

Update

A Monthly Newsletter of the Common Ground Alliance

2018 DIRT Report Released

DIRT
Damage Information
Reporting Tool

2018 Analysis & Recommendations

The 2018 DIRT Report

Annual excavation-related damages to underground facilities increased from 2017 to 2018, according to latest CGA DIRT Report

CGA has released its findings from the 2018 Damage Information Reporting Tool (DIRT) Report.

The report, which analyzes all 2018 data submitted voluntarily by facility operators, utility locating companies, one call centers, contractors, regulators and others, used a refined statistical modeling process to estimate that 509,000 excavation-related damages to underground facilities occurred in 2018, compared to the 2017 estimate of 439,000 damages.

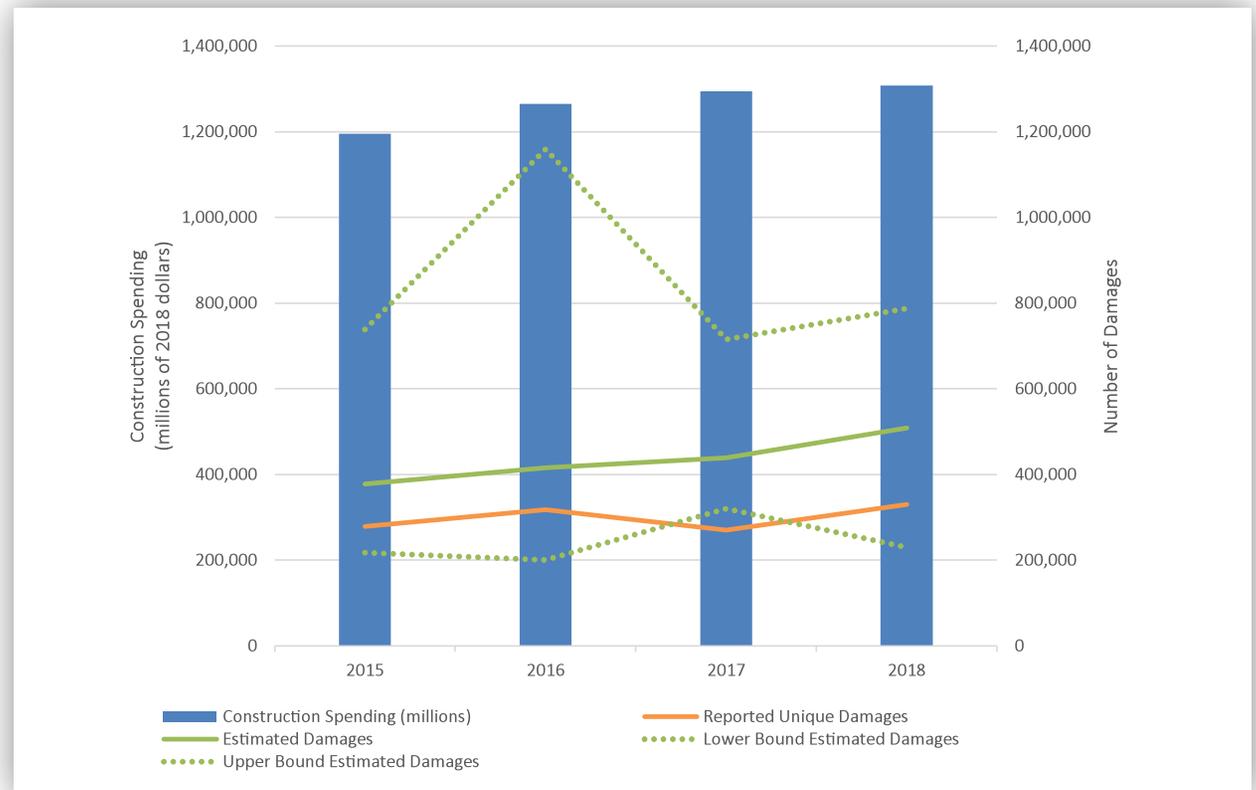
Increased damages reinforce the importance of continued investment in damage prevention education and training.

CGA, working with statistical analysis consultant Green Analytics, also found that damages per 1,000 one call center transmissions (the total number of times a “call before you dig” center notified a member utility of someone’s intent to

dig) increased slightly from 2017 to 2018, along with a similarly small increase in damages per million dollars of construction spending.

