

Update

A Monthly Newsletter of the Common Ground Alliance

CGA™

September 2016

DIRT Report

2015

CGA DIRT 2015
Volume 12

Analysis & Recommendations

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
2012	14383	14573	17272	19182
2013	12966	12036	14939	18212
2014	14108	13923	18083	22173
2015	18584	16245	23469	29457
2016	1994	2120	2656	2577
Total	62015	58897	76419	91601

Released September, 2016
This report may be referenced as the DIRT Annual Report for 2015. © 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015
Common Ground Alliance, all rights reserved. To download the report or to access additional analysis, just visit cga-dirt.com.

DIRT
Manage Information
Reporting Tool

2015 DIRT Report Estimates that Damages to Buried Utilities Dropped 9 Percent from Previous Year

Record number of submissions, new methodology to merge multiple reports of same event, and new interactive dashboard make the 2015 DIRT Report the most comprehensive examination of damages to underground infrastructure to-date.

CGA is proud to announce the findings from its comprehensive 2015 Damage Information Reporting Tool (DIRT) Report.

The report, which is the sum of all 2015 data submitted anonymously and voluntarily by facility operators, utility locating companies, one call centers, contractors and regulators, estimates that the total number of underground excavation damages in the U.S. last year dropped by 9 percent from the year prior, to approximately 317,000 damages. The 2015 damage ratio, which measures damages per 1,000 one-call

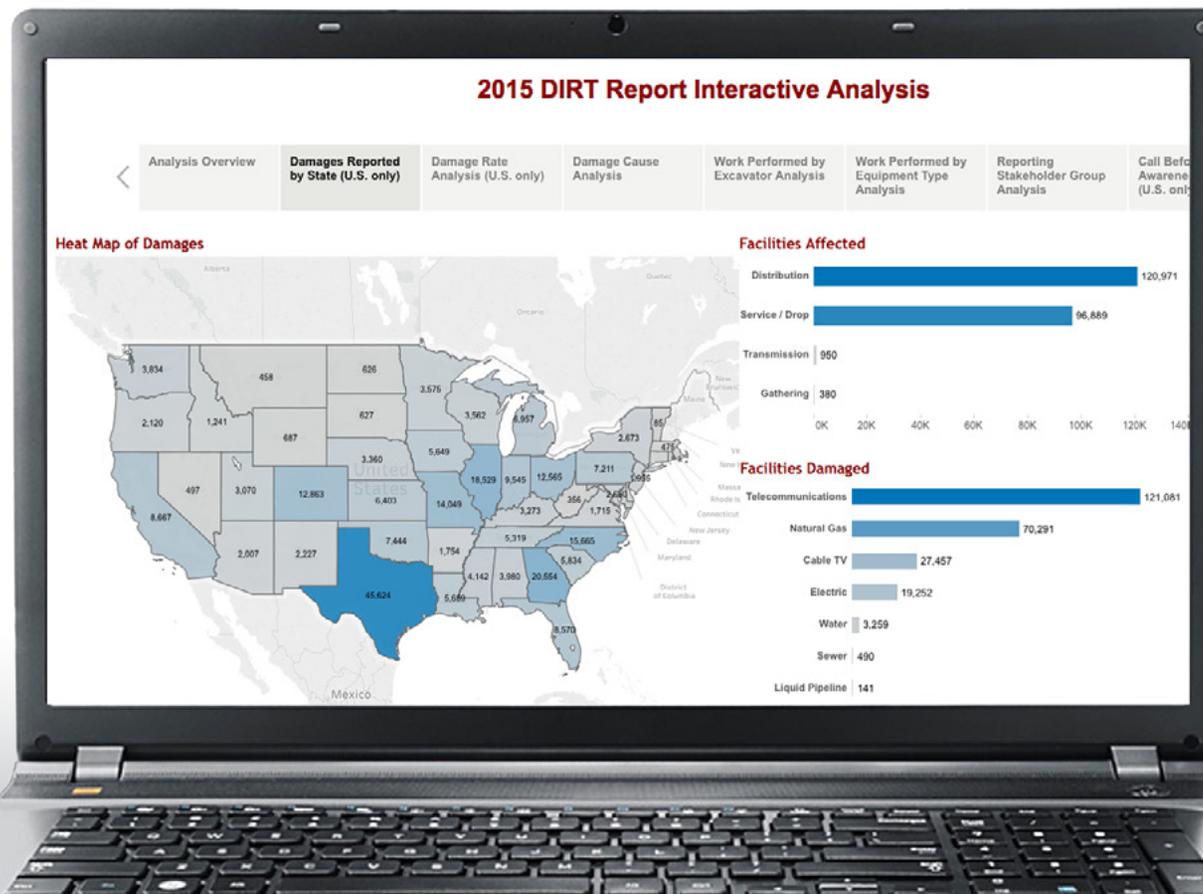
transmissions, decreased by nearly 4 percent from 2014. Combined with an 8 percent

