

# The Southern Voice

*"To provide exceptional underground water and wastewater infrastructure solutions through technical excellence, unwavering safety standards, and environmental stewardship. A commitment to building and maintaining vital utility systems that support sustainable communities while delivering superior value to our clients, employees, and stakeholders"*



## Chairman's Monthly Update

Dear Valued Team Members and Stakeholders,

As we close the month of August at Southern Underground, I am pleased to share some key developments and reflections on our continued journey in the public works water and wastewater infrastructure sector. Our private work continues to show significant growth and the municipal business in the northern end of the state has exploded exponentially due to the influx of people moving away from cold weather, high taxes not to mention the high cost of home ownership and dimensioning job opportunities.

### Project Highlights

This month marked significant progress on our municipal pump station expansion from Dade County through Volusia County. Despite logistical challenges our crews have maintained their schedule. Our work in the public work sector continues to receive accolades like I haven't seen or heard before. Congratulations guys and girls, you're doing it right and you're doing it consistently! With our environmental impact mitigation strategies being particularly commended in a positive note and our interaction of our folks with our clients. These projects represent our commitment to developing sustainable water solutions for communities facing increasing scarcity challenges and you guys have embraced that challenge. As the years pass and developers purchase the last open tracks of land it's becoming almost impossible to find the necessary land to build wellfields to service the local community. Our senior engineers voluntarily formed a committee to develop a system to find the necessary land to help Cities capitalize on securing the land for their next wellfield, sometimes right below their feet.

### Expansion News

We received word that the new date of September 30th will be the date we occupy our new facility in Pompano Beach. Some permits took additional time to process through the regulatory agency, and our new landlord has been very accommodating with his time and energy to help us make the changes to the new layout of our offices.

### Industry Developments

The recent federal infrastructure funding announcement brings promising opportunities for our sector. With \$3.5 billion allocated specifically for water and wastewater improvements nationwide, as we are well-positioned to support municipalities in upgrading aging systems. Our business development team is already engaging with key stakeholders to ensure we can contribute our expertise where it's most needed.

### Team Recognition

This month special recognition goes to the dedicated hard-working folks who drop everything no matter the time or the situation & rush to the aid of our clients who suffer catastrophic failure in their municipal infrastructure. The month of August we witnessed for the first time all ten crews strategically placed throughout FL with their men & equipment engaged in emergency repairs. It was the first time all crews were working simultaneously. Fortunately, we were able to dispatch the work in short order and none of our clients had to wait. We are evaluating the need to add additional crews to this sector of our business as our client's infrastructure ages, and more demand is placed on their resources.

### Looking Ahead

As we move forward, we remain focused on our strategic goals of expanding our design-build capabilities and strengthening our position in the water reuse market. Water infrastructure remains critical to community health and economic development, and I'm proud of the essential role we play in this sector. The challenges of aging infrastructure, climate changes impacts, and increasing regulatory requirements create opportunities for us to demonstrate our expertise and commitment to excellence.

Belseri Comerford  
Chairman & CEO  
Southern Underground Industries & its wholly owned subsidiaries

## September FEATURED EMPLOYEES

### Oscar Portillo



#### Role: Project Engineer

**Fun Fact:** Oscar's dedication to detail and commitment to safety is second to none. He has become a role model & mentor to our younger Engineers, all the while his free time is spent with his 3-year-old girl, the real boss

Few people know that Oscar is a graduate Architect who works in a predominately Engineering field and leads by example. All our Engineers have the greatest respect for Mr. Portillo, seeking his advice on numerous matters in the field. His depth of knowledge amasses his fellow workers in the office. Oscar firmly believes that many of a young Engineer's time should be spent in the trenches not behind a desk. As Oscar has repeatedly stated it's easy to learn to use a pencil, but experience is taught in the field. We congratulate Oscar for the recognition and thank him every day helping our young Engineers become the best they can be."

