

Louisiana



2023 Issue 1



Pipeline Safety



DON'T ignore me.

What? You don't think that you should pay attention to a little yellow flag? Well, I'm the best thing to keep your crew safe. Call 811 before digging, and Atmos Energy will plant me and my pals wherever natural gas lines are buried. Trust me, you'd rather have us get your attention than a natural gas line.



Know what's **below.**
Call before you dig.



atmosenergy.com/call811

from the desk of

Brent Saltzman



As we begin this journey into a new year, I would like to take a moment and reflect on 2022. We experienced an incredible year with locate requests (up 9% from the previous year) and outgoing tickets to our members (up nearly 11% from the previous year). Surprisingly, we had only anticipated an increase of 4%! Based on what we're seeing in the economy, our Board of Directors and staff anticipate a 5% increase in ticket volume for 2023 due mainly to increased infrastructure spending.

I realize the increase we saw in 2022 was partly due to hurricane restoration efforts and numerous road projects. But increased awareness of contacting 811 "Before You Dig" impacted this volume as well. With the assistance of our advertising agency and very active Public Awareness Committee, we continue to make great strides in educating and informing the public about the importance of damage prevention.

Some new initiatives we started in 2022 were advertising for the first time with a collegiate team. We were the gameday sponsor for LSU baseball in April and had radio ads during game broadcasts for the entire season. We made a concerted effort to advertise our message on Hispanic radio stations to reach a segment of our society never tapped before. Both of these endeavors reached thousands across our great state. You may have also seen Uber or Lyft vehicles wrapped with LA811 graphics in some of our metropolitan areas. These initiatives along with our traditional statewide billboard and sports radio campaign were just a few of the many, many outreach efforts we have provided.

This year, we'll continue with many of the public awareness initiatives listed above but are excited to "spread the wealth" and support some of our other colleges in Louisiana. We will be sponsoring collegiate baseball in April at Louisiana Tech, Tulane, University of Louisiana-Lafayette (ULL) and University of Louisiana-Monroe (ULM). Additionally, we'll be sponsoring women's softball at many of these institutions so be on the lookout for us at these sporting events. We'll have a tent set up at each location giving away cool promotional items so stop by and pay us a visit!

In closing, we're extremely excited about the prospects of what 2023 will bring. We are continually looking for innovative ways to heighten 811 awareness so check out our website for other activities we'll be involved in throughout the year.

Until next time, take care and God bless!

Brent Saltzman
Executive Director
Louisiana 811

Louisiana



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Roger Cox, Publisher

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Contact Louisiana 811 for specifics in their dig law.

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Louisiana 811

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2023 Louisiana Convention Schedule

Police Jury Association of Louisiana Annual Convention
March 8-10, 2023
Shreveport Convention Center
www.lpgov.org

LGA GasTEC Expo Day
March 23
Baton Rouge, LA
lga@tاتمangroup.com

SE LA Utility Coordinating Council (SELA UCC) Digger's Night Out
May 16
New Orleans, LA
rarmst2@entergy.com

CGA Conference & Expo
April 17 – 21, 2023
Orlando, FL
www.cgaconference.com

Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors of LA (PHCCLA) Annual Convention
July 13-15
West Monroe, LA
www.laphcc.org/page/Convention2023

Louisiana Rural Water Association (LRWA) Annual Convention & Trade Show
July 17-21
Lake Charles, LA
lrwa.org/annual-conference

Louisiana Gas Association (LGA) Pipeline Safety Conference
August 14-17
New Orleans, LA
www.louisianagasassociation.org/psc

Operations Report

Incoming Locate Requests:

Calendar Year 2021 – 792,795
Calendar Year 2022 – 863,003

Outgoing Notifications:

Calendar Year 2021 – 3,780,011
Calendar Year 2022 – 4,188,360

Call Ratio (Incoming notifications to Outgoing Members)

Calendar Year 2021 – 1: 4.77
Calendar Year 2022 – 1: 4.85

On-Line Ticket Entry

Calendar Year 2021 – 81.89%
Calendar Year 2022 – 88.63%

Welcome New Members

Commodore Offshore Operating, LLC
Menzies Aviation
Producers Gas Transmission, Inc.
Village of Quitman
Wilcox Energy Company

LOUISIANA damage prevention **Summit**



A CGA REGIONAL PARTNER EVENT

Thank you sponsors and exhibitors

Sponsors

PLATINUM

Atmos Energy
Louisiana 811

Progressive Partnering

GOLD

Louisiana Gas Association

USIC

SILVER

Entergy Gas Distribution
Grady Crawford Construction Company
HydroExcavators

Keith Lott's Plumbing, LLC

Rust-Oleum
Shell Pipeline

BRONZE

CenterPoint Energy
Compliance EnviroSystems
Ditch Witch of South Louisiana
Hartree Natural Gas Storage

