

UNDERGROUND NEWS

SUMMER 2026

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER:

JUST AN INCH MORE - LET'S MAKE IT BETTER



Throughout our lives, it seems that perfection can never be achieved but we can strive for excellence. That measure of difference between something being “good” and the same thing becoming “excellent” is usually another inch of effort beyond what was required to make it good. If it is only another inch of effort, why do so many of us stop at “good”? It is likely because that extra inch of effort to achieve excellence takes another level of **EFFORT** that we may, or may not, be willing to give.

However, when it comes to the Missouri ticketing system, damage prevention, and public safety, this is **EXACTLY** what prevents us from achieving excellence. Here are some examples:

- It's easier to simply provide a response on the ticket rather than providing a complete picture, which would include your response coupled with your GIS mapping data. To do this, utility owners must first set up an interface that allows Missouri 811 to read the GIS data.

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- It's easier to submit multiple tickets well in advance because I'm worried they won't be marked in time than it is to use Advanced Ticketing and schedule them for when the work is actually ready to begin.
- It's easier to clear my ticket than it is to mark the infrastructure because I believe it's cheaper to repair the damage than it is to pay someone to mark it. At least, I think so.

We at Missouri 811 take the pursuit of excellence seriously and apply it to ourselves. We are constantly looking for ways to make that ticketing system excellent, not just good. Here are some of the improvements we have implemented or are still working through:

- Adding excavators on our Board of Directors so we can work better to serve all stakeholders through collaboration rather than relying solely on legislative changes.
- The Project Coordination Tool is about to launch and will allow you to post your long-term projects and collaborate with others to coordinate right-of-way work.
- We are discussing ways to improve the locate response process for everyone rather than forcing larger projects into a two-day locating window.
- We are discussing ways to structure the system for contractors and subcontractors do not have to submit the same ticket.

If you have ideas on how to make the Missouri 811 system better, we want to hear them. Share them with the Operating Committee at operationschair@missouri-811.org or any Missouri 811 employee. That includes me...You can email me at rnorden@missouri-811.org

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S ROLE IN ENFORCING MISSOURI'S ONE CALL LAW: EMPOWERING ACCOUNTABILITY



The Missouri Attorney General plays a critical role in upholding the Missouri Underground Facility Safety and Damage Prevention Act, commonly known as the One Call Law (RSMo Chapter 319.010 to 319.050). This law is designed to prevent damage to underground utilities and protect public safety by ensuring proper communication between excavators and utility owners before digging occurs.

A LEGAL AUTHORITY FOR SAFER EXCAVATION

Enforcement of the One Call Law is more than just a deterrent; it is an active safeguard for workers, communities, and infrastructure. The Attorney General's Office is empowered to investigate and take legal action against both excavators and utility owners who fail to comply with the law. Depending on the nature and severity of the violation, outcomes can range from official warning letters to legal penalties.

Missouri 811 collaborates with the Attorney General's One Call Enforcement Unit to ensure that each reported violation is properly reviewed and addressed. Together, they work to uphold the integrity of the state's damage prevention system.

SUBMIT VIOLATIONS FROM THE MISSOURI 811 WEBSITE DIRECTLY TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

A major enhancement to the enforcement process now gives stakeholders an easier and more direct way to report potential violations.

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The updated Missouri 811 Enforcement webpage (<https://missouri-811.org/enforcement/>) features a “Report a Violation” section that allows users to submit online forms for:

Excavator Violations

- No call made prior to excavation
- Inadequate notice or information
- Misuse of emergency locate requests

Utility Owner Violations

- These may include failures to respond to locate requests or provide accurate information about underground facilities.

Once submitted, these forms go directly to both Missouri 811 and the Attorney General’s Office, enabling faster review and potential action. This streamlined reporting process is designed to empower all industry stakeholders, including contractors, utility companies, municipal crews, and citizens, to play an active role in damage prevention enforcement.

SUPPORTING RESOURCES AND TEMPLATES

To make the reporting process even easier, Missouri 811 provides downloadable templates for various violation types. These include step-by-step instructions, common violation descriptions, and checklists to help ensure that all

essential information is documented. Reporters are encouraged to include key details such as:

- Date and time of the incident
- Location and address
- Names of involved parties or companies
- Photos or other visual evidence when available



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These details greatly enhance the Attorney General's ability to act on submitted complaints.

