



## Premier Underground Utility Contractor Relies on AirSpade to Reduce Risks and Improve Worker Safety

*By replacing traditional underground utility service excavation methods, AGI Construction reduces jobsite injuries while improving safety and worker satisfaction.*

Safely and efficiently identifying existing underground utility services is an ongoing challenge for companies like AGI Construction, which must successfully navigate the intricate and vast array of underground gas and utility lines on every one of its projects.

As one of New England's premier underground utility contractors, AGI recently began using state-of-the-art air excavation tools to uncover electric and gas lines in a safe, efficient, and effective manner. In return, the company has already seen safety improvements, reductions in jobsite injuries, and improved worker satisfaction.

### Keeping Workers and Residents Safe

Headquartered in Smithfield, R.I., AGI has been providing a comprehensive range of contracting services for natural gas, telecommunications, and electric underground utility installations for the last 25 years. During that time, the company has grown to become an industry leader, working primarily with all of the major gas utility companies in New England.

As part of their company's mission, AGI's crews work with live gas lines on a daily basis. Employees must identify the location of existing gas lines that can explode and/or leak when hit with shovels or heavy equipment. These incidences put both crews and residents (in the surrounding areas) at risk – something that no construction firm can afford to have happen in today's competitive and litigious business environment.

### Shovels Make Way for State-of-the-Art Tool

Up until recently, AGI used traditional hand-digging methods to locate and verify underground gas lines. "About one year ago, one of our crews was working on a job and we were given poor records about the location of services," said Jamie Carpenter, AGI's Director of Safety. "This caused the crew to accidentally rupture the services and, ultimately, disrupt the business."

Intent on improving underground utility location processes and ensuring the safety of team members and the surrounding communities, AGI went in search of an alternative means of digging verification holes. They wanted a solution that would not only be safer, but that would also be more efficient and effective.



AGI found what it was looking for in the Utility AirSpade 4000. Equipped with a high-performance, patented supersonic nozzle, the AirSpade 4000 generates a laser-like jet that moves at twice the speed of sound for faster, more effective digging. The energy and momentum of air moving at approximately 1,200 mph is focused into the soil, dislodging it in a fraction of a second. Meanwhile, nonporous materials such as metal or plastic pipes, cables, or even tree roots are unaffected. The result is faster, safer, more effective digging.

## The AirSpade as the Tool of Choice

By replacing traditional shovels with the AirSpade, AGI gave their workers extra power to safely and effectively dig around sensitive utility lines, pipes, and/or cables – all of which are at risk of damage with traditional digging methods.

The AirSpade 4000 features an insulated inner-air hose (surrounded by a non-conductive material), a fiberglass outer barrel, and a non-sparking brass/bronze alloy nozzle and brass barrel sleeves for ultimate protection when digging around sensitive electric, gas and other utility lines.

“The AirSpade has now become a favorite tool among all the crews,” said Carpenter. “In the past, we did all of our verification hole digging by hand, which was tough on our crew members. Not only does the AirSpade make for a safer environment on the job, it also makes life easier for our crew members.”

## Safe Operations & Effective Jobsite Activities

Thanks to the AirSpade, AGI is experiencing improved safety and efficiency on the job. Workers no longer have to worry about striking and damaging sensitive utility lines with shovels; they can safely use compressed air to uncover services of all sizes.

Crew members have high praises for the AirSpade and can rest easy knowing that they are operating in the safest possible manner. “And, if you look at the stats, we’ve only had one lost-time injury in the past year,” said Carpenter. “Using shovels to dig up soil, gravel, rocks, and around roots puts strain on employees’ backs. Switching to the AirSpade has definitely been a factor in reducing our injuries.”

**Company:** AGI Construction

**Industry:** Utility and Construction

**Challenge:** Find a safer and more efficient way to locate and navigate around underground electric, gas and other utility structures.

**Solution:** Guardair Utility AirSpade 4000

**Results:** Fewer lost-time injuries, a safer work environment, and improved identification of (and navigation around) existing utility lines.

# AIRSPADE®

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