

# USANorth Damage Prevention Update

Know what's below. Call before you dig.

## **Common Ground Best Practices:**

In August of 1998, the Federal DOT authorized a Common Ground Study of One-Call Systems and Damage Prevention Best Practices Study to be done. The purpose of the Study was to identify and validate existing Best Practices performed in connection with damage prevention to underground facilities. The collected Best Practices were intended to be shared among stakeholders involved with, and dependent upon, the safe and reliable operation, maintenance, construction, and protection of underground facilities. These Best Practices contain validated experiences that can be further examined and evaluated for possible incorporation into state and private stakeholder underground facility damage prevention programs.

The Common Ground Study produced an unprecedented collection of Best Practices in one-call and damage prevention programs. These practices address key elements of successful damage prevention programs for underground facilities including: stakeholder communication while planning construction activities; accessibility of one-call centers; accurate locating and marking; safe digging throughout excavation; education and enforcement to facilitate compliance; marketing strategies to enhance public education; and effective reporting and evaluation of damage prevention programs.

In August of 1999 the Common Ground study was completed and in 2000 the Common Ground Alliance (CGA) was created as a member-driven association dedicated to ensuring public safety, environmental protection, and the integrity of services by promoting effective damage prevention practices and carrying on the Common Ground Best Practices. In recent

years, the association has established itself as the leading organization in an effort to reduce damages to all underground facilities in North America through shared responsibility among *all* stakeholders. The CGA has identified 15 stakeholders that currently consist of: Excavators, Locators, Road Builders, Electric, Telecommunications, Oil, Gas, Railroads, Water, One Call, Public Works, Equipment Manufacturing, State Regulators, Insurance and Engineering/Design. The CGA is looking into expanding the list of stakeholders to include Emergency Responders. All across the country the Best Practices are being introduced into One-Call Legislation. Understanding and conforming to the Best Practices will help you avoid problems in the future whether you are an excavator or an operator of underground facilities. Go to Common Ground Alliance's website at [www.commongroundalliance.com](http://www.commongroundalliance.com) for further information.

## **Regional CGA Committees:**

In an effort to identify and attempt to rectify issues in Damage Prevention, USA North established two State Regional CGA Committees. In California, there is the California Regional Common Ground Alliance Committee (CRCGA) and in Nevada there is the Nevada Regional Common Ground Alliance Committee (NRCGA). This group of stakeholders has agreed that Damage Prevention is a shared responsibility. Both committees have been responsible for new legislation introduced into the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 455 and California Government Code (CGC) 4216 over the last several years. Join the appropriate committee and help form Damage Prevention in the future. Contact us at [USANorthDPUpdate@usan.org](mailto:USANorthDPUpdate@usan.org) the

committees are open to all stakeholders identified by the CGA.

## **Regional CGA Action:**

The NRCGA introduced several changes in the NRS and NAC 455.

- NRS 455.131 Requires all underground facilities to be made locatable.
- NRS 455.133 Operators of underground facilities are to use the CGA Best Practices Marking Guidelines.
- NAC 455.115 Excavators are required to use the CGA Best Practices Marking Guidelines.
- NAC 455.165 Provides information on how a ticket can be extended.
- NAC 455.170 Presents how a ticket can be renewed.

The CRCGA has introduced changes in the CGC 4216.

- CGC 4216. (e) Identifies High Priority Subsurface Installations (HPSI)
- CGC 4216 (i) Requires that a "Qualified Person" be a person who meets the minimum training guidelines and practices of the CGA current Best Practices.
- 4216.2. (a) Provides special requirements for operators of HPSI and excavators when working within 10' of a HPSI
- CGC 4216.3.(a) (2) States only "Qualified Persons" can locate surface installations

To obtain copies of NV or CA Excavator Manuals, call USA North at 1-925-798-9504 ext 0. All changes to the respective legislation or regulation are underlined in the appropriate Excavation Manual.

## **CalOSHA Changes Section 1541:**

CalOSHA has introduced the changes to Title 8, Chapter 4, Subchapter 4, Article 6, Section 1541

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the effective date of the regulation is March 31, 2007. The CRCGA has worked with CalOSHA since June of 2005 to modify the language changes to 1541. This regulation is more consistent with CGC 4216 with a few exceptions.

The major differences between 1541 and CGC 4216 are as follows:

- 1541 (b) (1) (A) 1 & 2 States that no excavation work shall commence until 1) the excavator has marked the excavation area in white and 2) the excavator has received a positive response from all known operator of subsurface installation, (positive response is when the operators provide the excavator with the location of their underground facility, operators mark/stake the horizontal path of their underground facilities for the excavator or the operator notified of the excavation notifies the excavator that they have no facility at the excavation site).
- 1541 (b) (1) (D) CalOSHA now requires that all employees exposed to excavation hazards be training in 1541 and CGC 4216.

