

# Update

A Monthly  
Newsletter of  
the Common  
Ground Alliance

January 2018

2018 Best Animation  
Award Winner!



811 at the Tournament of Roses Parade!

# President's Corner

As we rang in the New Year, some of our members were hard at work making sure that 811 was front and center on Jan. 1! The 811 safety message was featured on a float at the 129th Tournament of Roses Parade thanks to Dig Alert, USA North 811, Alabama 811, Colorado 811, Georgia 811, Ohio Utilities Protection Service, North Carolina 811, JULIE, Inc., and Blue Stakes of Utah 811.

The float received a close-up during the television coverage of the event, and also won an award for most outstanding use of animation. This year's parade theme was "Making a Difference," and what better theme for the 811 float than "Making it Safe for All."

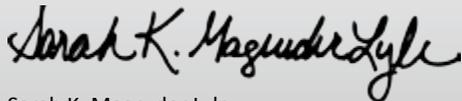
2018 is sure to be an exciting – and busy – year for all of us in the business of preventing damages to underground infrastructure. CGA is in the process of updating its strategic plan, and we want to thank all of you who have participated in surveys and meetings to ensure that we are able to focus our efforts and support our members in their mission to protect buried assets and those who work and live near them. More to come on the updated plan during the 2018 CGA 811 Excavation Safety Conference & Expo and in my future letters.

The conference agenda is packed with informative sessions and excellent networking opportunities. Visit the CGA Conference [website](#) to learn more about the Expo, CGA Annual Meeting, networking reception and golf outing. With more than 2,000 attendees from the U.S. and around the globe, it's the premier damage prevention event!

I want to recognize all of our sponsors who support our damage prevention efforts. We could not continue to do our important work without you! A big thanks to those of you who have already paid your 2018 invoices, and if you have any questions about increasing your support of CGA, please let us know.

While I have spoken with many of you over the past year, I look forward to the opportunity to engage more of our members and collaborate with you on reducing damages to underground infrastructure.

Be Safe,



Sarah K. Magruder Lyle  
President & CEO



# CGA Members Reach Millions of Viewers with Award-Winning 811 Float at the 2018 Tournament of Roses Parade

By Jim Schwilk, Vice President, Underground Service Alert of Southern California (DigAlert)

It was 10 p.m. on New Year's Eve in Pasadena, Calif., when the 811 Float pulled onto Orange Grove Blvd., awaiting its national appearance in the 2018 Tournament of Roses Parade the next morning, a journey 9 months in the making.

Flocks of bystanders watched as the float made its way down Orange Grove until it reached the designated area where it would rest for the night. Thousands walked by taking pictures, commenting on how wonderful it looked, the detail of the dogs and cats and the number of flowers.

The float was a hit already. Fast forward to New Year's Day at 5:30 a.m. Tim Estes, owner of the premier float building company, Fiesta Parade Floats, walked down from The Tournament House to a group of Fiesta employees and volunteers with the award sheet in hand. All the hard work, multitude of hours and dedication of his team had paid off again as he read "Animation Award – DigAlert/811." Three years in the parade and three award winning floats!

The float titled "Making It Safe for All," showed a bumbling crew of comical felines and canines busy at work, but apparently they did not contact 811 first to ensure they were "Making It Safe For All." The highly animated float was sure to entertain the audience, as the overhead crane,

operated by a blundering Bulldog, was hitting a main water pipe, causing a torrent of water to flood the scene!

As the out-of-control crane gyrates and twirls its overhead load precociously spirals from side

to side and up and down while a shocked Dalmatian and field mouse hangs on tight. Meanwhile, the digging backhoe, driven by a madcap cat, sporadically jerks and sputters up and down as it moves from side to side. Watching the zany backyard dishevelment unfold are wide-eyed crew members working hard except for the snoozing loafer.

The backhoe and overhead crane emits puffs of theatrical "smoke" as the boom and shovel bucket raises, lowers and swings from side to side. The Dalmatian and mouse dangling from the overhead crane sway side to side. All animals are animated as their heads turn side to side or arms raise and lower. Real water and CO2 spurts from broken pipes. On-board music adds to the fun, all while communicating an important safety message – Call 811 before you dig.



An array of materials has been creatively crafted to create the texture of fuzzy animal fur. These include: golden and brown flax seed, curly white coconut chips, dark brown nyjer seed, dock seed and dried cranberry leaves, gold strawflower petals, orange-red safflower spice, orange marigold petals, silky grass, uva grass and pampas grass.

