



## Summary of a Successful Construction Project

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Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the MTAS website ([mtas.tennessee.edu](https://www.mtas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained daily by MTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee municipal government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with municipal government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other MTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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**Reference Number:** MTAS-1954

SCORE members firmly believe construction projects that “go bad in the end” actually started out bad or, at the least, began without proper thought and planning. The most important element of a public utility construction project is the involvement of informed and dedicated owners. Frequently engineers are hired, money is borrowed, and contracts are awarded with little knowledge of these parties or of the construction process by the owners. We simply depend upon the kindness of strangers for the completion of a successful public project. The purpose of this paper is to encourage involvement and to provide direction and information so that the involvement actually improves the project.

Owners are encouraged to hire highly qualified personnel for all aspects of the project and to direct them well, listen to them and learn from them. If you do not understand or trust them, get a second opinion. Spend the time necessary to develop a high-quality project that actually will solve the problems at hand in a way that matches your community resources.

We encourage the use of some type of dedicated construction or project manager, a single person committed to a successful project who will see it through from beginning to end. This person needs knowledge of the process; the skills to direct, organize, and manage the process; and the support of the owners. The manager may be a contracted third-party manager or some hybrid, such as a project coordinator, or simply the engineer’s inspector who has additional responsibilities and authority. We encourage a partnership approach as opposed to an adversarial approach, which characterizes most failed projects.

Do not get in a hurry or try to perform too much construction with too little money. Utility construction, like home construction, can be a very high stress process. There are many obstacles and problems that must be overcome, but the thrill of accomplishment is even greater. To complete a treatment plant expansion or pipeline extension on time and on budget is a great accomplishment, and there is nothing as much fun as success. It’s our desire that this SCORE material will be instrumental in helping your utility complete a more successful construction project.

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