

# NEW ENGLAND CONSTRUCTION

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ACP



## Safety and Customer Satisfaction are Top Priorities for Maine Drilling & Blasting

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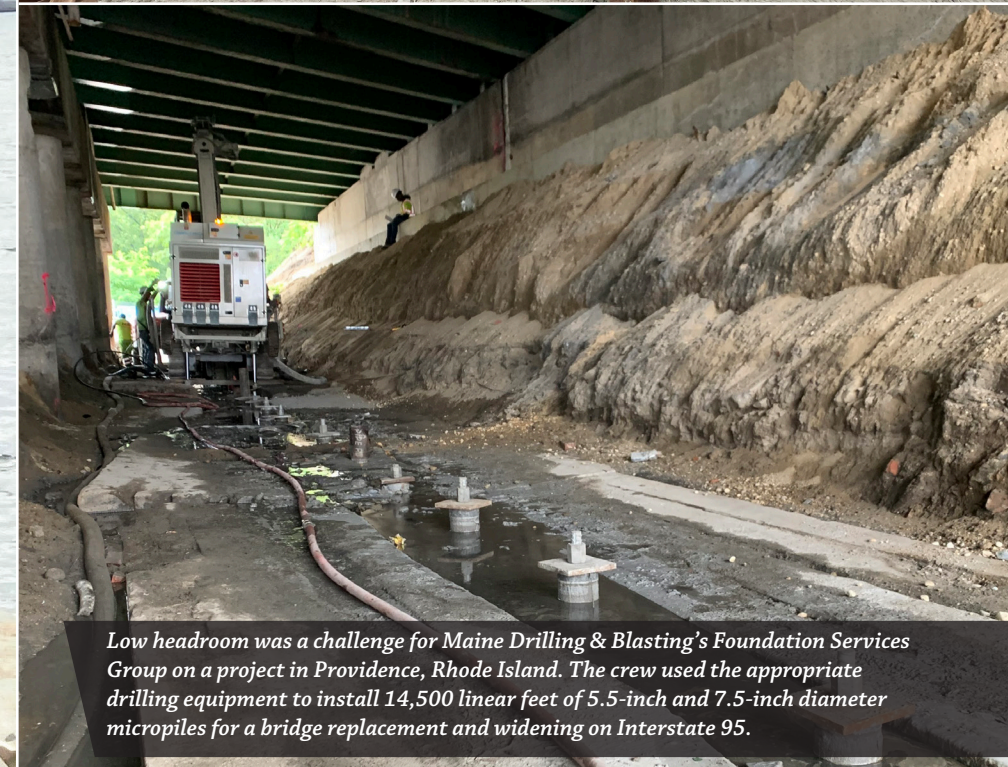
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On a bulkhead replacement project in Fairhaven, Massachusetts, Maine Drilling & Blasting's Foundation Services Group installed 1,400 linear feet of multistrand tie backs, working with the contractor to restore a failing bulkhead for a commercial pier.



Maine Drilling & Blasting performs a frame load test.



Low headroom was a challenge for Maine Drilling & Blasting's Foundation Services Group on a project in Providence, Rhode Island. The crew used the appropriate drilling equipment to install 14,500 linear feet of 5.5-inch and 7.5-inch diameter micropiles for a bridge replacement and widening on Interstate 95.



Maine Drilling & Blasting crews stabilizing a rock slope.

# ROCK SOLID

Maine Drilling & Blasting Achieves Over 50 Years of Success with a Commitment to Safety, Their Employees, and Quality Work *By Debra Wood*

Rock solid and dependable, Maine Drilling & Blasting (MD&B) has served the construction industry well for more than 57 years, with its core values, a commitment to safety, and quality work. The company, with corporate headquarters in Gardiner, Maine, has expanded its Foundation Services Group, nearly tripling revenues for this division in a few years.

"We are a professional team who can go and outperform anyone else in the industry, operate at a high level and keep everybody safe," says Jereme Caron, Business Operations Manager of MD&B's Foundation Services Group division. Plus, "we do this work to the satisfaction of our customers."

## Getting to know MD&B

Maine Drilling & Blasting, founded in 1966 by Ted Purington Sr., operated as a family-owned enterprise for 38 years, with Purington's sons at the helm. In 2004, as members of the original family planned their retirement, the company began a transition to become employee owned, instituting an employee stock ownership plan (ESOP).

As owners, employees receive the rewards of greater economic security and additional retirement funds. Customers benefit from a motivated workforce and increased morale when hiring MD&B.

"Parallel to the company's mission statement, Maine Drilling & Blasting's ESOP has created an even higher standard of service," Caron says. "Ownership focuses

employees on increased professionalism and proficiency, handling business situations with the respect, responsiveness, and responsibility of business owners. It is successfully serving as an incentive for reaching a new level of performance and in turn driving the success of the company."