Kinder Morgan

KorTerra

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Kinder Morgan

KorTerra

LineQuest

Louisiana 811
Louisiana Gas Association
Lynx Mapping LLC
Miller Pipeline

Navigation Electronics, Inc.
One Call Concepts
Paradigm

PelicanCorp
PHMSA
Pipe View America
Rust-Oleum
SJB Group
Talygen
USIC

The way I See it

Louisiana 811

By Cole Vanderlick
 Manager - Damage Prevention
 Louisiana 811




Thank you to everyone who attended the Louisiana Damage Prevention Summit this year! It was filled with meaningful topics to bring us closer together as one industry. It also felt amazing to build comradery and strengthen our relationships. I left the conference feeling proud of everyone's passion to work together. We are constantly challenging each other on initiatives that help our industry flow as one. Another way to strive towards zero damages is training courses and challenges. Trainers executed successful classes at the Summit, and locators conducted a challenging yet fun rodeo. We appreciate all sponsors and volunteers for putting on these impactful events. We encourage more locators to participate in the Rodeo next year. They will have the opportunity to improve their skill level, learn from industry peers, win door prizes, enjoy themselves and get honored for their hard work by our industry.

Speaking of educational events to help improve the utility industry, Louisiana Gas Association (LGA) is hosting a GasTEC Expo Day on Thursday, March 23rd in the Baton Rouge area. This event will have exhibitor booths,

demonstration areas, classroom presentations, lunch, door prizes, etc. For more information or to get involved as a participant or sponsor, email lga@tatmangroup.com.

If you know a graduating high school senior continuing their education in some way, encourage them to apply for the Louisiana 811 Scholarship. The application and all information can be found at scholarship.louisiana811.com. The application deadline is April 14th.

Utility Coordinating Councils have really ramped up throughout the state lately! These monthly meetings are incredibly important for stakeholders to attend. We highly encourage excavators, utility and pipeline operators, locators, DOTD, etc. to attend to discuss current and upcoming projects with the group. Communication and working together are arguably the most important tools for success. These meetings help different entities prevent damages and execute their work more safely and efficiently. Check out our website events calendar for meeting details. We look forward to seeing you at the next one!

In closing, please don't hesitate to reach out to Louisiana 811 if we can help you in any way. We are here for you! 



Call 811 before you dig



Your safety is our number one priority.

From installing a new pool to simply planting a tree, digging without knowing what's beneath the surface can be extremely dangerous. You could also disrupt utility services to your neighborhood, leading to expensive repairs and fines.

When you call 811, all utilities, including Entergy, will respond within two business days to locate and mark the underground utility lines. (The two business days start the morning after you call).

And if you suspect a gas leak, leave the area immediately and call **1-800-ENTERGY** (368-3749) or **911**. Indications of a gas leak include the distinctive smell of natural gas, a whistling or hissing sound near a gas appliance, or dead vegetation and bubbles near a gas line.


We power life.SM

A message from Entergy New Orleans, LLC and Entergy Louisiana, LLC
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Vic Weston Damage Prevention Champion Award



(left to right) Grady Crawford, Trey Crawford, Vic Weston

Congratulations to the 2023 recipient of the Vic Weston Damage Prevention Champion Award, Trey Crawford with Grady Crawford Construction Company! "Making Louisiana a safer place to live and work." Always leading with safety and damage prevention, Trey works together and communicates with the industry as well as anybody. Thank you, Trey, for everything you have done in your career and how you do it. It's a pleasure to work with you and we are grateful for our relationship. 

Save the Date!

LOUISIANA
damage prevention
summit
A CGA REGIONAL PARTNER EVENT

January 23 - 25, 2024

L'Auberge Casino
& Hotel
Baton Rouge

Start the New Year with CenterPoint Energy

CenterPoint Energy training is focused on making sure your leadership and field personnel understand the 811 state laws, safe digging best practices, and other tips to help your projects be completed damage free without the delays and expenses of cutting a natural gas line. Most importantly, it is critical we cover how to stay safe in the event of a cut natural gas line.

Our training also covers the steps to prevent natural gas ignition, explosion, and inherent risks should blowing gas from a damaged pipeline occur in your community.