Note: To obtain a copy of this regulation, go to [www.usanorth.org](http://www.usanorth.org) and select the "Marking Guidelines and the Law" link. Then select the downloadable version in PDF format by selecting "California Marking Guidelines and the Law". The California Excavation Manual will be reprinted in December of 2007 when current legislation changes have been completed.

## Suggested Changes to NRS 455:

The Nevada Legislature passed SB 396 which modifies NRS 455, the Nevada One-Call Law. The three areas that have been revised are as follows:

- NRS 455.082 changes the approximate location of a subsurface installation from 30" to 24".
- NRS 455.110 1 (a) changes 14 calendar days to 28 calendar days.
- NRS 455.160; 455.170 1. & 4. removes the "A commissioner", "legal counsel for", and an employee who is engaged in regulatory operators" respectively and replaces them with The regulatory Operations Staff.

To view SB 396 click on the link <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/74th/Reports/history.cfm?ID=964>

Another area of SB 396 still under discussion is.

- NRS 455.101 adds the words "service laterals" to Subsurface Installation description.

The legislature has asked that this section be reviewed by the industry and when there is consensus in the excavating community represented by the NRCGA that it be brought back for consideration by the legislature.

## Damage Prevention Event List:



The DPC Conference will be held December 5 & 6, 2007 at the Las Vegas Hilton in Las Vegas, NV. If you would like to attend this conference just click on the link below and register.

<http://www.damageprevention.com/damage/index.po>



The CGA Conference will be held March, 2008 at the San Diego Convention Center, in San Diego, CA. If you would like to attend this conference just click on the link below and register.

<http://www.cgaconference.com/registration/register.php>.

## 811 Introduction:



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On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 **811** was introduced from our Nation's Capitol. 811 is the new Damage Prevention number to notify the Damage Prevention Centers where you are excavating in our Nation. When dialing 811 from a land line you will be connected automatically to the Damage Prevention Center where you are calling from. It can be a little different when you dial 811 from your cell phone, if your cell site is within the area where you are excavating then you will be connected to the Damage Prevention Center. However, if the cell site is located outside the area you are excavating in you will be connected to that Damage Prevention Center. The best way to overcome this situation is to maintain 800-227-2600 for Central & Northern California and all of the State of Nevada in your cell phone speed-dial to make sure you connect to the correct Damage Prevention Center. The damage prevention service USA North provides is a free service to the excavating community. The issue of marking your excavation site prior to you calling USA North is important and will gather greater attention by enforcement agencies in the future so mark your site in white and make

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sure that if your request re-marks that your site is still marked in white.

## **Excavation Tips:**

Prior to starting an excavation, examine the excavation site for physical evidence (manholes, valve covers, water meters, sewer cleanouts, vaults, utility maintenance boxes, pole risers, etc) that would indicate the existence of underground facilities. Always excavate, as cautiously and prudently as possible.

USA North accepts calls for excavation work on public or private property, on Military Bases, on Indigenous People's Reservations and even on waterways within our coverage area.

Our members will provide information about the location, mark or stake the horizontal path, or provide clearance for facilities that they own. Excavators should be aware that there could be other facilities of the same type at the excavation site owned by the property owner or another company who is not a member of USA North.

When working on private properties the excavator should determine what facilities belong to the property owner; (water, well, sewer, septic tanks, gas, propane lines, electrical, etc.) and what easement(s) may exist on the property, if any. In general, ownership of underground facilities transfers to the property owner behind the curb, behind the sidewalk, clean out, at the meter or point of entry.

USA North notifies only its members of your excavation work, for your safety you should notify any non-member.

Contractors must call USA North anywhere they excavate with hand tools or power operated or power driven equipment in California while in Nevada, a contractor

must call us anytime they use power operated or power driven equipment.

In Nevada we strongly recommend that excavators call USA North even when using hand tools. While you may not be liable for a fine under NRS 455, you will be liable for damages to the subsurface installations and 3<sup>rd</sup> party damages.

## **Introducing IRTHNet:**

Keeping in step with the most advanced technology available in the industry, USA North has adopted the IRTHNet program, and is offering it FREE to all of our members. IRTHNet is a web based damage prevention ticket management solution that offers a number of valuable services. The user friendly system is easily customizable, cost effective, and secure. This replacement for the old system makes managing your tickets simple and easy.

The IRTHNet system uses an interface similar to most popular applications, making it recognizable and easy to navigate. With interactive drop down menus and built in wizards, the system virtually walks you through every step of the process. IRTHNet requires no special hardware or software additions. The entire system is accessed through the web. Any PC with Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher can utilize the latest version of IRTHNet automatically.

IRTHNet can grow with you. As you expand into new areas, or existing laws change making Positive Response mandatory, you will not have to change the way you work. The system will accommodate all industry wide changes and allow you to not change your day to day operations.