increase in locate requests, a 15 percent increase in housing permit activity and a 4 percent increase in construction spending on infrastructure, the 2015 DIRT Report shows that damages are decreasing as construction activity increases and as awareness of the free 811 service increases.

For the first time, the 2015 Report matched and weighted multiple data submissions pertaining to the same event, which are often submitted by two or more stakeholders. This new methodology, along with a record number of event submissions (more than 363,000), and a higher Data Quality Index score (a measurement of the completeness of data submissions) than either

2014 or 2013, makes the 2015 DIRT Report the most comprehensive and accurate account of the state of damages to underground infrastructure ever compiled.

“The expanded methodology of the 2015 DIRT Report represents a new benchmark in damage prevention. The volume and quality of DIRT data increases every year, strengthening the insights we glean from the report – and the data



science points to our 2015 analysis being the most comprehensive picture of how and why damages occur across the country,” said Bob Kipp, CGA President. “For the first time ever, damage prevention stakeholders will also be able to use the data analysis and visualization platform Tableau to examine the DIRT data sets most relevant to their type of work, location, root cause, or other variables.”

The interactive 2015 DIRT Dashboard, powered by Tableau, is accessible to the public through the [CGA website](http://www.cga-dirt.com). It contains seven individual dashboards that examine 2015 data through the lens of a specific element, e.g., damage characteristics by state, root cause analysis, etc. Each dashboard visualization allows users to sort information through additional filters, giving damage prevention stakeholders a powerful tool for drilling down into the topics that are most interesting to them or where they feel they can have the biggest positive impact.

