

Clerk

From: Jeffrey Buerman
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2026 10:39 AM
To: [REDACTED] Justin Bierman; Stacy Conquest; Trish Wagner; Nick Kane; Robert Coppersmith; Jo Self
Cc: Dustin Moma; "Jesse Lewter; Office Manager; Clerk
Subject: Re: Immediate Safety Concern & Submitted to State Gov

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for contacting the Village regarding the fiber installation work in Portage Dells. This email confirms that the Village received your formal complaint and has reviewed the concerns you raised.

The Village takes the reported utility strikes and emergency responses seriously. Public safety must remain the first priority for residents, emergency personnel, utility workers, and construction crews.

Village representatives met this morning with Surf Internet and RLM to review the incidents, applicable safety procedures, and the corrective measures required moving forward. The following information responds to your questions and summarizes the actions being taken.

1. Village representatives and project oversight

The Village representatives responsible for monitoring and coordinating this project are:

- ^{Moma} Dustin ~~Moma~~, Village of Pinckney Department of Public Works Director;
- Jesse Lewter, Wolverine Engineers & Surveyors, the Village's engineering consultant; and
- Jeff Buerman, Village President and Zoning Administrator.

Questions or concerns may be directed to me through the Village office. I will coordinate with Mr. ^{Moma} ~~Moma~~, Mr. Lewter, and the project representatives as appropriate.

2. Company responsible for the project

Surf Internet is the entity responsible for the fiber installation project. RLM is the contractor that will perform excavation work going forward.

Blue Ridge Power will no longer perform work within the Village of Pinckney. The two subcontractors involved in the recent excavation work have been prohibited from performing any additional work within the Village. Only RLM will be permitted to conduct excavation associated with this project moving forward.

3. Permits, MISS DIG tickets, markings, bonds, and safety procedures

The required Village permits and bonds have been issued for this project.

During this morning's meeting, representatives of Surf Internet and RLM confirmed that the required MISS DIG tickets, utility-marking requirements, and safety procedures are current and will be followed. The Village has made clear that excavation may proceed only when all applicable requirements have been satisfied.

4. Reported utility strikes

The Village has been notified of the utility strikes and related emergency responses. When an incident is reported, the DPW director notifies the Village engineer and Village president.

Underground utility markings can sometimes be incomplete or inaccurate. However, that possibility does not remove the excavator's responsibility to work carefully, verify conditions, and follow all applicable damage-prevention procedures.

RLM represented to the Village that the incidents were addressed as quickly as possible and that no injuries were reported. The Village does not consider repeated utility strikes to be an acceptable or routine part of this project.

5. Corrective measures and resumption of work

The Village reviewed the safety concerns and excavation procedures with Surf Internet and RLM during this morning's meeting. The corrective measures include:

- Removing the two subcontractors involved from all further work within the Village;
- Limiting future excavation work to RLM;
- Reinforcing compliance with MISS DIG requirements and utility markings;
- Implementing additional excavation and safety protocols; and
- Providing direct supervision and oversight as work proceeds.

Based on these corrective measures and the representations made by Surf Internet and RLM, the Village has not ordered a continuing project-wide suspension. RLM was authorized to **resume work at noon today, subject to these requirements and continued Village oversight.**

6. Inspection and supervision

Jesse Lewter of Wolverine Engineers & Surveyors and Dustin Mora, the Village's DPW director, are responsible for the Village's inspection and oversight of the work.

Gabriel, RLM's overall project manager, is responsible for managing the contractor's work. If you would like to meet with him, please let me know and I will help arrange that conversation. Residents may also speak with him when he is present at the project site.

The Village understands why these incidents have caused concern. We want this fiber project completed, but it must be completed safely, legally, and with appropriate oversight. We will continue monitoring the work and addressing reported concerns.

If you observe an immediate hazard, smell natural gas, see damaged electrical infrastructure, or believe there is an active emergency, please move to a safe location and call 911. For nonemergency project concerns, please contact me or the Village office so the matter can be documented and promptly reviewed.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to our attention and for giving the Village an opportunity to respond. We will continue working with our engineer, DPW director, Surf Internet, and RLM to protect residents and ensure the project proceeds responsibly.

