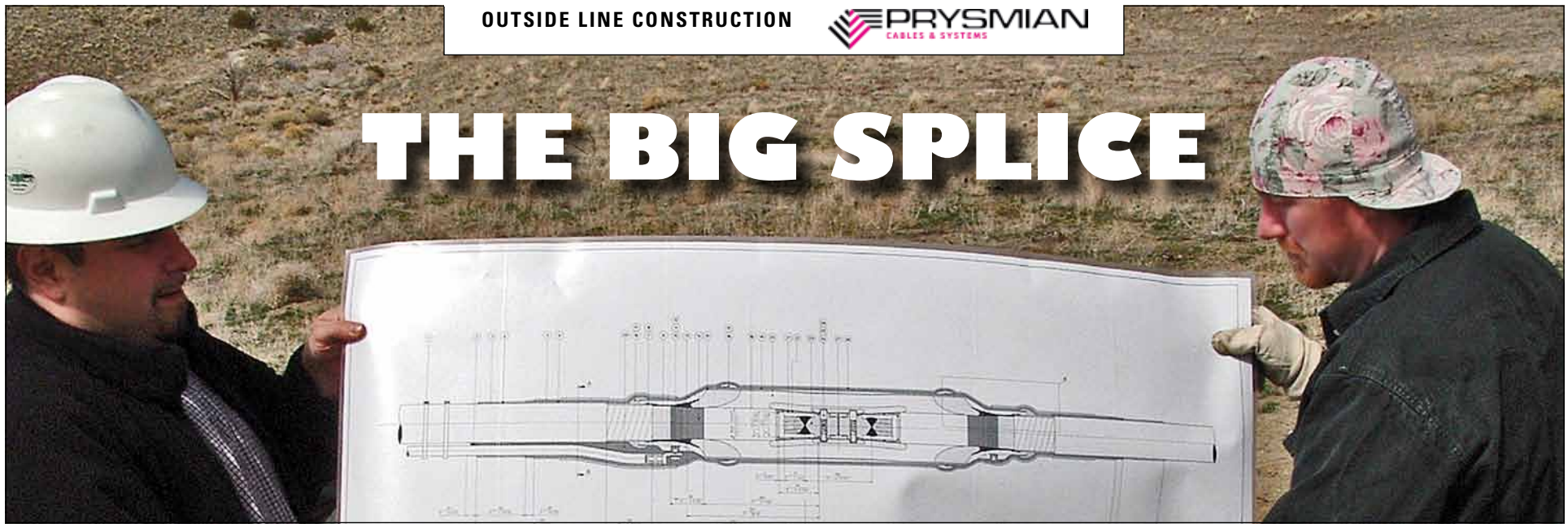
THE BIG SPLICE



Joshua Rivera (left) and Jeffery Bonnett hold a blueprint showing a cross-section of the splice: the lead sheathe, semi-conductor, insulation, and the mechanical part of the connector, which snaps into place to make a permanent connection.

Photos by Ron Cochran

IBEW Outside Line crews for Prysmian have been at work northeast of Reno this spring splicing cable for a loop connecting two Sierra Pacific Power substations.

The project includes overhead as well as Prysmian's 4-1/2 mile stretch of 115k underground transmission line.

"It takes between five and six days to complete the vault, including opening it up, doing the splicing, and cleaning up," says Assistant Business Manager Ron Cochran, who visited the site in March. "As splices go, these are very big splices," he notes.

The Prysmian crew's part of the job consists of 14 vaults. They are also installing risers and potheads. IBEW members at Par Electric are pulling the cable into the vaults.

Prysmian will play a role in upcoming construction of a trans-bay cable under San Francisco Bay, and hopefully providing good-paying union jobs in the years ahead.

Joshua Rivera, project manager.

The Prysmian crew, from left: Darren Carter, foreman and cable splicer; Joshua Rivera, project manager; Michael Bastian, cable splicer; and Jeffery Bonnett, operator/welder.

As cable splices go, it's a big one.

Working in the desert northeast of Reno. Left-over cable is stacked at right.

RIGHT: **Michael Bastian and Darren Carter in the vault. Keeping your hands clean is a challenge.**