

# Know What's Below

## GEORGIA



### What's inside

Statewide Marking Standards and White Lining  
Large Project Ticket Type  
Tolerance Zone, Why is it so important?  
UPC Public Awareness Resources  
Meet GA PSC Utilities Division  
How to file a probable violation  
Locate Excellence  
International Utility Locate Rodeo

Volume 1 Issue 1

# Letter from the Executive Director



**Claudette Campbell**  
Executive Director

In this day and age, we acknowledge that damage prevention is a team effort. We are constantly saying that safe digging is a shared responsibility. Are these the politically correct phrases or words to live by?

Most companies recognize safety as an important responsibility. Companies win awards for being safe. Employees win awards for being safe. Normally, this means no accidents in the work place or no vehicle incidents. Ask yourself if your employees know about the rules and laws surrounding safe digging.

If you are having safety meetings, are you armed with the right information? If safety meetings aren't a regular part of your company routine, this question may seem daunting.

The goal of damage prevention is always the same: keeping employees safe as they carry out their jobs, keeping the public safe by preventing service outages and preventing property damage. By doing this, you save time, effort and money. While the goal may remain the same, the processes and techniques for creating this safe environment are always changing, becoming better.

The Utilities Protection Center, Inc., (UPC) is dedicated to being your team member in the goals of damage prevention. We want to not only be your communication resource for transmitting information about upcoming excavation, we want to be able to provide information and resources to help educate all of our stakeholders in safe digging practices. Read the questions below. Do you find yourself needing more information? You may find the answer within the pages of this magazine. You will find information about who to contact to get answers to your questions and to get public awareness materials for employees and customers.

- Does everyone in your office know who you call before you dig?
- Does everyone know how far in advance to call?
- Do you know your responsibilities in the damage prevention process, according to the Georgia Utilities Facilities Protection Act (GUFPA)?
- Did you know that violating GUFPA could result in fines up to \$10,000 per incident?
- Do you know when you have to white line?
- Did you know UPC has staff, resources and educational materials ready for your use in your public awareness programs?
- Did you know UPC has camera ready ads, logos and artwork you can use with employees and customers?
- Did you know that UPC has an elementary school program geared at 2nd and 3rd grades you can invite to your local school as part of your public awareness program?
- When you have a question, do you know who to contact at UPC to get the answer?

UPC is proud to team up with you in creating a safer working environment. Know what's below. Always call before you dig. Every project, every time.

*Claudette Campbell*



Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.





## UPC Board of Directors

Alan Bell, Georgia Power

Tiffany Callaway-Ferrell, Atlanta Gas Light

George Coussons, AT&T

Nancy Davis, Georgia Power

Larry Finney, AT&T

Wendell Holbrook, Cobb Energy

Jim Laplander, City of Savannah

Rick Lonn, Atlanta Gas Light

Bill Meecham, City of Covington

Steve Murphy, Atlanta Gas Light

Chester Parker, Georgia Power

Jeff Patton, AT&T

Franklin Rigdon, Jr., Ellijay Telephone

Edward Strong, Newnan Utilities

Tom Tarver, Southern Natural Gas



Thank You Georgia Public Service Commission for contributing to this issue of Know What's Below Georgia.

## Table of Contents

UPC Member Services.....	page 4
UPC Liaison Managers.....	page 5
UPC Call Center.....	pages 6-7
Georgia Public Service Commission, Utilities Division.....	pages 8-9
How to File a Probable Violation	
Example of what happens after submission of probable violation/damage reports.....	page 10
Facilities Protection Pipeline Safety Challenges & Responsibilities	
Disagreeing with PSC Staff Findings & Recommendations of GUFPA Investigation	page 11
Statewide Marking Standards.....	pages 12-13
Tolerance Zone... More than meets the eye.....	pages 14-15
UPC's Digger Dog .....	page 16
UPC's Large Project Ticket Type.....	page 17
International Utility Locate Rodeo.....	pages 18-19
Damage Prevention Supplies .....	page 20
Managing Electrical Power Line Hazards.....	page 21
Locate Excellence .....	pages 22-23

## Who is UPC and what is our mission?

*We are located outside of Atlanta in Duluth, GA. We are a non-profit corporation funded by our member utilities. The Utilities Protection Center is a communication system established to provide one telephone number for excavating contractors and the general public to call for notification of their intent to use equipment for excavation, tunneling, grading, boring, blasting, demolition or any similar work. This one call system provides the participating members an opportunity to locate and identify their underground facilities. Our phone number is: 770.623.4344 (Local) or 1.800.282.7411 (Statewide) or simply dial 811.*

*Mission Statement: Utilities Protection Center will be an industry leader in preventing damage to members' facilities and in promoting safety through high quality, efficient and economical notification service; providing education; and encouraging compliance with all applicable laws.*

*Know What's Below Georgia Georgia* is published by the Utilities Protection Center, Inc.

3400 Summit Ridge Parkway, Duluth GA 30096

Call Before You Dig. Dial 811 or 800-282-7411

UPC Administrative Office: 770-623-4332 UPC Member Services Department: 770-623-5786

[www.gaupc.com](http://www.gaupc.com)

# UPC Member Services



**Michelle Aucker**  
**Member Services**  
**Supervisor**

The Member Services Department is responsible for several functions of the Utilities Protection Center, Inc. Some of those functions include:

- Setting up new members
- Creating Web accounts
- Assisting Web users
- Performing ticket searches

Its main function is to work with the utility members. There currently are 728 active members.

Members Services Department is responsible for entering data into the system for new utility membership, monitoring ticket delivery for existing members and maintaining contact information for each member.

The UPC offers members and contractors the ability to perform certain functions on the Web. Member Services is responsible for creating Web accounts for those users and offering any assistance they may require. It also offers monthly Web entry classes at the office in Duluth.

On occasion, a member or contractor may need a copy of a past locate request (ticket), which will require Member Services to perform a ticket search. The search may or may not require payment from the requesting party.

You could almost consider Member Services a “troubleshooting” department. It fields calls from members, homeowners and contractors who may not know where they need to turn for assistance. Member Services does everything it can to assist the caller or guide them in the right direction.

The goal at UPC is to provide excellent customer service and Member Services does its part to ensure that the experience for the caller is both pleasant and handled in a timely manner.

Call Member Services at (770) 623-5786 or [memberservices@gaupc.com](mailto:memberservices@gaupc.com).



**Andrea Ford-Brown**



**Melissa Kimsey**



**Sally Johnson**

## Dialing 811?

May 1, 2007, the Federal Communication Commission mandated that 811 become the national call before you dig number. Georgia was ready for the FCC mandate and actually began accepting calls through the 811 number before the compliance date.

811 does not take the place of the existing 800-282-7411 number. It is in addition to that number, and easier to remember for new callers. If you are using the 800 number and wish to continue doing so, feel free.

Dialing 811, like the 800 number, may be used for normal locate requests, damages, emergencies and design locates.



If you dial 811 in Georgia, you will be connected to the UPC. Calling 811 in Florida? Then you will be connected with that state's one call. Calling near a state line with a cell phone may cause your call to bounce to the wrong state, but we are working with neighboring call centers to get your call where it belongs.

Go ahead, call 811 today! Or call 800-282-7411. The most important thing is that you do call before you dig at least two business days before excavation takes place. Then wait the required amount of time, respect the marks and dig safely.

Know what's below, always call before you dig! Every time, every project.

# UPC Liaison Managers



**Mike Joyner.**  
**Liaison Director**  
**Region 2 & 5**

UPC Liaison Managers are dedicated to educating UPC members, excavators and the general public about the importance of “Calling Before You Dig” and about safe digging under the Georgia law. The task of public awareness takes many forms. Liaisons attend numerous local utility coordinating meetings and conferences, offer special training classes, attend meetings and/or trade shows with such stakeholders as the Common Ground Alliance (CGA), Georgia Municipal Association (GMA), Georgia Emergency Management Association(GEMA), Georgia EMC’s, Electric Cities/Municipal Electric Authority of Georgia (MEAG), American Public Works Administration (APWA), Georgia Utility Contractors Association (GUCA), National Utility Locate Contractors Association (NULCA), DOT district meetings, Georgia Utility Coordinating Council (GUCC) and One Call Systems International, just to name a few. Currently Liaisons are offering information and/or train-

ing on Large Project Ticket Types, the newly-adopted statewide marking standards and Web ticket entry.

UPC Liaisons are assigned to specific areas of the state as shown below. Should you need a liaison for training, as a speaker or if you just have questions, please contact them using the information below.

**Fiona Bowen** **404-444-3603**  
[fbowen@gaupc.com](mailto:fbowen@gaupc.com)

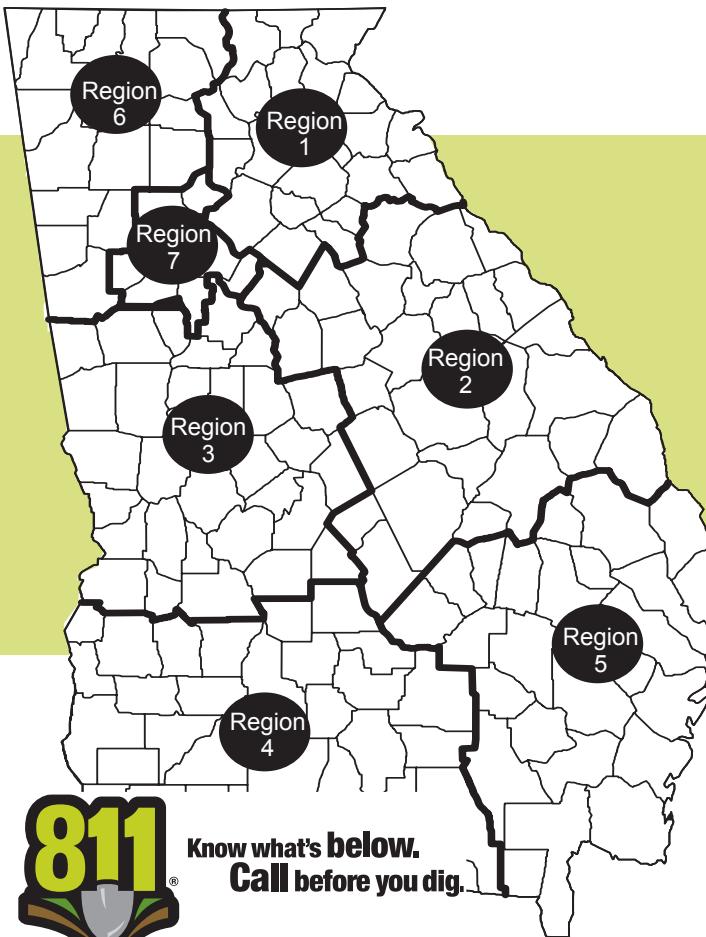
**Becky Creech** **404-757-6467**  
[bcreech@gaupc.com](mailto:bcreech@gaupc.com)

**Eren Chapel** **770-757-6467**  
[echapel@gaupc.com](mailto:echapel@gaupc.com)

**Holly Files** **404-538-6648**  
[hfiles@gaupc.com](mailto:hfiles@gaupc.com)

**Mike Joyner** **404-245-5813**  
[mjoyner@gaupc.com](mailto:mjoyner@gaupc.com)

**Terry McLaurin** **770-476-6023**  
[tmclaurin@gaupc.com](mailto:tmclaurin@gaupc.com)



**Fiona Bowen**  
**Region 7**



**Holly Files**  
**Region 3 & 4**



**Eren Chapel**  
**Statewide**  
**Digger Dog**  
**Presenter and**  
**Region 7**



**Becky Creech**  
**Region 1 & 2**



**Terry McLaurin**  
**Region 6 & 3**

# UPC Call Center



**Bob Murphy**  
**Call Center**  
**Manager**

It's Wednesday morning and you are putting together your schedule for next week. You see that you have an excavation slated to begin Monday morning. Because you have most of the details of the project readily at hand, you decide to call the UPC to get a dig ticket. However, once you call, you find that there are some questions being asked for which you don't have the answers. You begin to question why the UPC needs to know all this information.