A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

The One Call Law only works when everyone plays their part. Missouri 811 encourages all stakeholders to remain vigilant and proactive. Whether you're an excavator, utility owner, or simply a concerned citizen, your observations and reports matter.

By working together and with support from the Missouri Attorney General, we can maintain a safer and more accountable excavation environment across the state.

**COULD YOUR
UTILITY REDUCE
LOCATE
REQUESTS BY
UP TO 40%?**



Every locate request requires time, attention, and resources. Whether your organization performs locates in-house or contracts with a third-party locator, receiving excavation notices that are nowhere near your facilities creates unnecessary work and added expense.

Some Missouri 811 member utilities using centerline-based notification areas have reported reductions in locate notifications of up to 40 percent. For a utility receiving 5,000 locate requests annually, that could mean approximately 2,000 fewer tickets to review, process, and respond to. At an estimated cost of \$50 per locate request, the potential annual savings could approach \$100,000 annually.

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Beyond the financial savings, fewer unnecessary notifications allow utility personnel and contract locators to focus their time and attention on excavation activity that actually poses a risk to their infrastructure.

One of the most effective ways to improve notification accuracy is by using centerline-based notification area polygons.

WHAT ARE NOTIFICATION AREA POLYGONS?

Every Missouri 811 member utility has notification area polygons on file. These polygons define the geographic areas where a utility receives excavation notifications.

Many utilities use broad boundary polygons that outline an entire service territory. While this approach helps ensure all facilities are protected, it can also result in receiving tickets for excavation activity that is nowhere near actual underground infrastructure.

A more precise approach is to create notification area polygons using centerline data.

Centerline data represents the mapped location of underground facilities such as electric, natural gas, water, sewer, and communications lines. By creating a buffer around those mapped facilities, utilities can establish notification areas that more accurately reflect where infrastructure actually exists.

Many utilities use a combination of approaches. For example, a utility may use broader boundary polygons in rapidly developing areas while relying on centerline-based polygons in established areas where facility locations are well documented.

WHY USE CENTERLINE-BASED NOTIFICATION AREAS?

When notification areas are based on centerline data, excavation notices can be routed more accurately to the utilities that actually have facilities in the area.

Benefits include:

- Fewer locate requests that do not affect your facilities
- Reduced workload for utility staff and contract locators

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- More efficient use of locating resources
- Improved focus on excavation activity occurring near actual infrastructure
- Reduced labor, vehicle, fuel, and administrative costs
- Better allocation of staff time and contractor resources

Every unnecessary locate request consumes resources that could be spent elsewhere. Centerline-based notification areas help ensure your organization is dedicating its time and budget to excavation activity that truly requires a response.

HOW THE PROCESS WORKS

Creating centerline-based notification areas is relatively straightforward.

Using GIS software, a utility can create a buffer around its facility centerlines. Buffer sizes commonly range from 20 feet to 300 feet depending on several factors, including:

- Urban versus rural locations
- Type of utility infrastructure
- Accuracy of the centerline data
- The utility's preferred level of protection

Once the buffer polygons have been created, they can be submitted to OCC for processing.

The most common file format is a shapefile, including the following files:

- .shp
- .shx
- .dbf
- .prj

OCC can also accept:

- KML
- KMZ
- GDB files



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Utilities may submit:

- A complete replacement of existing notification areas (statewide or by county), or
- Additions to existing notification areas

After submission, OCC processes the data and uploads it to IMAP, the online mapping application, where it can be reviewed and approved.

DON'T HAVE BUFFERING CAPABILITIES?

If your utility has centerline data but does not have the ability to create buffers, OCC can help.

Simply submit your centerline files and indicate the desired buffer size. OCC can create the notification area polygons on your behalf.

This service makes it easier for utilities of all sizes to take advantage of centerline-based notification areas, even if they do not have advanced GIS resources available internally.

KEEP YOUR NOTIFICATION AREAS CURRENT

The effectiveness of centerline-based notification areas depends on keeping them up to date.

As systems expand and new facilities are installed, notification areas should be updated to ensure excavation notices continue to be routed appropriately.

How often should updates occur? The answer depends on your system and growth rate.

Utilities with little or no expansion may only need to review their notification areas annually. Utilities that regularly install new infrastructure may need to submit updates monthly, quarterly, or as changes occur.

