

2018 State Damage Prevention Program Grants Final Progress Report
CFDA Number: 20.720

Award Number: 693JK31840009

Project Title: Nebraska State Fire Marshal State Damage Prevention Grant

Date Submitted: October 25, 2019

Submitted by: David Levering

Specific Objective(s) of the Agreement

Host the 9th Annual Excavation Safety Summit and increase awareness of underground utility damage prevention to the population of homeowners and property owners found in the metropolitan area as well as vast rural areas of Nebraska. Money will go to promotional handouts, billboards, radio, TV and online advertising, and direct mailings. (Elements 1, 2, 5)

Workscope

Under the terms of this grant agreement, the Recipient will address the following elements listed in the approved application as stated in 49 U.S.C. §60134 (b).

- **Element 1 (Effective Communications):** Participation by operators, excavators, and other stakeholders in developing and implementing methods for establishing and maintaining effective communications between stakeholders—from receipt of an excavation notification to successful completion of the excavation, as appropriate.
- **Element 2 (Comprehensive Stakeholder Support):** A process for fostering and ensuring the support and partnership of stakeholders, including excavators, operators, locators, designers, and local government in all phases of the program.
- **Element 5 (Public Education):** A process for fostering and ensuring active participation by all stakeholders in public education for damage prevention activities.

Accomplishments for this period (Item 1 under Article IX, Section 9.01 Progress Report: “A comparison of actual accomplishments to the objectives established for the period.”)

Element 1 – EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Statewide education and distribution of white marking flags preceded by an educational mailer/order form. Educational information went out via various media methods to enhance awareness of the need to pre-mark the dig site and to promote effective communications between stakeholders. Information was included in the messages which described the benefits of white lining and explained the process. The graphic offering the white flags was displayed on the Nebraska811 website homepage from June to August 2019 which provided a continuous reminder of the importance of pre-marking the dig site for anyone that visited the website. The flags themselves had printed text that provided helpful information about the digging process as well. The number of requests indicates that the email tool is an effective marketing tool for reaching this stakeholder group and it shows that there are numerous excavators in Nebraska that are willing to white line their dig site regardless of that fact that it is not mandated by law. This project continues to be a very effective method of assisting stakeholders in completing a damage free excavation.

Element 2 – COMPREHENSIVE STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

Safety Summit – see Midterm Progress Report

Outstanding Excavator and Locator Awards – see Midterm Progress Report

Element 5 – PUBLIC EDUCATION

Billboards, Radio, TV and Online Advertising

Billboards: A campaign to support National Safe Digging Month was successfully executed mainly in the highly populated areas of the state as well as in outstate Nebraska. Further attention is drawn to the use of billboards via the supplemental use of social media and combining it with other outreach projects.

Radio, TV and Online Advertising: Advertising purchased covered both rural and metro areas in Nebraska during peak digging months.

Quantifiable Metrics/Measures of Effectiveness (Item 2 under Article IX, Section 9.01 Project Report: “Where the output of the project can be quantified, a computation of the cost per unit of output.”)

Element 1 – EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Statewide education and distribution of white marking flags was preceded by an educational mailer/order form. A mass educational email was sent July 2019 to 9,402 excavators across Nebraska. These were all the excavators that had placed a locate request since July 2018. A hard copy mailer went out in July 2019 as well to 9,451 addresses of excavators that had placed a locate request in the previous year. In addition, social media was utilized in the form of an educational post of the white flag infographic. A total of 712 requests were received for a bundle of 50 white flags in response to the mailing.

Element 2 – COMPREHENSIVE STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

Safety Summit: See Midterm Progress Report at which time this project was complete.

Element 5 – PUBLIC EDUCATION

Billboards, Radio, TV and Online advertising

Billboards: Billboards were posted in nineteen different locations around Nebraska throughout the months of June and July 2019. Locations were chosen based on their ability to achieve the highest number of impressions possible within budget allowances.

Radio TV/Online: Radio, TV and online advertising funding went towards a comprehensive program in the state which utilized several stations covering the majority of rural and metro areas in Nebraska. Three different spots per medium were run over the main six months of digging season April through September.

Issues, Problems or Challenges (Item 3 under Article IX, Section 9.01 Project Report: “The reasons for slippage if established objectives were not met. “)

No issues, problems or challenges to report.