Astonished and wide-eyed eyes are decorated in black seaweed, green split peas, blue sinuate statice and brown flax seed. The backhoe and overhead crane are created in yellow strawflower petals, black onion seed with silverleaf and eucalyptus leaves to simulate chrome. Crisp white coconut flakes are used to create the white picket fence with orange lentil and white sweet rice used to decorate the safety barriers and cones. Fanciful azalea bushes are created from more than 9,000 roses with over 3,000 stems of lavender and purple alstroemeria creating the floral trees. Colorful floral gardens of alstroemeria, lisianthus, lilies, waxflower, iris, roses, gerbera, solidago, renunculars, heather, monte casino, liatris, bouvardia, sunflowers and tulips line the lawn of freshly grown soil-less fescue grass. White coconut flakes create the picket fence. More than 18,000 hot pink roses surround the float.

None of this would have been possible without Tim Estes and his team at Fiesta Parade Floats, Stanley Meyer (Float Designer), Ryan Smith and Leo Castanada (Float Supervisors), the hundreds of volunteers, Cliff Meidl (811 Spokesperson/Olympian) and the sponsoring Notification Centers who financed the venture: Underground Service Alert of Southern California (DigAlert),

USA North 811, Blue Stakes of Utah 811, Georgia 811, Colorado 811, North Carolina 811, JULIE, Inc., Ohio Utilities Protection Service and Alabama 811. Visit [811RoseParade.com](http://811RoseParade.com) for pictures, videos and time-lapse video of decorating.

### Float Riders

**Cliff Meidl**  
*811 Spokesperson, Olympian*

**Ryan Dove**  
*DigAlert Board of Directors Vice Chairman,  
Southern California Gas Company*

**Claudette Campbell**  
*CEO, Georgia 811*

**Emma Wingate**  
*Daughter of USA North 811's Executive  
Director, James Wingate*

**Spence Felsted**  
*Damage Prevention Manager,  
Blue Stakes of Utah 811*

**Meghan Wade**  
*President, Georgia 811*

**Paul Huntsman**  
*President, Blue Stakes of Utah 811*

**Lee Richards**  
*Public Awareness & Education Supervisor,  
Ohio Utilities Protection Service*

**Nathan Oliver**  
*Customer Service Representative,  
USA North 811*

**“Being a part of The Rose Parade has been an incredible experience! The road from idea on paper to National TV is almost overwhelming. Given the opportunity to be able to reach millions of people with the hopes of educating them about 811 and safe digging in a humorous way is extraordinary.”**

*– Jim Schwilk, Vice President, DigAlert*



# CGA Annual Meeting and Conference is Less Than Five Weeks Away

We can't wait to see all of you at the CGA Excavation Safety Conference & Expo, March 5-8 at the Phoenix Convention Center in Arizona

**Here's what you can look forward to seeing at this year's event:**

## Committee meetings

All CGA committees will be meeting at the Phoenix Convention Center conference facilities just prior to the official opening of the CGA Conference on Monday, March 5 and Tuesday, March 6. Whether you're a dedicated committee member or someone who is interested in learning more about the incredible work these groups do, please consider **registering for and attending these meetings.**

## Annual Meeting and Breakfast

Our annual meeting and breakfast will be held from 7-9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 7, and is the centerpiece of our busy conference week. CGA's annual meeting will review our 2017

successes and showcase our vision and goals for the future, with formal remarks from committee leaders, CGA President and CEO Sarah K. Magruder Lyle and many more. Additionally, CGA will present its annual awards as part of the annual meeting.

## Wednesday Evening Networking Event

After a well-received Wednesday evening event that celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 811 in 2017, we're bringing back the Wednesday evening networking event for 2018!

All full conference registrants will receive complimentary transportation and be admitted to the Wednesday evening networking reception at Culinary Dropout, an entertainment venue located in nearby Tempe, Ariz. Expo-only attendees will have the option to purchase party

tickets through [cgaconference.com](http://cgaconference.com) after they select the expo-only registration option. Food, drinks and entertainment will be provided.

We hope you will join us for this opportunity to celebrate another successful year of damage prevention.

## Call Before You Divot Classic

The Fifth Annual Call Before You Divot Classic will take place at the Legacy Golf Club in Phoenix at 1 p.m. on Thursday, March 8. The Legacy Golf Club is a challenging and engaging golf course — an oasis of green at the base of Phoenix's scenic and well-known South Mountain. This 18-hole championship golf course was voted the top public course in Phoenix by ESPN.com/Travel and is the site of Golf Channel Academy.