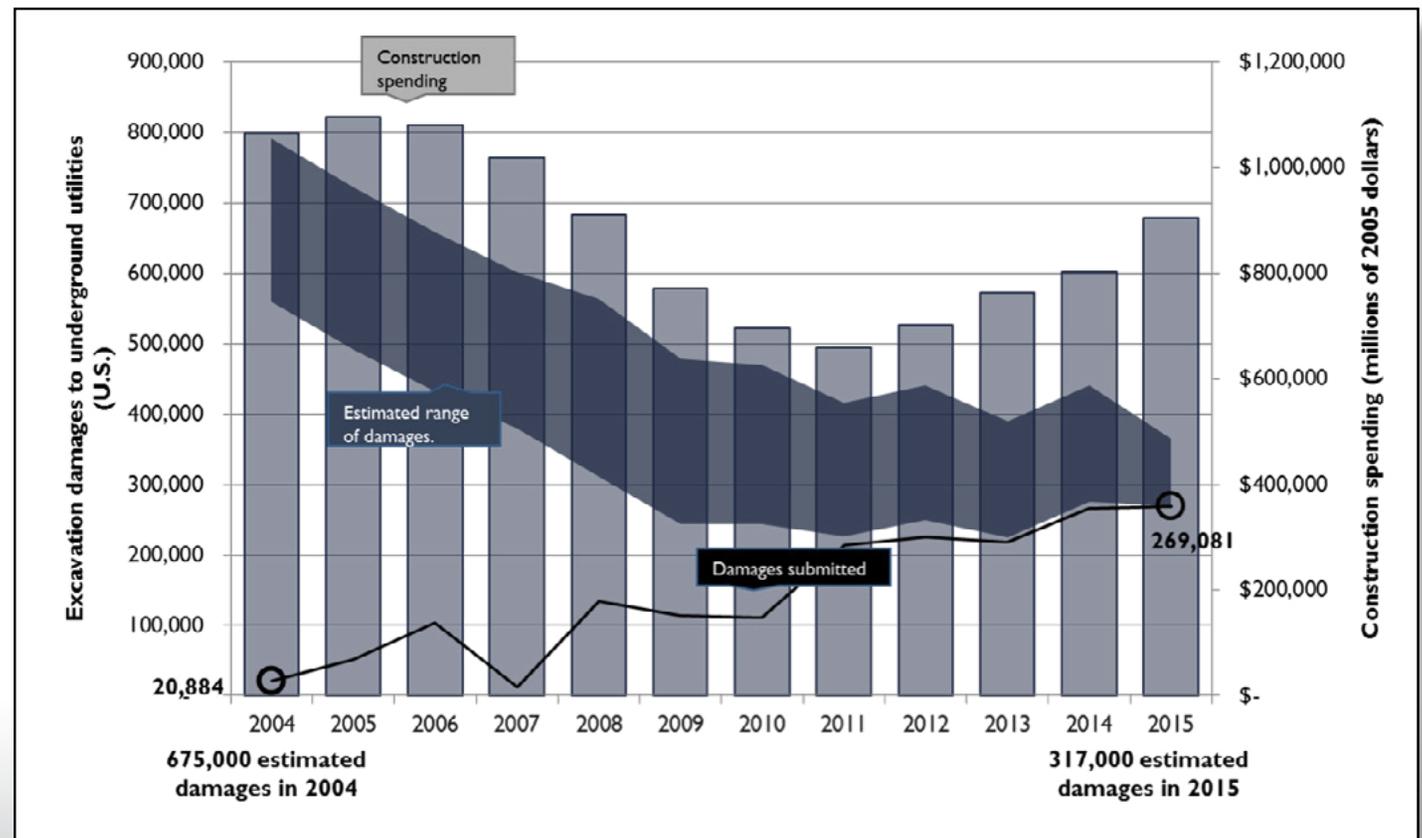
While the new matching and weighting methodology represents a reset for DIRT data analysis in some important areas – including damage root causes, an area that the report flags for data quality improvement – the report’s findings still emphasize the importance of targeting one call process education to occupant excavators (e.g., homeowners and farmers), to those who do landscaping and fencing work, and

those who dig with hand tools. The 2015 DIRT Report also identified that educating professional excavators about safe digging practices could prevent a large percentage of damages to buried infrastructure.

“CGA’s Data Reporting and Evaluation Committee has worked closely with data scientists to develop an even more refined and accurate approach to analysis of the 2015 DIRT dataset with the goal of providing damage prevention advocates with the best and most relevant information,” said Bob Terjesen, Data Committee co-chair from

National Grid. “Paired with the new interactive DIRT Dashboard hosted on the CGA website, this year’s report puts unprecedented analysis tools at the fingertips of those who are committed to protecting underground utilities and the people who work near them.”

The complete DIRT Annual Report for 2015 is available for download at www.commongroundalliance.com, and stakeholders interested in submitting data to the 2016 report or establishing a Virtual Private Dirt account should visit the DIRT site at www.cga-dirt.com.



New 811 taglines available in 811 Logo Toolkit

CGA is happy to announce that our complete suite of 811 logos and taglines is easier than ever to download from the new 811 Logo Toolkit. This toolkit now also features the new “Know what’s below. 811 before you dig.” tagline artwork. You will still be able to find the same standard- and high-resolution 811 logo and tagline artwork files as always, but it should now take only moments to identify and download exactly what you need with the release of the improved 811 Logo Toolkit.

What’s new in the 811 Logo Toolkit?

NEW taglines:

Following comprehensive research among excavators and the general public in 2015, CGA adopted a new optional tagline – “Know what’s below. 811 before you dig.” – to reflect technological updates that have made it possible to submit locate requests via computer and smartphones. You can access the new suite of tagline files in the [811 Logo Toolkit](#).

UPDATED graphic standards:

Because CGA makes the 811 logo available to all stakeholders for the promotion of safe digging, it is important that the logo and taglines are used in accordance with the updated [811 Standards and Guidelines](#). You’ll find the newly released version of the 811 Standards and Guidelines in the [811 Logo Toolkit](#).

