

Software Program Aids Selection Of Proper Construction Method

For many underground utility projects, it is not always obvious whether open-cut or horizontal directional drilling (HDD) will be the best, most cost-efficient method of construction.

To help answer that question, Vermeer Manufacturing Co., a major supplier of trenching and HDD equipment, has introduced a new software package.

Underground Analysis software uses basic information about a project to compare open-cut to directional drilling, says Ed Savage, Vermeer underground segment manager.

"It is a unique tool that can help contractors evaluate if HDD or open-cut would be the better method for a specific project," Savage said. "We also believe it will help civil engineers and ultimately will result in cost savings."

The new software program was introduced at the 2007 ICUEE show in Louisville, KY, and is now available from the Vermeer dealer organization.

To make an analysis about which method of construction is best, the user inputs information about project variables, including project complexity; whether the project is in a rural or urban area; soil conditions; if there are existing utilities in the project area; concerns about noise and vibration levels; whether control of dust will be neces-

sary; estimates of the percentage of project costs related to labor, equipment and material for both HDD and open-cut; restoration requirements; and distances that must be traveled to complete the project.

Questions

The software also asks about how many bidders are anticipated, levels of experience of contractors in estimating project costs, and the user's level of comfort in meeting or exceeding the project owner's expectations.

Based on this information, the software provides an overview of the project, prepares detailed reports on the cost using HDD and the cost for open-cut, and recommends which method is best suited for the project.

To assist in development of the software, Savage said Vermeer conducted research within the industry to determine specific information necessary to effectively evaluate methods of construction and that the software is based on those criteria.

Underground Analysis joins Bore Pilot and Atlas Bore Planner to help evaluate and plan underground installation projects.

FOR MORE INFO:

Vermeer Manufacturing, (888) 837-6337, www.vermeer.com