As a best practice, Missouri 811 members should review their notification areas at least once each year to verify they accurately reflect current

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infrastructure. Utilities should also ensure their Mapping/GIS contact information remains current in the Missouri 811 Member Portal so mapping updates can be coordinated efficiently.

NEED ASSISTANCE?

For questions about centerline data, notification area polygons, or submitting mapping files, contact:

OCC Mapping Department
mapping@occinc.com
573-636-1552

Accurate notification areas help ensure excavation notices are routed to the utilities that truly need them. The result is fewer unnecessary tickets, lower locating costs, more efficient use of resources, and better protection of Missouri's underground infrastructure.

DIG UP TICKETS - EXPANDED TICKET STATUS COMMUNICATION



Missouri 811 continues to improve communication between utility operators and excavators with the expansion of status code functionality to Dig Up Tickets.

For years, status codes have provided a valuable way for utility operators to communicate marking information and ticket updates on locate requests. Now, similar status communication capabilities are available for Dig Up Tickets, giving excavators greater visibility into the status of utility responses following a reported damage event.

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When a Dig Up Ticket is submitted, all utility operators listed on the ticket are notified of the reported damage. The new status code options allow utilities to communicate the outcome of their investigation directly through the Missouri 811 system, creating a more transparent and documented process for everyone involved.

NEW DIG UP TICKET STATUS CODES

Utility operators can now select from the following status codes when responding to a Dig Up Ticket:

1. Utility Acknowledges Active Facility Damaged

The utility has investigated the reported damage and confirmed that an active facility was damaged.

2. Utility Acknowledges Abandoned Facility Damaged

The utility has investigated the reported damage and confirmed that an abandoned facility was damaged.

3. Utility Observes No Damage to Facilities

The utility has investigated the reported damage and determined that none of its facilities were damaged.

4. Utility Acknowledges Receipt of Damage Notification

The utility has received the damage notification and acknowledges awareness of the reported incident, but an investigation has not yet been completed.

BENEFITS FOR UTILITY OPERATORS

The addition of status code communication to Dig Up Tickets helps improve the flow of information between utilities and excavators while providing better documentation of utility responses.

MISSOURI 811 **NEW DIG UP CODES**
FOR DAMAGE INVESTIGATION RESPONSES

1 UTILITY ACKNOWLEDGES ACTIVE FACILITY DAMAGED	2 UTILITY ACKNOWLEDGES ABANDONED FACILITY DAMAGED	3 UTILITY OBSERVES NO DAMAGE TO FACILITIES	4 UTILITY ACKNOWLEDGES RECEIPT OF DAMAGE NOTIFICATION
			
The utility has investigated the reported damage and confirmed that an active facility was damaged.	The utility has investigated the reported damage and confirmed that an abandoned facility was damaged.	The utility has investigated the reported damage and determined that none of its facilities were damaged.	The utility has received the damage notification and acknowledges awareness of the reported incident, but an investigation has not yet been completed.

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By utilizing these status codes, utility operators can:

- Confirm receipt of damage notifications.
- Communicate investigation findings more efficiently.
- Reduce uncertainty regarding the status of a reported incident.
- Improve transparency between utilities and excavators.
- Create a documented record of responses within the Missouri 811 system.

For excavators, the enhancement provides greater visibility into utility responses and reduces the need for follow-up calls to determine whether a utility has received or investigated a damage report.

SUPPORTING DAMAGE PREVENTION EFFORTS

Clear communication is a critical component of effective damage prevention. By expanding status code communication to Dig Up Tickets, Missouri 811 is helping utilities and excavators share information more efficiently and work together to resolve damage incidents quickly and accurately.

Utility members are encouraged to review the new status code options and incorporate them into their damage response procedures to help improve communication and support safer excavation throughout Missouri.

For questions about Dig Up Ticket status codes or other Missouri 811 ticket management features, Visit www.missouri-811.org



THE HUB OF DAMAGE PREVENTION



For many people, Missouri 811 begins with a locate request. But that's only one part of the damage prevention process.

Behind every successful excavation is education, communication, and collaboration. That's where Missouri 811's Damage Prevention team comes in.

