



Request for Proposals: Operation of the Oregon Utility Notification Center

2026 Procurement Process · Submission Deadline: May 8, 2026 | Contract Start Date: January 1, 2027

The Oregon Utility Notification Center (OUNC) is soliciting proposals from qualified firms to provide a **turnkey operation** of the statewide 811 notification system.

OUNC's mission is to operate and maintain a modern notification system that reduces damage to underground facilities and promotes public safety related to excavation.

Through this procurement, OUNC seeks a strategic partner to deliver a comprehensive solution that combines high-quality operations with modern technology, user-friendly digital interfaces, accurate GIS-based notification, and a shared commitment to continuous improvement.

The successful vendor will be asked to enter into a contract, which is to start **January 1, 2027**, and will cover a period of **three years with the possibility of two one-year extensions**.

Direct All Communications to:

Joshua Thomas

Executive Director

Oregon Utility Notification Center

josh.thomas@digsafelyoregon.com

(503) 317-5007

For more information, visit:

Oregon811.com

This document was reviewed for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to ensure it is accessible to all.

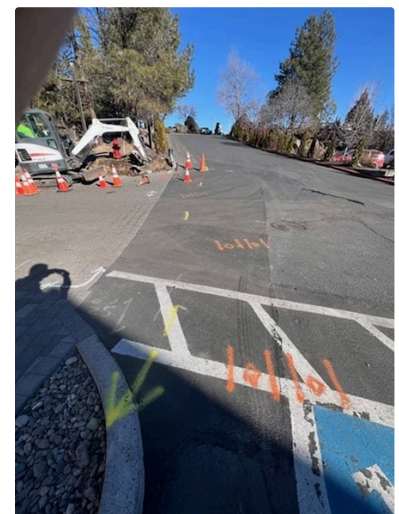
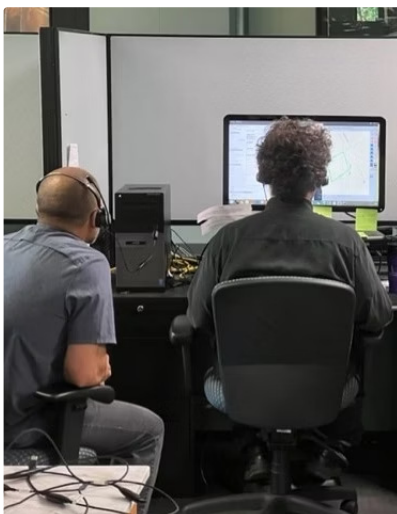


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Organizational Overview

About OUNC

The Oregon Utility Notification Center (OUNC) was created by the **1995 Oregon Legislature** and is an independent, not-for-profit public benefit corporation. OUNC has the powers of a state agency under **ORS 757.552** and is governed by a **21-member Board** appointed by the Governor of Oregon.

OUNC is funded through a **per-ticket assessment** (current [current service tariff rate information](#) is \$1.58) on member utilities and receives no tax revenue. The organization has an Executive Director and contracts for the operation of the notification center.

Expected Outcomes of this Solicitation

OUNC is soliciting proposals from qualified firms to provide a **turnkey operation of the statewide 811 notification system**. The current contract expires on December 31, 2026.

In addition to our solicitation for "status quo" proposals, we are welcoming creative solutions in a secondary proposal option that is less prescriptive to explore efficiencies. Our goals are budgetary stability/predictability and controlling costs for our 1,190 subscribers without adversely impacting system users.

This RFP and the successful vendor's Proposals shall become part of the final contract between the Board and the vendor. The contract will be for **three years with the possibility of two one-year extensions**.

How the System Works (simplified)



Request Submitted

Locate requests arrive via calling 811, visiting Oregon811.com or DigSafelyOregon.com, using the Oregon 811 app, or third party ticket management systems.



Utilities Notified

The Notification Center notifies facility operators of proposed excavation within their notification boundaries so their facilities can be marked to prevent damage.



Locates Provided

Underground utility locates are performed by in-house or contract locators within two business days for homeowners, contractors, excavators, and utilities at no cost.



