



April 2007 Set For "811" Implementation

Dialing those easy-to-remember three-digit numbers to reach vital public services has a proven track record. "911" gets you through quickly to emergency services, "711" allows those with hearing and speech disabilities to contact California's Telecommunications Relay Services, and coming in April 2007, "811" on your phone will link you to the local One-Call Notification Center. In Southern California, that's DigAlert!

Verizon Wireless has already completed its setup and now has a working "811" system. But soon, all of the remaining telephone companies will also be providing this faster way to contact USA/SC: the only place you can call to notify the operators of underground lines where and when you are going to be digging. Then, not only will the process to get the lines located be a simpler one but so will dialing the DigAlert number.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**



Job Size Limit On USA/SC Tickets Seen As Communication Improvement

When someone calls DigAlert to get the USA/SC members underground lines located, the job site is usually determined by an address. However, there are those more extensive projects that can cover larger areas like those involved with building new housing tracts, working along the Southern California freeway systems or installing fiber to the premises.

USA/SC procedures currently limit the ticket size at one square mile. But locators and construction personnel alike have seen problems with that large an area at times. In the high desert area of Southern California, Verizon was doing a lot of fiber to the premise jobs. The excavators and the owners of the underground lines in the area

met and agreed that a smaller boundary of 2,500 feet would make it so the contractor didn't have to delineate the entire job all at once and would make it easier for the locators to keep ahead of the digging with locating their buried lines. This also made it easier for calling in remarks and updates.

Because USA/SC provides the "connection" between those digging and those doing the locating, limiting the size of each ticket is an easy solution. A caller would just end up with an extra DigAlert ticket or two. A small inconvenience if it means better communication with a more practical way to get the job done. And that can provide a safer dig!

A Voice For The Excavating Community

One of the strong forces behind the recent legislative changes to the One Call Law is the Common Ground Alliance, more commonly referred to as "The CGA". If you are looking for a way to be heard or a way to become more involved in how your industry's safety is secured, then you should consider the California Regional CGA. Meetings are held every other month. The location of the meetings alternates between Southern and Northern California, but if you are unable to physically attend the meetings, the option to be involved by way of conference call is always a possibility. This is one way that you can still speak out and give your opinion in a setting with others who also care about the underground excavation community. For more information, please visit the links area of our web site at www.digalert.org or go directly to www.commongroundalliance.com for more information.



George Hendrick receiving the 1st Ron Olitsky Extra Mile Award.

First Recipient Named For Ron Olitsky's "Extra Mile" Award

In remembering Ron Olitsky, USA/SC's president who passed away last year, DigAlert created a special award in his name. This is to honor the individual who best emulates the promotion of the one-call concept. The unanimous first choice was George Hendrick.

Hendrick began his pursuit in providing safety for the digging public over 30 years ago and became instrumental in establishing the Southern California one-call notification center. Even though he retired from Southern California Gas Company in 1991,

he continues to this day actively serving as a member of the USA/SC Board of Directors. His undisputed knowledge of the industry provides valuable insights for those who decide the paths taken by DigAlert.

It was appropriate that the first award be presented by Olitsky's wife, Fern, at the 30th Anniversary Celebration held September 16th in Long Beach. A plaque bearing his name and future recipients will be displayed in the DigAlert office.

Congratulations to George for his constant support and going that extra mile!



Changes In Excavation Law Result Of 2004 Disaster

The current excavating law affecting public safety for anyone digging and for the protection of underground lines, California Government Code Section 4216, has recently been amended by Senate Bill 1359, which Governor Schwarzenegger recently signed. Many aspects are changing, placing new controls as a direct result of the Walnut Creek disaster in 2004 that led to five deaths and several injuries. The new changes will go into effect January 1, 2007.

Revisions now include requiring only those classified as qualified personnel to be able to perform the line locating of buried facilities 4216-(i). To obtain the classification, the locator must complete a required training program in accordance with Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations.

If the excavation is within 10 feet of a high-priority line, an on-site meeting between the excavator and facility owner will be held prior to excavating. A high-priority line is described as high-pressure natural gas pipelines with normal operating pressures greater than 415kPA gauge (60psig) or greater than six inches nominal pipe diameter; petroleum pipelines; pres-

surized sewage pipelines; high-voltage electric supply lines, conductors, or cables that have a potential to ground of greater than or equal to 60kv; or hazardous materials pipelines that are potentially hazardous to workers or the public if damaged.

If a damage occurs, the excavator must immediately notify the facility owner. The emergency numbers can be found on the DigAlert web site (www.digalert.org) or by calling (800) 227-2600. If a high-priority line is damaged and the facility owner cannot be reached, the excavator is to call 911.

4216.7 now clarifies who is responsible if a damage does happen.

The author of SB 1359, California Senator Tom Torlakson, said that he was committed to helping prevent future tragedies like the one which occurred in his district. He stated that his bill was written after addressing the concerns of all parties, the owners of underground lines and those performing the excavating. USA/SC shares his hope that this amendment will



Kinder Morgan Pipeline Explosion in Walnut Creek November, 2004.

increase the safety measures for everyone participating in digging projects around our state.

The law in its entirety can be found on the USA/SC web site at www.digalert.org, or you can request a copy by calling the USA/SC office at (951) 808-8100.