The tournament will be a four-person scramble/best ball. There will be team prizes, skill holes, closest to the pin and many other prizes presented at the awards reception following the golf outing.

**Click here** to download the registration form. We look forward to seeing you there!



# FRESH DIRT Changes in 2018

As part of our continuing series on revisions to DIRT, we highlight some important information users need to be aware of at the start 2018.

**A new Toolkit has been added to the CGA website:**

[commongroundalliance.com/damage-prevention/toolkits/new-dirt-field-form-toolkit](http://commongroundalliance.com/damage-prevention/toolkits/new-dirt-field-form-toolkit)

It contains a detailed comparison between the 2006 and 2018 DIRT form, FAQs, a PowerPoint presentation from a recent webinar, and articles from past CGA newsletters.

## FRESH DIRT Changes in 2018

### The New DIRT Field Form Kit

After more than 10 of years DIRT data collection and annual reports, the Data Reporting & Evaluation Committee is making some significant revisions to the DIRT form to ensure it continues to provide value to damage prevention efforts.

The updated DIRT form will become effective on January 1, 2018. The first quarter of 2018 will be a transition period as 2017 data needs to be entered by March 31, 2018, while at the same time some data submitters may be entering 2018 data.

The following Toolkit is designed to guide DIRT data submitters through this transition period, and to explain what the revisions are and the rationale for them. New material will continue to be added to the toolkit, so please check back in periodically.

Calendar Year 2017 events need to be entered by March 31, 2018 and will continue to use the original version of DIRT. Whether entering 2017 reports one-at-a-time or by bulk upload, make sure the DIRT Specification Version is set to "Original v1, 2006."

DIRT Specification Version: Original v1, 2006  
Use original for date of event up to and including 31-Dec-2017, Use new for date of event on or after 01-Jan-2018

DIRT Specification Version: Original v1, 2006  
Original v1, 2006  
New version, 2018.0

For events occurring on or after Jan. 1, 2018 make sure the DIRT Specification Version is set to "New Version 2018.0."

Regardless of whether you enter DIRT reports as they occur, at regular intervals (monthly, quarterly), or in the first quarter of the following year, you need to be aware of the new questions being added to DIRT. The following information should be captured during field investigations for events occurring on or after Jan. 1, 2018. If you wait until March of 2019 to enter your 2018 reports, it may not be possible to go back and determine or obtain this information.

- *Did the event involve a cross bore?*
- *Was facility operator exempt from one call membership?*
- *Measured depth from grade*
- *Was excavator/excavation exempt from 811 notification?*
- *Was work area white-lined?*
- *New/revised root causes*

Few DIRT users do this, but it will not be possible to enter a bulk upload file with a mix of 2017 and 2018 event dates. Separate files will be required for each year. This is because each DIRT Specification Version has a different number and order of columns due to the questions being deleted and added between versions.

Sample Excel files can be found at the bottom of the File Upload Specification. They are formatted with the proper column headers, columns in the correct order, and a few rows of sample data that you can delete or over-write. They correspond to the Specification Version highlighted at the top of the File Upload Specification.

For example, "sample\_adl\_1.xls" corresponds to Original v1, 2006 and "sample\_adl\_2.xls" corresponds to New Version, 2018.0.

If you have any questions or issues while entering data, please submit a Feedback ticket using the "Contact Us/Support" link on the DIRT website.

### Sample Files:

The following data files are available as examples. Right-click on the links below and choose Save Link As...to save these sample files to your PC:

#### [sample\\_adl\\_2.xls](#)

Microsoft Excel 95/97 spreadsheet containing some sample data. DIRT File Upload does not support Excel spreadsheets, but you can create valid text files from this document by choosing File->Save As...and picking either 'Text (Tab Delimited) (\*.txt)' or 'CSV (Comma Delimited) (\*.csv)', creating either of the two sample files below.

#### [sample\\_adl\\_2.txt](#)

Tab-delimited text file containing the sample data from the Excel spreadsheet using File->Save As... and picking 'Text (Tab Delimited) (\*.txt)'. This is the most optimal format for File Uploads.

#### [sample\\_adl\\_2.csv](#)

Comma separated-values text file containing the sample data from the Excel spreadsheet using File->Save As...and picking 'CSV (Comma Delimited) (\*.csv)'.