Safe Excavation

Timely, accurate locates support safe excavation practices statewide, protecting vital underground infrastructure and public safety.

Procurement Schedule

The following milestones govern this procurement. All proposers are responsible for meeting these deadlines and confirming receipt of their respective proposal. **Late proposals will not be considered.**



The timeline above reflects the full procurement lifecycle from issuance through contract commencement. Proposers must be fully operational by December 11, 2026.

Milestone	Date
<i>Request for proposals issued</i>	<i>March 31, 2026</i>
<i>Deadline for questions</i>	<i>April 17, 2026</i>
<i>OUNC posts answers to questions on Oregon811.com</i>	<i>April 24, 2026</i>
Proposal submission deadline	May 8, 2026 · noon (Pacific Time)
<i>Vendor presentations in person (by invitation only)</i>	<i>May 21, 2026</i>
<i>Selection of successful proposer</i>	<i>July 16, 2026</i>
<i>Operational readiness required</i>	<i>December 11, 2026</i>
Contract start date	January 1, 2027

Instructions to Proposers

Submission Requirements

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by **April 17, 2026**. Responses to questions will be posted on the OUNC website by **April 24, 2026**.

Proposals should not exceed 30 pages and must be received no later than **noon (12 p.m., Pacific Time) on May 8, 2026**. Late proposals will not be considered.

Electronic submission as a PDF is required. Mailed/hard copy submissions will not be accepted. Proposers are responsible for confirming receipt of proposals before the deadline.

Proposers should submit **two pricing proposals** as described on page 9. An authorized representative shall **sign the proposal** and provide the name and address of the Vendor. Email subject line shall be simply **"Proposal – Notification Center Operations."** See Attachment A for guidance.

Direct All Communications to:

Joshua Thomas
Executive Director
Oregon Utility Notification Center

Email:
josh.thomas@digsafelyoregon.com

Phone: (503) 317-5007

Please ensure your authorized representative includes their contact information in case we have follow up questions about your proposal.

Questions

Submit questions by email by **April 17, 2026**. Responses will be posted to the OUNC website by **April 24, 2026**.

Electronic Submission

Submit proposals by email to [Josh Thomas](mailto:josh.thomas@digsafelyoregon.com) as a PDF. Proposers are responsible for verifying receipt before the deadline.

Two Pricing Proposals

Option A (Baseline) and Option B (Alternative/Value-Optimized) as described on page 9.

Please note: If your proposal is selected for final consideration, you will be invited to present your proposal in person to the OUNC Board on **May 21, 2026** at Eagle Crest Resort in Bend, Oregon. Presenters will be invited and provided with the requisite information in advance of this Board Meeting. Scoring will be conducted based on the evaluation criteria on page 10.

Scope of Work — Core Operations

The Contractor shall provide all personnel, systems, facilities, and resources necessary to operate the statewide 811 notification center on a **turnkey basis** under the direction of the OUNC Board. Successful proposals will explain capabilities and plans across these 12 functional areas:

1 - Turnkey Operations

24/7 availability (or proposed alternative), management of all incoming locate requests, creation and distribution of locate tickets, billing, quality assurance, and ongoing communication with excavators, utilities, and stakeholders. Contractor is responsible for insurance, staffing, compensation, training, supervision, and performance management.

2 - Technology Platform

A modern platform enabling users to submit, manage, and access locate requests through web-based and mobile (iOS and Android) interfaces. Must support intuitive online ticket interface, search and status tracking, and communication features (e.g. positive response). System must be scalable, and comply with accessibility requirements.

3 - GIS & Mapping

Advanced GIS functionality to accurately delineate excavation areas, facilities and determine notification boundaries. Improved mapping accuracy must reduce overnotification by identifying and working with facility operators whose infrastructure is reasonably expected to be impacted. Continuously refine tools and integrate updated facility data with the utilities.

4 - Communications and Outreach

Support OUNC's outreach and public awareness initiatives, including maintenance of website, management of social media channels, and production of public education materials. Provide creative services to produce campaigns promoting safe excavation practices and encourage use of the 811 system.

