

Underground Damage Occurs Once Every 60 Seconds

Statistics You Can't Afford to Ignore

It happens every 60 seconds - an underground utility is hit or damaged. The result can range from a minor headache to the loss of 911 and other vital services, and in extreme cases, loss of life. When these scenarios do occur, damage claims and lawsuits can develop.

What happened? Why? What can be done in the future to prevent this type of accident?

The Common Ground Alliance (CGA), a member-driven organization dedicated to damage prevention and underground safety, offers a tool to help answer these questions. Damage Information Reporting Tool (DIRT) is a free, online tool to help improve damage prevention through collection and analysis of underground facility event data. The CGA defines a facility event as facility damage, a near-miss, or excavator downtime. A near-miss is defined as a facility event where underground facility damage did not occur, but where a clear potential for damage was identified.

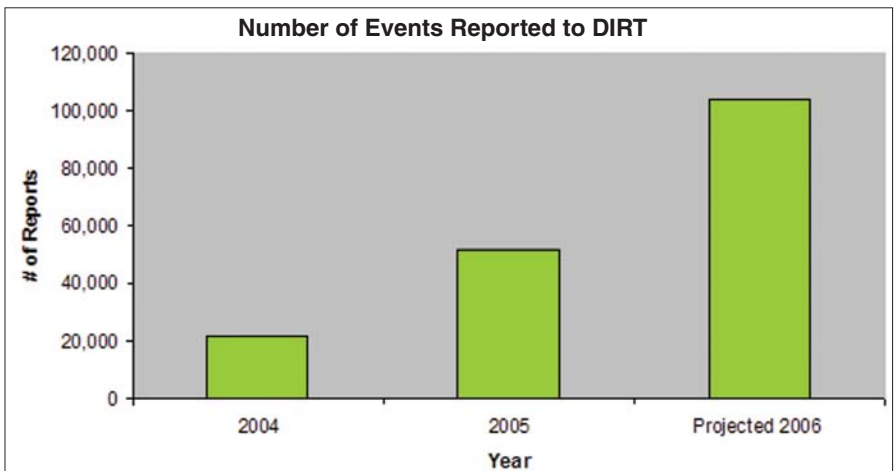
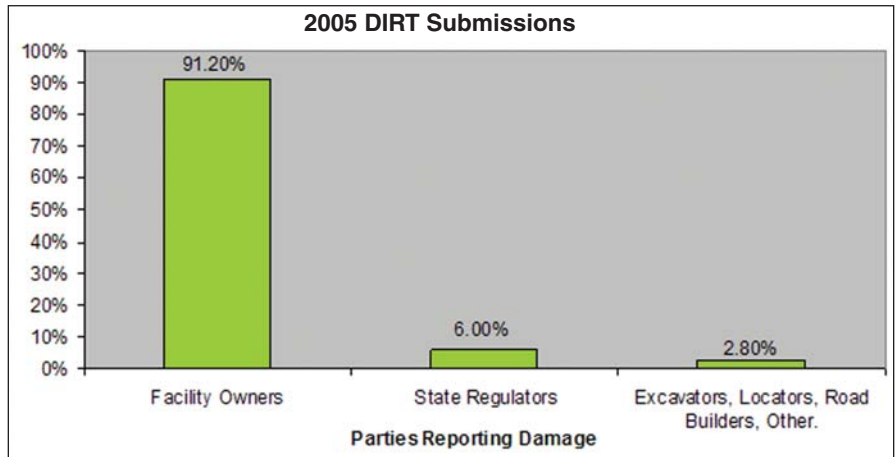
The ultimate goal of DIRT is to identify the root cause of facility events and, in turn, eventually help reduce the number of events. Reducing underground damages helps ensure worker and public safety, protects property and the environment, reduces construction downtime and prevents costly service outages.

Who should use DIRT?

The CGA urges all parties involved in excavation and underground work to collect damage and other underground facility event data and to report it via DIRT (www.cga-dirt.com). This includes excavators and facility owners. Facility events may be entered anonymously and at no charge. The information is added to the national clearinghouse of data that is analyzed annually by the CGA DIRT Committee.

DIRT is a web-based software application used to collect and report underground facility event data on a national basis. As a result, the DIRT tool can be used to help educate stakeholders, and improve practices and procedures to reduce future underground events including damages and construction downtime.