All you want is to have a locate technician come out, find the underground utilities and get them marked before Monday morning when your crew arrives. What is the problem?

To answer that, look at Georgia law first. The dig law states that the following information must be on all Georgia dig tickets:

- (1) Describe the tract or parcel of land upon which the blasting or excavation is to take place with sufficient particularity, as defined by policies developed and promulgated by the UPC, to enable the facility owner or operator to ascertain the precise tract or parcel of land involved;
- (2) State the name, address and telephone number of the person who will engage in the blasting or excavating;
- (3) Describe the type of blasting or excavating to be engaged in by the person; and
- (4) Designate the date upon which the blasting or excavating will commence. No. 2 is easy enough. That is the excavator, generally you or someone from your office. No. 3 is also easy. UPC needs to specify the type of work being done so the CSR asks you what you are going to do and, when appropriate, will ask if you are installing, repairing or replacing, in order to be specific. No. 4 is also easy. Note, however, that the statute says blasting or excavating. The CSR therefore does ask if any blasting is going to be done, regardless of the work type. Although it may seem silly sometimes, CSRs do this in order to be consistent – each and every time.

Now back to No. 1. In order to process a valid dig ticket, CSRs need to be able to identify the tract or parcel of land that will be excavated or blasted. They ask you to be able to be very specific as to where the work will be done. This is for two very important reasons: First, they need to be able to have enough information for the locate technician to go to the dig site to perform the locate work in an expedient manner. Driving directions are necessary. Second, they need to be specific enough to hone in on the dig site because UPC maps are in place primarily for the utility members to identify where their facilities are buried. Each facility member is required to maintain their service areas with enough detail so as to be notified when the excavation is going to occur in one of their service areas, but at the same time, UPC does not want to over-notify and slow down the process. UPC has developed a policy and proce-

dure to further enhance the efficiency of this process. Per order of the Public Service Commission and Georgia law, the UPC has developed a policy defining sufficient particularity. That information is available on the UPC Web site and training will be available through its liaison staff.

To go along with this, CSRs ask if you will be white lining the dig site to help the locate technician identify where the excavation will be so he or she will be sure to mark the correct areas, thereby reducing the chance for an accident. To understand how the call center operates and what role it plays in underground safety, let's take a tour of the center.

What does all this mean to you, as a caller to the UPC?

It means that you are going to receive service quickly by a trained call center professional. However, that doesn't answer the other question. Why do the CSRs have to ask for all that information?

The UPC Call Center is both physical and virtual. In addition to Manager Bob Murphy, there is Assistant Call Center Manager Linda Rackley, three teams of CSRs and one team of QA specialists. In all, there are 52 CSRs, Quality Assurance Specialists and Senior CSRs. The three teams – supervised by Brandon Thornhill, Maxine Recio and William Aguila – each have some CSRs who work exclusively in the office in Duluth and some home-based CSRs. The Quality Assurance Specialists are supervised by Myra Powell and they work part of their week in the office and part of their week from their homes.

When working at home, CSRs and QA Specialists are as much connected to the office as their in-office counterparts. They are on the same phone system and ticket-taking software and each takes calls as they come into the system.

Priority is always given to damage and emergency notifications, but all other calls are taken in the order they



are received by the next available CSR, whether that CSR is working in the office or from home.

A person is selected to be a UPC CSR only after a long interview and testing process. In the past several years, Call Center managers found that to hire one solid CSR, they need to look at close to 100 resumes and interview 10. Once hired, a CSR trainee goes through a four-week training program and then is on training probation for three months.

After initial training, and because there is always something new, the CSR undergoes a monthly training and evaluation by his or her supervisor in which ticket quality and quantity is discussed and improvement suggestions are discussed. This in no small way plays a role in the lower-than-industry average for turnover rate. The UPC Call Center replaces less than 25% of its staff per year in an industry that averages close to 40%.

The Common Ground Alliance has a set of Best Practices for one-call centers. The UPC Call Center is proud that its Average Speed of Answer in 2007 through the end of October is 28 seconds. This exceeds the 30-second best practice. The Call Center's speed has remained close to 20 seconds in the past several months.

It also exceeds expectations in its Abandoned Call ratio. The CGA Best Practice calls for no more than a 5% abandonment rate if the caller holds for 60 seconds or more. Thus far this year, the Call Center has answered 99.17% of its calls before the caller hangs up after waiting 1 minute. This means that it loses only 0.83%.

#### **Quality Assurance**

In order for Call Center managers to be sure that you receive the quality of service you deserve and are used to receiving, quality assurance specialists perform a formal review of 20 to 25 random calls and tickets per CSR per month. These dedicated men and women review these calls, determine how the CSR did compared to Call Center standards, let the CSR's supervisor know how the CSR did and, if necessary, will meet with the CSR to give advice or provide training, if warranted. They listen to the demeanor of the CSR to be sure he or she is acting as

a professional, no matter what is happening on the other end of the phone. They also review the tickets from a technical view to ensure the dig site will be located properly and that the correct members are notified.

Working in a call center is not an easy job for any CSR. A CSR must know how to listen, communicate both orally and in writing and process information accurately at lightning speed. There is only one chance to get it right the first time. A CSR in the one-call industry adds one more dimension to this equation. A one-call CSR has the added knowledge that there can be property damage, a possible utility outage, injury to a person or persons or, worst of all, death if he or she makes an error on a ticket. Knowing that, they are going to be insistent to be sure they gather the required information and, if you, as the calling excavator, do not have the information required, you may be asked to get it as quickly as you can or even in some cases be asked to call back when you have the information required for the ticket. Please know that the CSR is interested in the welfare of all the constituencies, from the excavator to the utility member to the ultimate user of the utility. It is never for any other reason.

So when you call, please be aware that you are talking to one of the best one-call CSRs in the country and allow them to service your ticket expeditiously and allow them to make you feel special today, as you do your part for damage prevention.

## **UPC Call Center QA and Supervisors**



**Linda Rackley**



**Myra Powell**



**William Aguila**



**Maxine Reccio**



**Brandon Thornhill**



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

**Dial 811.**

**Utilities**  
PROTECTION CENTER

800-282-7411  
[www.gaupc.com](http://www.gaupc.com)



# Georgia Public Service Commission, Utilities Division

## Mr. Danny McGriff – Director, Facilities Protection Unit, Georgia Public Service Commission

Danny McGriff has distinguished himself as a leader in keeping Georgia safe and connected by his efforts in the reduction and prevention of damage to underground utilities through legislative, educational and enforcement efforts.

In his role as Director of the Facilities Protection Unit, he is responsible for enforcement of both the Pipeline Safety and GUFPA functions at the Georgia Public Service Commission. Reporting to Mr. McGriff are; one supervisor, eight Pipeline Safety Inspectors, one GUFPA Case Manager, three GUFPA Field Investigators and two Administrative Assistants.

Mr. McGriff has brought much attention to the State of Georgia on the national scene in the damage prevention arena by operating a top notch pipeline safety program that wins high marks from the Federal Government. Mr. McGriff also wins high marks for being instrumental in developing and managing an effective damage prevention program for the state that covers all buried utility facilities. Through his efforts, Georgia is recognized at the federal level as having one of the top five damage prevention programs in the United States. Those efforts have landed Mr. McGriff on

national committees charged with developing a damage prevention program to be carried to those states that do not currently have such a program.

Mr. McGriff has worked tirelessly with industry and governmental groups to develop a county wide safety plan to identify gas facilities thus furthering the safety of the citizens of Georgia as well as preventing damage to those utility infrastructures as well as development and implementation of an educational outreach program to the Hispanic community.



**Danny McGriff**

**Facilities Protection Unit, Director**

## Mr. Bruce Morgan – Supervisor, Facilities Protection Unit, Pipeline Safety and GUFPA



**Bruce Morgan,  
Facilities Protection Unit, Supervisor**

Georgia. In addition, the Unit is responsible for protecting the public

The Georgia Public Service Commission's (GPSC or Commission) Facility Protection Unit is responsible for protecting the public and environment from accidental release of natural gas or other liquid products by incorporating a technologically advanced compliance program that promotes educational standards for the industry and contributes to the health and security of

from physical harm, preventing injury to persons and property, and averting interruptions of utility service as a result of damage to utility facilities caused by blasting or excavating operations. By providing a procedure whereby the location of utility facilities will be made known to persons planning to engage in blasting or excavating operations, such persons may observe proper precautions with respect to such utility facilities.

Mr. Bruce Morgan's responsibilities in the Facilities Protection Unit require that he supervise inspectors in the investigation of facility damages and the evaluation of the operation, maintenance, emergency and pipeline corrosion control of natural gas system operators. This includes the analysis of survey data, equipment and field surveys and review of inspection reports.

In addition, he coordinates program activities among the state's inspectors and provides technical data regarding protection of underground utility facilities and the safety of natural gas systems in Georgia. With the increased responsibilities for Pipeline Safety and GUFPA, Mr. Morgan studies and plans for the future of the industry by staying abreast of activities in the field through frequent visits to onsite operators. Those visits make take the form of assisting other pipeline safety personnel in carrying out the different types of inspections required by federal guidelines.