5 - Administrative Support

Provide administrative support to the Executive Director, Board and committees. Includes but not limited to accounts payable, meeting planning/logistics, agendas and materials, recording meeting minutes, and assisting with research, review and communications. Respond promptly to staff and Board requests.

6 - Financial Operations

Manage billing and accounts receivable for the notification center. Issue invoices, collect fees, and maintain accurate financial records. Billing shall comply with Oregon law requiring charges assessed on a per-ticket basis and exemptions under ORS 757.552. Ensure transparency, accountability, and timely reporting.

Scope of Work — Advanced Services

7 - Training and Education

Develop, maintain, and deliver training and support resources tailored to contractors, professional excavators, utilities, facility operators, and homeowners using the 811 system. Training materials should include online tutorials, written guides, video demonstrations, and live or virtual training sessions. Track participation (learning management system) and report training activity and outcomes to the OUNC Board. Maintain database of excavators/key contacts.

8 - Data, Reporting & Strategic Support

Collect and analyze operational data to provide regular performance reports. Data should include ticket volumes, mode of submission (phone vs. electronic), performance metrics, and customer feedback. Provide reports to staff, board and bookkeeping firm. Develop forecasts and projections to support OUNC's budgeting and strategic planning processes. Identify and troubleshoot problem areas. Share and use insights, best practices, and innovations including Common Ground Alliance and Facility Notification Center Association.

9 - Governance and Compliance

Operate the center in conformance with ORS 757.542 - 757.993 and OAR Chapter 952, Division 1. OUNC is subject to Oregon public meetings law, records retention requirements, public records requests, and ethics guidelines. The Contractor shall support OUNC's compliance by maintaining records, assisting with information requests, and ensuring that operations adhere to applicable laws and regulations. Contractor shall cooperate with OUNC to ensure compliance and implement rule/law changes, tariff adjustments and related system modifications on schedule.

10 - Security and Resilience

Protect the notification center's systems, infrastructure, and data from cybersecurity threats, including ransomware, unauthorized access, and other system threats. Adhere to industry best practices, and ensure compliance with applicable security standards. Disaster recovery and business continuity plans must be established and tested to withstand an outage or crisis.

Scope of Work — Performance and Transition

11 - Key Performance Indicators and Quality Assurance

OUNC expects the Contractor to utilize a modern performance framework that reflects current user behavior and digital engagement. Traditional call center metrics such as Average Speed of Answer (ASA) may remain relevant for voice channels but are **not the primary measure of performance**.



System Uptime

Dependable and redundant infrastructure



Digital Adoption Rates

Intuitive electronic and mobile channels



Ease of Use

Intuitive interfaces for all user types



Notification Accuracy, Mapping

Precision of GIS-based locate notifications



Customer Satisfaction

Measured feedback from excavators, locators, utility operators and homeowners



Continuous Improvement

Ongoing innovation and performance enhancement, best practices

Proposers shall describe the metrics they will track, targets they propose to meet, and how results will be reported to OUNC on a regular, ongoing basis. How will you define success and demonstrate results?

12 - Transition Plan, Implementation

The Contractor shall provide a transition plan outlining the approach to seamlessly transfer operations to without disruption to service. This plan must address the following:

- **Staffing and Personnel Transition:** Hire and train qualified personnel for seamless service delivery.
- **System Setup and Configuration:** Deploy the platform with proper integration including billing.
- **Data Migration/Integration:** Securely transfer historical data, ensuring integrity and accessibility.
- **Comprehensive Testing, Quality Assurance:** Rigorous testing and user acceptance before go-live.
- **Training and Onboarding:** Develop training programs and resources for all system users.
- **Communication Plan:** Inform all stakeholders about transition timeline, impacts, and support.
- **Risk Management/Mitigation:** Identify risks, develop contingency plans, ensure continuity.

