

3M Expands RFID Marker System for Underground Pipelines

3M has developed a new line of RFID-enabled utility markers for near-surface and deeply buried applications. The markers expand 3M's RFID Marker Locating System and will supplement the ball and disk markers to address a broad range of permanent marking needs for pipelines.

The 3M RFID Marker Locating System, a first of its kind in the industry, provides positive identification of marked facilities, making it more valuable for locating and maintenance than conventional passive marker locating. Within the oil and gas industry, electronic markers can protect underground pipelines by marking road crossings and important buried features such as valves, stubs, joints and repair sleeves.

The U.S. natural gas infrastructure includes about 1.4 million miles of underground pipeline. As this number continues to grow, maintenance costs will increase, as will the potential for accidental damage. The new 3M RFID Marker Locating System will be a powerful asset management tool and database/mapping resource, benefiting owners of underground pipelines as well as contract locators as they pursue improved productivity and effective damage prevention.

3M's RFID Marker Locating System includes handheld 3M Dynatel 2200M Series locator units, which offer compatibility with industry standard GPS/GIS field data collection devices for real-time mapping of marker placement and enhanced asset and resource management.

The 3M Dynatel locators can pinpoint both conventional passive markers and new 3M RFID markers on all of the established utility marker frequencies. It also provides efficient pipe and fault location.

"The 3M Dynatel RFID Marker Locator System uses a new technology with a custom chip inside that can be programmed in the field to convey important information about each marked underground facility," Corey Willson, 3M marketing manager, said. "Markers are located by means of a utility-specific radio frequency signal and respond to the locator with details, including a unique identification number as well as unique feature attributes that provide positive identification of the underground facility."

Unlike conventional markers, the new 3M system can differentiate every marked underground feature, even distinguishing between nearby lines, which may have markers tuned to the same frequency. The locators can also be programmed to include only those marker frequencies required by the operator.

For more information about the 3M RFID Marker Locating System, contact 3M Track and Trace Solutions, A148-2N-01, 6801 River Place Blvd., Austin, Texas 78726-9000, USA, or call 800-426-8688. For more information about 3M locating products, go to www.3M.com/dynatel.

3M Track and Trace Solutions

3M provides comprehensive, practical and easy-to-use track and trace solutions for customers in diverse markets, including health care, safety and security, aerospace and government, oil and gas, process industries, supply chain, construction and utilities, libraries and legal. Utilizing RFID, GPS and RTLS technologies, our asset management, protection, and utilization solutions enable customers to reliably and accurately track and manage high-value assets. Unlike similar offerings, based on components rather than complete solutions, 3M Track and Trace Systems are designed with full implementation in mind, deploying the right solution, with the right technology, suited for the customer. For more information on 3M Track and Trace, go to www.3Mtrackandtrace.com.

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