## Mr. Gary Mason, Case Manager, Facilities Protection Unit, GUFPA

The Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act (GUFPA), enacted by the General Assembly in July 2000, provides for the protection of the buried utility facility infrastructure within the State of Georgia. That protection is provided by requiring excavators using mechanized equipment to call for a facility locate prior to excavating or blasting and requiring the facility owner/operator to locate their facilities upon request. Violations of the GUFPA are subject to a civil penalty of up to \$10,000. When a probable violation is reported to the Public Service Commission, the GUFPA section of the Facilities Protection Unit conducts an investigation and prepares a report and recommendation.

After an investigation of a possible violation of the GUFPA has been completed and the respondent has signed a consent agreement, Mr. Gary Mason, Case Manager, is responsible for taking the case before the Commission for approval. The Commission meets in public on the first and third Tuesday of each month and is the only entity who can issue a settlement in any matter brought before the Public Service Commission in the state of Georgia. The acceptance of the consent agreement by the Commission is then communicated to the respondent in a Final Order of the Commission. If a respondent fails to address the consent agreement, Mr. Mason will go before the Commission, request that a Rule NISI

hearing be held and then, testify on the Commission's behalf. Mr. Mason's other duties include making frequent public presentations before industry groups representing excavators, facility owner/operators and locate technicians regarding the GUFPA, Commission rules and the enforcement of the GUFPA.

He also handles consumer complaints and concerns from around the state regarding excavation issues as well as calls from respondents who wish to discuss the results of their case's investigation. Most recently, he was appointed by Danny McGriff to chair the marking standards committee charged with the development of uniform guidelines to mark underground facilities in accordance with the Common Ground Alliance (CGA) Best Practices. Mr. Mason also has been working with the UPC on the implementation of the large project ticket.



**Gary Mason  
Case Manager**

# Contacting Georgia PSC

The Georgia Public Service Commission has two divisions, Utilities and Administration. Within the Utilities Division are several units, each headed by a Unit Director. The Facilities Protection Unit Director is Danny McGriff, the Facilities Protection Supervisor is Bruce Morgan and the Administrative Assistant is Lisa Taylor. The Facilities Protection Unit has two sections, Pipeline Safety and GUFPA. The Pipeline Safety section of the Facilities Protection Unit has eight Pipeline Safety Inspectors. The GUFPA section has one Case Manager, three Field Investigators and one Administrative Assistant. To contact the Office of Pipeline Safety and GUFPA, dial 404-463-6526, the fax number is 404-463-6532. To reach Gary Mason, GUFPA Case Manager, call 404-463-9784 or e-mail him at [garym@psc.state.ga.us](mailto:garym@psc.state.ga.us). The Web site for the Georgia Public Service Commission is [www.psc.state.ga.us](http://www.psc.state.ga.us).



## Pipeline Safety Inspectors



Mr. Alan Towe



Mr. Billy Donaldson



Mr. John McCarter



Mr. Lynn Buffington



Mr. Rob Pace



Mr. Jeff Baggett



Mr. Sam Yarley



Mr. Joshua Lairsey

## GUFPA Employees



Bruce Coogler  
GUFPA Field Investigator



Jason Smith  
GUFPA Field Investigator



Lisa McKnight  
GUFPA Field Investigator



O'tania Jenkins  
Administrative Assistant

# How to file a Probable Violation

HOW TO SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION GUFPA DATABASE New User? REGISTER <http://www.psc.state.ga.us> Follow the links. Click on "Facilities Protection"

Click on "GUFPA Violation Reporting System" Click on "Get a User ID" Click on "Gary Mason" and email your name and the name of your company to Gary Mason, GUFPA Case Manager.

User will receive an email advising of USER ID and temporary password.

Already Registered? LOG IN!

<http://www.psc.state.ga.us> Follow the links.

Click on "Facilities Protection"

Click on "GUFPA Violation Reporting System"

Enter User I.D.

Enter Password.

Takes you to the Probable Violation Report screen in order to submit a damage report/probable violation

THE PROCESS FLOW OF A CASE SUBMITTED TO THE

FACILITIES PROTECTION STAFF

HOW TO SUBMIT A PVR REPORT DATE - automatically populated with the date that the report is submitted.

REPORTER/COMPANY

– Name of the company submitting the damage report/probable violation.

REPORTER/CONTACT – GUFPA Staff's "Main Point of Contact" at the reporting company.

REPORTER/MAILING ADDRESS – Street address of the reporter and where all correspondence from GUFPA will be sent.

REPORTER/PHONE – Telephone number of the reporter/Main Point of Contact.

REPORTER/CITY – Reporter City

REPORTER/STATE – Reporter State

REPORTER/ZIP – Reporter Zip Code

MATERIAL TYPE – (Required Field) Drop-down box to select material type of the facility which was damaged, i.e., plastic, steel, etc.

SIZE – Populate the size of the facility which was damaged, i.e., 5/8-inch, 2-inch, 24 pair, 4/0, etc.

PRESSURE – Examples:

MHP, etc.

UTILITY LINE FUNCTION – (Required Field) Drop-down box to select Utility Line Function of the facility which was damaged, i.e., main, service, primary, secondary, etc.

NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS AFFECTED – number of customers out of service due to the damaged facility REPAIR COST – Cost incurred to repair the damaged facility

MECH. EQUIP. – Type of mechanized equipment being used when damaged occurred, i.e., backhoe, trencher, bobcat, etc.

NATURE OF EXCAVATION – What type of excavation was being performed by the excavator when the damage occurred, i.e., installing water line, installing sewer line, landscaping, etc.

PROBABLE VIOLATOR/NAME – Name of the company responsible for causing damage to the facility.

PROBABLE VIOLATOR/CONTACT - Name of the main point of contact at the company responsible for the damage.

PROBABLE VIOLATOR/ADDRESS – Street address of the company responsible for causing the damage and the address where all correspondence from GUFPA will be sent.

PROBABLE VIOLATOR/PHONE – Telephone number of the probable violator main point of contact.

PROBABLE VIOLATOR/CITY – City

PROBABLE VIOLATOR/STATE – State

PROBABLE VIOLATOR/ZIP - Zip Code

INCIDENT DATE – (Required Field) Date the damage/incident/probable violation occurred.

INCIDENT ADDRESS – (Required Field) Street address where the damage/incident/probable violation occurred.

INCIDENT CITY – (Required Field) City where the damage/incident/probable violation occurred.

INCIDENT COUNTY – (Required Field) County where the damage/incident/probable violation occurred.

FACILITY TYPE – (Required Field) Drop-down box to select facility type, i.e., gas, phone, CATV, electric, etc.

WAS FACILITY LOCATED – (Required Field) N/A,

Yes, No

WERE LOCATE MARKS WITHIN 24 INCHES – (Required Field) N/A, Yes, No

LOCATE # - (This field required unless violation advises that probable violator did not request a locate. Format of field is 12345-123-123). Ticket number of the locate requested for the work being performed at the time of the incident/damage/probable violation.

FAC OWNER – Company name of facility owner.

FAC CONTACT – Name of the point of contact for the facility owner in the region/district where the damage occurred.

PHONE – Telephone number of the point of contact for the facility owner in the region/district where the damage occurred.

EXCAVATOR – Company name of the excavator

EXCAVATOR CONTACT – Name of the main point of contact at the excavating company.

PHONE – Telephone number of the main point of contact at the excavating company.

Locate technician – Name of the company responsible for performing the locate.

Locate technician CONTACT – Name of the main point of contact at the locate company.

PHONE – Telephone number of the main point of contact at the locate company.

DESCRIPTION – Enter a detailed description of the damage.

Example: While excavating to install a drainpipe, XYZ Water & Sewer Company struck and damaged a 5/8-inch gas service line. The incident occurred as they were excavating with a trencher. No locate was requested for the work being performed.

SUBMIT TO SAVE THE RECORD.

RECEIVE CONFIRMATION NUMBER.

To enter another report of damage during this session, click on "PVR Report" at the top of the screen.

## EXAMPLE OF WHAT HAPPENS AFTER SUBMISSION OF PROBABLE VIOLATIONS/DAMAGE REPORTS

If this is the probable violator's first violation, and it is not a "failure to call for a locate" violation, and it is not an egregious violation, the investigator will send an informational package to the probable violator.

If the investigator determines that the probable violator has violated the Georgia Utilities Facility Protection Act (GUFPA) and a civil penalty is in order, he/she will send a Consent Agreement to the probable violator.

As an example, a Consent Agreement may be sent to a probable violator which requires them to pay a \$1500.00 civil penalty.

(However, the Commission always reserves the right to offer education/training in lieu of paying any civil penalty or portion thereof.)

Should the probable violator disagree with Staff's recommendation, they may respond in writing within 15 days of the date of the Consent Agreement and request their case be placed on the next Advisory Committee docket.

If the probable violator signs and returns the consent agreement within 20 days, a docket number is assigned.

A staff recommendation memo is prepared and the case is placed on the appropriate Committee agenda (Energy or Telecommunications) for disposition before the Commission, with Staff requesting that the Commission issue an order to accept the consent agreement.

Following recommendation from the respective Committee (depending on utility type), the case is placed on the Administrative Session agenda for Commission action.

Following the Commission's acceptance of a signed consent agreement, a final order is issued for the Chairman's signature.

The PSC GUFPA Staff will collect the civil penalty and/or training certificate from the probable violator and the case will then be closed.



# Facilities Protection Pipeline Safety Challenges And Responsibilities

The Georgia Public Service Commission retains responsibility for ensuring that all natural gas operators in Georgia meet federal safety requirements. Calendar year 2006 marked the 38th year of certification for the Pipeline Safety Section of the Georgia Public Service Commission with the Research and Special Programs Administration of the Federal Department of Transportation. In 2006 this office continued regulating all pipeline safety matters involving private and municipally-owned natural gas distribution systems, including liquefied natural gas facilities, master-meter operators, direct sales customers and propane facilities that operate in the state of Georgia. During 2006 the Pipeline Safety Section monitored and inspected over 78,159 miles of distribution mains, service lines and transmission pipelines transporting natural gas to over 2 million Georgia customers. Operator compliance with the Pipeline Safety Regulations was evaluated during 539 inspections, expending 979 inspection days. These inspections addressed Operator Qualification, Integrity Management, comprehensive, specialized and construction inspections, along with accident investigations and follow-up inspections that monitor operators for violations of the law.