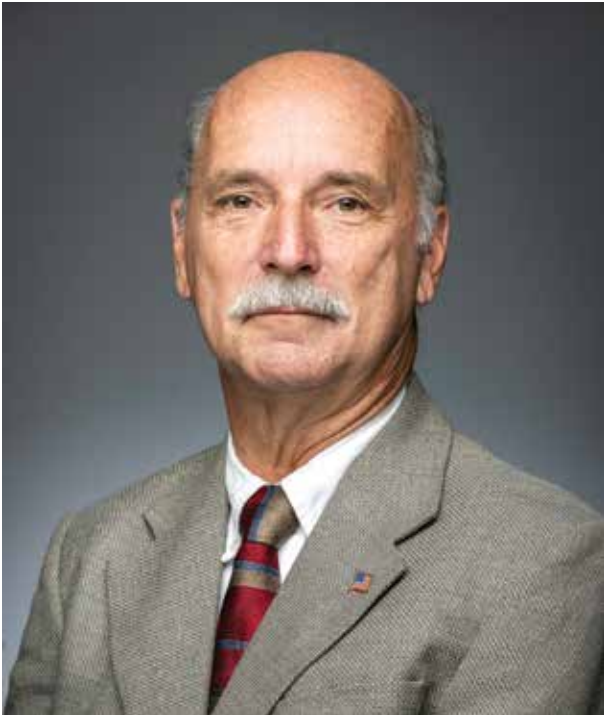
To schedule your training session, email PublicAwareness@CenterPointEnergy.com




Board Member Spotlight



John Neilson
Waterworks District #1-DeSoto Parish
At Large Board Member



As Administrator of one of the largest Water Districts in the State, with well over 400 miles of water lines in one Parish alone, safe digging is always a priority. We are involved with all three segments of protection of underground assets, as we are an owner, also an excavator that installs our own meters, and as a locator since we mark our lines after notification of a dig ticket. Water lines are notoriously hard to locate after locate wire has deteriorated, so accurate data during construction and normal repairs are crucial in our industry. When we do our installs, we depend on accurate markings and good communications from other stakeholders so we can dig safely and protect their assets. Education is a vital part of ensuring an awareness of safety and confidence when digging and Louisiana 811 plays a vital part in the education of not only infrastructure stakeholders but also the general public by making them aware of the laws put in place to protect vital infrastructure. While my team and I are responsible for our assets, we also promote safe digging awareness to help protect other assets in our State. We publicize Louisiana 811 by signage on our vehicles and notices on our water bills. I am often called upon to give talks concerning our Water District and always mention safe digging to help promote awareness. I enjoy serving on the Louisiana 811 Board and feel that together, the Board has made and is continuing to make a difference in Louisiana promoting safe digging. Together, we can all work toward fewer damages to underground utilities. 

LOUISIANA damage prevention Summit

A CGA REGIONAL PARTNER EVENT

Louisiana Damage Prevention Summit Sets Record Attendance

More than 350 damage prevention professionals descended on Baton Rouge's L'Auberge Casino and Hotel for this unique event! Educational workshops, interesting and relevant sessions and an exhibit hall that wowed the attendees kept the event moving at a fast pace.

Sponsors and exhibitors alike lauded the enthusiasm and interest of attendees, while the attendees were actively involved in the sessions throughout the event.

This year's event also hosted its first Spanish-speaking only competent person workshop. It was very successful. Based on the feedback we've received; we can expect to host the session again next year.

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Inaugural Trailblazer Award


Martha "DOTTIE" Davis

By *Thelma Coleman*



(left to right) *Thelma Coleman, Martha "Dottie" Davis, David Frey*

During the late 70's to the mid 80's Martha Nelson Bonfanti Davis started the amazing journey as a marketing symbol for the Call Before you Dig program! Martha worked tirelessly day and night attending many meetings, appearing on tv shows, speaking on radio stations and building a marketing strategy that would become legendary. The marketing efforts were designed to speak to excavators about the need to call before digging as well as speaking to facility owners concerning the need to participate in a notification program on the other end. The media outlets around the state were also excited about promoting this newly created advertisement. This concept would send the message about preventing damage to underground facilities with one single call. Visits were made to all TV and radio stations around the state and there was an overwhelming response to assist with pushing this message forward. It was often commented that she could do an entire segment in one take with no edits required. With Martha at the forefront of the brand-new call before you dig program and the face of the new advertising concept, she embraced the assignment and became an icon in the damage prevention industry all across the state of Louisiana.