NEW 811 logo overview:

For guidance on whether you need a .JPG or an .EPS logo file for your project, or if a “reverse” logo option is necessary, or other basic information about how to use 811 logos, you can refer to the 811 Logo Toolkit Overview, found in the [811 Logo Toolkit](#).

As always, if you have any questions about the 811 logo or taglines, email 811logo@commongroundalliance.com. Be sure to download the updated [811 Standards and Guidelines](#) document today and share it with your communications or marketing staff.





Being different is the new Normal: JULIE and the Normal CornBelters partnership

If there is one place to be different and try a new idea, why not in Normal, Illinois? During a Normal CornBelters minor league baseball game in August, JULIE, Inc. (Illinois One-Call System) promoted the 811 message in a fun, creative way.

“The findings of a recent survey of Illinois homeowners showed that baseball was among the most popular sports to watch, listen to and follow for our target audience, so we teamed up with the CornBelters on a unique promotion,” said Kevin Chmura, JULIE’s director of public relations.

Since JULIE was already partnering with the Frontier League team and sponsoring the “Call to the Bullpen” during each game, the not-for-profit organization decided to promote its safety message and target the one place where every fan would see the 811 logo and never miss any of the action – on the CornBelters players’ jerseys.

On a beautiful night at the CornCrib, JULIE team members greeted all fans entering the ballpark and distributed 811 drawstring backpacks with “Call Before You Dig” information. All players and coaches then wore a custom safety green jersey highlighting the JULIE and 811 logos. The 811 logo was predominantly displayed on the back of the jersey.

The fun did not end after the last pitch. After the team won the game, the CornBelters’ players signed their jerseys while fans placed bids via an auction process. All proceeds benefited a local little league baseball organization.



How Alabama 811 stumbled upon a children's education opportunity

By Annette Reburn, Alabama 811 executive director

In the first quarter of 2016, Alabama 811 received a phone call from a fifth grade teacher in Madison, Ala. named Mrs. Grice. Madison is a suburb of Huntsville, Ala., and has become one of the fastest growing cities in the state, with many of its families either having connections to the NASA headquarters in Huntsville, or the United States Redstone Arsenal. Needless to say, there is a large amount of new underground infrastructure installation and construction happening in the area.

Mrs. Grice was wondering when we were going to do the 811 poster contest again. We immediately recognized that she was referring to the PHMSA Energy Safe Kids 811 Poster Contest, which had not been released quite yet for this year. We took her information, with the promise of following up with her with more information.

As we started doing some digging, no pun intended, we stumbled upon the fact that one of Mrs. Grice's students was the overall winner of the 2015 national poster contest, which included an all expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C to help celebrate 8/11 Day with the CGA, PHMSA and other stakeholders.

We immediately called her back, and even though that student had moved on

the sixth grade, we felt like we owed it to Sarah G., the winner, and Mrs. Grice to do something special. Alabama 811 and the local

gas distribution operator in the area threw together a big thank you box full of pens, Band-Aids, 811 decals, notepads, wristbands, etc. We also sent her a file full of CGA's children's educational modules and materials. She later told me that she used the banana demonstration module, and then used the bananas to make fruit smoothies!

During that second phone call, Mrs. Grice also mentioned that she had been teaching about underground utilities and 811 for a few years. We were floored! We had someone, without asking and without our knowledge, helping us to share the 811 message in our schools!

We assured her that she had our complete backing in years to come, and we even

Mrs. Grice, with volunteers from the Alabama Public Service Commission, Madison Utilities, Madison Public Works, and North Alabama Gas District.



offered to have Alabama 811 come do a presentation during Safe Digging Month in April. Mrs. Grice was more than welcoming, and quickly received her principal's approval.

Assisting Alabama 811 was the Alabama Public Service Commission's Department of Pipeline Safety and three local utilities, who all graciously stepped up with manpower and equipment to set up an equipment rodeo for approximately 330 children in grades four through six.

Each utility competed against the other, with breaks in between each competition to stress the importance of the 811 message, and working and living safely around underground utilities.