## Pipeline Safety Enforcement

The Commission's Pipeline Safety Section is responsible for enforcing regulations contained in Parts 191, 192, 193, 199 and Part 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations, as well as applicable state regulations. The Commission also has the authority, if the need arises, to adopt additional regulations. As required under the Pipeline Safety Act, The Pipeline Safety Section's priorities continue to include inspection requirements under Subpart N. of Part 192.800, Operator Qualification (OQ) of Pipeline Personnel. Upon becoming a law, it became Public Law 107-355 which can be found in its entirety at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/plaws/>. The Commission places the highest priority on safety and compliance and supports the goals of improving pipeline safety as well as raising the public's confidence about the safety of pipelines.

## (GUFPA) ENFORCEMENT

The responsibility of the Commission's GUFPA Section is to investigate reported complaints or violations of the Official Code of Georgia (OCGA) 25-9. Education still proved to be the main thrust of the Commission's enforcement efforts in 2006 with 2,067 people representing 431 companies attending training in lieu of paying civil penalties. Even with the numbers attending training in 2006, assessed penalties and penalties collected and sent to the General Fund continued to grow. In addition in 2006, staff addressed different groups around the state including locate technicians, excavators and facility owner/operators representing some 1,429 attendees on different facets of the GUFPA.

Staff worked extensively with Hispanic civic and business leaders throughout the state to develop a community awareness program and to implement a public information campaign using Spanish language media outlets. "Dig Safely" bumper stickers and Construction Spanish books have been distributed throughout the community.

Currently, the Pipeline/Facilities Protection Unit supports the Hispanic Contractors Association of Georgia (HCAG) by participating on its safety committee. The committee, made up of representatives from Georgia's construction and safety community was established on February 21, 2006 with its main priority being to reduce accidents and fatalities among Hispanics in Georgia's construction and related industries. The group is responsible for outreach and partnership in the community, prevention programs and major events throughout the state of Georgia. Staff most recently participated in the Hispanic Safety Fair held on September 8, 2007 in Atlanta, Georgia. The fair brought together general contractors, subcontractors, construction workers, suppliers, exhibitors, vendors, government and professional service representatives for the opportunity to learn about safety in the workplace. There were five different classes taught and exhibitors were on-hand to conduct tool demonstrations, safe excavation practices and proper utility locating procedures. Staff is currently working with El Constructor Latino to participate in the 2nd annual "Latino Construction Workers Day" which will be celebrated in 2008 at the Duluth, Georgia Town Green. This event is being organized through a partnership between El Constructor Latino magazine, the Archdiocese of Atlanta, the Mexican Consulate of Atlanta, OSHA and Georgia Tech. The event will offer free safety classes, vendor exhibits, activities for children, traditional Mexican food, music and entertainment.

Commission staff has become firmly entrenched in the damage prevention community with speaking invitations that resulted in addressing in excess of 1400 industry representatives during the year. Commission staff has come to be seen as a partner in damage prevention and not just another governmental law enforcement agency.

## If You Should Disagree With Staff Findings & Recommendation of GUFPA Investigation

The cover letter mailed with all consent agreements proposing a recommended settlement of a GUFPA violation include a paragraph instructing the respondent that if they should disagree with staff's recommendation that they can request a review before the Advisory Committee. The letter further states that if the respondent does not respond to the consent agreement in any manner, a Rule NISI hearing will be scheduled to address the violation.

The Advisory Committee is a group of 14 people, appointed by the Governor, representing all facets of the utility industry, excavators, locate technicians, state DOT, cities, counties, facility owner/operators, the UPC and chaired by the Public Service Commission. Commission staff will present the case to the committee and then the respondent has an opportunity to present their case which would include any witnesses, documentation or any other facts that they feel would be pertinent to supporting their case. The respondent is even welcome to bring an attorney if they so wish. The committee will rule on the case at that time, there is no wait. The committee can either support staff's findings and recommendation or they may make a separate recommendation to the Commission. There is no charge for going before the Advisory Committee.

If the respondent ignores the staff's attempt to obtain a signed consent agreement, staff will ask that the Commission schedule a Rule NISI hearing. A Rule NISI hearing is held at the Commission before an administrative law judge who will hear all facts and then make a recommendation of settlement to the Commission. The hearing notice is mailed certified from the Commission informing the respondent of the charges against him as well as the hearing date,

time and location. Once again, the respondent may have an attorney present if he so desires. Failure of the respondent to show for the hearing does not stop the hearing. It will proceed without you. Once the hearing officer has made his recommendation to the Commission and the Commission makes its decision, that decision will be communicated to the respondent by certified mail outlining the Commission settlement and a timeframe for the respondent to comply. This communication is known as a Final Order. If the respondent fails to abide by the Order of the Commission, a second Rule NISI will be scheduled to address the violation. Failure to abide by an Order of the Commission is a violation of Georgia Law 46-2-91 which carries a penalty not to exceed \$15,000 plus and additional not to exceed \$10,000 per day for each and every day that the violation exists. An administrative law judge once again hears the case and makes a recommendation to the Commission. The settlement of the Commission is communicated to the respondent by Final Order outlining the settlement and the timeframe for complying with the order. If the respondent does not abide by this order, the matter is turned to collections. The collection group for the Public Service Commission is a law firm deputized by the State Attorney General's office. Once it is turned to collections, the collection firm will obtain a judgment in court and then penalties and interest will accrue in addition to the Commission's assessed penalty.



# Marking Standard FAQ's

Q – I hear a lot about Georgia Law, Commission Rules, and UPC Policy. What is the difference between these three terms?

A – A law is a statute voted on and passed by the state legislature. A rule is written by a state commission which explains a law and generally provides direction to the public about how to administer or adhere to the law. Policy is written by an entity which is administering the rule and law.

Q – How does that concept apply to White Lining?

A – Georgia law (§25-9-6a1) states that a locate request shall, "...Describe the tract or parcel of land upon which the blasting or excavation is to take place with sufficient particularity, as defined by policies developed and promulgated by the UPC, to enable the facility owner or operator to ascertain the precise tract or parcel of land involved;...". That tells us what needs to happen. Section 1d of GPSC Rule 515-9-4-.14 explains how to administer the law. It says in part, "...Utilities Protection Center, Inc. ("UPC" or "One-Call Center") is hereby directed to establish policies and procedures which identify when white lining is required...". Finally, in order to comply and to assist the excavating public with adhering to the law, UPC has adopted the Board Policy on Sufficient Particularity.

Q – I do work for the GA DOT. Am I exempt from this rule?

A – No. The three exemptions are for large projects, tickets completed with locate instructions with sufficient particularity, and emergencies or extraordinary circumstances.

Q – Are the work types mentioned in the UPC Policy the only ones that are applicable to this? Can I add another work type?

A – The work types listed are for illustration purposes only and do not infer a complete list. We will not be publishing a list since each ticket and each set of locating instructions are taken on their own merit in order to determine sufficient particularity.

Q – What do I do if my work covers two of the quadrants on a piece of property? Do I have to white line then?

A – Not necessarily. As long as the work will take place on the quadrants named, sufficient particularity will apply.

Q – Can I be fined if I don't white line when I should?

A – If you are found in violation of a Public Service Commission Rule, you may be fined up to \$15,000.

Q – If I am told I should white line by the CSR and I don't think I should, will the CSR still accept the ticket and send it to the utility members for locating?

A – Yes. The UPC will not refuse to take any tickets. The CSR will note your responses on the ticket but will send it to the utility members as prescribed by law.

Q – If I should white line and I don't, can the utilities refuse to locate?

A – No. By law, the members must locate the

utilities. There is no provision in the law allowing a refusal to locate if the area is not white lined.

Q – I enter tickets on the Web. Does the white lining rule and question apply to me, also? What am I supposed to do on the tickets I enter?

A – This rule applies no matter if you are calling tickets into the call center or doing them yourself on line. We are asking that you be as specific as you can on your locate instructions and stay away from using Locate Entire Property on all tickets. While we understand this saves time when you are doing your Web tickets, it actually can slow the entire facility locate process down in the long run.

Q – Is "Locate Entire Property" no longer acceptable at all on a ticket?

A – "Locate Entire Property" is still an acceptable set of instructions if indeed the excavation or blasting will take place throughout areas of the entire property. This rule is not intended to eliminate entire property locates. It is intended to better define where the excavation or blasting is to be done so that member utilities do not waste valuable time and money locating facilities where no work will take place. The intent is to make the entire process more efficient and effective.

Q – How will I know if I am doing a good job at describing with sufficient particularity on my Web tickets? What happens if I think it is sufficient particularity according to the UPC Policy but it actually is not? Will I be fined?

A – Web tickets will be monitored through UPC's normal quality assurance program. As tickets are found that do not specify the dig site with sufficient particularity and white lining is not checked on the ticket, you will be receiving a call from one of our quality assurance specialists and she will assist you and answer questions for you. After an educational and training period, the length of which is yet to be determined, we will count this item in our quality control program. As with other aspects of our QA program, if the same errors are repeated over time, you may lose your Web entry privileges. You will not be fined, however, by the UPC. Please refer to the next question.

Q – Will the UPC turn me into the PSC if I don't describe my dig site with sufficient particularity?

A – No. The UPC will not be identifying probable violations. A probable violation of this rule can only be determined in the field when the locate technician is locating the utilities. A locate technician or a member may file probable violations if the area should have been white lined but was not. The UPC has no way of knowing what was ultimately done prior to the locate technician's arrival on site.

Q – What should I use to white line?

A – Water-based white paint or white flags. Be sure your excavation company name appears with the paint or on the flags.

# Statewide

"The Georgia Dig Law is about damage prevention," stated Gary Mason from the Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) at a recent meeting with industry stakeholders. Recent PSC rules that have come into effect this year bring changes, but the bottom line is still damage prevention. These recent updates involve the Utilities Protection Center of Georgia, or UPC.

"The role of UPC in damage prevention is to advocate job safety, safe digging practices and to promote communication. We take this responsibility very seriously and work to make sure that our message to call before digging is done each and every day. Safe digging is no accident. It takes all the stakeholders communicating to be successful in damage prevention," says Claudette Campbell, executive director of UPC. "Dialing the new national 'Call Before You Dig' number 811 or using our existing 800 number is only the first step in the process. However, it may be the most important step as it begins the communication process between the excavator and utility owner/operators."

The Georgia Underground Facility Protection Act (GUFPA) gives the PSC the authority to create rules that enhance safe digging practices. As these rules are created, the PSC charges the UPC to create policies and procedures to administer them. An example of this is the UPC Ticket Size Policy.