I can personally tell the story because I was there in 1978 a few months after the startup. When I was transferred out and left the program for a year, Martha bid me farewell and we cried together. So, this is a personal honor as well as one most deserving of the person that we come to know and love as DOTTIE. At this time, I want to introduce to some and present to others, my friend, my former supervisor, my mentor and the One Call ICON called DOTTIE, Ms. Martha Nelson Davis. 





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WARNING

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BEFORE EXCAVATING OR IN EMERGENCY CALL TOLL FREE

Energy Lifelines

*Without them our roads
and highways would be
overrun with trucks trying
to meet this demand.*

Millions of people all across the country share the same neighbor. This neighbor does not intrude where it's not wanted and simply goes about its business helping all of us every day. Pipelines are the energy lifelines of many of our daily activities, from driving our children to school and heating our homes, to buying groceries at the store delivered by trucks that run on diesel.

The U.S. has the largest network of energy pipelines of any nation in the world. There are more than 200,000 miles of oil pipelines and 300,000 miles of natural gas pipelines all across the country. These lines are tucked under our streets, through neighborhoods and communities, and traveling below farmland, forests and deserts. Since Americans consume more than 700 million gallons of petroleum products per day, pipelines are an essential component of our nation's infrastructure. Without them our roads and highways would be overrun with trucks trying to meet this demand. According to National Transportation Safety Board statistics, pipelines are the safest, most reliable manner for transporting crude oil and other liquid petroleum products. Pipeline owners and operators are ever mindful of the safety of those around them and they strictly follow proven safety procedures.

Many pipeline companies regularly inspect their rights-of-way using air, foot or vehicle patrols. These trained inspectors look for potential danger to pipelines such as construction activity or signs of gas or liquid leaks. These inspections along their pipeline routes are to ensure the security and integrity.

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Be aware of pipeline markers in your neighborhood and at your worksite



Pipeline companies keep in touch on a regular basis with emergency officials and work with local emergency responders along pipeline rights-of-way in case of an emergency, sometimes even training with fire departments or hazardous materials units. Even though a leak or spill is extremely unlikely, pipeline companies provide information like that which you will find on the following pages that will prepare you in the event that it does occur. Their hope is to continue to be a quiet neighbor and provide you with this important information to help if you suspect a problem in your area. Pipeline companies take the safe operation of their infrastructure seriously, which includes protecting your family, your property and the environment. Because of this diligence, incidents are very rare.

For your safety, pipelines are marked by above ground signs to provide an indication of their presence, approximate location, material carried and the name and contact information of the company that operates the pipeline. Markers may be anywhere along the right-of-way (a strip of land usually about 25 to 150 feet wide that contains a pipeline) or directly over the pipeline itself. These markers are generally yellow, black and red in color. The pipeline may not follow a straight course between markers. While markers are helpful in locating pipelines, they do not provide information such as how many pipelines are below or the depth of the lines. The primary function of these markers is to identify the location of the pipeline generally as an alert to those who might be working along the pipeline corridor for another utility or during the construction of homes or businesses nearby. You should be aware of any pipeline markers in your neighborhood. As the saying goes, “Know your neighbors.” Write down the name and phone numbers appearing on the pipeline markers in case of emergency.

Pipeline markers are important for the safety of the general public. It is a federal crime for any person to willfully deface, damage, remove or destroy any pipeline signs or right-of-way marker.

