it?

Ron Petersen ([03:57](#)):

Sure. And you can find the article. There's two actually. You can find those at [dubdubdub.nulka.org](#). Just scroll down on the page and you'll see under news, you'll see both articles. And we wrote them for a number of reasons, but primarily the definition of insanity, doing the same thing over and over and over again and expecting something to change. Well, nothing's changing. In fact, I was speaking with the CGA earlier in the week and damages are actually going up again.

([04:31](#)):

Combined that with things like which my industry is getting the brunt of the late to locate issue, which we need to take our lumps on that and look ourselves in the mirror and say, "What do we do about that? " So we just felt it was time to have a real candid conversation, first of all, with ourselves, with my board, with our members, and then talk about what we need to do within our own little stakeholder group and the help we need from others. One of the key points in the article is that the One Calls are over 50 years old. They were designed as a system to maybe handle a million locates, not 250 million notifications. And that was one of the ways we came up with the system's not broken. It's doing what it's designed to do. It cannot handle the scope scale.

([05:29](#)):

And there are other issues within that. It was intentionally designed as a free service for the excavation community to entice them to use it. Well, a lot of times, where's the ownership in something that's free? Where's the care about not the abuse? And we have a lot of great contractors and NULCA has taken pride in working with NUCA and the PCCA and other groups to communicate and talk about how to make things better. But if there's no penalty for you calling in the same ticket for a year every week

and not getting around to it, it's wasted resources. And when we're shorthanded enough at our own doing, at our own fault, it just magnifies the problem. So we felt it was time to have it and start a candid conversation.

Mike Sullivan ([06:22](#)):

And you certainly did. And what I liked about the article, I mean, so many articles can be written and they always point the finger, but you were pointing it back at yourselves too and saying, "We're part of the problem. We've let this go on too long." And you're absolutely right about the quote unquote free service. Somebody's paying for it and it's just not the excavator or the person submitting the locate request. And that is something that has been talked about here and there and it's been talked about here because of the abuse. And when a person submits a locate request and then they submit another one, "Oh, I got to get to the top of the queue if I do that and I'll put in another one on another one." Somebody on the other end of that who's being notified, they are triaging that. Now they may realize it's not a locate...

([07:09](#)):

I said relocate, I should say, or they may triage it and dispatch a locator again and all that costs money and resources and takes resources away from bonafide locate requests. And one of the things we've seen and your article mentions. So when we look at that and then you said you're in a board meeting and you learned about an event, a serious event where in Lexington and where somebody was gravely injured and killed. Unfortunately, it sometimes takes something like that to make all of these issues come at us at once and say, "Wait a minute, something needs to be done." And you mentioned the dirt report too and the dirt report is only as good as the damages that are reported and okay, damages have gone up. What does that really mean that maybe more people are reporting and good on them? I think that's great, but we don't know.

([08:15](#)):

We don't know. Not everybody has mandatory reporting and that's a problem in itself. But the fact is that we're seeing an increase in locate requests and as you mentioned, the system was designed for a reality of 50 years ago and in many respects we haven't changed and expecting that the results are going to improve. Well, it's simply not. It's just not going to be able to improve the way we're hoping. You use direct language in that article and one of the most striking quotes of that article is, and it says it a couple of times, you mentioned a couple of times, is that the system was designed to fail. What prompted you, I guess, to take that much of a forceful position? That's a bold statement.

Ron Petersen ([09:10](#)):

It is.

Mike Sullivan ([09:11](#)):

I don't want to get you in trouble, Ron. It's just you and me. Nobody listening.

Ron Petersen ([09:15](#)):

Well, we toyed with, do we take a super soft approach or do we get a little more direct and draw attention? So that was part of the deal. And I want to go back real quick. You mentioned Lexington, and while I can't say a whole lot about that, what was important to me with Lexington, that incident, which was a gas explosion, killed a little boy, that was 500 feet from the house I grew up in. Literally, we played in the backyards in that alleyway and in there. So it hit really home. Being on site and watching the

grandfather, who I knew show up on site was very... It hit me. And I've been to a lot of these, but they're horrible and I don't want to ever downplay any of them. They're all horrible.

Mike Sullivan ([10:08](#)):

But

Ron Petersen ([10:08](#)):

When you know the people involved, I had a cousin that was blown off his feet four houses away. It really hit home for me. And that's really one of the drivers for me that when it was time to start talking about this and we'd been talking about a white paper for almost a year initially doing it with the CGA. And then as this came more apparent, we thought, "We need to do this. " And the CJA's been very supportive so I don't want to knock them because they've been great, but we felt like this was something we needed to take the ball and run with and we needed to be very specific. And my board really, my executive committee, we didn't want to sugarcoat anything. We didn't want to be totally in anybody's face and I think we were fair with that, but the system is designed to fail in its current day.

