

**2012 State Damage Prevention Program Grants Progress Report**  
**CFDA Number: 20.720**  
**OHIO**

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**Award Number:** DTPH56-12-G-PHPS15

**Project Title:** Ohio Utilities Protection Service State Damage Prevention Program

**Date Submitted:** 2/27/2013

**Submitted by:** Alice Miller

**Specific Objective(s) of the Agreement:**

Under this grant agreement, O.U.P.S. will:

- Develop and implement methods for effective communication
- Foster support and partnership with stakeholders
- Review the Effectiveness of Damage Prevention Programs

**Workscope:**

- Element (1): Participation by operators, and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of methods for establishing and maintaining effective communications between stakeholders from receipt of an excavation notification until successful completion of the excavation, as appropriate.
- Element (2): 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 (9): A process for review and analysis of the effectiveness of each program element, including a means for implementing improvements identified by such program review.

**Accomplishments for this period:**

This project requires the creation of a fifteen second television spot that will target homeowners and air on the three major television channels during April - Safe Digging Month, and May of 2013. All of the background work for this project was completed prior to submitting the grant application.

This work included the review of data collected by a research firm after surveying Ohio's stakeholder groups and homeowners; selecting a production company to create the video, and establishing primetime slots on the three major networks – in Ohio they are Channels 3, 5, and 10. The proposal from the production company and the three networks were submitted with the original application. Due to the amount of the grant awarded the number of airtime slots had to be reduced slightly in order to stay within budget; the revised proposals are attached to this report.

The commercial script will be approved within the next two weeks. Previously shot video will be used in the commercial in order to keep costs down, and once completed, it will be sent to the stations for airing.

Elements 1 and 2: The research referred to above was conducted two years ago with PHMSA's support. Phase one of that research involved interviewing a total of 418 stakeholder representatives about their public education programs. This stakeholder group included facility owners, municipal representatives, facility locators, the one-call center, and excavators. Phase two of this research project measured the effectiveness of these programs by interviewing 269 homeowners. Homeowners were asked a series of questions, including what message would most likely change their behavior (and motivate them to call before digging) and what method of delivery is best. This project was based on that research.

Collaboration among Ohio's stakeholders, and PHMSA's support, enables us to educate homeowners about Ohio's excavation laws and the need to call 811. Which should ultimately reduce damages to Ohio's underground infrastructure.

Element 9: When the educational ads begin airing O.U.P.S. will house a short survey for homeowners on our web site. We plan to capture information about the effectiveness of the ad: specifically, was the message that they said would be most effective – just that – affective. To clarify, homeowners said a message that “warns me about a threat to my safety” would be the most affective message, as opposed to a message that talks about personal responsibility or the benefits of safe behavior. The ad will temper the “threat to my safety” idea while making it clear that the idea of calling before one digs needs to be taken seriously.

**Quantifiable Metrics/Measures of Effectiveness:**

There is nothing to quantify or measure at this point. This is a simple project with a relatively short life span. Once the educational ads air we will be able to provide feedback as to the effectiveness of the project.

**Issues, Problems or Challenges:**

There are no issues, problems, or challenges to report.

**Mid-term Financial Status Report:**

Mid-term Financial Status Report submitted per agreement.

**Plans for Next Period:**

The educational piece will be created and aired on three major television stations in Ohio: Channels 3, 5, and 10. A survey will then be posted on O.U.P.S.' web site in order to measure the effectiveness of the educational message.

**Requests of the AOTR and/or PHMSA:**

No action requested at this time.

ajm 02/27/2013