How you tell where a pipeline is *located*

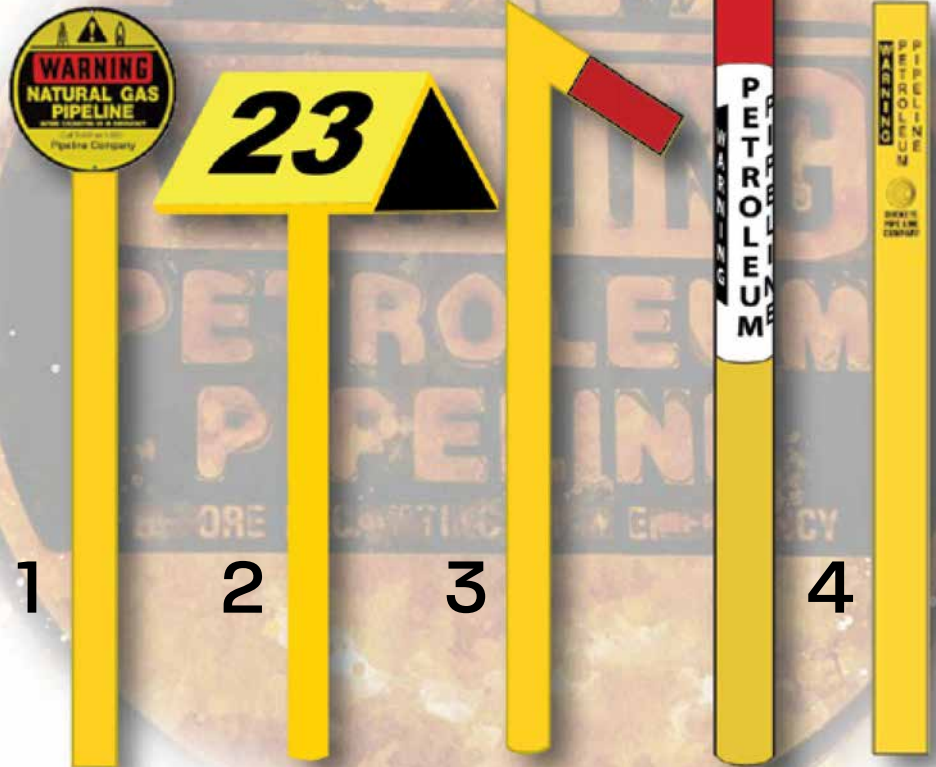
Look for these signs

1. Located near roads, railroads and along the pipeline right-of-way

2. Marker for pipeline patrol planes

3. Pipeline casing vent

4. Painted metal, plastic or fiberglass posts



What to Do if a Pipeline is Damaged or Disturbed

One of the greatest single challenges to safe pipeline operations is the accidental damage caused by excavation, construction, farming activities, or even homeowner construction and maintenance. Before you dig or excavate, contact the One-Call Center by simply dialing 811 from anywhere in the United States. Please call before you start your project, whether landscaping, building fences or performing a major construction project. Pipeline companies and other utilities will mark the location of their lines at no cost to you. Pipeline and utility markers may not show the exact location of the buried lines. When excavating near pipelines, many companies will require that they have a pipeline company representative onsite to inspect and protect the underground pipeline. Failure to call 811 before excavation is the leading cause of damages to buried pipelines. One simple call can help keep you out of harm's way.

Even if you cause what appears to be only minor damage to the pipeline, immediately notify the pipeline company. A gouge, scrape, dent or crease to the pipe or coating may cause a future rupture or leak. It is critical that a cut or broken tracer wire be repaired. It is imperative that the pipeline owner inspects and repairs any damage to the line or related apparatus. Many states have laws requiring damages to be reported to the facility owner and/or the One-Call center by dialing 811. Do not attempt to make the repairs to the line yourself. If a line is ruptured or leaking call 911. Contact the pipeline company as quickly as possible. Pipeline marker signs show the pipeline company's name, emergency telephone number and pipeline contents.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

So what exactly do all these pipelines transport?

There is a wide range of products traveling through the thousands of miles of pipelines, everything from gas for your car to oxygen for hospitals. Many of these products can be highly flammable, harmful if inhaled, cause eye or skin irritation or possibly cause difficulty breathing. Some of the materials could cause environmental damage. Because of these potential hazards, it is important for our neighbors to be able to recognize a pipeline leak.

Recognizing a pipeline leak

Using your sense of sight, smell and sound will help you in recognizing a suspected leak.

see

A dense, white cloud or fog over a pipeline
Discolored vegetation surrounding the pipeline
Bubbling in water or creeks or an oily sheen on water
Frozen ground in warm weather
Dirt blowing up from the ground

What TO DO If You Suspect a Leak

Immediately leave the area.

If possible turn off any equipment being used in or near the suspected leak. Abandon any equipment being used and move upwind from the suspected leak.

From a safe location, call 911 or your local emergency response number and the pipeline company. Call collect, if needed, and give your name, phone number, description of the leak and its location.

Warn others to stay away when possible.

smell

An unusual smell or gaseous odor will sometimes accompany a pipeline leak.

What NOT TO DO If You Suspect a Leak

Do not touch, breathe or make contact with the leaking liquids or gas. Stay upwind if possible.

Do not light a match, start an engine, use a telephone, turn on or off any type of electrical switch such as a light, garage door opener, etc. or do anything that may create static or a spark.

Do not attempt to extinguish any pipeline fire that may start.

Do not drive into a leak or vapor cloud area. Automobile engines may ignite the vapors.

Do not attempt to operate valves.

hear

An unusual noise coming from the pipeline, such as a hissing or roaring sound, may be a sign of a leak.