Known as the Hub of Damage Prevention, this team serves as a statewide resource for homeowners, excavators, utility members, locators, municipalities, engineers, and anyone involved in protecting Missouri's underground infrastructure. Whether you need answers to a question, guidance on Missouri One Call law, or training for your organization, Missouri 811's Damage Prevention Specialists are here to help, all at no cost.

"We like to think of our team as the Hub of Damage Prevention. Whether you're a homeowner planting a tree, a contractor managing multiple crews, or a utility member with compliance questions, we're here to be your resource."

– Charlie Peel, Damage Prevention Manager



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TRAINING DESIGNED AROUND YOUR NEEDS

No two organizations face the same challenges. That's why Missouri 811 offers customized training rather than a one-size-fits-all presentation.

Whether you're onboarding new employees, reviewing recent law changes, improving excavation practices, or looking for a refresher on the ticketing process, the Damage Prevention team can tailor a training session specifically for your group.

Training is available:

- Onsite at your location
- Virtually
- In a classroom setting
- For groups of nearly any size

Best of all, these training opportunities are provided free of charge.

TOPICS THAT HELP PREVENT DAMAGES

Missouri 811's Damage Prevention Specialists provide education on a wide variety of topics, including:

- Missouri One Call law and compliance
- Excavation safety and best practices
- Locate requests and ticket management
- Utility marking standards
- Damage investigations
- Project coordination
- Membership onboarding
- Internet ticketing
- Reports and data management
- Homeowner education
- Attorney General enforcement process

Whether your employees are new to the industry or experienced professionals, ongoing education helps improve safety, reduce damages, and keep projects moving efficiently.

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LEARN LIVE OR ONLINE

Missouri 811 makes training convenient by offering both instructor-led and self-paced learning opportunities.

If your organization would benefit from a customized presentation, the Damage Prevention team can provide free onsite, virtual, or classroom training tailored to your needs.

Prefer to learn on your own schedule? Missouri 811 also offers a free online Learning Management System (LMS). The self-paced Damage Prevention Awareness Course takes approximately 90 minutes to complete and covers the entire excavation process—from planning and submitting a locate request to understanding utility markings and safe digging practices. Participants who successfully complete the course receive a Missouri 811 Damage Prevention Awareness Certificate of Achievement.

MEET YOUR LOCAL DAMAGE PREVENTION SPECIALIST

DAMAGE PREVENTION MANAGER
CHARLIE PEEL
573.721.7657

DAMAGE PREVENTION SPECIALISTS

- ANDREA FUHRER**
816.876.7330
- MIKE MOORE**
417.598.1815
- BILL MURRAY**
314.307.2122
- JOHN SPATAFORA**
573.220.2039

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One of the greatest strengths of Missouri 811's Damage Prevention team is that they're located throughout the state. Each specialist serves a specific region, providing local support and building relationships with the stakeholders they serve.

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Whether you need onsite training, help understanding Missouri One Call law, assistance with a damage prevention issue, or simply have a question, your regional Damage Prevention Specialist is just a phone call or email away.

GET STARTED TODAY

Whether you're looking to educate new employees, provide a refresher for experienced crews, or simply learn more about Missouri's damage prevention process, Missouri 811 offers free resources to help.

REQUEST A FREE CUSTOMIZED TRAINING SESSION:

<https://missouri-811.org/field-education-training/request-training/>

ACCESS MISSOURI 811'S FREE ONLINE LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS):

<https://mocs-dpacdn.talentlms.com/plus/>

Missouri 811's Damage Prevention team is committed to helping every stakeholder work safer, smarter, and more efficiently. Because when everyone has the knowledge they need, everyone is better equipped to prevent damages before they happen.



405 INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS TRAINED SO FAR IN 2026 JOIN US AT A MISSOURI 811 WORKSHOP



Missouri 811's Excavator and Utility Training Workshops continue to provide valuable education and networking opportunities for damage prevention professionals across the state.

Through the first three workshops of 2026, a total of 405 attendees have participated in Missouri 811's free training program, averaging approximately 135 attendees per event. The strong turnout reflects the industry's ongoing commitment to protecting underground infrastructure through education, communication, and collaboration.