Pricing Proposal

Option A – Baseline/Status Quo

Subscribers pay OUNC a [view OUNC service tariff rate details](#) of \$1.58 per ticket transmitted, invoiced on a monthly basis. Provide proposed pricing for existing services that meets all requirements specified in this RFP. Clearly explain your base price per incoming ticket, as well as any discounts you may offer for how tickets are received/processed. The baseline will be used for direct comparisons among proposers. It can be as simple as this:

Service	Price
Base Price Per Incoming Ticket	\$ _____
Per Ticket Discount for TEXT ONLY entry by Internet User	\$ _____
Per Ticket Discount for TEXT and Mapping entered by Internet User	\$ _____
Per Ticket Discount for Updates entered by Internet User	\$ _____
Board Administrative Services – Per Hour	\$ _____

Option B – Alternative/Value-Optimized

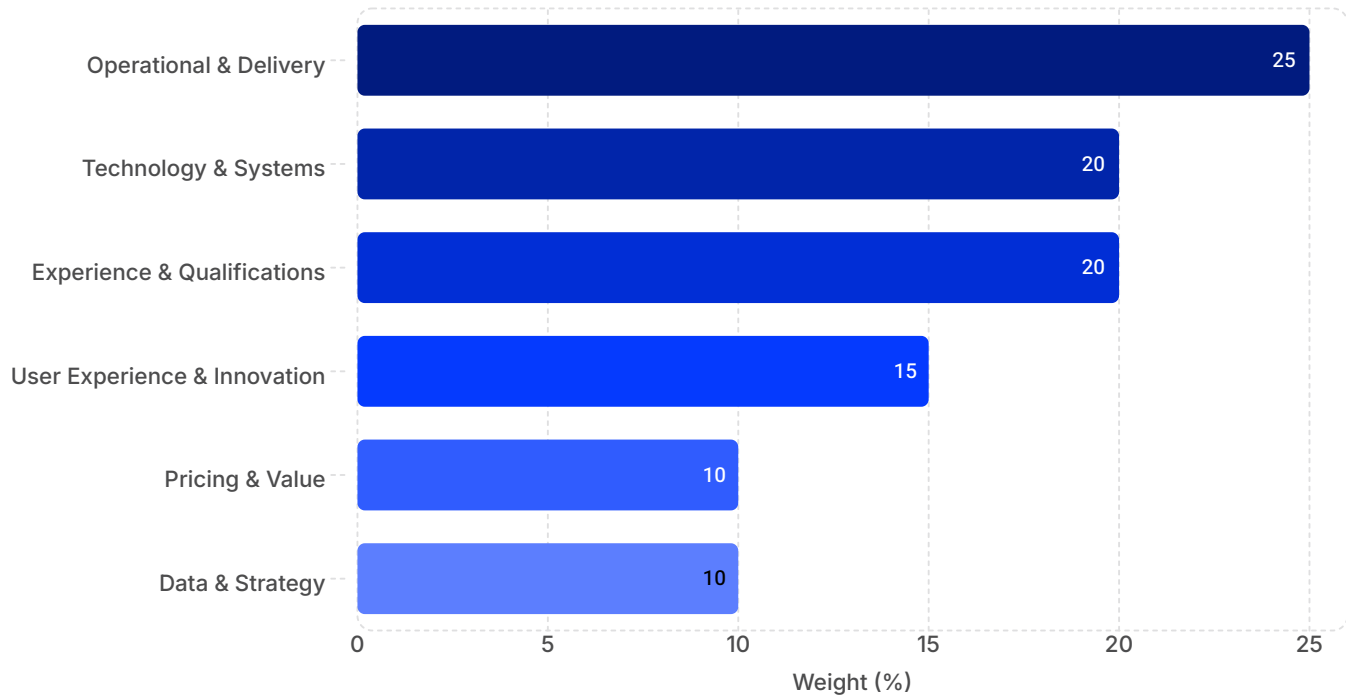
An alternative proposal that incorporates innovative approaches, efficiencies, or 'value engineering' strategies that maintain high service quality while improving cost-effectiveness.

Alternative proposals may include adjusted service schedules, seasonal or demand-based operations, changes to performance targets, technology-driven efficiencies, creative pricing structures, and other innovative solutions.