Pipeline Operator's Actions during an Emergency In the unlikely event of an accident or leak, the pipeline operator who is notified will immediately dispatch personnel to the site to help handle the emergency and to provide information to public safety officials to assist in their response to the emergency. Pipeline technicians will also take quick action such as starting and stopping pumps or compressors, closing and opening valves, and similar steps to minimize the impact of the situation. These responders are heavily trained throughout the year to ensure their neighborhood is returned to its well-being.

High Consequence Areas In accordance with federal regulations, some areas near pipelines have been designated as High Consequence Areas. For these areas, supplemental hazard assessment and prevention programs known as Integrity Management Programs have been developed. If a pipeline operator has High Consequence Areas, information about these plans may be available through their company's website or by contacting the operator's corporate offices.


There is a wide range of products traveling through the thousands of miles of pipelines, everything from gas for your car to oxygen for hospitals. Many of these products can be highly flammable, harmful if inhaled, cause eye or skin irritation or possibly cause difficulty breathing. Some of the materials could cause environmental damage. Because of these potential hazards, it is important for our neighbors to be able to recognize a pipeline leak.

Can Owners Build or Dig on a Right-Of-Way? Pipeline rights-of-way must be kept free from structures and other obstructions to provide access to the pipeline for maintenance, as well as in the event of an emergency. If a pipeline crosses your property, please do not plant trees or large shrubs on the right-of-way. Do not dig, build, store or place anything on or near the rights-of-way without first having the pipeline company's personnel mark the pipeline or stake the rights-of-way and explain the company's construction and easement requirements to you.

We Need Your Help The nation's infrastructures, including pipelines, are a matter of national security. If you witness suspicious activity on a pipeline right-of-way, please report it to the appropriate authorities as soon as possible, or you may call the pipeline operator's numbers. Threat advisories may be found at the Department of Homeland Security's website www.dhs.gov/dhspublic.

National Pipeline Mapping System

For information about pipelines operating in your area, you may contact the National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS). This database of pipeline operators and the location of their lines was designed for the public to have access to contact information for pipeline companies operating in your area. This information can be found at www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov. Visit <https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/about-phmsa/offices/office-pipeline-safety> for more information. For information on safe excavation, go online and visit <https://commongroundalliance.com>

Awareness is the key to preventing pipeline accidents. You can contribute to the safety and security of your neighborhood by knowing where pipelines are, and knowing how to recognize unauthorized activity or signs of a leak, as well as how to respond in the case of a pipeline accident. Pipeline companies continue to strive to be good neighbors, and just like any good neighborhood watch program, neighbors look out for each other. Join in with the pipeline companies to keep our families safe. 

LOUISIANA GAS ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

PIPELINE SAFETY CONFERENCE

AUG 14-17, 2023 | HILTON RIVERSIDE, NEW ORLEANS, LA

FIND MORE INFO AT LOUISIANAGAS.ORG/PSC




MORE UPCOMING 2023 LGA EVENTS

Scholarship Golf Tournament
May 18 | Jennings, LA


Annual Operations Conference
November 5-8 | Vidalia, LA



Want to make sure you're in the know?
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Know what's below.
Call before you dig.



Join us in
our commitment to safety.

Call before you dig.

www.linde.com
Making our world
more productive





Louisiana 811, Call Before You Dig


- 🔥 Call 811 at least two full business days before excavating.
- 🔥 Wait until all buried utilities are marked with paint and/or flags.
- 🔥 Dig and Excavate Safely, within the parameters of the One Call ticket.

Kinetica Emergency Phone Numbers: (337) 312-2101 or Toll Free (855) 395-3958

Pipeline safety is a shared responsibility

- 🔥 There are over 2.5 million miles of pipelines in the US according to the Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.
- 🔥 GulfSafe reports 35,000 miles of pipeline just in the Gulf of Mexico.
- 🔥 Every six minutes an underground utility line is damaged by someone who did not call 811 before digging, according to CGA's DIRT report.
- 🔥 Louisiana State Law requires contacting the 811 at least 2 full business days prior to a planned excavation.
- 🔥 According to Louisiana State Law, an "excavation" means any operation causing movement or removal of earth, rock, or other materials in or on the ground or submerged in a marine environment that could reasonably result in damage to underground or submerged utilities or facilities by the use of powered or mechanical or manual means, including but not limited to pile driving, digging, blasting, augering, boring, back filling, dredging, compaction, plowing-in, trenching, ditching, tunneling, land-leveling, grading, and mechanical probing.

*For more information, or to
schedule a free presentation
please contact Kinetica's
Damage Prevention
Department.
(985) 223-6145*



Those Dreadful Words

By Joe Igel

This time of year would often make me cringe. It was not a Scrooge moment, no deep-rooted childhood experience.