([11:01](#)):

It just cannot do what it's meant to do with all the factors and all the failures from all the stakeholders.

Mike Sullivan ([11:09](#)):

Another way of looking at it... Sorry, I mean I cut you off, but another way of looking at it, maybe we're designed to fail, but is it also victims of its own success? I mean, there's so much more emphasis now on public education awareness programs that have done a tremendous job. Utility owners have grasped the, whether it's 811 or click before you dig in Canada and the US and they have the brand amplification of submitting a locate request before you dig is tremendous. And there's so much more awareness out there. You see it whether you're any member of the damage prevention stakeholder group, a locator, a contractor, a utility owner, you name it, everybody is promoting the same thing to initiate that damage prevention process. That also wasn't there 50 years ago, not to the degree that it is today. So in that regard, the system is successful, but perhaps it just hasn't kept pace.

Ron Petersen ([12:13](#)):

Yeah, I would agree with that. I think it's a very good analysis. I mean, yeah, we are a victim of our own success. And the front end of it's very good. Like you said, exactly what you just said. It's our collective failure to do anything with the rest of the process and it's on all of us. And I think I said this earlier, but one of the things I was adamant with my board with is if we do this, we have to first look in the mirror. Nobody cares if you're pointing fingers, but if you're pointing fingers at yourself,

Mike Sullivan ([12:47](#)):

Maybe

Ron Petersen ([12:47](#)):

People will stop and take a look because I, and sometimes my board and my members get a little antsy when I start talking about it. But if you don't talk about the problem with staffing, with retention, with training, if you don't talk about those things, you have to. We are a part of the problem and we need to realize that.

Mike Sullivan ([13:09](#)):

Well, it shows some humility too, right? I mean, you realize that we have to look in the mirror, as you said, we're part of the problem and you're absolutely right. The upfront part of the damage prevention process has changed dramatically in the last 20 years, let alone 50. But the tail end, the locating and marketing side really hasn't, whether that's from a data perspective, the integrity of the data, the turnaround in terms of submitting new data to improve what was already there, then the locating and marketing and the number of people that are available, the number of locating contractors are actually available and assigned to clear these tickets to actually locate and mark the buried plant. We've seen this in Alberta, we've seen this in other parts of Canada and we face the specter of winter that not everybody in North America experiences. We don't have that 12 months of the year where we can rely on a steady influx of, we jam 12 months of excavation into seven or eight months sometimes if we're lucky sometimes and in many parts of the US experience that too.

([14:21](#)):

Then there's that cycle of hiring, you're locating staff and training them, getting them up to speed and then watching them walk out the door at the end of the season and are they going to come back? And you can't blame them if they found something else that's more lucrative and steady, but that's a problem too. And how do we get around that? I think we're finding a way here in Alberta and we can talk about that a little bit. I know you've been following that, but how do we get around that?

Ron Petersen ([14:50](#)):

It is a difficult question or a

Mike Sullivan ([14:53](#)):

Difficult

Ron Petersen ([14:53](#)):

Problem, especially in the areas where you do have such a defined excavation season.

([15:02](#)):

Our bigger issue has been just pure retention and how do we make locating a profession? I think I say this sometimes and maybe I get eyes rolling, but we're a job on the way to a career currently and that doesn't mean there aren't people with 25, 30 years experience out there in the locating world because there are. But generally speaking, we get somebody, we get them in, we get them trained up, they learn about the utility sector and the next thing we know they are working for the utility or they're working for a contractor where

Mike Sullivan ([15:36](#)):

They're making

Ron Petersen ([15:36](#)):

More money. Part of that's our own doing. I mean, 30 some years ago, I loved being out in the field and locating. Had you given me a hundred tickets on Monday followed by 50 tickets on Tuesday, followed by 40 tickets on Wednesday and I know I can do 20 tickets a day, the stress level would drive me out. We've talked to some experts and they say, "Look, okay, you need to do something with your wages, but most people don't leave for a better paying job. They leave something else for some other reason." The

stress, I know people that are so... They put a piece of paint on the ground, they never see the result of it and that eats at them because they don't see the finish line. That's a small problem, but the bigger problem I think is the stress we put our people under because we don't staff accordingly and some of it's our fault, some of it is quite candidly is our...