While these increases are noteworthy, it’s important to frame them in the context of more than a decade of mostly year-over-year decreases in estimated damages during the past 15 years, dating back to the first DIRT Report in 2004.

Among all damage reports with an identified and known root cause, the top reported root cause category in the 2018 DIRT Report was “excavation issue,” which encompasses a variety of reported process problems, including excavating prior to verifying marks by test-hole,



excavating with faded or unmaintained utility marks, and excavating with mechanized equipment within a “hand dig” zone, just to name a few.

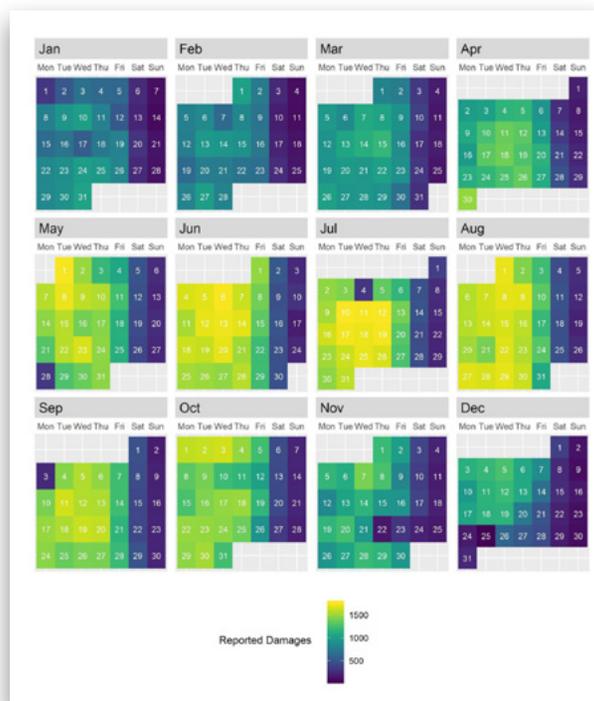
The 2018 DIRT Report identified the following root cause categories for all reported damages with an identified and known root cause:

- Excavation issues – 31 percent
- Notification not made – 23 percent
- Locating issues – 21 percent
- Other notification issue – 13 percent

For the second consecutive year, the DIRT Report includes analysis of when damages occur, by month and day of the week. These findings are a helpful tool to damage prevention stakeholders who are looking for the most strategic times to share important safety messages with professional excavators and the general digging public. Specifically, the report found the following:

- The month with the most damages nationwide in 2018 was August, with 36,571 reported events in DIRT (11 percent of all reported events).
- October 2018 was the month with the second-most reported damages, with 32,886 reported events in DIRT (10 percent of all reported events), as daylight waned and colder weather approached in most of the country.

- Wednesday was the day of the week in 2018 when damages were most likely to occur, with 19.7 percent of reported events occurring on the week’s middle day.



“The key findings in the 2018 DIRT Report serve as important reminders to all damage prevention stakeholders that our hardest work is still ahead of us,” said Sarah K. Magruder Lyle, president and CEO of Common Ground Alliance. “Damage prevention stakeholders will continue to be up against familiar challenges – increased construction spending, labor shortages, new infrastructure buildouts for fiber-to-the-premises and 5G technology.

The analysis included in the DIRT Report, in conjunction with the use of CGA Best Practices and collaborative efforts to educate on the importance of calling 811 prior to digging, provides stakeholders with the tools needed to make damage prevention programs more effective.”

CGA has produced an interactive DIRT Dashboard accessible to the public through its website, allowing users to view and query the data through the lens of a specific element, including on a state level or for specific utility or excavation types. This dashboard features a series of graphs and other visual tools to allow users to identify areas where they can have the biggest positive impact.

“While the DIRT Report provides the most comprehensive data and analysis on underground utility damage, it’s only as strong as the data we receive,” said Deanna Centurion, co-chair of CGA’s Data Reporting and Evaluation Committee and Principal at Cyera Strategies. “We encourage all damage prevention stakeholders to voluntarily submit data for 2019 to help make next year’s report even stronger.”

The complete 2018 DIRT Annual Report is available for download at common-groundalliance.com, and stakeholders interested in submitting data to the 2019 report or establishing a Virtual Private Dirt account should visit cga-dirt.com.

Save the date for the 2021 CGA Conference & Expo

We are excited to announce the [2021 CGA Conference & Expo](#) – the premier event for damage prevention stakeholders to network, gain knowledge and learn about the latest industry data, trends and technology – will take place March 2-5, 2021 at the [Renaissance Orlando at SeaWorld®](#).