Most recently, UPC released new policies and procedures for the newly implemented PSC rule regarding the adoption of statewide marking standards, which includes sufficient particularity.

As an excavator, beginning Jan. 1, 2008, it will be required on each locate request that the proposed excavation site meet the UPC's policy of sufficient particularity.

Sufficient particularity can be met in two ways.

The first way is to verbally describe your proposed dig site in such a way that there is no question where the excavation will take place. In other words, verbally white line the area.

To help excavators achieve sufficient particularity verbally, the UPC has created a system to help narrow down the location of a dig site on the property. (See illustration #1) Imagine you are looking at your lot from the curb just in front of the job site. Now divide the lot into four equal sections. Where will the work be taking place...in the two front

# Marking Standards

quads...perhaps only the left front and left rear quad? If there is a structure located on the lot, include that information as well.

"Excavation will be taking place in the front quads of the property from the right of way to the front and both sides of the house for service line installation."

In that one sentence you have let the locate technician know there is no need to locate the rear of the property, thus leaving no question as to where the excavation will take place.

A second way to meet sufficient particularity is to go to the dig site and white line the area where excavation is to take place, using either white paint or flags. This would be physically white lining the excavation area.

When physically white lining your area, be sure your company's name appears with the marks or on the flags. (See illustration #2)

Will I still be able to ask for the entire property to be marked? The answer is yes, if your work will require you to excavate the entire property.

When calling in your ticket to UPC Inc., the Customer Service Representative (CSR) will ask what type of work will be done. This work type will allow the CSR to begin asking further questions to help determine the exact location of your proposed excavation.

Examples of work types that would NOT need an entire property located would be setting a pole and anchors, service line installations, utility pits or installing signs.

If you are entering your locate requests online, there is a box that can be checked to indicate that there is white lining at the dig site. To help the locator know where the marks are and how many are present, you will need to indicate this in the locate instructions box.

For example, locate the four areas white lined for pole installations along the right of way on the northbound side of Hwy. 197 between mile makers 10 and 12. If you want to verbally white line your request online, instructions will need to go in the locate instructions box.

UPC quality assurance will be auditing online tickets, as they do now, to help make sure that this is being done correctly.

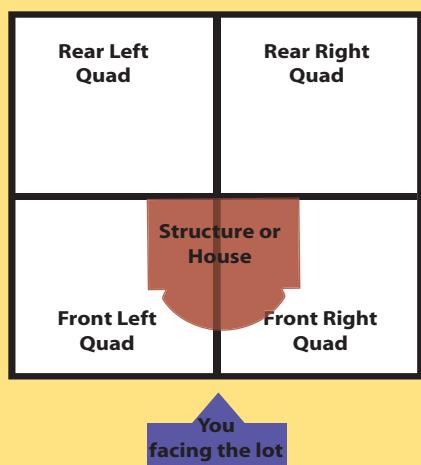
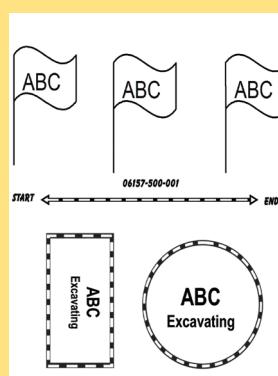


Illustration #1 - UPC's Quad System to provide sufficient particularity verbally.

Illustration #2 - Examples of placing the excavator's name or ticket number with on-site white lines.



The UPC quality assurance team reviews 5,000 online tickets each month.

The locate technician will locate an additional 20 to 30 feet past your white lined area. This will allow you to make adjustments if needed once you are on site.

Once you see the locator's marks at your proposed excavation site, what is the next step? (It is not to begin excavation.) You must check the UPC Positive Response Information System (PRIS) to be sure all utility facility owner/operators have responded. Once you have done that, then excavation may begin if all utility companies have responded that they have either marked or the response is that there is no conflict, no facilities.

Checking PRIS is done via the Web at [www.gaupc.com](http://www.gaupc.com) or by phone (888) 670-2902. Use your locate request ticket number to access the status of your request.

During excavation, be mindful of the Tolerance Zone. The Tolerance Zone is the area that is 24 inches from the outer edge of an underground facility, not the locator's marks. Locators are to mark the approximate center of the buried facility, but certain conditions make it difficult to do this. When locating a nonconductive underground facility, a locator will be locating a tracer wire. The proximity of the tracer wire to the nonconductive facility can vary. It is important to hand dig or pot hole in order to view the exact location of that buried facility and to know the size of it. The size of underground facilities vary greatly, a 1-inch service line's tolerance zone begins in a much different place than a 24-inch water main. (See illustration #3)

Keep in mind that violation of a UPC policy (ticket size policy or sufficient particularity) could result in a probable violation of the PSC rule and/or a probable violation of GUFPA. Each comes with its own penalties.

While UPC is not the enforcement agent of these two components, it strives to make compliance achievable and efficient. To view and download the educational documents on the newly adopted Marking Standards and examples, the UPC policy and procedure for sufficient particularity or GUFPA, please visit [www.gaupc.com](http://www.gaupc.com).

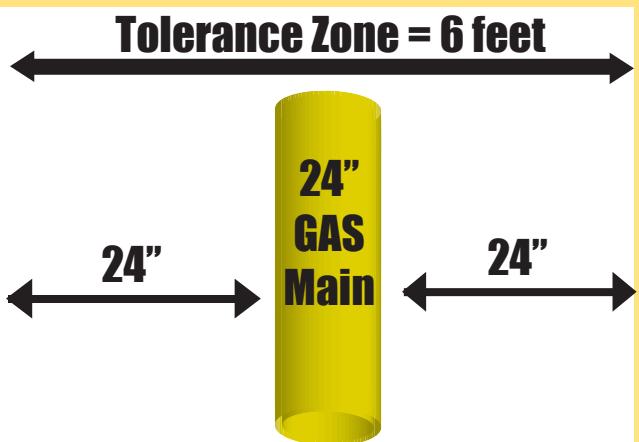
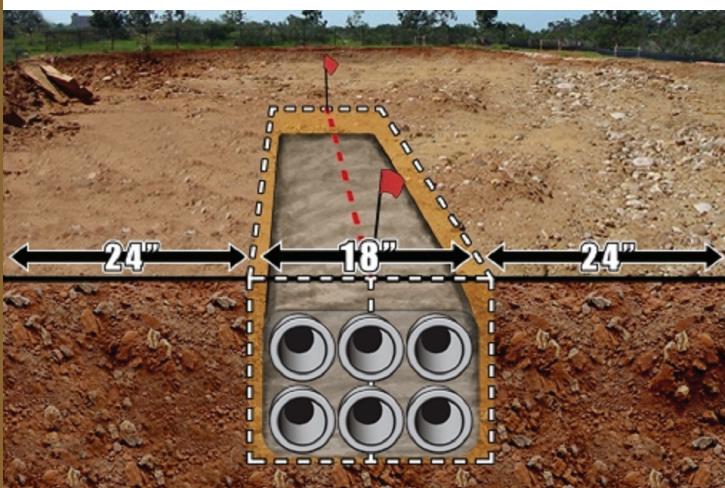


Illustration #3 - Diagram of the Tolerance Zone when locating a 24-inch underground facility. See more about the importance of the Tolerance Zone on the following pages.

# Tolerance Zone...



5 1/2' foot tolerance zone in Georgia

Knowing the definition of the Tolerance Zone is only the beginning of the story when it comes to the exact location of underground utility facilities. On these two pages are photos that will help you understand the importance of soft digging to see the facilities location before excavation with mechanized equipment begins.

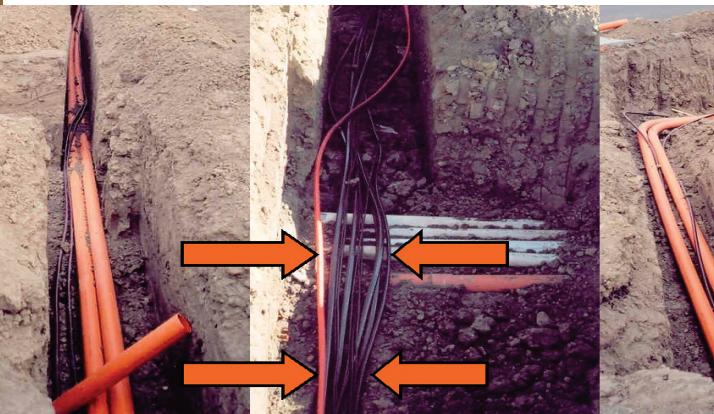
The first photo to the left is an illustration of the Tolerance Zone's definition. In the state of Georgia, as this differs from state to state, the Tolerance Zone is defined as 24 inches from the outside edge of the underground facility. As this illustration helps shows mine where the outer edge is. What does this mean? In this example the tolerance zone is 5-1/2 feet wide. The excavator is required to use reasonable care when excavating within the tolerance zone.

*A special thank you to Mike Pariliac and Planet Underground Media for allowing the use of these photos.*



Illustrated above, different companies will install tracer wires in different manners. This will affect the way the locate technician will mark the line. Above is an example of a tee connection splice in the tracer wire. If the splice is poor, creating an incomplete circuit for the locate technician to follow, then determining its location will be difficult.