For utility members, these workshops offer practical, real-world training that can help improve compliance, increase operational efficiency, reduce damages, and strengthen communication with excavators and locators. Whether you are responsible for utility locating, GIS mapping, operations, customer service, or regulatory compliance, the workshops provide valuable information you can immediately apply within your organization.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

The 2026 workshops feature a full day of training focused on utility operations, excavation safety, and Missouri One Call requirements. Attendees can choose from several educational sessions, including:

- Utility Mapping Class – Learn how effective utility mapping improves safety, operational efficiency, and locating accuracy.

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- How to Safely Pothole and Dig Around Utilities in the Tolerance Zone – Explore best practices for reducing risk when excavating near buried facilities.
- Utility Locator Training – Strengthen locating fundamentals and improve field accuracy.
- Understanding Missouri 811 One Call Law – Gain a practical understanding of Missouri’s excavation laws and compliance requirements.
- How to Perform a Proper Utility Damage Investigation – Learn how to document incidents, identify root causes, and protect your organization.
- Missouri 811 Membership Requirements and Responsibilities – Understand member obligations, including the importance of maintaining accurate maps and contact information.
- Missouri 811 Internet Ticketing – Learn how to efficiently submit and manage locate requests using Missouri 811’s online system.

WHY UTILITY MEMBERS ATTEND

Utility members consistently find value in the workshops because they provide:

- 6.5 DNR Continuing Education Credits (WT, WD, and WW)
- Practical training that can be applied immediately
- Updates on Missouri One Call law requirements
- Guidance on utility mapping and locating best practices
- Networking opportunities with industry peers
- Discussion of real-world damage prevention challenges

The workshops are especially beneficial for locate technicians, GIS personnel, engineers, operations staff, supervisors, city clerks, and primary points of contact responsible for Missouri 811 compliance.

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WHY EXCAVATORS AND LOCATORS ATTEND

These workshops aren't just for utility operators. Excavators, contractors, public works crews, and utility locators can also benefit from the practical, hands-on training offered throughout the day.

For excavators, sessions covering safe excavation practices, working within the tolerance zone, Missouri One Call law requirements, internet ticketing, and damage investigations provide valuable information that can help reduce risk, avoid costly damages, improve compliance, and enhance jobsite safety.

For utility locators, the workshops offer opportunities to strengthen locating fundamentals, improve field accuracy, better understand utility mapping practices, and stay current on Missouri One Call requirements. The training also promotes stronger communication between locators, excavators, and utility operators—an important component of successful damage prevention.

Attendees gain a better understanding of their responsibilities while learning proven practices that can be applied immediately in the field. The workshops also provide an opportunity to ask questions directly to Missouri 811 staff and network with utility operators, locators, excavators, and fellow industry professionals.

REMAINING 2026 WORKSHOP SCHEDULE



 AUGUST 5, 2026 Kirkville, Missouri Moose Lodge 2405 E. Illinois Street	 OCTOBER 6, 2026 Maryland Heights, Missouri Maryland Heights Community Center 2300 McKelvey Road	 DECEMBER 1, 2026 Sikeston, Missouri Miner Convention Center 2610 E. Malone Avenue
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 Each workshop runs from **8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** and is offered at **no cost** to attendees.

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REMAINING 2026 WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

August 5, 2026

Kirksville, Missouri

Moose Lodge

2405 E. Illinois Street

Register: [Workshop – Kirksville](#)

October 6, 2026

Maryland Heights, Missouri

Maryland Heights Community Center

2300 McKelvey Road

Register: [Workshop – Maryland Heights](#)

December 1, 2026

Sikeston, Missouri

Miner Convention Center

2610 E. Malone Avenue

Register: [Workshop – Sikeston](#)

Each workshop runs from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and is offered at no cost to attendees.

As excavation activity continues throughout Missouri, education remains one of the most effective tools for reducing utility damages, improving compliance, and protecting critical underground infrastructure.

Missouri 811 encourages utility members, excavators, and locators to take advantage of the remaining workshops and consider sending employees from multiple departments to maximize the value of the training.

Whether you're a locator, GIS specialist, operations manager, engineer, customer service representative, compliance contact, contractor, public works employee, or excavation professional, these workshops provide valuable insights that can help you work more safely and efficiently while supporting Missouri's shared commitment to damage prevention and public safety.

We look forward to seeing you at one of the remaining workshops this year.

UNDERGROUND NEWS

SUMMER 2026



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3 WORKING DAYS
BEFORE
YOU DIG



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