- Important:** Alternative proposals must maintain compliance, safety, public confidence and user satisfaction. Clearly identify deviations from baseline requirements; and explain the rationale, benefits, trade-offs, and impacts on users and member utilities.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following weighted criteria. The total weight equals 100%.



Category	Description	Weight
Operational Approach & Turnkey Delivery	Fully integrated, turnkey solution including operations, administration, communications, and billing.	25%
Technology & Systems	Quality and maturity of digital platforms, GIS precision, system reliability, redundancy, and security.	20%
Experience & Qualifications	Demonstrated experience operating notification centers or comparable systems; references.	20%
User Experience & Innovation	Intuitive user experience; modern KPIs; commitment to continuous improvement and innovation.	15%
Pricing & Value	Overall cost, clarity of pricing, and demonstrated value in relation to services provided.	10%
Data, Reporting & Strategic Support	Capabilities for reporting, data analysis, forecasting, and strategy in alignment with OUNC priorities.	10%

Submitting Questions & Attachments

Question and Answer Process

Questions that are not already addressed in this RFP will be welcomed until **April 17, 2026**.

Questions shall be submitted to the Executive Director via email. Responses will be compiled and posted on the OUNC website by **April 24, 2026**.

Proposers are responsible for reviewing posted updates.

Contact for Questions

Joshua Thomas, Executive Director
Oregon Utility Notification Center

[Email Joshua Thomas at
josh.thomas@digsafelyoregon.com](mailto:josh.thomas@digsafelyoregon.com)

Attachments

The following are provided as informational resources:

Attachment A – Proposal Content Guidelines

Attachment B – Notification Center Data
Contextual metrics and summary information.

Attachment C – OUNC Strategic Plan

For more information, visit:

[Visit Oregon811.com](http://VisitOregon811.com)

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- ❏ This RFP was issued on March 31, 2026, and was reviewed for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to ensure the content is accessible to all. If you need special assistance, contact OUNC Executive Director Josh Thomas at josh.thomas@digsafelyoregon.com or (503) 317-5007.



[Visit Oregon811.com](http://VisitOregon811.com)

Attachment A: Proposal Content Guidelines

GENERAL INFORMATION

The vendor shall submit a definitive proposal for the results set forth in the RFP. Proposals shall describe the vendor's qualifications, intended performance for operation of the Center on the activities described, and the resources required to perform the activities. The selected vendor must have demonstrated a minimum of five years experience in the utility notification center business.

The vendor must have a manager available with demonstrated skills in managing a Center.

Qualifications that merely repeat requirements of the scope of work will be considered non-responsive.

RIGHT OF AWARD OR REJECTION

Proposals shall confirm terms and conditions contained in this RFP are accepted by the vendor. It is understood that the Proposal will become a part of the public record without obligation to the Board. The Board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for good cause, in the public's best interest.

INCURRING COSTS

The Board is not liable for costs incurred by the vendor in the preparation or presentation of the proposal.

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND LENGTH

Proposals should be well-organized, logically structured, and easy to read. Each proposal section should be clearly identifiable with appropriate headings and subheadings, and should not exceed 30 pages.

All proposals must adhere to an 8½ x 11" page size. A minimum font size of 12 point should be used for all body text within the proposal. Any specific page limits for individual sections or the overall proposal will be detailed within the respective sections of this RFP. This list provides a basic roadmap for your proposal:

Attachment A: Proposal Content Guidelines

Cover Sheet

Title of the proposal, the legal name of the proposing firm, its address, telephone number, primary contact person, email address, date, and any other pertinent identifying information.

Firms' Capabilities

Demonstrate relevant experience, including length of time in business, similar operations for other clients, financial solvency, quality assurance procedures, and the ability to operate and manage an 811 Center. This section should clearly present how your firm's capabilities align with the demands of operating a critical notification center. References are encouraged.

Operation Team

A staffing plan, including an organizational chart, a list of key personnel and subcontractors (if applicable) to be assigned to the contract, including qualifications for key personnel. List experience in 811 Centers or comparable operations, and availability during core business hours and for emergencies. Clearly outline roles, responsibilities, and reporting structures.

