



U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of Public Affairs
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590
www.dot.gov/briefing-room.html

News

PHMSA 22-12
Monday, August 27, 2012
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DOT Announces Over \$1.5 Million in State Pipeline Safety Grants *Grants support damage prevention and education programs*

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) today announced over \$1.5 million in grants to [22 states](#) to strengthen and support pipeline damage prevention programs. Excavation damage is the number one cause of pipeline accidents resulting in [fatality or injury](#) and can cost states millions of dollars in repair work and property damages. Since 2002, excavation damage resulted in over \$190 million in property damage nationwide.

“Most major pipeline accidents are caused when someone is digging and hits a pipeline by mistake,” said Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. “With these grants, states will be able to educate the public about safe digging in order to help prevent pipeline accidents – saving lives and improving safety for everyone.”

States will use the damage prevention grants to continue implementation of the [nine elements of an effective damage prevention program](#), outlined in the Pipeline Inspection, Protection, Enforcement and Safety Act of 2006. Program elements include effective communications, partnerships, fair and consistent enforcement, training and technology.

“Damage prevention is a key component of protecting people and the environment around the 2.6 million miles of pipeline in our nation,” said PHMSA Administrator Cynthia L. Quarterman. “These grants will help states continue to focus on preventing pipeline accidents through education, training and enforcement.”

Between 2002 and 2011, more than 28 percent of all serious pipeline accidents were caused by excavation damage, resulting in 38 fatalities and 148 injuries.

The 2012 damage prevention grant award recipients are:

- Alabama: Public Service Commission - \$43,853

- Arkansas: Public Service Commission - \$16,379
- Colorado: Utility Notification Center of Colorado - \$88,150
- Connecticut: Call Before You Dig, Incorporated - \$98,017
- Georgia: Public Service Commission - \$95,000
- Indiana: Utility Regulatory Commission - \$50,000
- Iowa: Utilities Board - \$95,000
- Kansas: Corporation Commission - \$90,000
- Maryland: Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Enforcement Authority - \$95,000
- Michigan: Public Service Commission - \$90,000
- Minnesota: Office of Pipeline Safety - \$95,000
- Mississippi: Public Utilities Commission - \$100,000
- Nebraska: Pipeline Safety Division - \$82,171
- Nevada: Public Utilities Commission - \$62,625
- New Jersey: Board of Public Utilities - \$100,000
- New Mexico: Pipeline Safety Bureau - \$74,948
- New York: DigSafely New York - \$78,941.20
- North Carolina: Utilities Commission - \$6,831
- Ohio: Utilities Protection Service - \$49,953
- Pennsylvania: PA One Call - \$56,250
- South Carolina: Public Utilities Protection Service - \$56,775
- West Virginia: Miss Utility of West Virginia - \$50,000

Pipeline safety is a top priority at PHMSA. In April 2011, Secretary LaHood issued a pipeline safety [Call to Action](#), asking operators to replace and rehabilitate aging pipelines. PHMSA closed a [record number of enforcement cases](#) in 2011, stepped up [public education efforts](#) and recently announced it is moving forward to [implement tougher pipeline safety regulations](#) as part of the Pipeline Safety Act signed by President Obama in January 2012.

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration develops and enforces regulations for the safe, reliable, and environmentally sound operation of the nation's 2.6 million mile pipeline transportation system and the nearly 1 million daily shipments of hazardous materials by land, sea, and air. Please visit <http://phmsa.dot.gov> for more information.

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