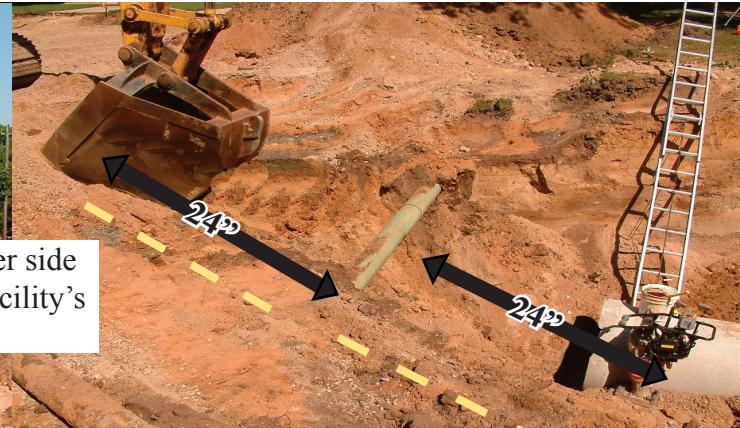
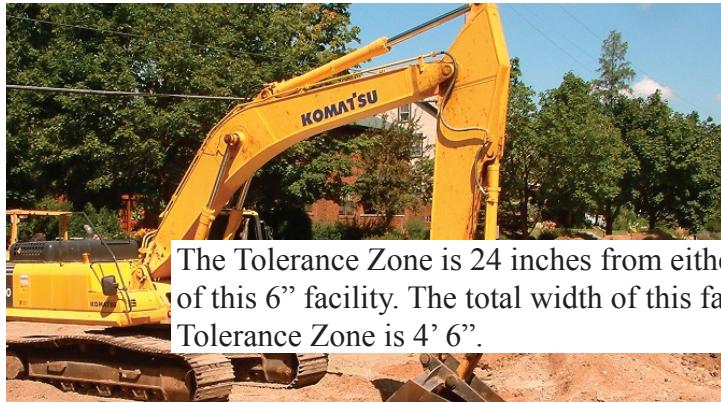
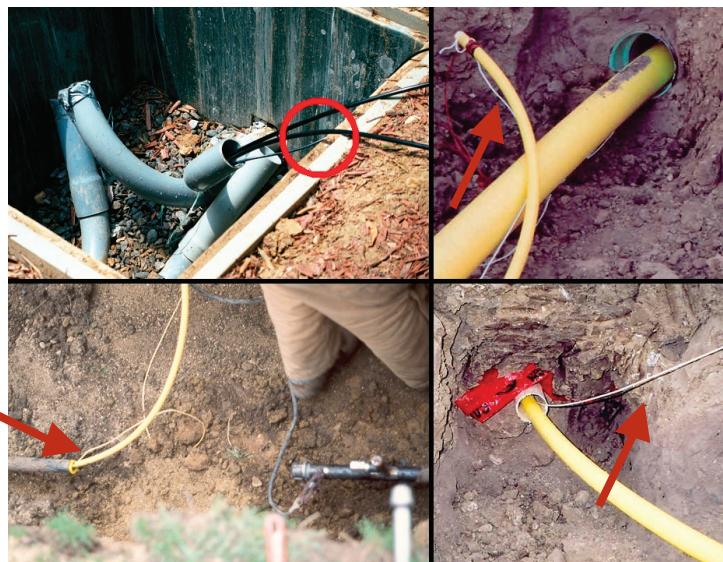
In the photo above, you can clearly see that the locate technician's marks do not identify the center of a facility. In Georgia, the law states that the locate marks will be placed on the *approximate* center of a facility. Never assume it is the center. These locate marks are within three to four inches of the facility, Georgia's Dig Law requires the locate marks to be placed within 24 inches of either side of the outside edge of the utility facility.



The photo shows how the Tolerance Zone of these facilities that are joint trenched will change in diameter as the location of the lines is different within the same trench. One section may be more narrow than another. The direction of the facility may also change in a short distance. Exposing the lines in a safe manner would allow the excavator to know for sure. Two examples of methods used to safely expose an underground facility would be pot holing or vacuum excavation.

# ...more than meets the eye

Notice in each of these pictures there is a tracer wire being installed to make these non-conductive facilities locatable.



This excavator exposed the 6" gas pipe before excavating to determine the exact dimensions of the Tolerance Zone. The intent here is to run a sewer pipe under the gas main with mechanized equipment. This shows the inherent danger of excavating before potholing a facility to see what size it is. It is impossible to determine width of the Tolerance Zone without knowing the width of the underground facility.

When a new facility is installed, designing it for locatability will help locate technicians. Locate technicians face many challenges in the field and designing an underground facility for locatability will be one less challenge to overcome.



*All photos reprinted with permission from World of Training Magazine, the One-Call Edition published by Planet Underground Media. [www.underspace.com](http://www.underspace.com)*



**During 2007, Digger visited more than 9,000 elementary students across Georgia. Pictured above are presentations at Ringgold Elementary School, Ringgold; North Brooks Elementary School, Morven and St. James Catholic School, Savannah.**

# UPC's Digger Dog

*By Eren Chapel*

The Utility Protection Center of Georgia's mascot, Digger Dog, hits the road each school year with his new and exciting revamped and FREE program.

He has been visiting schools since 1998.

Digger's mission is to educate Georgians, specifically younger Georgians, about safe digging. He is also bringing messages from two of his friends, Ben Zapped and Skunk Sniffy, about the importance of smelling gas and acting fast, and how to be safe around overhead electrical lines.

Digger's educational program takes about 35 minutes to deliver this energetic, informative and life-saving message. Digger also will leave behind several items for the students to take home and share with their parents, homeowners who are the least educated about the "Dig Law." There is an 8-page workbook that includes pictures of Skunk Sniffy and Ben Zapped, as well as the number to "Call Before You Dig."

It also includes information on the new campaign of dialing 811. This number connects you to the nearest call center of the state you are in and allows you to call in a dig request where excavating will be taking place, in accordance with the law. Other items include: a Digger Dog Utility Safety Program completion certificate, a Digger Dog sticker, a neon pencil, a magnet and a Digger Dog beanbag doll – all with Utilities Protection Center's phone number on them to "Call Before You Dig."

Information in Digger's presentation has been geared for 2nd and 3rd grade, but may be presented to other age groups at your request. His message fits several of the criteria found in both Grade Two and Grade Three of Georgia's Performance Standards.

For example, Digger will demonstrate some of electricity's natural changes by telling the students what to do around downed power lines. Also, Digger will demonstrate what happens when electricity is manipulated as objects come into contact with overhead high voltage power lines. He also will describe the hazards of a natural gas leak and what to do if you do smell gas.

Students are encouraged to participate and ask questions to gain more information during Digger's presentation. The workbook Digger leaves behind contains activities such as a word search, maze and decoding of a secret message. In addition, it also serves to reinforce the safety messages heard in Digger's show, all skills found under the Language Arts Standards.

Each year, Digger's show reaches between 9,000 and 12,000 students. For reservations for Digger to visit your school, call Meghan Chestnutt at (770) 476-6048.



**Eren Chapel**



# Large Project Means Knowing All the Pieces

By Terry McLaurin

Just as a jigsaw puzzle has many pieces with different sizes and shapes, the damage prevention puzzle also has a number of different facets so as to reach as many people and situations as possible to keep Georgia safe and connected. The most recent puzzle piece being developed is Large Project Notification.

When the Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act was opened in 2005 for updating, one of the things that was recognized immediately was the need for more communication between all parties, especially in cases where the excavation would exceed one linear mile or take 90 days or longer to complete. In response to that

need, the legislative committee determined that a new "ticket type" was warranted and the Large Project was placed in the law.

The advisory committee, which is comprised of stakeholders from the excavating community, utilities, the Public Service Commission and the Utilities Protection Center, developed procedures which later developed into the PSC rule on large projects. PSC rule 515-9-4-.13 can be viewed from the UPC Web site ([www.gaupc.com](http://www.gaupc.com)) or the Secretary of State's Web site (<http://sos.georgia.gov/>).

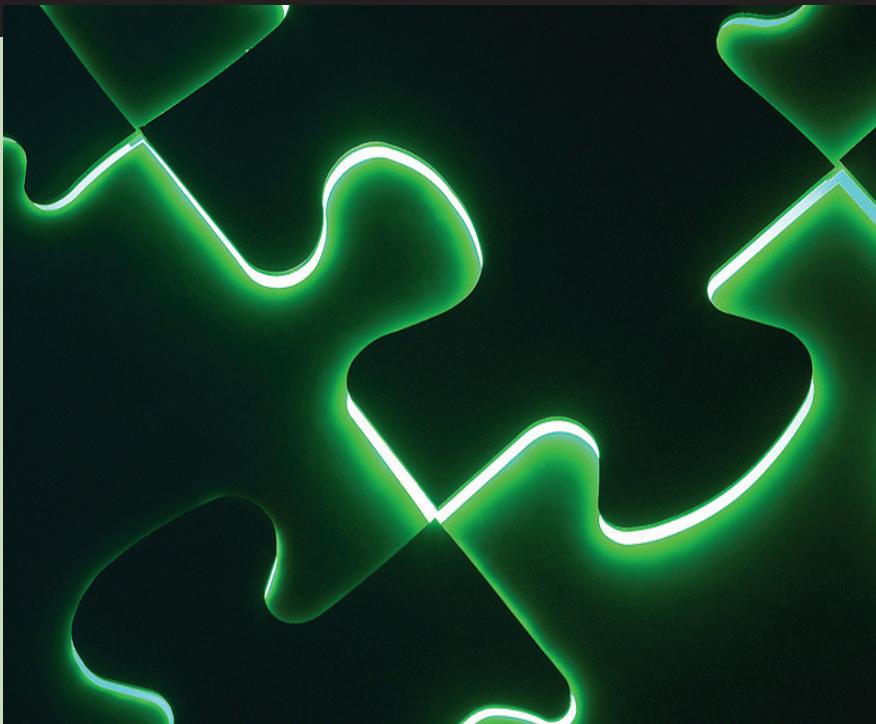
Without going into detail, the essence of the large project methodology is as follows:

If an excavator has a project that is anticipated to go longer than 90 days or is going to be longer than one mile in length, or both, the excavator will call into the UPC and ask for a Large Project Meeting Notification. This notification will have the same information a normal ticket has today but also will call for a meeting at a specific place on a specific date and time.

The notification will go out to all member utilities in the planned dig site area. At the meeting, an agreement to mark, along with a marking plan, will be developed and agreed upon. Once this is all settled, the members will vote via positive response to accept or reject the project as a large project.

If 60% or more of the affected member utilities agree, the project will be declared a large project. The excavator would then call the UPC and have the meeting notification converted to a Large Project Excavation Notice.

Those voting for the large project would work under the plan as agreed with this notification. It will be valid for 90 days without a re-stake. (If the project will continue past 90 days, a renewal will be available.) Those member utilities not agreeing to the large project



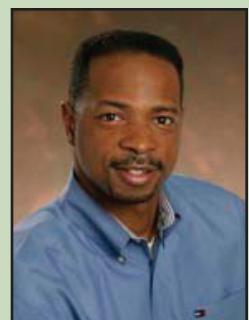
would receive a normal notification as happens today and would be responsible for keeping fresh marks on the entire project for the duration of the project, via the re-stake process as is done today. Aside from calling to renew the notification if the project would go on longer than 90 days, the only other time the excavator would have to call the UPC would be if there were deviations to the originally agreed upon marking plan. In that case, the deviation would be documented by the CSR and responded to via Positive Response Information System by the member utilities.

A full training program for members and excavators is available through the UPC liaison staff upon request.