Take care,

Jeff Buerman
Village President and Zoning Administrator
Village of Pinckney

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Saturday, August 8, 2026 6:52 AM

To: Jeffrey Buerman <president@villageofpinckney.org>; Justin Bierman <j.bierman@villageofpinckney.org>; Stacy Conquest <s.conquest@villageofpinckney.org>; Trish Wagner <twagner@villageofpinckney.org>; Nick Kane <nkane@villageofpinckney.org>; Robert Coppersmith <rcoppersmith@villageofpinckney.org>; Jo Self <jself@villageofpinckney.org>

Subject: Immediate Safety Concern & Submitted to State Gov

Dear President Buerman and Members of the Village Council,

I am writing to submit a formal complaint regarding the ongoing fiber/ethernet installation work being performed in Portage Dells and, most importantly, the serious and escalating safety concerns created by the excavation crews.

I want to be very clear from the outset: **this complaint is not about damage to our lawns**. We understand that construction can disturb landscaping and that lawns can be repaired.

Our concern is the safety of the residents, emergency responders, utility workers, and the construction crews themselves.

This week alone, excavation associated with this project has resulted in:

- **Two separate gas-line strikes;**
- **One electrical-line strike;**
- Gas escaping and filling portions of our residential streets;
- **The fire department and emergency personnel being called to the neighborhood on two occasions;** and
- Crews continuing to excavate despite these serious incidents.

We have also been told by the company responsible for marking the underground utilities that the excavation contractor, identified to us as **Blue Ridge Power**, has been proceeding before the utility markings are complete. We have separately been told by utility representatives that Blue Ridge Power is responsible for the excavation and that there have been repeated problems with their work.

At this point, residents should not be expected to determine which company is blaming which other company.

Someone responsible for this project needs to take ownership of the situation and ensure that the work is being performed safely.

Michigan's MISS DIG requirements exist specifically to prevent damage to underground utilities and protect public safety. The Michigan Public Service Commission states that excavators have responsibilities regarding marked facilities, including appropriate excavation in the caution zone, and that the MPSC has enforcement authority over Michigan's underground-facility damage prevention law.

Given the repeated utility strikes occurring during this project, we are asking the Village to take this matter seriously as an **immediate public-safety concern**, rather than treating it as a normal construction complaint.

We are requesting an IMMEDIATE WORK STOPPAGE

We respectfully request that the Village immediately require the excavation work in Portage Dells to stop until the Village and the appropriate regulatory authorities can determine:

1. **Who is ultimately responsible for this fiber/ethernet construction project;**
2. Who hired Blue Ridge Power and who is supervising its work;
3. Whether all required permits, MISS DIG tickets, utility markings, and safety procedures are current and being followed;
4. Why multiple underground utilities have already been struck during this project;
5. What corrective measures will be implemented before excavation resumes;
6. Who is physically responsible for inspecting and supervising the work;
7. Whether the contractor is properly licensed and authorized for the work being performed; and
8. What specific safeguards will be put in place to prevent another gas or electrical strike.

We are particularly concerned because these are not isolated minor incidents. **Two gas-line strikes in one week in a residential neighborhood, resulting in emergency responses, should be considered a serious warning that something in the excavation process needs to be corrected before someone is injured or killed.**

We are also asking that a Village representative **come to Portage Dells and personally observe the construction activity** rather than relying solely on reports from the contractor or utility companies.

Residents should not have to stand outside watching excavation crews and wondering whether the next hole will hit a gas or electrical line. We also need to know **who is representing the residents of Portage Dells during this project**. If the Village has authorized, permitted, or otherwise facilitated this work, residents reasonably expect the Village to have someone monitoring compliance and responding when serious safety problems arise.

I have already attempted to contact the Village regarding this matter and have not received a return call. Given the number and seriousness of the incidents, I am asking that this written complaint receive an immediate response.

Please provide the following in writing:

- Confirmation that this complaint has been received;
- The name and contact information of the Village representative responsible for this project;
- The identity of the company or entity responsible for the fiber/ethernet project;
- Whether Blue Ridge Power is the contractor or subcontractor for the project;
- Whether the Village has issued any permits or approvals associated with this work;
- Whether the Village has been notified of the utility strikes and emergency responses;
- What action the Village will take regarding the repeated utility strikes; and
- Whether the Village will order or request an immediate suspension of excavation until the safety concerns have been investigated and addressed.

We are not asking the Village to wait for another incident. We are asking the Village to act before another utility is struck and someone is seriously injured.

A gas-line rupture in a residential neighborhood is not simply a construction inconvenience. It creates a potentially dangerous situation for residents, emergency responders, utility personnel, and workers.

We want the fiber installation to be completed. We simply want it completed **safely, legally, and with appropriate oversight**.

Please treat this as a formal request for immediate intervention and provide a written response as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Resident, Portage Dells

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]