**Department of Transportation**
**Grants Management Process (*PHMSA*)**
**Process Description:** Pipeline Safety One-Call Grants – Discretionary

## Introduction to the One-Call Grant

The U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) – Office of Pipeline Safety, administers a grant program designed to support state excavation damage prevention efforts. The Pipeline Safety Program One-Call Grant is CFDA 20.721 and is commonly referred to as the "One-Call Grant".

State agencies who participate in the pipeline safety program are eligible to apply for One-Call grant funding on an annual basis.  This grant has an annual appropriation authorization of $1,000,000 and states are eligible to receive a maximum amount of approximately $45,000 (based on historical allocations) per state which supports initiatives to further promote efforts specifically for damage prevention activities, including one-call legislation, related compliance activities, training and public education. Actual awards are contingent on a current fiscal year appropriation and enacted budget  Eligible programs will cover such areas as compliance enforcement, legal assistance with enforcement actions, new equipment to support on-going enforcement programs, compliance membership initiatives, communication improvements, training programs for field locators, educational materials and public awareness campaigns.

## Authorities

PHMSA is provided the authority for the grant by 49 U.S.C. §6101 (et. seq.), One-Call Notification Programs Statutes.  Section 6106 of the statute provides for a supplementary grant to states as follows:

(a) In general.--The Secretary may make a grant of financial assistance to a State that qualifies under section 6104(b) to assist in improving--
(1) the overall quality and effectiveness of one-call notification systems in the State;
(2) communications systems linking one-call notification systems;
(3) location capabilities, including training personnel and developing and using location technology;
(4) record retention and recording capabilities for one-call notification systems;
(5) public information and education;
(6) participation in one-call notification systems; or
(7) compliance and enforcement under the State one-call notification program.
(b) State action taken into account.--In making grants under this section, the Secretary shall take into consideration the commitment of each State to improving its State one-call notification program, including legislative and regulatory actions taken by the State after the date of enactment of this chapter.

(c) Funding for one-call notification systems.--A State may provide funds received under this section directly to any one-call notification system in such State that substantially adopts the best practices identified under section 6105.

## Pre-Application Activities

### Level of Review

The National Association of Pipeline Safety Representatives (NAPSR) works with PHMSA Office of State Programs on the criteria for, review and allocation of these grants. The NAPSR committee currently assigned to this task is called the Grant Allocation and Strategic Planning Committee (GAC). This committee is comprised of a NAPSR representative from each of the PHMSA five operating regions along with the current NAPSR office holders of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. These members comprise leadership of the NAPSR organization and are inherently subject matter experts (SME) in the area of damage prevention enforcement and pipeline safety throughout the country.

### Funding Priorities and Criteria

The One-Call Grant has been in existence since 1994 and funding priorities have been established to meet the intent of 49 USC 6106 as noted above. Funding priorities, criteria and any other considerations are provided to all potential grant applicants at the time of the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).

PHMSA Office of State Programs meets with NAPSR GAC (August-September) each year to review One-Call Grant Funding Priorities and other considerations for One-Call grant applications. Any stakeholder input gathered during the previous year is reviewed along with updating the funding priorities with any current legislative activities or DOT administration priorities.

Funding priorities and criteria typically see very few changes from year to year, but particular attention is given during periods of any changes to pipeline safety legislation or any recommendations proposed by the National Transportation Safety Board. (NTSB)

Project funding that is considered to have a greater level of importance and overall effectiveness to the objective of this grant are considered to be Priority 1, with lower levels of priority placed on Priority 2 and 3 respectively. Priority Funding Projects and Criteria are listed below:

#### PRIORITY 1

1. Compliance Enforcement
   Legal assistance with enforcement actions
   Cost of enforcement and/or complaint investigations
   Cost of enforcement actions
2. State agency collection and analysis of data
   One Call center statistics
   One Call center membership

Compliance/Noncompliance statistics
Causes of noncompliance
Frequency, cause, and consequences of dig-ins
Identification of problem areas or individuals
Incorporation of excavation damage data tools (such as DIRT, virtual DIRT, etc.) into state monitoring and compliance program Submission of state-collected excavation damage data to other data collection systems (such as DIRT and Virtual DIRT)

3. Legislation and Rulemaking
Obtaining input from affected interests
Assistance drafting language
Testimony before legislative/rulemaking bodies
Studies to identify legislative needs

4. Implementation of One Call Laws and Regulations**
Start-up costs for the state agency only, mandated by new law or rules
Equipment (including computer programming and software)
Records systems and databases
Procedures
First-year information campaign on new/changed law or rules

** A state cannot request grant funds to implement proposed legislation - the legislation must have already been passed by both houses and signed into law by the Governor.

**PRIORITY 2**

1. One Call Membership Initiatives for Operators, such as:
Initial membership fees
Fax machines Computer
equipment Communication
improvements E-mail access
Dedicated phone line
Locating equipment and training

2. Consolidation of Multiple One Call Centers (only costs incurred by the state agency)
State agency expense to encourage consolidation
One Call Center consolidation expenses
First year awareness campaigns for new one-call center and/or phone number

3. Training of state inspection or enforcement personnel in -
Facility locating methods and technology
Provisions of state One Call law or regulations

4. Equipment primarily intended to support on-going enforcement activities (including computer programming and software.)

