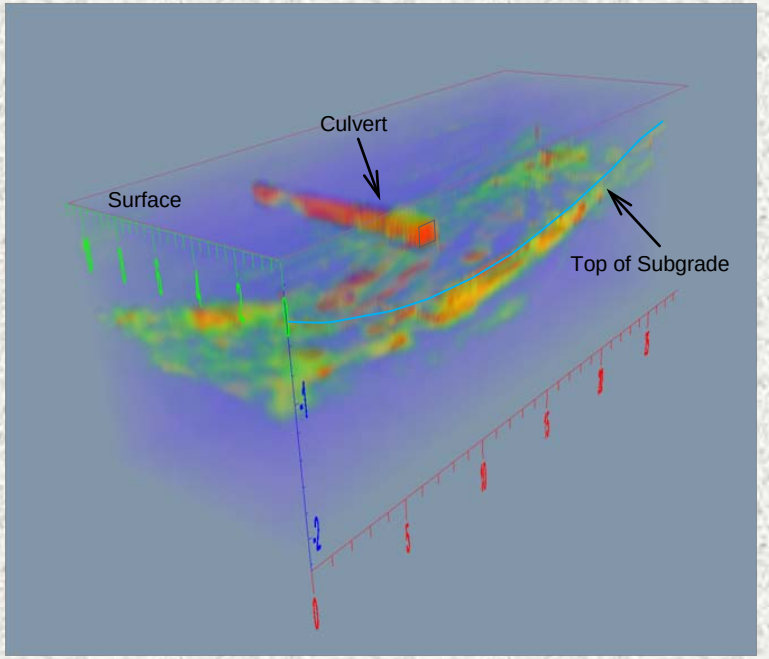
Geophysics and Geology

Subsurface Utility Engineering (SUE)

SUE is a branch of engineering practice that seeks to manage construction project risks associated with underground utilities, such as project safety and costs associated with utility conflicts and relocation.

Four quality levels for underground utility information have been established. They range from examination of existing information (Quality Level D) to actual exposure of buried utilities (Quality Level A). The second-highest level, Quality Level B, employs surface geophysical methods to designate utilities within project limits.

The proper selection and application of surface geophysical techniques are critical for achieving Quality Level B data. The Geophysics and Geology Branch has many years of experience using these methods and can assist with your project needs.



Methods available through the Geophysics and Geology Branch:

- Utility Tracing
- Magnetometry
- Electromagnetic Conductivity
- Ground Penetrating Radar

High-precision differential GPS may also be employed to accurately designate detected utilities

For more information, please contact:

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Additional information on subsurface utility engineering is available from the Federal Highway Administration at the following link:

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/programadmin/sueindex.cfm