

Gold Shovel Association Announces Pre-Excavation Standards

Mapping, Locate & Mark Activities Added to Damage Prevention Certification Program

TEMPE, AZ, UNITED STATES, August 11, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Gold Shovel Association](#) Announces Pre-Excavation Standards Mapping, Locate & Mark Activities Added to Damage Prevention Certification Program

In connection with National 811 Day, the Gold Shovel Association today announced expansion of the organization's damage prevention certification program to include specific policies, procedures, and performance metrics for locating, marking and mapping underground infrastructure. The program expansion also includes technology platform updates to collect, report and share performance metrics.

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Mel Christopher

“The Gold Shovel Association is working hard to make communities safer by reducing damages to underground utility infrastructure,” says Josh Hinrichs, Gold Shovel Association board chair and president of ELM Companies. “Implementing meaningful certifications and standardized performance metrics for mapping, locating and marking activities is the next critical step to achieving this goal and recognizes the excavator as the primary customer in these processes,” he added.

The new standards for facility owners and contract locate entities include requirements for written policies and procedures that encourage the use of Subsurface Utility Engineering (SUE) by facility owners during project planning, incorporate Common Ground Alliance best practices



Gold Shovel ASSOCIATION

Gold Shovel Association Logo

and Nulca competency standards for locating and marking facilities, resolve issues related to problem locates, and facilitate information sharing regarding mapping accuracy and discrepancies. The program also standardizes definitions and data collection and sharing for performance metrics including on-time locates, quality of locate and mark activities, mapping accuracy and timeliness of mapping updates.

“We can only meet our goal of zero damages when we work together to ensure safety at every step in the process,” says Mel Christopher, executive director of the Gold Shovel Association. “The certification program and metrics for pre-excavation activities combined with our existing excavation program provide a full end-to-end view of the damage prevention process and align with a safety management approach to continuous improvement.”

Today’s announcement celebrates more than three years of cross-industry collaboration by the Association’s [Pre-Excavation Committee](#). The committee utilized a consensus process involving excavation companies, contract locate and mark entities, facility owners and other damage prevention industry experts to develop and pilot the program certification requirements and performance metrics.

Pre-Excavation Committee members include representatives from Duke Energy (NYSE: DUK), Dominion Resources, Southwest Gas (NYSE: SWX), Washington Gas, UGI Utilities, Inc., PECO, ELM Companies, UtiliQuest, USIC, Vannguard Utility Partners, MasTec, West Valley Construction, Charge/Accu-Bore, Michels Corporation, Delmarva and Sempra Utilities. The pre-excavation program was approved by the Gold Shovel Association Board last month.

The Gold Shovel Association will host a webinar on August 19 to discuss key elements of the expanded certification program. Register for the webinar at <https://bit.ly/GoldShovel-Aug19>.

About Gold Shovel Association

The Gold Shovel Association is a member-driven, non-profit organization with more than 1,600 members who are committed to improving workforce and public safety by reducing damages to underground utility infrastructure. The Association facilitates continuous safety improvement and reduces environmental harm by providing meaningful damage prevention certifications and standardized performance metrics. Learn more about the Gold Shovel Association and its signature certification program, the Gold Shovel Standard, at goldshovelstandard.org

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