The UPC is currently in its beta testing phase, in which excavators who have volunteered to assist the UPC will try out the procedures in order to help the UPC and the membership determine where the existing procedures work well and where there is room for improvement. The UPC has taken on several beta tests thus far, however, it has not firmly determined when the program will be opened up for the excavating community at large.

Because of the many advantages to both the excavating community and the member utilities, the UPC anticipates great success with this program over time. The obvious advantages to this program include, but are no means limited to: fewer tickets to keep track of, fewer ticket renewals, knowledge of which portion of the project will be marked at what time and better communication among all parties.

The UPC staff hopes that many of you will have the opportunity to speak to one of the liaisons at a gathering, conference or meeting and talk about this program. Perhaps some will volunteer to be a beta test partner and have the opportunity to provide the valuable feedback UPC needs in order to make this a truly successful inroad into damage prevention in the state of Georgia. Remember, each piece of the damage prevention and safety puzzle requires all of us to be involved.



Terry McLaurin

# International Utility Locate Rodeo



**Fiona Bowen**

In 2001, Utilities Protection Center, Inc. set out to create a competition to recognize technicians that locate underground utility lines. Previously, their work was only noticed when

something went wrong and an underground line got damaged, but what about all the times things go right? So why not set up some fun for them? For two years prior, the UPC had hosted a trade show, better known as "Utility Expo," in Macon. This was an opportunity to invite utility members and excavators to meet with vendors who sell products that may help them in their utility line location and dig ticket delivery. Combining the vendor show and the competition was a natural fit and so, in 2001, the first International Utility Locate Rodeo and Expo was held in Macon.

Getting started was difficult. In order to have a competition, you must have some type of measurement system or method to measure one's accuracy. A wagon wheel type setup was created.

This wheel can vary in circumference, is color coded at the end of each string (spoke of the wheel) and has a center point. We refer to this as the rodeo wheel.

The wheel is placed on top of a predetermined utility and measurements are pulled from the center point out the length of each spoke of the wheel. At the point where the utility crosses the path of any of the spokes of the wheel, a measurement gets logged. Measurements are verified prior to competition and a "master measurement" is taken. All competing measurements are compared in a scoring system to the master

measurement to determine a winner. Time is of the essence! While accuracy is essential in a competition, if you throw in a time factor, the heightened anxiety and nerve factor become an integral part of the overall state of the locate technician(LT) who chooses to compete.

In their day-to-day job, no LT is sitting there with a judge and a stopwatch, making sure the locate is done within 12 minutes. But in competition, it becomes a factor. It helps move the competition along in a timely manner, and, can be a deciding factor in the case of "tie" measurements between competitors.

Locate Rodeo is limited to 120 competitors. Each competitor must participate in three events for their total score. In its first year, Locate Rodeo would divide the competitors and

have divisions. A locate competitor would, in future competitions, choose to either compete in the water division, power division, gas division or telecom division and the only locates required are those of the division he/she chose. So the gas locate technician would now locate three gas event sites.

A bonus event fondly referred to as "The Locate From Hell" gives competitors a chance to win additional money if they choose to participate. The rules are different in this event as the competitor only has 3 minutes to complete the locate and must use equipment provided by the event sponsors.

The International Utility Locate Rodeo is held annually, toward the end of July or early August. The rodeo uses university campuses as a rule, because they typically have power, gas, water and telecom onsite. Additionally, they are usually spread out enough so that organizers can find three event sites per division without any interference from other event sites.

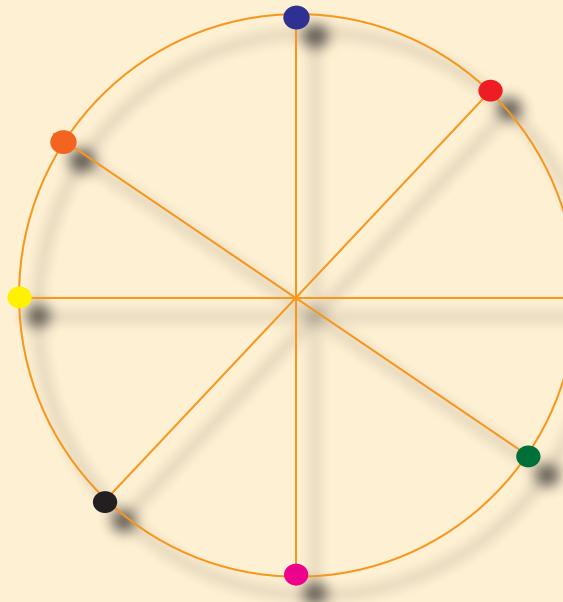
The time frame best fits between their heavy school sessions and is generally between semesters. The actual competition takes place on a Saturday and is followed by an awards banquet at the hotel where trophies, money and rodeo jackets are awarded.

A total rodeo purse of \$8,750 has been awarded each year, broken down to five \$1,000 winners, five \$500 winners and five \$250 winners.

Past campuses have included Mercer University in Macon, Mercer University in Atlanta, Emory University in Atlanta and Oglethorpe University in Atlanta. When the campus is big enough, organizers try to utilize the campus for several years of competition.

In addition to competitors, the volunteer base has grown and grown each year. Approximately 100 volunteers are involved each year. Many volunteers come back year after year and take their personal time to help support the competition and the industry.

Damage Prevention Liaison Dave Van Wy from JULIE (Illinois One Call) says, "the 'can do' attitude of all in-



they ended up locating in three of four events (power, gas, telecom and water). Although this seemed like a great way to come up with the overall "International Utility Locate Rodeo" first-place winner, organizers quickly got feedback that many locate technicians felt it was unfair to make them compete in events that had nothing to do with what they do in a day-to-day setting. In essence, a gas locate technician was not happy if he/she had to locate water or power (which might be the luck of the draw). So it was decided to instead

volved is great!"

Dave's knowledge and participation in the international event has helped him coordinate a MidWest feeder event, sponsored by the one-call center where he works. The winners of his regional feeder event are sent to the international competition held in Georgia. Volunteers help with set up, judging, managing the flow of the competitors to each site, shuttle service and much more. Without volunteers and the support from their companies, the rodeo simply would not exist.

Greg Kreig, competitor from UtiliQuest, e-mailed his thoughts on his experience in 2005: "Great job by all the rodeo staff. The logistical 'machine' that whisked me around to all four events, fed and watered me, and had me back at the hotel room by 2 p.m. Saturday was pretty much invisible to all of us competitors. I don't have a clue how ya'll do it. I only know it worked very well!"

The rodeo has grown in two ways. First, through the comments received after each competition. A survey is usually provided at the awards banquet dinner. Each comment – good or bad – is discussed in detail in follow-up meetings after the rodeo.

The great thing comments provide is the experience (again, good or bad) that the person is going through, whether they are competing or volunteering or are a spectator. Organizers take each comment very seriously and, more often than not, incorporate the ideas into future events to make the competition more comfortable, fun and fair for everyone.

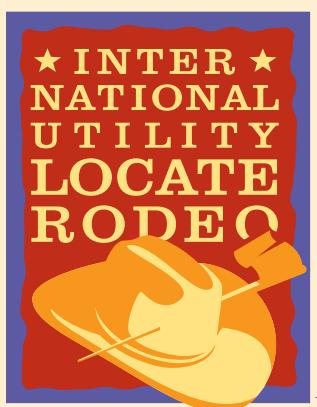
The second way the rodeo has grown is through sponsorship. While the UPC is a non-profit one-call center, there are no rodeo funds to make it happen. It is 100% a sponsored event. Sponsors like Georgia Power, Radiodetection, Southern Linc and so many more have helped fund this amazing event. Their dedication to support the industry and provide a fun event for locate technicians to look forward to each year is so important. Organizers are always looking for new sponsors to help carry this event forward.

"Can't say enough about a wonderful event supporting and recognizing the industry. Excellent coordination and job well done by the GA UPC." – Janice Wentworth/3M/Vendor/Sponsor



While in negotiations with the potential university at the time of this printing, more information for sponsorship, competitor registration, vendor participation and event site location will be updated at [www.LocateRodeo.com](http://www.LocateRodeo.com).

**Pictured above are scenes from the 2007 International Utility Locate Rodeo held on the campus of Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, Georgia, on Saturday, August 4. A total of 84 locate technicians from 21 different states competed. More than 120 volunteers from 14 different states and Canada also participated. None of this would be possible without the continuous support of our sponsors. Join us in 2008 as the search continues. Proposed Expo and educational meetings on July 30 – Friday, August 1. Competition on Saturday, August 2, 2008.**



# Public Awareness Educational Resources



**Meghan Chestnutt**  
Mgr, Corp.  
Communications

Public awareness is a big part in the damage prevention process. UPC offers a variety of items for use in your office with employees and customers. Shown here are a few of those items.

By viewing [www.gaupc.com](http://www.gaupc.com) and then clicking Public Education on the top tab you can see other ads available from the UPC for your use. By selecting the giveaways option from the left-hand menu bar, you are able to view additional items to order. Most of the resources offered are free; a few others are available at a small price. Once you are in the Public Education section of the UPC Web site and you find the items you need, look for the contact information for Meghan Chestnutt. You may e-mail her right from those

pages to request the resources you need. Questions also may be e-mailed.

When ordering supplies, be sure to include your name, a contact phone number, shipping address and the quantity of the item/items you need.

Many items are available in English and Spanish, as well. If you don't see what you are looking for, just ask. UPC will do its best to accommodate your request.

Available first quarter of 2008 will be UPC's Rainy Day Safety Training Kit. The kit will contain information for training up to 10 employees, including an instructor guide, DVDs and PowerPoint presentation.

Meghan Chestnutt may be reached at (770) 476-6048 or by e-mail at [mchestnutt@gaupc.com](mailto:mchestnutt@gaupc.com).



Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.



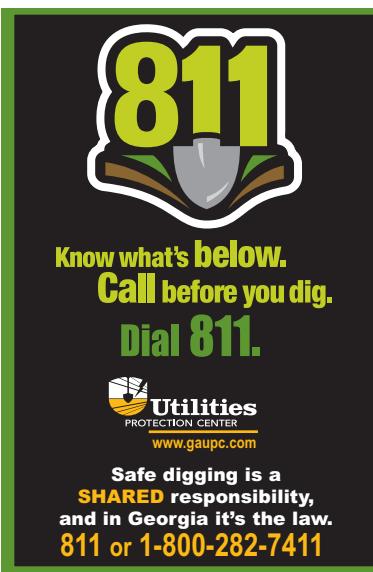
800-282-7411



Determina lo que está bajo tierra.  
Llama antes de excavar.