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Safety bingo starts in October  
(see page 4 for details)

### September Birthdays:

Giovanni D' Alessandro  
Ramy Wassef  
Reinaldo Ortega  
Victor Chavez  
Nathaniel Scott  
Jose Antonio

### Work Anniversaries:

Jessica Abbott - 1 Year  
William Blackford - 1 Year  
Emilio Flores - 4 Year  
Frankline Mitchell - 4 Year  
Hector Meneses - 1 Year

## ON GOING JOBS

- City of Hallandale Beach  
Lift Station #3  
\$2,826,223.60
- City of Hallandale Beach  
Lift Station #6  
\$6,284,435.00
- City of North Miami  
Beach Bell Gardens  
\$3,367,833.00
- City of Hallandale Beach  
7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Street Water  
Main \$ 3,191,524.00
- City of North Miami  
Beach Bunche Park  
\$ 3,318,554.00
- City of North Miami  
Beach Washington Park  
\$ 5,454,365.00
- City of Dania Beach Lift  
Station #12  
\$ 3,699,900.00
- City of Fort Lauderdale  
Rehab PS A-20 & B4  
\$ 8,514,415.00
- City of Hallandale Beach  
LS # 10, 11, & 15  
\$6,666,449.00

## DIRECT FROM THE SOURCE

*Let our fellow workers know how to have their voices heard in the new Company newsletter!*

## Words of Wisdom

**"Life is like a coin. You can spend it any way you wish but you only will spend it once".**

**"Big dreams require healthy habits and healthy habits require self-discipline"**

**"If you stay positive in a negative situation sometimes you win sometimes you learn"**

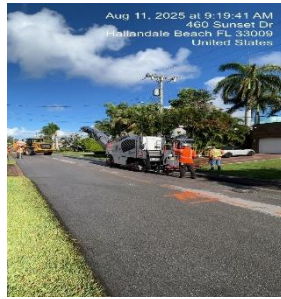
**"If you believe it will work out, you will see opportunities, If you believe it won't, you will see obstacle's."**

**'Life can be very challenging at times, step back and take a big breath and retool for the next chapter"**

# Recent Highlights



**City of Hallandale Beach  
Hallandale Lift Station No. 3**  
We have completed installing the control panels and electrical boxes on the elevated platform.



**City of Hallandale  
Lift Station 10, 11 & 15**  
All sanitary sewer pipe installation has been completed, along with the asphalt patch restoration. The Permit approval is in, and we have started pumps and grinder stations.



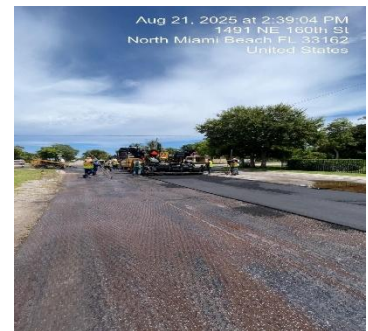
**City of North Miami Beach  
Bell Gardens**  
We are awaiting ARV installations, mill and overlay, and final restoration.”



**City of North Miami Beach  
Bunche Park**  
Waiting on Mill and overlay and final restoration.



**City of Hallandale Beach  
7 & 8 Street**  
Connections of the backyard water services are currently ongoing, with final connections to be completed soon. Once this work is finished, the mill and overlay will follow.



**City of North Miami Beach  
Washington Park Pump Station  
and Force Main**  
The Mill and overlay for the entire project have been successfully completed. All restoration work outside Neal Park is now finalized. Currently, installation of conduits and piping for the control panels is in progress.



# SAFETY

*Focusing on Employees working alone, working late at night, or working in high-crime areas:*

**Directly from OSHA:** General Safety Topics:

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Ensure employees are using the correct PPE for their tasks and that it is in good condition.

**Hazard Communication:** Review chemical hazards and the proper use of safety data sheets.

**Fire Safety:** Conduct fire drills and review fire safety procedures, including the location of fire extinguishers and emergency exits.

**Fall Protection:** If applicable, review fall protection procedures and equipment.

**Heat Exposure:** If the weather is still warm, remind employees about the dangers of heat exposure and how to prevent heat-related illnesses.