(16:34):

We have utility members in which we have NDAs, non-disclosure agreements or confidentiality agreements and we're being sprung on massive fiber projects, for example, since that's coming into play bigger and bigger in the states with BEAD.

(16:48):

Nobody tells us until we start getting tickets. We have these NDAs, these confidentiality agreements. Why won't my own client tell me six months or a year when they're talking about this so that I can staff effectively? So there are those factors as well.

Mike Sullivan (17:03):

And we'll talk about it here. Might as well talk about it right now because we're going to get there eventually. But the segue to what you're saying is what we've experienced here in Alberta and other parts of Canada or we don't, but there are contracts that the utility owners have with locating contractors, but that was that artificial bottleneck. They would only have so many locators assigned to those contracts to remain lucrative. Totally get that. There's no shortage of locators in Alberta given the nature of our economy and the tremendous amount of buried utilities that are across the province, transmission pipelines. And so we knew there was an increased capacity, but how did we unleash that? And that's when the alternate locate provider came in, which was really spearheaded initially and still by ATCO gas and pipelines. And the gentleman you know, Mr. Ian Stables, he's really been the force behind that and the other utilities, obviously they are right there with them in parallel.

(18:09):

And what we've certainly found is that it has allowed these projects to have a locator assigned to it and they are there. They aren't rushed. They are there to do the work for that contractor, whether it's a day or two days or longer, whatever that might be. And that's where there's really no magic here. The people who are locating for locating contractor or an ALP locating contractor, the qualifications are the same in many cases, if not all of them, but they aren't rushed. They're there for the... And they have that communication with the foreman, with the heavy equipment operator, with anybody who's on site who wants to know what the markings mean or whatever they might be doing and the results are tremendous and you've seen them, the dramatic reduction in damages compared to what I'll call conventional locating. And again, there's nothing magic about it except that the capacity is consistent with the decrease of demand on the locators.

(19:22):

And is that something do you think... I mean, you've seen the breadth of the excavation and damage prevention space in the US from coast to coast and do you think it's something that could be contemplated in the US?

Ron Petersen (19:40):

I do. I think it's maybe a longer process than what I'd like, but you're absolutely right. There's that capacity there that the results speak for themselves. As you know, you and I were in Australia a few years back. Do not critique my driving any further. I was learning and you survived, so let's go skip that.

Mike Sullivan ([20:03](#)):

Short left, long rate.

Ron Petersen ([20:04](#)):

Exactly, exactly. But what we found over there was you had the locators working for the contractors, the same thing. There was a direct relationship, direct communication, everything was going really well. Now we fast forward to your program, which I love and you're seeing the exact same thing and for the same reasons. 30 some odd years ago, God, I sound like an old man, but when I started locating, I had more time to spend with contractors that needed it. We don't have the time to do that. And if you don't have that communication, you're going to have problems. It's, I hate to say spray and pray running gun, but that's kind of what it gets to. By your process where somebody can take that alternative side and get that person over here to work with them, be there for them and they're paying for it. I think it does offer some potential, a lot of potential actually.

([21:04](#)):

I can tell you the drawbacks all day long and I'm thrilled that your utilities are going along with that. I hear quite frankly, BS excuses, well, that doesn't fit in the one call. Well, how doesn't it fit within the one call?

Mike Sullivan ([21:18](#)):

Number

Ron Petersen ([21:18](#)):

One, the utility is statutorily required to do this. They farm it out to whoever the third party is currently. You're just adding an alternative and it's being farmed out to another person. It changes nothing within the laws.

Mike Sullivan ([21:32](#)):

Exactly. And it comes right down to the excavator deciding if they want to choose that option or not. And if the costs are an issue, the costs are typically being borne by whoever the proponent of that excavation or that project is. So the other part that, and I see so many parallels here of how things can maybe move forward and this is why your article was, it really hit home with me for a variety of reasons, but it called for some practical reforms to improve capacity, improve accountability and field verification. And this is where we did bring in the ALP, the alternate locate provider, to address those exact same issues. And the data in Alberta, we're proud that this sounds so backwards, but we're really proud that we have the amount of damages reported to this Canadian Common Ground Alliance that we do because in my view, yeah, it looks like we're a bunch of cowboys.