IRTHNet can streamline the process of effectively locating and responding to requests through it's

easy to use automated features. Automation of renewal or re-mark requests is simple and can free up valuable time. The system also allows you to set up user groups for specific tasks, such as a ticket research group or a locating group. Once you set the permission for the group their work space is customized for maximum efficiency every time the user logs in.

All of the data and software reside on our secure servers and is mirrored by a second secure server operated by the systems facilitator. This ensures the privacy and security of the site and its content. All transmissions are automatically monitored, and a history of each ticket is kept in the notes section on all tickets. Also the data is solely retrievable through the web, so only your users can receive your information strictly through their unique log in and password.

IRTHNet puts the control of damage prevention into the hands of the members, with better ways to manage tickets, online, and around the clock. Best of all the system is offered FREE through USA North. Including free training and free, full ITS support.

If you are interested in learning more about IRTHNet click on IRTHNet information under On-Line Services in the menu bar at [www.usanorth.org](http://www.usanorth.org).

## **Please Contact Us:**

If you have suggestions contact us via Email at:

[USANorthDPUpdate@usan.org](mailto:USANorthDPUpdate@usan.org).

Or by mail at:

USA North DP Update  
4090 Nelson Avenue Suite A  
Concord CA 94520-1232

Let us know what issues you would like to see the newsletter address.

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## USA North Administration:

### Center's Office Number

All Extensions - - - - 925-798-9504

### Administration Assistant

Linda Whitley - - - - - ext 0

### Operations Department

Leah Keyes, Lynda Bloxsom & Voltaire Lerma - ext 1

### Operations / Public Relations Manager

Don Heyer - - - - - ext 4

### General Manager

Mike Heyer - - - - - ext 5

### Public Relations Support

Patrice Heyer - - - - - ext 6

### Public Relations Assistant

Clarence Johnson - - - - - ext 7

### IT Manager / Operations Supervisor

Chris Brassart - - - - - ext 8

### Bookkeeper

Tonie Ibarra - - - - - ext 9

### IRTHNet Tech Support

Vladimir Lerma & Joey West - - - ext 2309

### Mailing Address:

4090 Nelson Avenue Suite A  
Concord CA 94520-1232

Fax: 925-798-9506

Email: [usanorth@usan.org](mailto:usanorth@usan.org)

Website: [www.usanorth.org](http://www.usanorth.org)

## USA North's Coverage Area:

Central & Northern California: Alameda, Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Marin, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Benito, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo and Yuba.

Nevada: Carson City, Churchill, Clark, Douglas, Elko, Esmeralda, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lincoln, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, Pershing, Storey, Washoe, and White Pine.

## 2007 Federal and State Holiday Schedule

Holidays	Date	State	Center
<u>New Years Day</u>	01/01/07	CA/NV	Closed
<u>Martin Luther King's</u>	01/15/07	CA/NV	Open
<u>Lincoln's</u>	02/12/07	CA	Open
<u>President's Day</u>	02/19/07	CA/NV	Closed
<u>Cesar Chavez Day</u>	03/30/07	CA	Open
<u>Memorial Day</u>	05/28/07	CA/NV	Closed
<u>Independence Day</u>	07/04/07	CA/NV	Closed
<u>Labor Day</u>	09/03/07	CA/NV	Closed
<u>Columbus Day</u>	10/08/07	CA	Open
<u>Nevada Day</u>	10/26/07	NV	Open
<u>Veteran's Day</u>	11/12/07	CA/NV	Open
<u>Thanksgiving Day</u>	11/22/07	CA/NV	Closed
<u>Family Day</u>	11/23/07	CA/NV	Closed
<u>Christmas Day</u>	12/25/07	CA/NV	Closed

### Note:

Federal holidays are printed in red and State holidays are printed in blue (the State that observes the holiday is listed under the State column). Both California and Nevada One-Call Laws, do not allow Federal or State Holidays to be included as part of the two working day notice for the excavation notification. Holidays falling on a Saturday will be observed on the Friday before and holidays falling on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. Excluding the eight (8) holidays underlined above the Center's hours are:

**Operations Hours; M-F** 6:00a.m. to 7:00p.m.  
**Office Hours; M-F** 7:30a.m. to 4:30p.m.

### Important Web Links:

- ◆ American Public Works Association – [www.apwa.net](http://www.apwa.net)
- ◆ California Law – [www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/calawquery?codesection=gov&codebody=4216&hits=20](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/calawquery?codesection=gov&codebody=4216&hits=20)
- ◆ Common Ground Alliance – [www.commongroundalliance.com](http://www.commongroundalliance.com)
- ◆ Dig Safely – [www.digsafely.com](http://www.digsafely.com)
- ◆ Office of Pipeline Safety – <http://ops.dot.gov/>
- ◆ Nevada Law – [www.leg.state.nv.us/NRS/NRS-455.html](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/NRS/NRS-455.html)
- ◆ USA North – [www.usanorth.org](http://www.usanorth.org)