It was putting together the toys that were gifts to our sons and seeing somewhere on the box “Some Assembly Required”. Couple those dreadful words with the toy being made overseas and I knew the instructions would not be clear. So, I would start assembling without reviewing the instructions, which was almost always a significant mistake. Had I planned, test-fitted and most of all, started before Christmas Eve, so much of this could have been averted.

Unfortunately, in so many situations, this “damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead” attitude can be deadly. My concern is rooted in an incident that I recounted in an article three years ago about an incident where a small excavation crew cut a main gasline, causing an explosion. The story in the newspaper noted that they proceeded after their spotter had left for the day. The workers died instantly. The explosion was twenty-five miles from our offices, but I could still hear it and feel it. The power and the fury in that single event made an impression upon me that still lingers today.

As I have mentioned in several previous articles, I am privileged to sit on Ohio’s Underground Technical Committee, the body that enforces One-Call laws for the State. In my years of service, I have seen varying trends that trouble me, but the one that I find particularly troubling is when the violator fails to realize the potential for damage from their work and disregards free and

simple safety precautions that would protect all involved. This failure has been particularly true with excavations around pipelines.


Too many times a year, we see complaints coming from gas pipeline companies that have discovered either current or recent excavation that could have caused severe damage to the pipeline and to those working around it. From fences to culvert pipes, from field drains to farming work, from foundations to small contractor work, we have seen it all and all pose a significant and dangerous threat to those working there.

If these digging events are happening because excavators or owners performing excavation are uninformed, how do we resolve it? First there needs to be a broader outreach. Some violations are reported as a result of drone/aerial survey, inspectors driving along the pipeline, in short, first-hand inspection. But these discoveries are made after or at best, during the excavation. And yes, these pipelines have marker posts that indicate the hazard, but for some reason, the warnings go unheeded.

The reasons for this lack of knowledge are understandable but unacceptable. In some cases, the land has always been in the family and there is no realization of a pipeline ever having been buried on the property. Sometimes, it is simply the expectation that the excavation being performed will not penetrate the ground to the depth they believe the utility is or should be buried. And, sometimes, the owner is aware of the utility presence, but not aware that they are working in conflict with it.

Marker posts alone are not enough. They can be destroyed, removed, grown over and obscured and sometimes people grow numb to their presence. There are many useful tools. A friend of mine provides safety talks in schools, educating junior high and high school students and encouraging them, to pass the information on to the rest of their household. Farm Bureaus can also provide a mechanism for this education. Perhaps insurance underwriters could have a more active role. And if a permit is required, the permitting authority could have a role. The best solution, but it takes a bit more time, is to encourage a site assessment. A good site assessment involves more planning, but the advantages are immense.

Think about me assembling a toy garage, not following the instructions, starting at the last minute, with other toys demanding assembly and batteries! And only one short evening to complete the tasks. All the while hoping that when complete it faintly resembles the picture on the front of the box. Planning, preparation, anticipation, all would have benefited the process. And a site assessment plan would be enormously helpful to these unaware excavators.


Despite federal regulations, state laws and owners desire to provide safety, the current methods of disseminating information need enhanced. It is time for a more aggressive approach. 

Mr. Igel recently retired as vice president of the George J. Igel & Co., Inc. after working there for more than 35 years.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

We're thankful for the promises of "can't wait until next year!" As always, the Damage Prevention Summit strives to create the environment for stakeholder involvement in identifying best practices or possible solutions to issues that impact public safety and disruption of utility services without regard to utility type.

We had a building filled with winners this year. You can see some of their photos in this issue. If you were one of the record number in 2023, thanks for making it happen. If not, plan to attend next year's Summit and help us set another record. We'll be back at L'Auberge, Baton Rouge. The date is already set. Mark your calendars for January 23 – 25, 2024.

Until then, let's work together to have a record reduction in damages in Louisiana! 



Locate Rodeo Winners

Left to Right - 1st Place in Power – William Smith, T. Baker Smith

2nd Place Overall Winner – Chuck Young, Atmos Energy

1st Place in Telecom – Christopher Smith, Grady Crawford Construction

1st Place in Gas & LFH and 1st Place Overall Winner – Joey LaBorde, Entergy Gas




2022 Louisiana Locator of the Year Winners

Congratulations to the 2022 Louisiana Locator of the Year Award winners! Locators are unsung heroes to our industry. Thank you for your long days and hard work to mark underground facilities for excavation projects. You keep our state progressing forward. We truly appreciate you!