Operations Understanding

Provide a clear narrative demonstrating understanding and objectives of 811 Center operations. Include your perspective on the essential components of service delivery, stakeholder engagement, and the regulatory environment. Please explain any proposed modifications to the scope of work.

Methodology of Operating the Center

Action plan outlining how you will approach this scope of work. This includes, but is not limited to, timelines, assignments, ticket processing, quality control, data management, administration, billing, and training programs. This section should illustrate adequate financial resources, equipment, and confidence in managing the operations.

Attachment A: Proposal Content Guidelines (Continued)

Supportive Information

This could include graphs, charts, photos, resumes, references, case studies, examples – any pertinent information or resources to tell your story. This could include affiliations/memberships, industry recognition, certifications, licenses, etc. Familiarity with local geographical, governmental and regulatory considerations is also relevant.

Technology Changes

Describe any technology changes or upgrades you have implemented, and what you would intend to implement or integrate within Oregon 811 operations. This section should detail the benefits of such changes, the implementation timeline, and how they enhance efficiency, accuracy, and overall service delivery. Include any necessary hardware or software requirements and your ability to plan, procure, test and implement.

Electronic White Lining/Positive Response

Explain your capabilities for enabling features such as electronic (aka virtual) white lining and enhanced positive response integrated with tickets. Share any other relevant new/pending features you can offer.

Pricing Proposal

Present your comprehensive pricing structure, including the baseline proposal and any alternative or value-optimized proposals, as described in the RFP. Clearly itemize all costs, fees, and any potential discounts. Ensure transparency in pricing, explaining how costs are calculated and what is included in each service component. Refer to previous sections of the RFP for specific pricing requirements. The contract term will be three years with the possibility of two one-year extensions.

Attachment B: Notification Center Data

INCOMING TICKETS (Monthly)

Contextual metrics and summary information on incoming tickets.

Month	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
JAN	27113	24352	26377	26335	26393	24737	31358	29460
FEB	20645	25883	24477	27320	24152	27410	24595	28297
MAR	27463	28286	35479	35104	31316	30254	34939	
APR	32459	30813	35373	32400	29277	33902	38386	
MAY	32606	30303	32023	32058	34484	33779	35684	
JUN	29106	32354	32377	33447	31822	30502	36031	
JUL	31968	31647	31255	29820	30156	31853	35880	
AUG	30324	30458	31846	32816	33704	31186	31291	
SEP	28813	28927	30379	28972	28629	31020	33792	
OCT	31205	31536	28720	29071	29121	34117	32240	
NOV	23813	24061	25294	24050	23591	23585	24163	
DEC	20745	24298	21435	19556	19416	23257	24082	
TOTAL	336260	342918	355035	350949	342061	355602	382441	

Attachment B: Notification Center Data (Continued)

OUTGOING TICKETS (Monthly)

The following are outbound monthly ticket volumes and annual totals since 2020.

Month	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
JAN	143654	156897	146966	142967	143773	155463	147753
FEB	152465	143739	151825	130380	156124	126004	147060
MAR	169235	206051	193767	172888	171657	171691	
APR	181230	205164	178016	158007	190804	191284	
MAY	176782	183674	181184	183400	177849	180047	
JUN	190754	185075	186929	169974	156293	180927	
JUL	187915	176412	164822	160359	163814	178115	
AUG	180238	179670	180327	178504	160887	156169	
SEP	170710	171490	159917	157874	157653	170752	
OCT	183390	158301	155771	168362	166658	166055	
NOV	140679	138351	130123	134980	118630	124540	
DEC	140776	114203	105029	112274	116695	121878	
TOTAL	2017828	2019027	1934676	1869969	1880837	1922925	

Attachment B: Notification Center Data (Continued)