As we wrapped up the presentation we invited the principal and Mrs. Grice go head-to-head dropping an egg in a plastic cup using a mini excavator with a spoon attached to its bucket. They took a bit longer than the experienced excavators, but with their students cheering for them, both of them

were able to successfully complete dropping the egg into the cup!

Things couldn't have worked out any better, and the kids had a blast! We have already been welcomed back during Safety Digging Month in 2017. The hope is that with one down and in the books, other schools might be open to the idea!

A chance phone call to not-quite-the-right-group led to us stumbling upon a great opportunity to bring 811 into schools!



“ Mrs. Grice also mentioned that she had been teaching about underground utilities and 811 for a few years...we were floored! ”

The weather was beautiful, and we had a great setup!

News Briefs

811 is back in the saddle!

The year-long campaign of sponsoring jockeys with the 811 message at key nationally televised horse races continued on Aug. 27 at the Travers Stakes, a Breeders' Cup Challenge Series race in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. Jockey Kent Desormeaux once again carried the 811 logo on his boots and silks, as he did earlier this year in 811's third consecutive win at the Preakness Stakes. The Travers Stakes race aired on NBC to approximately 1 million viewers.

Consumers Energy supervisor receives Patriot Award

Consumers Energy meter reading supervisor Janice Smith has been recognized by the U.S. Defense Department for her willingness to accommodate an employee and National Guard reservist's military training schedule. Smith, a meter reading supervisor at the company's West Branch Service Center, was honored by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, a

division of the Department of Defense, for going above and beyond to accommodate a short notice training requirement for employee and National Guard Reservist Eric Queener.

"We are committed to a talented and diverse workforce, including the addition of military veterans. We seek ways to welcome these dedicated and professional men and women into the Consumers Energy family – and to ensure they have the opportunity to continue to serve our country," said Cathy Hendrian, Consumers Energy's vice president of human resources.

Queener, a meter reader in West Branch, served nearly four years in U.S. Army active duty as a cavalry scout where he earned his Airborne and Ranger certifications.

Consumers Energy was recently recognized for its dedication to employing military veterans, being named a silver level Veteran-Friendly Employer by the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency.



MPL celebrated 8/11 Day at the Ohio State Fair

The Ohio State Fair is one of the largest, most celebrated events in the state every summer, and this year Marathon Pipe Line LLC (MPL) added to the celebration. Through a sponsorship of the fair, MPL emphasized the importance of calling 811 and recognized its landowners at a special event on Sunday, July 31.

Landowners in Ohio were invited to an MPL-sponsored picnic and also received free admission to the fair. Through interactive education booths, landowners had the opportunity to learn about safety while living along the pipeline. In total, 55 MPL employees participated in the event, which hosted more than 350 landowners.

"The landowners along our pipelines are very important in maintaining pipeline integrity," said MPL Damage Prevention Supervisor Karen Byers. "Events like this one are a great way to spread the safe-digging message while earning our landowners' trust, getting to know them personally, and thanking

them for their continued protection of our pipelines”

MPL partnered with Ohio Utilities Protection Services (OUPS) to showcase two excavators, equipped with 811 banners, at the front entrance gate. OUPS also assisted at an outreach booth at the fair. The booth facilitated one-on-one education moments with those who stopped by. Visitors also had the opportunity to win prizes at the 811 prize wheel, and a sandbox was available for children. MPL estimates that it reached 110,000 people with a safe digging message.

Montana 811 attends Digger Days

This year’s Digger Days at Eagle Mount Bozeman was a huge success for Montana 811. Call center representatives passed out T-shirts, plastic hard hats or other promotional items while telling people about the importance of safe digging. Three comfort dogs from the Springhill Church in Bozeman, Mont. that travel to area hospice and nursing homes joined them. For this event, the golden retrievers helped spread the word about 811.



Northern Ohio Damage Prevention Council’s busy 2016

The Northern Ohio Damage Prevention Council (NODPC) has been very busy this year. Organization representatives volunteered at the Home & Garden Show in Cleveland, Ohio. Next, the organization spread the safe digging message at the



Cuyahoga Fairgrounds’ EarthFest, the longest running Earth Day celebration in the nation. NOPDC also hosted its yearly golf outing, which raised money for Cornerstone of Hope, a local center for grieving children, teens and adults.