Since its inception in Nov. 2003, DIRT has consistently gained momentum. In its first year of operation in 2004, users entered more than 21,000 entries. In 2005, it



contained over 51,000 reports and the 2006 data should contain about 104,000 entries. The 2006 statistics will be released at the CGA annual meeting held in conjunction with the CGA Excavation Safety Conference and Expo March 25-27, 2008 in Las Vegas.

The DIRT program is a product of the CGA's Data Reporting and Evaluation Committee. This volunteer-based group is comprised of members from one-call organizations, locating companies, contractors, data/technical personnel and underground utility facility stakeholders. The Data Reporting and Evaluation committee meets on a quarterly basis. It has recently combined forces with the CGA Educational Programs & Membership, Marketing & Communications (EdMMC) committee to help promote DIRT.

Types of information collected

DIRT is used to report facility events. Because every type of facility event can help data analysis, it is important that all incidences of underground facility disturbances are reported, including near-misses, nicks, and minor damages, as well as the root cause of the event (i.e., no call for locate, etc.). It is also important to report construction downtime that may be caused by inaccurate or untimely marking and locating.

The data from DIRT is not used for regulatory enforcement purposes or to determine liability; identities of the involved parties are kept confidential.

The first and most important part of reporting is collecting the data. Computer access at the site is not required; the damage can be recorded on a standard form and

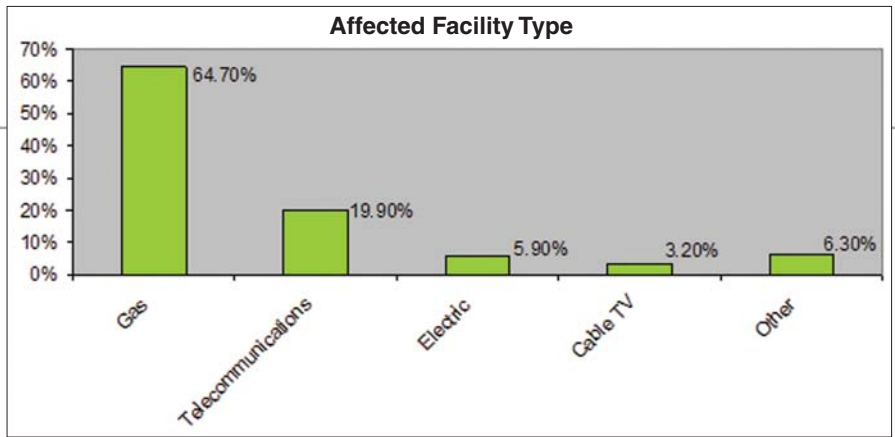
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uploaded to DIRT at a later time. Visit the DIRT website (www.cga-dirt.com) to download the standard DIRT report form or to learn more about online submission options including bulk upload of large quantities of data.

The ultimate outcome of DIRT is to assist in underground utility damage prevention efforts. DIRT provides one central location to gather national data on facility events, thereby creating a more uniform reporting structure.

The increased use of DIRT reporting will:

- Provide more accurate statistics – the more data submitted, the more accurate the final report;
- Provide a larger set of baseline data for long-term trend analysis;
- Increase consistency of data reports across stakeholders/industries;
- Increase awareness of the importance of damage prevention;
- Increase awareness of the importance of root cause analysis and incident follow-up; and
- Provide one-call and other organizations involved in excavation with targeted topics and targeted audiences for education campaigns.



Virtual Private DIRT allows organizations to record and analyze facility event data within their organization, as well as share the information with the national database, all through a web interface, not a separate application on the user's desktop. Virtual Private DIRT is accessible through a unique web address and can be customized with the look and feel of the organization.

Examples of companies currently using Virtual Private DIRT include Alabama One Call, Tennessee One Call and the North American Telecommunications Damage Prevention Council (NTDPC).

Kathie Fournier, executive director for Michigan's MISS DIG System, is planning an effort to increase the use of DIRT in 2008

for the Michigan stakeholders.

Miss Dig will encourage Michigan stakeholders to use DIRT by:

- Marketing DIRT and educating the workforce on submission procedures;
- Providing hard-copy versions of the DIRT report form to workers in the field – including excavator operators, locators and stakeholders; and
- MISS DIG may offer assistance to small one-call members in inputting report data.

For more information:

DIRT: www.cga-dirt.com

Common Ground Alliance:

commongroundalliance.com