During more than a half century, MD&B became recognized for its safety

and experience drilling and blasting from relatively simple to the most complex projects. It can take on many projects others can't due to its size, in-house resources, equipment and explosives diversity, and technology.

The company's first job was excavating a residential basement in Randolph, Maine. By 1973, New England Construc-

tion reported MD&B "was moving almost 100,000 yards of rock annually." Since then, the company has grown to drill and blast from the Canadian border south to Florida. Maine Drilling has performed more than 2 million controlled blasts for residential, commercial, marine and transportation projects, and quarries.

MD&B employs about 650 people, including safety and engineering teams. These owner employees live by the company's core values of honesty, respect, fairness, and responsibility. That leads to a safe and productive work environment.



## Entering the Foundation Services Business

MD&B had built a reputation for its drilling and blasting work, so drilling and bolting seemed a logical next step. The company accepted a wind farm foundation project in 2006 at Mars Hill – near the Canadian border – and then leveled mountain tops, built roads, and created foundations for many more wind farms as it proved its ability to safely work in remote and treacherous terrain. The wind projects required a 5-foot-thick foundation, with 50- to 60-foot-long, 2.5- to 3-inch diameter rods grouted in with concrete to anchor the turbine.

“Instead of drilling and putting in explosives, we were putting in rebar and grout,” Caron says. “It was a new scope we were doing on these jobs.”

The company decided to progress beyond installing rock anchors with rock drills and purchased a micropile drill. With the purchase of new equipment, MD&B began installing micropiles and tie backs on various jobs, including foundations for bridges, buildings and support of excavation work.

MD&B created the Foundation Services Group a few years ago to grow the rock anchor and micropile business. An experienced engineer and superintendent joined Caron as a foundation team – one that aims to finish the job ahead of schedule by being part of the construction team and avoiding stand-by charges.

“We will find the safest and most efficient way to complete the project,” Caron says. “We are a partner and plan ahead.”

The Foundation Services Group division trained and developed drill operators and foremen as the group grew. “We have a good core group of people,” Caron says.

## A Growing Collection of Foundation Service Projects

MD&B’s Foundation Services Group provides a number of techniques to create safe excavations, install shoring systems, micropiles and rock anchors for foundation work. Company-trained and -supervised crews complete the work, which can take place in urban or remote settings.

In Providence, Rhode Island, the Foundation Services Group installed 14,500 linear feet of 5.5- inch and 7.5-inch diameter micropiles for a Rhode Island Department of Transportation bridge replacement and widening on Interstate 95. Crews used a water flush method. The low headroom presented a challenge, which was overcome with the appropriate drilling equipment.

On the 180 Third Avenue project in Waltham, Massachusetts, the group installed 40,000 square feet of rock catchment mesh and drilled rock dowels to stabilize a rock face to allow others to be in close proximity to the rock high walls without the risk of being hit by falling rocks. Crews also used double corrosion protected rock anchors to secure the new foundation footing to the rock ledges before construction of the laboratory building.

For the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, MD&B’s foundation group installed 12,000 linear feet of 9 5/8-inch micropiles using air flush down-the-hole drilling system for the South Coast Rail project – creating a new train platform in New Bedford. The site was considered to have hazardous materials and all of the workers received Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response training to safely perform the work.

On a bulkhead replacement project in Fairhaven, Massachusetts, FSG crews installed 1,400 linear feet of multistrand tie backs, working with the contractor to restore a failing bulkhead for a commercial pier.

The Foundation Services Group also installs soil nails to stabilize slopes, and has found opportunities in joint venturing with other shoring contractors that provide only shotcrete service.

“We can combine forces to install soil nail shotcrete walls,” Caron says. “Additionally, Maine Drilling & Blasting has partnered with pile and sheet-driving companies to install tie backs completing scopes of work together to create a fully shored system for deep excavations.”

MD&B continues to focus on the growth of its Foundation Services Group, as multiple opportunities present themselves. The division is a natural complement to the company’s drilling and blasting work. Contractors can hire MD&B for its blasting and soil stabilization and geotechnical needs. General contractors and owners find advantages in only having to hire one subcontractor for their rock removal, stabilization and foundation needs. MD&B coordinates multiple scopes of work with all of its resources. Most of its work depends on repeat business.

“MD&B brings the same quality work to a project, whether it’s a drilling and blasting job, a micropile job, a rock anchor, or a slope stabilization job,” Caron concludes. “The future is exciting.”

*Photos courtesy of Maine Drilling & Blasting*



*Maine Drilling & Blasting uses a Comacchio MC-8 Drilling Rig on a project in Providence, Rhode Island.*