



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

**Oregon Utility Notification Center**  
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**April 14, 2025**

**The Honorable Tina Kotek**

Governor  
254 State Capitol  
Salem, OR, 97301

**Senator Rob Wagner**

Senate President  
S-201 State Capitol  
Salem, OR, 97301

**Representative Julie Fahey**

Speaker of the House  
H-271 State Capitol  
Salem, OR, 97301

On behalf of the Oregon Utility Notification Center, which celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, I am submitting this annual report to the Oregon Legislative Assembly pursuant to ORS 757.562 (1). April is National Safe Digging Month, and thanks to Governor Kotek's proclamation, we are recognizing Safe Digging Month in Oregon as well. Safe excavation is important to all Oregonians.

## **ABOUT THE OREGON UTILITY NOTIFICATION CENTER**

The Oregon Utility Notification Center (OUNC), more commonly known as Oregon 811, administers Oregon's excavation laws and statewide locate requests. Created by the 1995 Oregon Legislature, its mission is to operate and maintain a state-of-the-art one-call system for the state to reduce damages to underground facilities and to promote public safety related to excavation issues. OUNC conducts training and outreach and adopts rules to regulate notification and locating of underground utilities.

Through its efforts, OUNC is committed to helping people avoid serious damage, injuries and expenses by preventing accidents before they happen. The service is available by calling 811, going to [Oregon811.com](http://Oregon811.com) or [www.dig safet yoregon.com](http://www.dig safet yoregon.com), or using our free app. Homeowners and businesses can have their underground utilities marked before digging at no cost. The call center is located in Portland and is staffed by about 50 operators under contract with [One Call Concepts](#).

OUNC is a public benefit nonprofit corporation with the powers of an Oregon state agency, per [ORS 757.547](#). OUNC has a 21-member Board of Directors, appointed by the Governor, and a staff of two. Board members are unpaid volunteers, and no state funds are used to support the OUNC. The last financial audit provided a clean bill of health, and a financial review will be conducted in 2025.

## **SAFE DIGGING STARTS WITH NOTIFICATION**

In 2024, Oregon's one-call center received 355,602 notifications from Oregonians who were planning to dig. This was a 3.81 percent increase from 2023. These initial notifications are critical to protecting life and property when working and excavating around underground utilities. The notification center is responsible for identifying the dig site and alerting the appropriate utility members to locate and mark their facilities. As a result, the call center sent out 1,880,837 excavation notices to underground utility members in 2024. This represented a 0.58 percent increase from 2023 volumes.

The call center isn't just about calls though, as many submit their requests online. Oregon processes online locate requests through an internet ticketing application called ITICnxt. ITICnxt is an efficient and accurate way to request locates with enhanced mapping and marking. The system has achieved an adoption rate of more than 70%, and we are working to bring that number above 80% through education, training and informational resources.

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## PROACTIVE OUTREACH AND TRAINING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

You have likely seen OUNC's public-facing messaging, such as "know what's below" and "call before you dig." Now the unifying industry tagline from Common Ground Alliance is "Safety is in your hands. Every dig. Every time." It reflects a shifting strategy from raising awareness to behavioral change.

Damages in Oregon are typically caused by 20% homeowners and 80% contractors/professional excavators. Publicity efforts are aimed at raising awareness about the free 811 service and encouraging homeowners to call before they dig. Professional excavators and contractors are also targeted to encourage them to participate in our training programs, to utilize the enhanced features of the ITICnxt online ticketing system, and to follow industry best practices. In 2024, paid and earned media placements included print, television, radio, streaming platforms, social media and more.

Through sponsorships and partnerships with organizations like the Common Ground Alliance (CGA), OUNC has extended reach and access to content. At statewide public events and through related advertising and outreach, OUNC continues to go where the people are to engage with "DIYers" and all those completing projects requiring excavation throughout the heart of dig season (April-October).

OUNC's training and education programs help sharpen skills and provide resources for Oregon's damage prevention community. The OUNC hosts in-person excavator and locator training classes statewide as well as an online Excavation 101 course. More than 1,000 people completed our classes in 2024. Free training modules offered by Common Ground Alliance are adding valuable new tools.

## SUSTAINED REDUCTIONS IN DAMAGES

During the past five years in Oregon, we have reduced statewide damages to underground utilities by 44% -- from 1,783 reported incidents of damage annually down to just over a thousand. The "we" in that previous sentence includes contractors and professional excavators, locators, utilities, our notification center contractor, local and state government, homeowners and more. All have a role and a vested interest in reducing damages to underground utilities – and it takes a team effort.

We continue to track damage data provided in the national Damage Information Reporting Tool, through Oregon Public Utility Commission's complaint investigation and enforcement efforts, and through our utilities and regional utility coordinating councils. Damage data helps us determine the parts of our state with a higher damage ratio than others, and can identify root causes so we can sharpen our focus and continue to move the needle on damage prevention and public safety.

## IN CONCLUSION

Following on the successful implementation of strategic plan elements, we will adopt a new plan in July 2025. Our work remains vitally important to protect infrastructure from being damaged and to help Oregonians avoid hurting themselves (and their pocketbooks). Let me know if you have questions or need additional information about the Oregon Utility Notification Center. I am glad to meet with you or your staff anytime.

Respectfully submitted,



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