5. Location Capabilities

Development and/or conduct of training for locators

Field trials or demonstrations of new technology locating equipment

6.  Efforts to encourage operators, excavators and others to contribute to data collection systems such as DIRT

**PRIORITY 3**

1.  Development and/or conduct of state-provided training programs for excavators

2.  Development and/or conduct of state-provided training programs for operators

3.  Development and/or distribution of educational items or materials

4.  Development and/or conduct of damage prevention awareness campaigns, such as:

Public service announcements

Informational mailings

Advertisements

One Call center awareness and outreach

Booths/exhibits for damage prevention outreach

811 awareness campaigns

5. Record retention and recording capabilities for One Call notification systems;and making the data available to the state.

## Funding Allocation

As previously noted, the annual grant appropriation authorization total is $1,000,000. Actual award is contingent on a current fiscal year appropriation and enacted budget. Historical knowledge of the funding of various projects have targeting funding for each priority at $45,000, $20,000 and $10,000 for Priority 1,2 and 3 respectively.  If the grant funding requests are greater than the available appropriation, the projects will be reallocated based on review team consensus.

# One-Call Grant Application Review and Selection

## Grant Application

The one-call grant application is made available in October of each calendar year.  This funding opportunity is advertised in the grants.gov federal grant system.  An example of the funding description is provided below:

*Funding Opportunity Description:  This optional grant is only open for states that have a 60105 Certification and/or 60106 Agreement with the US Department of Transportation (DOT) Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) to do pipeline safety inspections. State agencies who participate in the pipeline safety program are eligible to apply for One Call grant funding on an annual basis. This optional grant program has a maximum amount request of $45,000 per state and supports initiatives to further promote efforts specifically for damage prevention, including one-call legislation, related compliance activities, training and public education. Eligible programs will cover such areas as compliance enforcement, legal assistance*

*with enforcement actions, new equipment to support on-going enforcement programs, compliance monitoring, one call center statistics, compliance/noncompliance statistics, One-call membership initiatives, computer equipment, communication improvements, development and/or conduct of state-provided training programs for locators, development and/or distribution of promotional items or materials, damage prevention awareness campaigns, public service announcements, informational mailings, advertisements and One Call center promotional items.*

State agencies participating in the Pipeline Safety Grant Program can submit their grant application in the Federal State Tracking and Reporting (FedSTAR) database and linked to the grants.gov system for processing. The due date of the one-call grant application is set for late November of each year.

## Grant Award Process

All One-Call grant applications are reviewed at a meeting convened between PHMSA Office of State Programs and NAPSR GAC (January-February) each year.  At this time grant applications are reviewed along with progress reports from previous grant activities.  In the event there is a grant application reviewed that comes from the respective state of the NAPSR member on the review team, that member is excused and not allowed in discussion of project review.

### Project Rating and Review

Due to the relatively small size of each award, every grant application project is recommended or approved based on its overall ability to meet any of the criteria outlined within each priority. The grant application should thoroughly describe what the project money is being spent on and how the project objective is met.  Many projects are continuation from previous awards and enough data should be included in grant application to determine its general effectiveness.  Progress reports from previous grant awards will also be reviewed for completeness aligned with grant objectives.  The documentation of current grant applications and past progress reports are provided to the review panel by PHMSA Office of State Programs.

### Project Feedback to Grant Applicants

Feedback is given to grant applicants after the grant award has been approved by DOT in order to explain funding decisions, reasons for funding denial or general information to improve or enhance the process.  The following list of items has been developed as common feedback:

1.  This activity has been reviewed and found eligible for funding.
2.  Pipeline personnel and other costs used for this project cannot be included in program costs for Pipeline Safety Base Grant reimbursement.
3.  All grant expenditures must be identifiable and specific to the cost objective to prevent a "double-dipping" situation with the State Damage Prevention (SDP)

Grant, Pipeline Safety Base Grant(s) or other federal grant.

4. If a contractor is used to perform any of these functions, the terms and conditions of the contractual arrangement, and the qualification of contractor, are subject to review by PHMSA.
5. It is required that the state applying for the money under this activity provide a contract for this activity to PHMSA State Programs.
6. Change in Priority: after review, this project has been deemed to be appropriately classified in a different priority. (New priority stated)
7. The One-Call progress report should include a copy of the completed study and relevant data.
8. The One-Call progress report should include specific data to show effectiveness.
9. Penalty applied: Applicant did not follow instructions. (Amount of deduction and details provided)
10. Penalty applied: Project detail is not an allowable cost.
11. The state cannot request grant funding to implement "proposed" legislation. The legislation must have already been passed.

The documentation of all selection decisions is kept by PHMSA Office of State Programs.

## Grant Award Document

After approval from DOT-Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST), each applicant is notified of their grant award. Each grant recipient receives a Notice of Grant Award electronically, also known as a payment agreement. This agreement is signed and payments are processed through PHMSA's fiscal office.

# Grant Progress Report

Grant progress reports are required to be submitted by mid-January of each year for each grant applicant. The progress reports should include descriptions of grant activities and any associated program performance data relevant to the project(s) being funded during the previous calendar year. Progress reports are used to analyze the viability of the funding of ongoing projects in future grant applications.

# Grant Close-Out

The project period for the One-Call grant is approximately one-year from issuance of funding, which is March 31 of each year. Each grantee is required to submit Standard Form 270 (SF270) along with the narrative details and any performance data relating to the specific project that the grant funded.

# OTHER

## Documentation and Training
All grant documents, including applications, progress reports and award decisions or

denials are kept in the Federal State Tracking and Reporting (FedSTAR) database.  All grant applicants are provided with training sessions during open grant application period along with discussion on guidance at this and each NAPSR region annual meeting.

**Grant Monitoring**

Grant expenditures are monitored on a triennial basis in conjunction with the Pipeline Safety Program grant.  One-Call grant funds remaining unspent during the performance period and deducted from the annual reimbursement payment for Pipeline Safety Grant expenditures.