The three-day [CGA Conference & Expo](#) will feature integrated committee meetings, industry-leading speakers, carefully curated breakout sessions and discussion groups, and an interactive exhibit hall. The [2021 CGA Conference & Expo](#) will also include ample networking events and opportunities – including CGA's Night of Networking to close out the event. Most importantly, this event will facilitate the development of concrete actions the industry can utilize to reduce damages.

Please save the date for the [2021 CGA Conference & Expo](#), which will carry additional significance as 2021

marks CGA's 20th anniversary and two decades of being the only 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that brings 16 stakeholder industries together to support one common mission: preventing damages to underground infrastructure and protecting those who live and work near these important assets through shared responsibility.

You can register for additional updates by clicking on the official conference website link: [2021 CGA Conference & Expo](#). We look forward to working together with

you to make the [2021 CGA Conference & Expo](#) a success and continuing our important damage prevention work as we strive toward our goal of zero damages!



Why Shared Responsibility Matters

By Sarah K. Magruder Lyle, President & CEO - CGA

The 2018 DIRT Report shows an increase in damages, which reinforces the importance of continued investment in damage prevention and working together across stakeholder groups.

On Sept. 26, CGA released the 2018 DIRT Report and for the first time, the report shows an increase in damages even when overall construction activity and one call transmissions are taken into consideration. Although we have experienced measurable reductions in damages over the past decade, in order to continue making progress, we must work together to address some of the industry's most pressing damage prevention challenges.

The latest DIRT Report includes a detailed analysis of damages and near miss events submitted for 2018. The quantity and quality of data being submitted to DIRT has increased dramatically since the first DIRT Report was issued for 2004. This is an important point, because the more data we have, the more we are able to evaluate where breakdowns in the safe digging process occur and how we can best address them.

The challenges we face are not a result of simply one issue – they are systemic. We must commit to taking on these issues together – as a damage prevention indus-

try – if we want to see measurable progress. As construction activity increases, the need to understand the role each stakeholder plays in the damage prevention process becomes increasingly more critical.

With that in mind, CGA hosted the inaugural CGA Damage Prevention Roundtable (DPR) on Sept. 10 in Alexandria, Va. DPR participants – which included executives from key trade associations and their respective industries – discussed what they viewed as the fundamental challenges and obstacles to reducing damages, current limitations to overcoming these obstacles and potential solutions.

The purpose of the meeting was to have a frank and open discussion about the challenges and solutions that can help reduce damages to critical underground infrastructure and ensure a safe environment for those who work and live near these important assets.

One of the most frequently discussed challenges was communication, not only

on the worksite, but with regard to how damage prevention is perceived by employees. Is it simply part of a “check the box” process, or is it truly a value in every facet of the organization? How does damage prevention fit into your organization's culture? Do your employees fully embrace damage prevention as a priority? Do your employees feel empowered to make tough calls in the interest of safety?

In order to solve our collective damage prevention challenges, we will need to double down on our commitment to work together to reduce damages to underground infrastructure. By improving the quality of DIRT submissions as well as the range of stakeholders engaged with damage reporting, we can not only strengthen the DIRT Report, but we can more confidently use this data to identify our biggest opportunities for significant improvement.

I would like to thank CGA's Data Reporting and Evaluation Committee and the CGA staff who worked diligently to produce this year's DIRT Report. The DIRT Report's conclusions warrant a close look by all stakeholders that play a role in the damage prevention process. If we are truly committed to reducing damages and making significant progress, we will have to work together across stakeholder groups as a damage prevention industry.

CGA White Paper: Key Takeaway #4

Make damage prevention training more accessible, relevant and actionable.

As the final part of our series highlighting the key takeaways from the inaugural CGA White Paper, which offers recommendations on more effective excavator outreach, this month we are featuring Key Takeaway #4, which is, “Make Damage Prevention Training More Easily Accessible, Relevant and Actionable.”

The 2018 CGA Excavator Study, which surveyed professional excavators, found that only half (51%) of respondents believe that all employees are responsible for maintaining safe digging practices. Furthermore, the focus groups in the study revealed that excavators have limited knowledge about regulations beyond the need to notify before beginning work, while the online survey showed that Best Practices such as pot-holing/test-pitting, requesting re-marks and more do not have the same level of awareness and compliance as making the notification.

