News Tip/Photo Op
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Controlled Blasting Critical to Hooksett Construction Project

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What: Drilling and blasting for a new Verizon tower and support facility
Where: Route 28 Bypass in Hooksett
When: Blasting daily in the afternoons for the next several weeks
Who: Maine Drilling & Blasting. Thibeault Corp. of N.E. is the general contractor

On-site contact: **Please arrange on-site coverage with Parker Mullins, Maine Drilling & Blasting divisional manager: (603) 647-0299 or (603) 486-9114 (cell)**

HOOKSETT, N.H.-- When you re detonating thousands of pounds of explosives ten feet from a road and a mere stone s throw from structures, controlling the force of the blast and containing the shattered rock becomes the most critical component of the job.

If we were blasting in the middle of nowhere, this wouldn t be such a big deal, said Parker Mullins, divisional manager for Maine Drilling and Blasting. But with the growth and development of this area, we rarely have that luxury.

Mullins drilling and blasting crew is leveling a four-acre site along the Route 28 bypass in Hooksett for construction of a new Verizon tower and support facility. In some places, the mini-mountain of granite now rises to 35 feet.

Thibeault Corporation of New England, the general contractor, is charged with preparing the foundation for the proposed 180-foot tower and 33,000-sq. ft. building. Maine Drilling and Blasting is Thibeault s subcontractor.

After eight weeks of one-a-day blasts, crews will have reduced about 40,000 cubic yards of rock to rubble, enough rock to fill 3,333 dump trucks. Some of the largest shots are expected to break up as many as 3,000 cubic yards.

The key is to control the energy we unleash, said Mullins. That means we have to do our homework to make sure that the vibration is kept to a minimum and the shattered rock is contained.

One technique to limit vibration employs timing devices, so what appears to the naked eye as a single blast is actually a series of separate smaller detonations milliseconds apart. (The staggered nature of the blast can be dramatically captured with a motor-driven camera or slow-motion video.) In addition, crews are relying on more than 20 10,000-pound rubber mats, each 12-ft. by 24-ft. to cover and contain the resulting fly-rock.

Seismographs placed by Maine Drilling and Blasting crews routinely record and document the impact of each blast, assuring blast neighbors that the resulting ground vibration is within acceptable and safe levels.

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Sources:

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