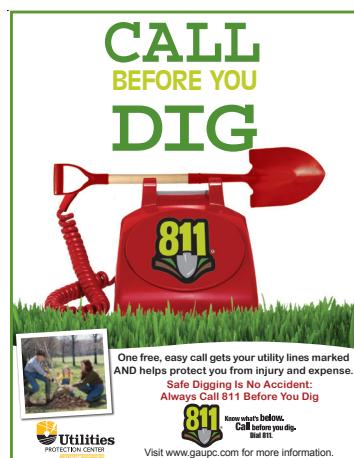


**Bill Stuffers, post card sized and ready to ship to you for insertion into your statements. Also, graphic files may be requested if needed.**



**Left to right: Small 2x3" stickers for permits and hard hats; Fleet license plates and bumper stickers are available.**

**Posters, Camera ready, Internet ready ads and logos available in full color and black and white. Some bilingual versions available. Please specify if a specific file type is needed.**



**Television PSA's and Billboard ads available in English and Spanish.**



# MANAGING ELECTRICAL POWER LINE HAZARDS

By George Kennedy

Many construction operations require workers to perform their jobs in close proximity to overhead and underground power lines. It is therefore imperative that construction workers, equipment operators, truck drivers and others be trained to recognize the dangers of letting their bodies, equipment, tools or vehicles make contact with, or come too close to, power lines.

Unfortunately, the reality is that while electrical utility workers are routinely trained to recognize and manage electrical hazards, most construction workers are not. That lack of knowledge of the potential electrical hazards present in their work environment makes them more vulnerable to electrocution, electric shock, burns and falls caused by contact with electrical energy.

For example, many construction workers do not know that the coating on overhead power lines is only there to protect the conductor from the weather; it is not electrical insulation. Nor do they know that most construction electrocutions are due to equipment making contact with a power line, which in turn electrocutes workers working in contact with the equipment or materials being handled. Even a brief contact with low-voltage lines can kill a worker or result in serious, disfiguring and/or debilitating injuries.

The data clearly show that a high number of construction workers have been killed or seriously injured due to contact with power lines. For example, in 2005, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that 107 construction workers were fatally injured by contact with electricity. Of the 107 workers killed, 49 died because of contact with overhead power lines. An additional 627 were seriously injured when they contacted power lines — 313 through contact with over-

head lines, 314 with underground lines. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), electrocutions from contact with overhead power lines result on average in 128 work-related fatalities per year.

**Managing the Hazard:** All power lines present a potential hazard. The first step in controlling electrical hazards is to assume that all power lines are energized and avoid making contact — unless the electric utility company has verified that the lines have been de-energized and grounded.

Notify the power company before starting the work and give them an opportunity to reduce the hazards and make the power line electrically safe. Although it is often difficult and may be impossible for the power company to de-energize the lines, there are other things they might be able to do to reduce the exposure, such as place protective covers over the lines or temporarily relocate lines. However, employees should be made aware of the fact that insulating sleeves alone might not allow equipment and workers to work safely close to lines.

OSHA currently requires a minimum safe distance of 10 ft for voltage up to 50kV and an additional 0.4 in. for each additional 1kv. Local conditions may require greater distances, so it is a good idea to check with the power company for their recommendations. Additionally, a trained, qualified worker should be assigned to observe the clearance of equipment operating near overhead power lines when it is difficult for the operator to judge and maintain the required distance. Contact the power company for assistance; they might be willing to install non-conductive flags or warning tape to assist the operator in judging the distance. Electronic warning devices that can be installed on cranes or other equipment are also available and can be used to alert the operator if the boom is coming too close to an energized line.

Before excavating around underground power lines, contact the Dig Safe One Call System (call 811 anywhere in America) at least 48 hours

(some states have different requirements) before you dig. They will arrange to send out a locate technician from the power company to mark the lines. Once the lines have been marked, excavators are required to hand dig or vacuum excavate (not permitted in some states) when working within the tolerance zone established by state laws. Most states require excavators to maintain an 18-inch tolerance zone around the line and other states require that a greater distance be maintained. Check local requirements and make sure that workers know what they are.

## If Contact Is Made:

Power line contacts will sometimes cause the lines to temporarily de-energize, but they will also reset automatically, often more than one time. Therefore, if equipment makes contact with a power line, everyone should move away without touching



George Kennedy

the equipment, attachments or rigging. If a power line is down, everyone should be kept away. Only qualified personnel from the power company should touch or attempt to move a fallen power line. (Note: Damaged underground power lines present similar electrocution hazards.)

The equipment operator should attempt to break contact with the power line without breaking the line. If that is not possible, the operator should remain in the equipment until the line is de-energized by the power company — unless there is a fire or the equipment is in danger of being struck by the power line. If the operator must exit the equipment, he/she should jump off the equipment, landing with both feet together. No part of the individual's body should touch the rig and the ground at the same time, or the individual could become a path to ground and be electrocuted. After getting off the equipment, the operator should hop or shuffle away from the equipment with feet together to avoid becoming a conductor between two areas of energized ground. The operator should not return to the equipment until the power company says it is safe to do so.

**Conclusion:** Because electricity is such a familiar part of our surroundings, it often is not treated with the respect it deserves. Overhead and buried power lines on the jobsite are especially hazardous because they carry extremely high voltage. Fatal electrocution is the main risk, but burns and falls from elevations are also hazards. Using tools and equipment that can contact power lines increases the risk. All this and more must be conveyed to workers, equipment operators, truck drivers and others who perform their jobs in close proximity to underground and overhead power lines.

To assist employers in meeting the requirements and establishing relevant safety policies and procedures, OSHA offers an online Construction eTool on electrical safety at [http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/construction/electrical\\_incidents/mainpage.html](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/construction/electrical_incidents/mainpage.html), and NIOSH a Safety and Health Topic page at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/injury/traumaelec.html>.

In addition, a DVD titled Contractor Safety — Preventing Electrical Injuries is available through the Burn Foundation (215-988-9882). NUCA members may also access a toolbox talk titled Overhead Power Lines in the members-only section of the NUCA Web site at [www.nuca.com](http://www.nuca.com).

**George Kennedy is NUCA Vice President of Safety.**

*Reprinted with permission from the Aug. 2007 issue of Utility Contractor.*



## HONOR AND DISTINCTION FOR LOCATE TECHNICIANS

Excellence means maintaining an exceptionally high quality of work performance. Only a select group of Locate Technicians will fit the bill. *Do you have one working for you?*

Locate Excellence™ is a dynamic program designed to promote highest standards for locate technicians and to recognize those individuals who meet or exceed them.

For more information visit  
**[www.LocateExcellence.com](http://www.LocateExcellence.com)**  
or contact Holly Files at 770-476-6029

 **Utilities**  
PROTECTION CENTER  
DIG SAFELY! 800-282-7411

**Locate  
Excellence™**



# ACHIEVING LOCATE EXCELLENCE

By Holly Files



**Holly Files**

For many years, the role of locate technician has been much like that of a referee in a football game: working in an environment with a tremendous amount of activity, making sure the process goes smoothly. They aren't noticed until something bad happens. Locating underground utilities is a process that requires skill, determination, workload management and puzzle-solving techniques in

today's overcrowded utility easements.

The goal of the Locate Excellence Program is recognizing the achievements of individuals in the utility-locating profession and fostering an environment of mutual respect with all stakeholders of the utility industry. Developed, designed and implemented by the UPC, this program has made a positive impact by reducing damages throughout the State of Georgia.

"Utility locate technicians spend every day outside in the heat or cold, rain or humidity protecting buried facilities from damage. Theirs is one of those jobs where nobody ever notices or recognizes you, they just always expect you to have done your job and done it accurately 100% of the time. Locate Excellence is a program intended to recognize these folks for doing a good job rather than only noticing when a mistake led to a damaged utility facility and a delay in construction for the excavator. I am proud of the fact that Georgia Power locate technicians have excelled in this program and 75% of them have achieved the gold level, with most of the rest barely missing it," says Jim Weldon of Georgia Power Co. With 12 companies participating and more than 250 locate technicians motivated to maintain a level of excellence in their profession, this program is an innovative approach in damage prevention.

Maintaining the criteria of no liable damages, no unexcused absences and no safety violations is no easy feat on a daily basis. Locate Excellence requires you meet this criteria for one month (Bronze), three months (Silver), nine months (Gold) or 12 months (Platinum) to be recognized.

"In my opinion, the whole purpose of the Locate Excellence Program is to give positive reflection to the damage prevention techs who have put forth an honest effort to put extra pride in their jobs and to get more than just a paycheck for doing it. When damages occur or someone has missed work unplanned, they get recognized in a negative way. It is good to see a program that seeks out a way to give positive recognition. Working in this industry can sometimes be very stressful and to do it

without damages and missing time is a feat that deserves rewarding. I truly believe that this program has helped the construction industry take locate technicians more seriously and shed light on just how important their job is. I am proud to be the person designated for UtiliQuest to nominate the techs. I am truly an advocate for the technicians and appreciate the job they do in total damage prevention," says Kay Bixby of UtiliQuest.

At each level of the program achieved, the awards become more appealing for the participant. In the five years Locate Excellence has been in existence, hats, shirts, jackets and other apparel are some of the awards earned. This program goes a step further in providing a variety of awards, such as Leatherman multi-tools, watches, leather bags and portable DVD players, to name a few.

"As the chairman of Locate Excellence, I have the honor of presenting the awards to participants throughout the state. The gratitude and, at times, surprise of the technicians to receive this type of recognition emphasizes the effectiveness of this program," says Holly Files.

No program can attain any measure of successes without supporters and sponsors. Locate Excellence is thankful to the following companies. Without their belief in a concept like Locate Excellence, the ground gained in damage prevention would not be possible: The new AT&T, Atlanta Gas Light, Georgia Power Co., Georgia Utility Coordinating Council and the Utilities Protection Center.

For more information about Locate Excellence or to become a sponsor, contact Holly Files at [hfiles@gaupc.com](mailto:hfiles@gaupc.com) or (404) 538-6648.

*UPC Locate Excellence Chairman Holly Files presenting awards at STS/UtiliQuest in Doraville. Picture with her are Maria Watson, Locate Technician and Randy Puckett Locate Manager*



# ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG



One free, easy call gets your utility lines marked AND helps protect you from injury and expense.

**Safe Digging Is No Accident:  
Always Call 811 Before You Dig**

Know what's below. Always call 811 before you dig.  
Visit [www.gaupc.com](http://www.gaupc.com) for more information.



Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.



**Utilities**  
PROTECTION CENTER

800-282-7411