**Ergonomics:** Review proper lifting techniques and workstation setups to prevent musculoskeletal injuries.

**Electrical Safety:** Review electrical safety procedures, including proper use of extension cords and avoiding electrical hazards.

**Respiratory Protection:** If respirators are required, ensure employees are properly trained on their use.

**National Preparedness Month:** Review emergency plans, including evacuation procedures and communication protocols.

**Pedestrian Safety Month:**

Highlight the importance of safe walking practices for employees, both on and off the job

**Peak of Hurricane season:**

**1. Prepare Your Home:**

**Secure your yard:** Move or secure outdoor furniture, potted plants, and anything else that could become a projectile in high winds.

**Protect your home:** Consider installing storm shutters or using plywood to protect windows and doors.

**Inspect and repair:** Check for loose shingles, damaged siding, and other potential vulnerabilities, and address them promptly.

**Clear gutters and drains:** Ensure proper drainage to prevent flooding.

**Trim trees and shrubs:** Remove dead or overhanging branches that could fall on your home.

**Reinforce garage doors:** Ensure garage doors are sturdy enough to withstand high winds.

**2. Assemble a Disaster Kit:**

**Water:** Store at least one gallon of water per person per day for a minimum of three days.

**Food:** Gather non-perishable food items that don't require cooking or refrigeration.

**First-aid:** Include a well-stocked first-aid kit, medications, and any special dietary needs.

**Lighting:** Have flashlights, batteries, and a portable radio. Other essentials: Include a manual can opener, multi-tool, duct tape, and personal hygiene items.

**Important documents:** Store vital documents in a waterproof container.

**3. Create or Review Your Emergency Plan:**

**Evacuation plan:** Identify evacuation routes and meeting points, especially for those in evacuation zones.

**Communication plan:** Establish ways to contact family members, and let them know your plan.

**Consider your pets:** Have a plan for your pets, including food, water, and identification.

**Out-of-town contact:** Designate an out-of-town contact for family members to check in with.

## Safety Bingo

Employees play using safety bingo cards, aiming to black out five numbers in a row (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal).

A number is drawn daily and posted in a visible area, such as a lunchroom or bulletin board.

The game ends for a team when a workplace injury occurs, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and safe practices. If you receive Bingo 1<sup>st</sup> then the winner receives a gift card.

Every day that we do not have an injury we will call a number from the bingo ball adding \$2.00 dollars each day until we get Bingo.

Every employee will receive a Bingo card to play and help keep the team safe.

## OUR NEXT AREAS OF FOCUS

•Emergency Repairs Fort Lauderdale

**\$1,500,000.00**

•Norwood WTP Improvements

Phase 2 raw water transmission main & wellhead,

**\$4,807,016.00**

•Master Pump Station 4 (Myrtle Grove) FM Replacement

**\$3,000,018.00**

•Lift Station 5

**\$4,035,000.00**

•Lift Station 1

**\$6,284,435.00**

•Lift Station 5 - Lauderdale

**\$ 2,249,475.00**

•Area 5, 10 & 14 Reclaimed Water Main

**\$ 2,183,839.20.00**

•Coquina Cove Drainage

**\$ 5,872,846.00**

•Lift Station 11

**\$ 2,960,200.00**

•Lift Station 4

**\$1,915,950.00**

•Lift Station 6

**\$6,284,435.00**



### Wellness Corner:

#### 1. Be Prepared for Emergencies:

Have a plan in place for emergencies like fires, floods, Hurricanes, or power outages.

#### 2. Avoid Heat-Related Illness:

Be aware of the signs of heat exhaustion (thirst, fatigue, leg or abdominal cramps).

#### 3. Protect Against Insects:

Use insect repellent with DEET or other effective ingredients and take precautions to avoid bites.

#### 4. Fall Allergies:

Be prepared for seasonal allergies, which can be triggered by falling leaves. Wash your hands frequently, and use hand sanitizer if you can't wash them. Any time you touch a publicly used item.

Have something you'd like to share for next month's issue? Contact: [newsletter@southernundergroundindustries.com](mailto:newsletter@southernundergroundindustries.com)