In response to these findings, CGA White Paper Key Takeaway #4 includes the following recommendations:



1. Continue investing in online training modules that identify influencers in excavator safety (such as insurance providers, general contractors, associations, internal risk management/safety directors).
2. Work to integrate damage prevention training into existing processes.
3. Be mindful of using words and illustrations that carry the broadest meaning.

These recommendations emphasize the need to task multiple stakeholder groups with training the broader excavation workforce through scalable educational programs, integrating damage prevention training into important state-level processes/business relationships, and showing excavators what broad terms like “tolerance zone” and “positive response” mean in a visual way with short process tips that help all audiences understand their legal requirements. Additionally, with thousands of companies digging each year in each state, online training modules are an important mechanism to consider to effectively reach everyone who could possibly need to be trained.

To view the full details on the recommendations and data behind Key Takeaway #4, [download the CGA White Paper](#) today. You can also download CGA's [White Paper Toolkit](#) for resources to promote and share the White Paper recommendations with your Regional Partner group, Damage Prevention Council, one call board or other stakeholders.

New CGA Communications Plan tools now available

Storm Clean-Up Toolkit

As Hurricane Dorian approached, CGA prepared a toolkit that members in affected regions could use to remind homeowners and professionals about the critical role that the 811 call before you dig service plays in protecting communities from striking buried utility lines during an already stressful situation. The toolkit, which is part of the CGA Communications Plan's [storm clean-up toolkit](#), contains customizable materials like a template press release, contributed column, social media messages and public service announcement scripts, which members could implement as part of a comprehensive storm clean-up communications package. The toolkit also contains generic materials that can be customized for any disaster recovery efforts.

NEW Lowe's Toolkit

In addition to the new storm clean-up toolkit materials, new tools to remind communities about the importance of calling 811 during tree planting season this fall are now available in the CGA Communications Plan. North Carolina 811 brokered an incredible partnership with national home improvement chain Lowe's to include 811 safe digging wraps around all



Nearly 6 in 10 homeowners who plan to dig this year can do one thing to make it safer

According to a national survey, 42 percent of homeowners who plan to dig this year will put themselves and their communities at risk by not calling 811 a few days beforehand.

811

Lowe's | Lowe's is wrapping trees and shovels with educational tags to remind customers to call 811. Learn more at [Call811.com](#)

of the trees it sells encouraging customers to call 811 before digging, especially when planting their newly purchased trees. New tools to promote this national grassroots effort, including an infographic and a press release template, have been added to the [Lowe's - 811 Partnership toolkit](#). You'll also find logos, social media messages and graphics in the toolkit. Please help us spread the word about this wonderful partnership and remind your communities to stay safe while planting trees this fall.

Register now for the November 2019 CGA Committee Meetings in Nashville

The CGA OCSI, Educational Programs, Data Reporting & Evaluation, Technology, Stakeholder Outreach, and Best Practices Committees, as well as the CGA Board of Directors, will meet at the Renaissance Nashville Nov. 18-21, 2019. Not a CGA member, but want to attend a committee meeting? Click [here](#) to register.

The schedule of meetings is as follows:

Monday, Nov. 18

1:00-5:00 p.m. – OCSI

Tuesday, Nov. 19

8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. – Data Reporting & Evaluation

8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. – Stakeholder Outreach

8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. – Educational Programs

Wednesday, Nov. 20

8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. – Educational Programs

8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. – Best Practices and Technology Committee Joint Schedule

8:00 a.m. – Combined Best Practices and Technology Opening

9:00 a.m. – BP/Technology Task Team Breakout Session 1

10:15 a.m. – BP/Technology Task Team Breakout Session 2

11:30 a.m. – Lunch Break

1:00-3:00 p.m. – Best Practices Meeting

3:15-5:00 p.m. – Technology Meeting

Thursday, Nov. 21

7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. – Board of Directors (Board Members only)

News Briefs

CenterPoint Energy makes 8/11 Day a sweet success

In celebration of 8/11 Day, CenterPoint Energy employees delivered 85 cakes to media outlets and stakeholders. This seven-state effort resulted in media coverage, as well as social media posts from fire departments, municipalities and other local stakeholders. CenterPoint Energy also contributed to the 8/11 sponsorships at several MLB games, co-hosted an on-site activation at Michigan International



Speedway, supported the Clint Black and Trace Adkins concert in Texas, co-facilitated the 811 Run in Minnesota, hosted a local safety day in Oklahoma, and distributed news releases and social media posts.