One Call Concepts to unveil Paul Jr.-designed 811 car

Secrecy surrounds the details of the 811 Car being built by Paul Jr. Designs for One Call Concepts! The car will be unveiled at the [Greater Chesapeake Damage Prevention Training Conference \(GCDPTC\)](#) taking place Oct. 18–21 in Ocean City, Md. The GCDPTC

is hosted by Miss Utility of Maryland/D.C. and Miss Utility of Delmarva, and is the premier training and networking event for damage prevention professionals in Maryland, Delaware and Virginia.

Oregon 811 spreads safe digging message at public safety fair

Oregon Utility Notification Center (Oregon 811) sponsored a booth at the Public Safety Fair in Lake Oswego. Thousands of people attended the event and enjoyed live music at the Sounds of Summer Concert. It was a great opportunity for Oregon 811 to spread the call before you dig message.



Pennsylvania 811's fire house marquis program yields creative entries

Pennsylvania 811 (PA811) received almost 100 entries to its fire house 811 marquis signage contest. The four best entries will win a \$500 donation during dig season. PA811 estimates that the program, which encourages fire houses to post safe digging marquis messages, will garner millions of impressions. Check out the contest entries by searching #firehouse811 on Facebook.

Texas811 on the air and on the road

Texas811 continues to reach out to anyone and everyone who may break ground in the state. President Mike Losawyer was recently interviewed for a Passport to Texas syndicated radio show carried on almost 100 stations in Texas and Oklahoma – [click here](#) to listen to the segment. Texas811 Damage Prevention Manager Jaime Medina and Damage Prevention Agent Jennifer Jaime Hooks anchored a Texas811 booth at the Nursery/Landscape EXPO in Houston Aug. 18-20. Mike Losawyer also represented Texas811 at the [Sunbelt Builders Show](#) at the Gaylord Texan Resort in Grapevine, Texas. Thanks to both David and Gaye McElwain with the [Railroad Commission of Texas](#) and to the representatives of the Regional Hispanic Contractors Association for their partnership and commitment to Damage Prevention in Texas.



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

CGA's 2017 Communications Plan

Next year will be here before we know it, so CGA is already starting to assemble its 2017 Communications Plan and Calendar.

Each year, the Communications Plan features new case studies and template materials to assist members in creative damage prevention outreach.

Has your organization executed a particularly creative and effective campaign this year that you would like to share with your partners in damage prevention?

Please consider submitting information about your successful media outreach, internal 811 education effort, community event, or any other easily replicable campaign to 811@commongroundalliance.com for possible inclusion in next year's Communications Plan.

Partnerships yield 811 TV programming opportunity

By Mark Stowe, Hunting in the Sticks

It's always great to watch collaborative efforts of companies and individuals pour out for a good cause. The 811 family of partners demonstrates this daily. From the partners who work on NASCAR, horse racing, the Rose Bowl parade and college and professional sports promotional opportunities, the 811 partners work side-by-side to get the call before you dig message in front of the right audiences. When someone has a rising idea, these folks rally around it and make it rise.

One of such collaborative efforts has been the Hunting in the Sticks television show, an idea first conceived by Kentucky 811's Tim Vaughn and me. We came up with the idea to get 811 messaging in front of the outdoor television viewing audience. When you look at the demographics of outdoor viewers on the Pursuit Channel, you see a lot of farmers and blue collar workers with household incomes that put them solidly in the DIYer category – making them important targets for call before you dig information. The overlap between the demographics

of outdoor TV programming viewers and the target audiences for 811 messaging launched another collaborative safe digging effort.

With the teams of **One Call Concepts, Kentucky 811, New York 811, Dig Safely New York, USA North 811, Tennessee 811, Texas811, Alabama 811, West Virginia 811, Lonestar 811, Miss Utility of Maryland/D.C.** and others, this effort became a reality: Hunting in the Sticks. Breaking into TV programming is expensive, but with the group's efforts and connections, these partners will put 811 in front of 10.6 million individuals through the Hunting in the Sticks TV show and its run of schedule commercials. These numbers do not include social media efforts.

Once again, with partners and collaborative efforts, the 811 team has put the message into the outdoor television arena and has raised awareness in a way that might have been deemed hard to reach otherwise.





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