Large Member Company: **David Alexius – Atmos Energy**

Small Member Company: **Darrell Langley – Simpra Infrastructure/Cameron Interstate Pipeline**

Contract Locator: **Teddy Venable - USIC** 



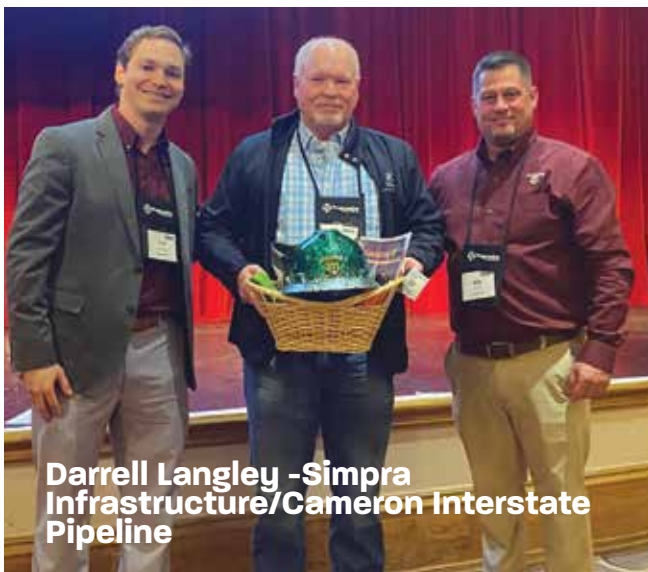
Teddy Venable - USIC

(l to r) Cole Vanderlick, Teddy Venable, Billy Forest



David Alexius – Atmos Energy

(l to r) Cole Vanderlick, David Alexius, Billy Forest



Darrell Langley - Simpra Infrastructure/Cameron Interstate Pipeline

(l to r) Cole Vanderlick, Darrell Lasngley, Billy Forest

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Pipeline Safety - It Is Personal!!

We just went through another national election. You may agree or disagree with the results, but you may find the following interesting. One of the results of the election was the 4,155-page FY 2022 Omnibus Funding Act. Just for kicks, I downloaded a copy (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2471/text>) and did a word search for "pipeline." The word "pipeline" occurs 14 times in the entire document (including twice with respect to foreign pipelines). The relevant fact is that the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) was funded to the tune of \$29.1 million for next year (basically no change in budget) IF "... a final rule on automatic and remote-controlled shut-off valves and hazardous liquid pipeline facilities leak detection systems as required under section 4 and section 8 of the Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-90), respectively, [is issued] not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act [12-23-22]. . ." If PHMSA is unable to issue the final rule by April 22, 2023, PHMSA (hypothetically) will get docked \$5,000 per day. If my math is correct, pipeline safety is less than 0.0002 percent of next year's budget. I find it hard to believe Congress is truly

concerned about pipeline safety.

What about employers? In my experience, the overwhelming majority of employers are genuinely concerned about the safety of their employees. That said, it is, in my opinion, unreasonable to expect safety personnel to be everywhere all the time someone else is working. Furthermore, not every accident happens "on the clock." Employees have lives outside the workplace and accidents happen outside the workplace. A "safe" employee is more also likely to be safe outside the workplace and less likely miss work because of an injury. If nobody gets hurt and nobody gets killed, EVERYBODY wins!!


What about Mother Nature? Mother Nature does not care who you are or what your pronouns are. The more effort you put into your safety and the safety of those around you, the less likely Mother Nature or Murphy's law will bite you in the a**!!

My father used to say, "Think before you do something." There are times when speed is important. However, the faster you try to get something done, the more likely something could go wrong. Plan the work, work the plan, and be ready to react to changed conditions.

I played football all through grade school, high school, and college. One of my favorite coaches had a saying: "Always run with your head up." The same is true with safety. ALWAYS be aware of your surroundings. If something doesn't seem right, slow down. If you see something, SAY SOMETHING!! If necessary, DO SOMETHING!! If you understand a risk and are willing to accept it, keep on trucking but be ready to accept the consequences if things don't work out the way you planned. Remember that things you don't know that you don't know can be dangerous. Things that you think you know but really don't, can be even more dangerous.

Safety always has been and always will be PERSONAL!

I am truly blessed. I have worked with my hands all my life and, even though I have done some stupid things, I still have all my fingers and toes and, AFIK, so does everyone that has ever worked for or with me. May you enjoy the same blessings.

Be safe out there!! 

*John Jacobi retired from PHMSA.
For questions or comments, email:
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BACK TO THE BASICS

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