

TRENCHLESS TECHNOLOGY

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Mini-Directional Drilling

*Midwest electrical contractors Warren & Ken
Aldridge foster trenchless operation.*

*Also In This Issue:
Directional Drilling Family Tree
Microtunneling with PVC Pipe
Sacramento Delta Crossings*

Clay Pipe Microtunneling Success in Houston

The first U.S. microtunneled installation of vitrified clay pipe (VCP) was completed early this summer by contractor B.R.H. Garver, Inc. in Houston, TX.

The Maxey Road project located on Houston's east side consisted of 720 linear ft. of 12-in. ID VCP. The four-ft. joints of pipe were installed in three equal drives of 240 ft. each using a Soltau Model RVS-100A microtunneler.

The clay pipe introduction into U.S. microtunnel applications went without a hitch according

to Raj Chugh, Garver project manager. No special equipment modifications were required since Soltau microtunnelers have jacked clay pipe in Europe since their inception. VCP has also been used successfully in Japan.

Supplier for the clay pipe was Mission Clay Products, Pittsburg, Kansas. Robert Lys Jr., P.E., technical services representative for Mission, noted that the U.S. clay pipe evolved from the 1991 adoption of the ASTM "Specification for Vitrified Clay Pipe and Joints for Use in Jacking, Sliplining, and Tunnels."

U.S. production of the new VCP requires special tooling which demands about a six-month lead time. Mission Clay Products was the first U.S. manufacturer to gear up for the new pipe production. The VCP joints uti-

lize a stainless steel collar and rubber gaskets for sealing the pipe. Mission VCP is offered in diameters of 8 to 42 inches ID and in lengths of 4 to 8 feet.

The benefits of VCP are its resistance to absorption and chemical deterioration due to its smooth vitreous surface, its compression strength to withstand high jacking forces, and its economical production.

Garver chose VCP for the Maxey Road Project since it was available in the diameters required and met the project specifications, according to Chugh. It



Clay pipe is lowered into jacking pit.

also was economical, typically running significantly less in cost than alternate products.

Since the Maxey Road success Garver and other contractors have bid VCP on other microtunneling projects. Lys from Mission Clay predicts expanded use of the new product across the U.S.

Article by TT Editorial Staff

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