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## News

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Contact: Jeannie Layson  
Tel: 202-366-4831

### **DOT Awards Over \$1.5 Million in Grants to States to Support Underground Pipeline Protection**

*Damage prevention and education programs are vital in reducing excavation related failures*

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) today announced it is awarding \$1.5 million in grants to 20 states to strengthen and support pipeline damage prevention programs. Excavation damage remains the nation’s 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 2003, excavation damage resulted in over 36 human fatalities and over \$28 million in property damage nationwide.

“Safety is our top priority and it is important for states and communities to be partners in educating the public on damage prevention,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. “These grants will help states get the message out about safe digging to homeowners, contracting companies, or anyone else who sticks a shovel in the ground, and will save lives by preventing excavation-related accidents.”

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.

“States play a huge role in helping homeowners stay safe and communities avoid costly pipeline accidents,” said PHMSA Administrator Cynthia L. Quarterman. “As more and more states promote damage prevention, they reduce the number of accidental contacts with underground pipelines.”

PHMSA offers damage prevention grants to any state authority where its governor has deemed it to be an eligible recipient, including state one call centers, pipeline safety agencies, or other organizations that support pipeline safety. Applications are received and examined by PHMSA to determine its relevance to the nine elements of an effective damage prevention program, among other criteria, prior to recommending awards of up to \$100,000.

The 2013 damage prevention grant award recipients are:

- Colorado: Utility Notification Center of Colorado - \$100,000
- Connecticut: Call Before You Dig, Inc. - \$80,157
- Georgia: Public Service Commission - \$73,500
- Iowa: Iowa Utilities Division - \$22,750
- Kansas: Corporation Commission - \$99,996
- Michigan: Public Service Commission - \$75,000
- Minnesota: Department of Public Safety - \$100,000
- Mississippi: Public Utilities Commission - \$91,455
- Missouri: Missouri Public Services Commission - \$40,000
- Nebraska: Nebraska State Fire Marshal - \$89,200
- New Hampshire: Dig Safe Systems, Inc. - \$64,900
- New Jersey: Public Utilities Board Commission - \$100,000
- New Mexico: Pipeline Safety Bureau - \$75,000
- New York: Underground Facilities Protective Organizations, Inc. - \$100,000
- North Carolina: North Carolina Utilities Commission - \$15,000
- Ohio: Utilities Protection Service - \$14,970
- Pennsylvania: PA One-Call Systems, Inc. - \$97,110
- South Carolina: SC 811 Palmetto Utility Protection Service, Inc. - \$93,209
- Virginia: Virginia Utility Protection Service - \$100,000
- Wyoming: One-Call of Wyoming - \$98,816

Pipeline safety is a top priority at PHMSA. 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.

More information about [grants to states and communities](#) offered by PHMSA is available on the agency's website.

*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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