INTERNET TICKETING ADOPTION RATES

Internet Ticketing Adoption Rates								
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
J	67.97%	68.27%	67.23%	72.00%	71.88%	78.01%	80.51%	81.16%
F	68.22%	65.95%	65.64%	72.39%	70.02%	76.40%	78.45%	80.74%
M	64.09%	64.30%	72.45%	71.65%	73.42%	74.00%	79.28%	
A	61.69%	60.07%	72.79%	71.65%	71.02%	73.32%	77.67%	
M	59.40%	59.32%	71.60%	71.42%	71.13%	73.11%	78.93%	
J	61.19%	62.38%	73.26%	71.83%	72.32%	74.18%	79.55%	
J	60.69%	61.23%	72.40%	70.61%	73.21%	74.65%	78.78%	
A	61.30%	61.33%	70.32%	70.73%	74.33%	74.43%	78.01%	
S	62.88%	61.46%	70.94%	69.87%	73.30%	76.17%	78.83%	
O	65.21%	63.08%	72.11%	70.26%	74.68%	78.01%	78.45%	
N	66.99%	65.47%	72.91%	71.86%	76.76%	79.95%	81.52%	
D	66.15%	67.47%	72.22%	71.76%	77.65%	79.64%	81.14%	

The chart shows internet ticketing adoption rates from 2019 to 2026. Rows represent months (January through December). Adoption rates have risen steadily, from approximately 64–68% in 2019 to 77–81% in 2025, with the highest rates typically in January and February each year.



STRATEGIC PLAN

Driving Results with Data

Providing Oversight

Delivering Quality Services

Maximizing Outreach

Rulemaking and Best Practices

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INTRODUCTION

Back in the 1990s, a group of volunteers with full-time day jobs and a commitment to damage prevention saw the opportunity to make a positive difference. They provided the leadership needed to create the foundations for what would become the Oregon Utility Notification Center. It didn't happen overnight, and it didn't happen by chance.

With a shared vision and strategic planning, they built a coalition and worked tirelessly towards their goal. Industry leaders made tough decisions and spent years making concepts into reality, and their investment of time and energy is still paying dividends.

Fast forward to today, and the board members of the Oregon Utility Notification Center continue that legacy, carrying on a proud tradition of reducing damages and improving safety for present and future generations. While today's leaders have the benefit of a solid foundation to build upon, the organization must continually evolve with changing times.

"Strategy-making forces executives to confront a future they can only guess at," said Roger L. Martin in *Harvard Business Review*. "It's not surprising, then, that they try to make the task less daunting by preparing a comprehensive plan for how the company will achieve its goal."

That's what this plan is all about. It is about taking a holistic look toward the future and devising a roadmap that helps make our envisioned destinations a reality. The process includes current assessment, visioning for where we want to go, and assessment to quantify results and adjust course along the way. This is a living document that we will continue to revisit and nurture.

Looking back at our previous plans, it is encouraging to see that much of what the board envisioned has become a reality. As a result, we're now better prepared for the road ahead in the coming years and beyond and this strategic plan serves as our GPS.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Josh Thomas".

Josh Thomas

Executive Director, Oregon Utility Notification Center



OUR MISSION AND MANDATE

Mission Statement

The mission of the Oregon Utility Notification Center is to operate and maintain a state-of-the-art notification center for the State of Oregon to reduce damages to underground facilities and to promote public safety related to excavation issues.

Vision Statement

We believe in preventing accidents before they happen. As a unifying force, we provide reliable services and resources that protect the critical systems that society depends on and keep people safe from harm.

Our Mandate

- Oversee a statewide notification system that provides the critical communication link between those planning to dig and those operators that may have buried facilities in an area of proposed excavation so that those facilities may be located and marked before excavation begins.
- Develop administrative rules that the board may adopt regulating the notification and marking of underground facilities to prevent damage.
- Establish an equitable rate structure to support the work and activities directed by the Board of Directors. Conduct a competitive bidding process to contract for notification services.
- Solicit prospective Board Members from organizations that have a vested interest in underground utility damage prevention and submit those nominees to the Governor for appointment to the Board of Directors.
- File an annual report to the Legislative Assembly and Governor covering the activities and operations of the Oregon Utility Notification Center.

