Big municipal contracts

by Mahala Kabili

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Recently, NEPCCO has been heavily invested in projects for the Metropolitan District (MDC), a nonprofit organization that manages the Hartford regionâ€™s sewer and water systems, including the cities of Bloomfield, East Hartford, Hartford, Newington, Rocky Hill, West Hartford, Wethersfield and Windsor.

NEPCCO has had MDC as a client for more than 35 years, performing services from CCTV inspections and sewer cleaning to shortline repairs and grouting. MDC is under a consent decree from the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection to upgrade its sanitary sewer system at costs estimated at $1 billion over a 15-year period that began about five years ago.

â€œThe consent decree has generated a considerable number of grouting and inspection contracts, with occasional dig repairs, and weâ€™ve been involved in some way with each of them,â€• says Assard, who is project manager for much of the MDC work.

NEPCCO bids for the MDC contracts either as general contractor or as a subcontractor providing specialized services. The company has worked with a slate of lining contractors that includes Insituform, Reynolds Inliner, and Allstate Power-Vac, who acted as prime contractors.

NEPCCO broke its own record for a lateral grouting contract in 2008 with an MDC project that involved sealing more than 2,000 laterals in West Hartford and Newington. On that job, the firm worked as a subcontractor to Insituform, which was lining more than 200,000 feet of sewer. The contract, from January 2009 through July 2010, employed as many as three full-time crews.

â€œWe topped that with the next contract, which involved more than 3,000 laterals,â€• says Poplawski. â€œAlthough we could seal as far as 20 feet up the laterals, we typically go in six feet. Case studies have shown that most of the I&I is caught at the mainline connection and perhaps to the first two joints, so this 6-foot treatment eliminates upwards of 95 percent of the problem.â€•

Insituform was the general contractor on that contract as well, lining about 170,000 feet of pipe. Work began in February 2010 and employed as many as five full grouting crews to meet a tough March 2011 deadline.

Large grouting contracts typically span several seasons, and this one stretched through the worst Connecticut winter in recent memory. â€œIt was bitterly cold, subzero weather,â€• says Poplawski. â€œTh lines are warm enough for the grouting chemicals, but the guys were exposed to the elements a lot of the time.

â€œThere was so much snow that at times we couldnâ€™t get the trucks into the street or find the manholes. Even after we located the manholes, we often had to be creative in our setups as the town was running out of places to put the snow that was removed.â€•

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