# News Briefs

## Louisiana 811 Hosts Open House

Louisiana 811 held an Open House at their office on Jan. 11, with more than 30 attendees representing owner/operators and excavators in attendance. The event featured a presentation about advancements that have occurred over the years for taking locate requests, center statistics, a NextGen online ticketing demonstration and an update on the Louisiana Dig Law. Afterwards, all the attendees took a tour operations to see a behind-the-scenes look at our call center operators in action.



## Texas811 Damage Prevention Summit Returns in February

The annual Texas811 Damage Prevention Summit CGA Regional Partner Event will be held in San Marcos February 12-14. You can get more information at <http://www.texas811.damagepreventionsummit.com>

## New York 811 Visits the "Big Duck"

Representatives from New York 811 attended an event at the Big Duck, a Long Island institution that hosts events during the holiday season. Each year, the Big Duck has been lit up with Christmas lights placed along a giant wreath which hangs around the duck's neck. Local residents hold a Christmas lighting ceremony each year when the lights are turned on, and the ceremony is covered by local news.



# National Safe Digging Month Returns

Stakeholders across the U.S. will observe National Safe Digging Month (NSDM) during the month of April for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, using a wide variety of tactics designed to achieve a collective goal of raising public awareness about 811 and safe digging practices.

CGA has once again produced an annual **Communications Plan** for members to use in planning their public awareness and education efforts. The 2018 Communications Plan features a calendar with daily, weekly and monthly tasks, as well as artwork files, template news releases, contributed articles, social media posts and email blasts. The plan includes new case studies from successful stakeholder campaigns in 2017, as well as returning favorites.

The Communications Plan features a special **NSDM section**, which includes documents to assist in creating and implementing events in conjunction with Earth Day and Arbor Day, along with a toolkit dedicated to engaging public officials (from governors to town councils) in proclaiming support for the importance of National Safe Digging Month.



## The 811 Hot Air Balloon Tour Returns for 2018

After a successful maiden voyage crossing the country from California to Virginia and beyond in 2017, the 811 Hot Air Balloon is back in 2018! There will be a new balloon design launching in 2018, thanks to Cox Utility Services, with a strategic focus on visiting highly attended balloon festivals.

This new design will be unveiled at the 2018 CGA Annual Meeting and Conference in Phoenix and highlighted in an upcoming edition of CGA Update.

A full list of planned events, along with an opportunity to apply to have an 811 Hot Air Balloon visit an event near you, can be found on the CGA website by clicking [here](#).

## The 811 Virtual Reality Experience Goes on Tour

Last year, CGA unveiled an incredible new interactive tool to help our members engage the

public about the 811 before you dig message: the 811 Virtual Reality Experience.

This custom-built software uses leading virtual reality technology HTC Vive to allow people to enter a virtual world where they can see underground facilities that run under their virtual front yard.



During the experience, users wear the HTC Vive mask and headphones and have 81.1 seconds to call 811, wait for the marks and then dig with care (using hand controllers), as they place up to 10 unique landscaping and yard improvement items in their virtual front yard.

As you plan for 2018 events, now is the time to submit your requests to host the immersive 811 Virtual Reality Experience. Visit the 811 VR toolkit by clicking [here](#) to view a promotional video, get answers to some frequently asked questions, submit your request and more.

*The VR Experience rental is available to CGA 'Corporate Members and Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum Sponsors in good standing.*





# 5th Annual Call before You Divot *Classic*

March 8, 2018

## Costs

\$150 (single) \$600 (foursome)  
Mulligans available for purchase

## Format

Four-man scramble/best ball

## Schedule

1:00PM shotgun start

## Team Prizes

Awarded to 1st, 8th & 11th place teams

## Skill Holes & Prizes

Longest drive, closest to the pin  
and much more

## Awards Reception

Following end of play at course



6808 S. 32nd Street • Phoenix, Arizona

Call: 866-279-7755 for more information

*\*Visit CGAconference.com for full details*



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*2018 CGA Excavation Safety Conference & Expo held March 6-8, 2018 in Phoenix, Arizona.*

# Make History



Join fellow colleagues from several Oceania nations for the inaugural damage prevention industry conference to educate stakeholders on damage prevention and safe excavation.



## August 20-23, 2018

Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre  
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- Plenary Sessions
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# CGA Safety Materials Now Available for Ordering



## CGA Best Practices 14.0, 2016 DIRT and 811 Safety Education Videos

To get your copy of the Best Practices 14.0 [click here](#) or for DIRT [click here](#) and look for the appropriate buttons to order.



To order any of our videos please [click here](#).