([22:32](#)):

Oh my God, there's so many damages. No, it means that to me we have the highest number of submitters. So they trust the system that you know what? We need to report this because we need to learn from this. And to me, that's a feather in our cap. I think the more damages you report through the more number of submitters, the better. I mean, if you have one submitter and they're damaging all the time, that's something else entirely. But in this case here, you want to be able to have damages to study to determine what the root cause is and then find ways to prevent a recurrence. And this is where the ALP seems to have done that. And when you compare the damages for conventional locating versus the

ALP, there's no comparison, like none. And we're looking to find ways to reduce damages. Well, that's kind of it.

(23:30):

I mean, can it be improved? Absolutely it can be improved. You mentioned in your article as well, somebody submitting a ticket that would be the equivalent of, was it 8,000 football fields? I mean, where's the logic? I mean, somebody's not thinking their critical thinking isn't even on the same page or in the same universe as ours. And if they were to hire a locator for that, they'd soon realize this is impossible. Exactly. It's impossible. It is. And you got to work with us here. So there's ways to move forward and we learned by looking around the world and saying, "What's working elsewhere?" And when I read your article, I thought exactly what you're facing and what your article is telling us we have lived, not just we, Alberta, I mean, we, the collective we have been living regardless of where we operate under the same typical procedural guidance or best practice.

(24:34):

Do you believe that, I guess, I think you already said that the alternate locate provider program has merit, obviously, but I guess I'm curious, you mentioned that there's not an appetite for it yet in the US and maybe it'll get there, but if every stakeholder is going to take this article seriously, what does progress look like from going forward?

Ron Petersen (25:03):

And I agree. I think this is something problem with the US is 52 or 50 whatever, plus little kingdoms thou shall not violate my kingdom. We do it our way, we're different, whatever. If we get one, one state to say, let's try this, then we show, again, we prove what you're proving already, what's been seen in other places and we can make it run. Yeah, that to me is the holdup. I mean, we have people in Georgia right now, they have a committee that's looking at what to do with projects. I should say it better for you. Projects, Mike. Projects. That's right. I'm learning. Projects. Yes. Projects. So if that becomes a starting point for a version of alternative locate process, great. I invite that. But to the bigger point of your question, we have to have movement from all stakeholders. We have a problem, we didn't really talk about it with Lexington, but we have mapping issues and I fully understand the response.

(26:17):

We had very few negative, if any, negative responses, but we had a few responses in our article that said, "Well, proper locator training this, proper locator training, that, all about training." I've been doing that for a long, long time.

(26:33):

But the reality is if you have no map or a map that shows nothing there with no access points, no nothing within the scope and scale of how we do ticket locating here, you're not going to find it. So we need those owners to take ownership, owners to take ownership of that. We need that. I've said now for 20 years, guys, maybe 30 years, who's the best person to help a utility with the mapping? The guy that's out there putting paint on the ground, because he's looking

Mike Sullivan (27:04):

At

Ron Petersen (27:04):

Your maps every day, he's finding the discrepancies with the advent of RTK locating now, you can actually have very precise mapping. Now, again, somebody has to pay for that. Locators have enough on their plate right now just getting staff the right, but there's a way to do that. You could ALP that, bring in the RTK, the mapping. Look, anytime there's a business opportunity out there, I'm not naive enough to think that my largest members aren't going to figure out a way to make it work within it. And if they can do that and make the system better, but everybody's got a part to play. We haven't left the one call out of it either. We said, "Look, you guys are right here. You can't stay neutral. You've got to get in there and say we need substantive change." Not to blow smoke at you, Mike, but you were a prime example.

(27:55):

I can remember what, two years into 811, you're going, "That's not the future, man. It's click."

(28:01):

And while the entire US was going, "No, 811's it. " We were way late to the game compared to what you did in Alberta. So we need to stop that thing and get into, let's put the egos aside and let's get to it. What can we do? We need to get mapping done. We need to get staffing right. We need to stop the contract locating race to the bottom. I've never understood why anybody would go bid a contract where they can't possibly make money. I remember the old mentality was, we'll take it, may lose a little bit the first year, but they'll see how great a job we did and then they'll give us more money. And they go back in and say, "Look at the great job we did." And they say, "Okay, yeah, we'd like 50 cents back on each locate." It hasn't worked that way.

(28:55):

It's going to take more money, but we have to get our training right. We have to make it a profession. We have to get the mapping. There's a lot of stuff that we have to do and if we all just did a little bit of it, it would improve the system dramatically,

(29:10):

But we also need to think outside the box and stop with this. This is the way locating goes. No. Why wouldn't you want to look at an alternative locating program?

