

2013 State Damage Prevention Program Grants Progress Report
CFDA Number: 20.720

Award Number: DTPH56-13-G-PHPS20

Project Title: Ohio Utilities Protection Service State Damage Prevention Grant

Date Submitted: 4/30/2014

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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
- Support Public Awareness and Stakeholder Education
- Laws and regulations of the damage prevention process
- Review the effectiveness of Damage Prevention Programs

Workscope

- *Element 1 (Effective Communications):* Participation by operators, excavators, 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 (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.
- *Element 7 (Enforcement):* Enforcement of State damage prevention laws and regulations for all aspects of the damage prevention process, including public education, and the use of civil penalties for violations assessable by the appropriate State authority.
- *Element 9 (Damage Prevention Program Review):* A process for review and analysis of the effectiveness of each program element, including a means for implementing improvements identified by such program reviews.

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):* Communication among stakeholders will be positively impacted by the information gained through this research campaign and the subsequent educational pieces that will be developed.
- *Element 2 (Comprehensive Stakeholder Support):* The research campaign targeted the facility owner/excavation industry at large in an effort to determine why stakeholders do not report damages and/or near misses by way of the Damage Information Reporting Tool (DIRT) or Virtual Private DIRT (VPD).
- *Element 5 (Public Education):* The information that we have gathered from stakeholders will impact the design of the subsequent educational piece.

- *Element 7 (Enforcement)*: It is our goal that this reporting and data collection project will encourage Ohio stakeholders to submit damage/near-miss data. It will also educate legislators about the need for this data. Once collected, we will be able to analyze the data and determine root-cause analysis as it relates to: Municipal exemptions under Ohio law, the lack of enforcement under Ohio law, and the impact of the existence of Limited Basis Participants (LBPs) under Ohio law, among many other safety factors.
- *Element 9 (Damage Prevention Program Review)*: The collection of this data from stakeholders has enabled O.U.P.S., and others involved in damage prevention, to measure the effectiveness of the State Damage Prevention Program. Additionally, it has enabled us to measure the impact of our current (one call) law as it relates to the protection of underground facilities, and the safety of its workers and general public.

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.”)

Summary of Research:

- O.U.P.S. Awareness
 - An overwhelming 98.9% of those interviewed say they are aware of O.U.P.S.
- Awareness of “8-1-1”
 - Nearly 9 out of 10 interviewed said they are aware of “8-1-1”.
 - 94% claimed to know what “8-1-1” is for.
 - 92% said they were aware “8-1-1” will reach O.U.P.S.
- Process to Investigate Damages/Near Misses and Complete Report
 - 68% say they have a process in place.
 - 39% of Engineers interviewed say they do not have a process in place.
- Reporting Information
 - Only 30% could say for sure they currently report information about damages and/or near misses to a state or national reporting system.
 - Contractors have the highest rate of reporting (60%).
- Reasons They Do Not Submit Information
 - 74% say they are not aware of a damage reporting system.
 - 88% of engineers surveyed say they are not aware of a damage reporting system.
- Benefits of Damage Reporting
 - 91% find “Reducing Damages” as most valuable.
- Benefits: “Helping to determine root cause of damages...”
 - 82% of Contractors surveyed agree this benefit would be valuable.
- Benefits: “Ability to generate reports based on your company data”
 - 84% of Contractors surveyed agree this benefit would be valuable.
- Benefits: “Helping to shape educational programs”
 - 86% of Contractors surveyed agree this benefit would be valuable.
- Benefits: “Reduce damages for your company/state/industry”
 - 96% of Municipalities (facility owners) surveyed agree this benefit would be valuable.
- Reporting in Other States
 - Among those who operate in other states, almost half say they do not report.
 - Of those who say they report in other states, 79% say they report because it is required by law.

Conclusions of Research:

- Awareness of O.U.P.S., “8-1-1” and the connection between the two is very high across all groups surveyed.
- While the majority (68%) say they have a process in place to investigate and make reports, there is still room for improvement, especially among engineers.
- Reporting to a state/national system is quite low (~30%) and around three-quarters of those surveyed say they are not aware of a damage reporting system.
- Respondents have high agreement with the benefits of damage reporting especially “Reduce damages for your company/state/industry”.
- Legal requirements for reporting in other states clearly improves compliance.

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

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 (Remainder of Grant)

The information gathered during the research phase will be used to create a direct marketing campaign emphasizing the importance of inputting data. Two separate tri-fold pamphlets will be created targeting two individual groups: stakeholders and legislators.

Requests of the AOTR and/or PHMSA

No action requested at this time.