- Josh Beach, CenterPoint Energy



City Utilities of Springfield delivers lunches to industry stakeholders

To celebrate 8/11 Day, City Utilities of Springfield, Mo., delivered home-cooked lunches to field crews and locators across the city.

- Heath Silvey, City Utilities of Springfield, Missouri

DigAlert celebrates 18 millionth ticket

On Aug. 7, DigAlert celebrated taking its 18 millionth ticket. In honor of each million tickets, DigAlert gives a cash prize to the person creating the ticket and the operator that processes the ticket. The 18 millionth ticket offered an \$1,800 payout to each person. When Cody from the County of San Bernardino renewed his

tickets using the DigAlert mobile app, he had no idea that one of his tickets would be the lucky one. Because he was both the “caller” and the “operator” by using the mobile app, he won the grand prize for both for a total of \$3,600. Vice President Jim Schwilk met Cody in Victorville, Calif., to present the prize.

- Jim Schwilk, DigAlert



Dig Safely New York increases online locating requests by 70%

In 2019, Dig Safely New York, Inc. (DSNY) decided to add an incentive to attract more homeowners to use its online location request platform, Single Address Ticket. DSNY held a Single Address Ticket Contest, which allowed anyone who submitted a request between May 11 and July 30 to be counted as a single entry in the contest. The prize package included an outdoor chair, a fire pit, two outdoor lanterns and a giant Jenga set. By partnering with Buckeye Partners, DSNY was also able to include a \$1,500 home im-

provement gift card to sweeten the deal. Through the contest, DSNY increased its online user volume by 70% compared to the same time last year. The one call center also secured nearly 13,000 impressions from social media posts about the online platform and contest. A DSNY field representative delivered the prize pack to the winner, who resides in Painted Post, N.Y.

- Devin R. Negrete, Dig Safely New York, Inc.



Kansas 811 hosts 811 Run

The 2019 Kansas 811 Run had more than 350 runners and approximately 1,000 attendees, making it the organization's most successful run to date. With proceeds from the race, Kansas 811 donated \$4,642.38 to Laughing Feet Performers,

a Wichita nonprofit that inspires relationships between individuals with special needs and their typical peers through musical and artistic expression. Kansas 811 presented Rex Schick, President and CEO of K&W Underground, Inc. and a longtime Kansas 811 board member, with a sponsorship award plaque as a token of his hard work during the run, as well as awarded NuStar Energy the "Most Spirited Sponsorship" traveling trophy for 2019.

- Kiersten Larson, One Call Concepts, Inc.

Louisiana 811 recognizes those committed to damage prevention

Louisiana 811 welcomed William Armstrong from Entergy Gas as the new NO Utility Coordinating Council's Chairman. Louisiana 811 would also like to recognize locator Wilbert Jones from Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government for doing a great job while locating sewer lines in Houma. It's folks like Wilbert who help keep us all safe.

- Kiersten Larson, One Call Concepts, Inc.



MPL hosts landowners at Ohio State Fair

On Aug. 3, Marathon Pipe Line LLC (MPL) sponsored 8/11 Day at the Ohio State Fair to spread the call before you dig message and treat its Ohio landowners to an appreciation picnic, during which landowners had the opportunity to speak face-to-face with MPL employees about pipeline safety and see ways MPL protects its pipelines through interactive education booths. In total, 55 MPL employees participated in the event. Two damaged pipe cutouts from past incidents were displayed for guests to look at and touch. MPL's Pipeline Finder App was another popular display at the picnic. Landowners were able to type in their address on a giant iPhone and see their property and where the pipeline crosses it. In addition to the picnic, MPL's 8/11 Day included a Central Park takeover, where visitors had

the opportunity to win prizes at an 811 outreach booth. There was also a photo board for guests to take photos posing as bugs with underground utilities, and a sandbox with underground utilities was available for children to enjoy. The area provided fun activities for the entire family while raising awareness about pipeline safety. Through the effort of 8/11 Day at the Ohio State Fair, MPL was able to connect and communicate the 811 message and MPL's values to more than 100,000 people.