(29:21):

It makes no sense that somebody would just blindly dismiss that. We have a whole industry of private locating companies. It's a huge resource. And again, they're for - profit companies. They'll figure out how to make that work and provide a good service. They can take slack off of the contract guys. The contract guys aren't stupid. They'll figure out how they can get involved in it. But at the end of the day, you get more people in there, more qualified people, more people answering the bell. We improve the efficiency of the contractors and continue to educate indicate them. The problem can go away or

Mike Sullivan (30:04):

At

Ron Petersen (30:04):

Least be drastically minimized. You're always going to have, in our world, you're always going to have the March to April, oh, here we go. It's time to run. Yep. We can get through that. It's when we're still doing that in late August and September because we can't catch up. Exactly. I've probably said this to you before. I think in a lot of times we downplayed stuff as the locating stakeholder group that we have not done a great job of explaining to our member our members, well, our members know, but to our utility clients what it takes to produce a single efficient locator. They don't get it. I've used this example

before when Minnesota was one of the states that made a drastic switch in locating and went away from their big guys and hired a small company thinking all the locators would just jump over and go to work for them, which makes no sense on two fronts.

(31:01):

Number one, if you're having a problem with the first guy, do you really want all their guys back there working for the new guy? But the call I get from a VP of a major utility is, "Hey, Ron, come up here and train a hundred guys. You got two weeks." I'm like, "Number one, no. But number two, you have absolutely no idea what it takes to create a single productive locator. No clue. And we've done a poor job of educating and keeping that in front of our potential clients because you can go to a two-day locator training class. You can go to a five-day locator training class. Now you've got a concept. Most locating technicians aren't fundamentally and profitable aren't moving good for about six months. There are exceptions, but you're not going to be out there making a difference on day two. And we haven't done a good job of explaining that or teaching our own clients that.

(31:58):

So it's like, oh, go open the closet, pull out a few more locators. Let's go. Doesn't work that way.

Mike Sullivan (32:04):

No, it doesn't. And I know here in Alberta and other parts of the North America as well, there are qualified locators out there, but this artificial bottleneck due to these contracts limits the capacity. And if that capacity can be opened up, then you'll be in a better place. Absolutely. And

(32:28):

It's going to take the lawyers to get involved and that's always a challenge, but it's possible. We've done it. Ontario has done it. Australia has done it. New Zealand has done it. And this is just the way things work in Australia. It's always been the excavator that locates. And they look at us like, "Are you crazy?" And we look at them and go, "Are you crazy?" So clearly it works and we can learn from each other. Before we go, I wanted to mention, and maybe you saw this, but when we talk about locator capacity and there's a lot of red tape, obviously. I was doing some blue skying and I put an article together and I just put it out into our utility safety partners newsletter and I compared securing a locator to Uber that I don't know if you saw this, but essentially if I'm an excavator, I can go onto an application, whether it's locate a locator, whatever it's called, and I need a locate and I secure my locate.

(33:40):

It puts in my ticket and everything. You can't have a locate without a valid one call ticket. So you put in your ticket and does everything on the app and then it gives you, here are the locators available to do that work in vicinity right now. And they've all been vetted and you can select your locator and you select the locator and you can see what their qualifications are just like an Uber driver. They have five stars or they have one. Maybe you don't want to hire the one that has one star. You can see the equipment that they've been trained on, what they're familiar with, what they are used to, what they are good at. And for example, are they a pipeline transition pipeline more adept at locating transition pipelines versus something else? You select your locator, you have your price right there, what it's going to cost for an hour, two hours, three days, a week, whatever it might be.

(34:32):

You select your locator and away you go. That would adjust for surge pricing. For here we are in the northern climate. Guess what? April, May comes along and we have a high demand for excavation and locating and then that tapers off during the summer months and comes up with a higher demand at the

end of the season. Do you see any potential to something like that going forward? I mean, it eliminates a lot of the red tape, the middleman, and puts the excavator in direct contact with qualified locators.

Ron Petersen ([35:06](#)):

It's fascinating. I love it. From our perspective, we need those qualified locators. You don't want the guy that went out on, not Amazon, but eBay or Craigslist if that still exists, found himself a \$200 locator from 1999. Now he's a locator. We don't want that guy. And obviously that guy will work himself out of the business really quickly. Pretty quick. If we had qualification like what you're doing, you're validating your guys on the ALP and all that. If we have that, if we get that in the States too, then yeah, why not? I mean, it's kind of back to what I kind of sarcastically said, you can't open the closet and pull out a bunch of locators. Maybe you can.

Mike Sullivan ([35:51](#)):

Maybe you can. As long as they're qualified, right? As long as they're all qualified.

