Utility Relocation: Before Construction

With a new look envisioned for the Route 1, Route 17 Business and Route 218 intersection at Falmouth, utilities will be moved underground to provide an attractive gateway at the entrance to Stafford County and the City of Fredericksburg.

Moving utilities **before** construction begins is the best way to avoid service disruptions to residents, schools, public safety agencies, and health care providers.

1. **Field Inspection**
   - Staff identify existing utility lines during design phase
   - Determine if VDOT will need access to private property – an easement – to move utility lines.

2. **Design**
   - Project design team finds the best location for the new lines.

3. **Right-of-Way**
   - VDOT negotiates with property owners to acquire land needed for new utility locations.

4. **Utility Coordination**
   - Providers submit plans for new locations, cost, and timeline.
   - VDOT reviews and approves plans, before any lines are moved.
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Utilities are relocated after structures are demolished so companies have clear access to the ground below.

Utility relocation is a deliberate, months-long process that involves connecting thousands of individual copper wires by hand for telecommunications, and fiber lines for Internet, cable, and phone services.

5) Utility Providers Arrive on Site
- Utility companies began site work on March 4, following demolitions.
- Several companies are locating their utilities in a new underground duct bank on the southeast corner, by the former Koons Automotive.

6) Trench Construction & Wire Connection
- New trenches are dug for underground utility lines.
- Trenches must be dug in small sections for safety reasons – high risk of collapse.
- Thousands of individual lines must be connected by hand while the trench is open.
- Trench is sealed with concrete.

7) Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)
- A chip is implanted with the new underground utility lines, containing information on the utility owner and year it was installed.
- A handheld locator device at the surface picks up the signal emitted by the chip, revealing the location and utility owner.

8) Construction
- Utility relocation will be completed in November 2013, just before project is advertised to bidders for construction.
- When a contractor is awarded the project, they receive a set of plans showing where the new utility lines are located underground.
- In addition, Miss Utility marks the ground with new line locations.