- Lauren Salinski, Marathon Pipe Line LLC

Miss Utility, Virginia 811 and Washington Gas partner to reach Spanish-speaking excavators

The one call centers from Maryland, Washington, D.C. (Miss Utility/District One Call) and Virginia (Virginia 811) joined together with area gas provider Washington Gas to sponsor Noche Latina with MLS team DC United on Sept. 4. The match pitted DC's home soccer team against Club Puebla from Mexico, and the international friendly reached an estimated audience of more than

10,000, with 70% being Spanish-speaking people. The sponsorship included animated 811 LED signage on the goal board, as well as field-level LED signs in both English and Spanish reminding everyone to call before digging. In addition to marketing booths both in the tailgate area and in-stadium by the main gate entrance staffed with bilingual 811 volunteers, Miss Utility, Virginia 811 and Washington Gas provided 811-branded cooling towels with the Spanish tagline and filled the stadium with this unique themed giveaway item.

-Dora Parks, Miss Utility/District One Call

Minnesota goes green for 8/11 Day

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Office of Pipeline Safety lit several Minnesota landmarks in green in honor of 8/11 Day. The landmarks included the 35W Bridge, France Avenue, the Broadway Bridge and the Sperry Tower.

- Mike Mendiola, Minnesota Department of Public Safety



Nebraska811 participates in Husker Harvest Days

On Sept. 11, Nebraska811 had a booth in the Black Hills Energy tent at Husker Harvest Days in Grand Island, where the organization spoke about the importance of damage prevention with attendees.

- Kiersten Larson, One Call Concepts, Inc.

The logo for CGA (Construction Groundwater Association) features the letters "CGA" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. A green swoosh underline is positioned beneath the letters.

**Excavation
SAFETY** 811
Conference & Expo

Registration Now Open!

Palm Springs, California
March 24-26, 2020

"Building these relationships is so important to sharing best practices and helping my company and the industry as a whole continue to make progress in damage prevention."

— Matt Miceli, Nisource

89.8%

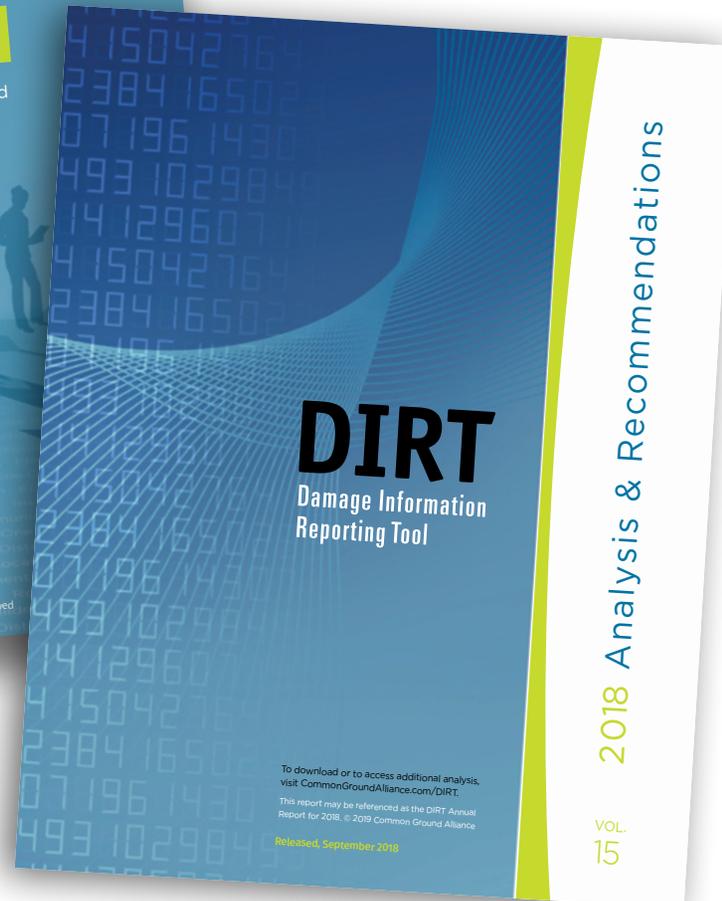
of surveyed attendees stated that information obtained will help them implement change at work.

CGAconference.com/register | 866.279.7755

CGA Safety Materials Now Available for Ordering

CGA Best Practices 16.0, DIRT Report
and 811 Safety Education Videos

To get your copy of the Best Practices 16.0 [click here](#) or for DIRT [click here](#), and look for the appropriate buttons to order.



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