Ron Petersen ([35:54](#)):

Yeah,

Mike Sullivan ([35:55](#)):

Absolutely.

Ron Petersen ([35:56](#)):

And it would have the potential to alleviate some of that stress. So I like it. I'm going to go sneak off and try

Mike Sullivan ([36:01](#)):

That. No, there's some big players out there. Well, there you go. There's some big players out there locating a marketing space that maybe they're listening to this, maybe they've already thought of it and maybe they have the capacity to do it. And if that's the case, hey man, I'll wave that flag all day, all day. However you can improve the process, do it, do it. I like

Ron Petersen ([36:25](#)):

Process, Mike. I like

Mike Sullivan ([36:26](#)):

Process. Yeah. Procedures. I'm learning. Well, and I should mention here before we go that Ron is going to be the keynote speaker at the Canadian Common Ground Alliance Damage Prevention Symposium in Calgary, Alberta in November of this year. I'm not sure if you're familiar with Calgary in November. It could be beautiful and warm. It could be dastardly cold and you'll never want to ever come here again. So let's hope for the farmer and really glad you're going to be able to do that for us, Ron. I'm actually looking

Ron Petersen ([36:58](#)):

Forward to it.

Mike Sullivan ([37:00](#)):

Well, great to see you up here. I haven't seen you in Canada for... I don't remember the last time I saw you in Canada, but I'm sure we'll be talking about the NULCA reports that are on the website and yeah, please do go to the website, check it out. And if you're not connected with Ron on LinkedIn, I invite you to do so. Ron is obviously very knowledgeable in this space along with many others too. And you're connected with so many people here in Canada as well in the locating and marketing space, the Kapulk and others as well. So that's great to hear. The last thing I want to talk about is how is Mount Chismore coming along?

Ron Petersen ([37:41](#)):

Mount Chismore may be rolled out in November and that is Mount Chismore for those who've never heard, which it may just be you and I, is the Mount Rushmore of Canadian damage prevention. So I have my feeling on who those four would be. One probably won't agree with me, but Mr. Chisholm was where we named it and then we had Jim Douglas originator out in there and then

Mike Sullivan ([38:14](#)):

We had - Scott Henley. Everybody

Ron Petersen ([38:15](#)):

Scott Henley and

Mike Sullivan ([38:17](#)):

You

Ron Petersen ([38:17](#)):

Were the other. You were the four.

Mike Sullivan ([38:18](#)):

I was the other one. Yeah.

Ron Petersen ([38:20](#)):

So it may be rolled out in November. We may make a surprise appearance.

Mike Sullivan ([38:26](#)):

Well, with the emergence of AI, I think we could make it happen pretty darn easy. Absolutely. Even 3D printer, everybody could have a small Mount Chismo on there as their centerpiece.

Ron Petersen ([38:38](#)):

My son and grandson have a 3D printer. I'm working on it now. So we'll get that done. And I even know where each individual person's head is going to be to replace the president. So we've got

Mike Sullivan ([38:49](#)):

This. Well, I've got a big Irish ranium, but I think Scott Henley had me bested there. Bless his soul.

Ron Petersen ([38:56](#)):

We'll scale him. Yeah. Bless his soul.

Mike Sullivan ([38:57](#)):

Yep. Yep. Ron, thanks for doing this and I'm glad to see you up and about and I'm looking forward to seeing you here in Alberta. And now that I know you're coming, I hope you don't mind, but I'm going to schedule some other little meetings with people while you're here and I'm going to make the most of your time while you're here.

Ron Petersen ([39:16](#)):

Absolutely. And I look forward to it and I will probably bring the frigid cold, the ladder, not the former, but who cares? I'm coming.

Mike Sullivan ([39:24](#)):

You're coming. And we have natural gas. We have really good heating, so we'll be fine.

Ron Petersen ([39:31](#)):

Awesome.

Mike Sullivan ([39:32](#)):

Thanks, Ron.

Ron Petersen ([39:33](#)):

Thank you.

Mike Sullivan ([39:35](#)):

That's going to wrap things up on the Safety Moment Podcast. I want to thank our producer stories and strategies and also all of you for tuning in. I want to thank our guest, Mr. Ron Petersen, for joining us today. The topic that we spoke about today is not limited to the United States. It's all over North America and it's a challenge we're experiencing everywhere. If you have an episode idea, please send us an email at info@utilitysafety.ca. You can also find us on LinkedIn on X, formerly Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. And remember, on click costs you nothing. Not clicking, that could cost you everything.