The Oregon Revised Statutes establishing and guiding the work of the Oregon Utility Notification Center are ORS 757.542 to 757.993, and the related Oregon Administrative Rules are OAR 952-001-0001 to 952-001-0100.

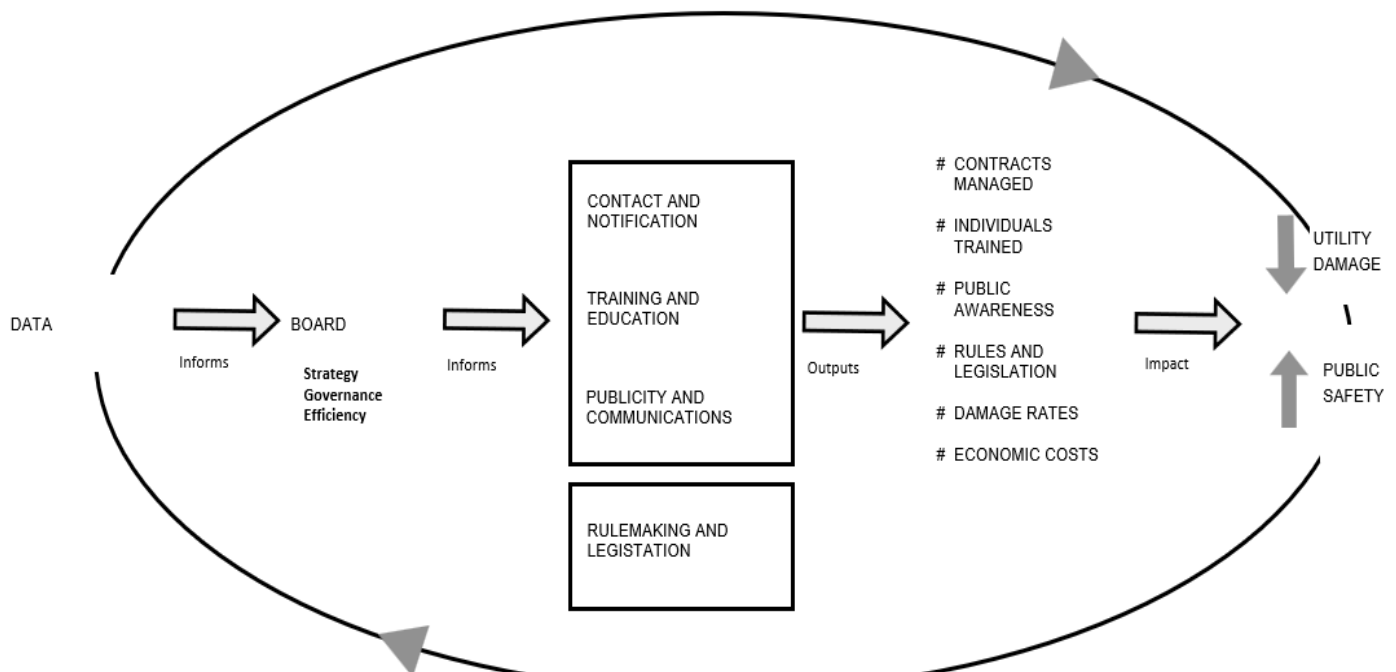
FORM AND FUNCTION

The Oregon Utility Notification Center was created by the Oregon Legislature as an independent not-for-profit public corporation [ORS 757.547(1)(a)] with the powers of a state agency [ORS 757.552(3)]. OUNC is led by a 21-member Board of Directors, appointed by the Governor, and an Executive Director. The notification center is operated under contract with One Call Concepts.

As visualized in the graphic below, the board follows a continuous cycle in achieving its mandate. As such, the OUNC Board of Directors has organized this plan into five sections:

- 1) Driving Results with Data (Data and Research)
- 2) Providing Oversight (Executive; Budget, Audit and Tariff)
- 3) Delivering Quality Services (Notification Center; Training and Education)
- 4) Maximizing Outreach (Publicity)
- 5) Rulemaking and Best Practices (Governance)

How we achieve our mandate:



1. DRIVING RESULTS WITH DATA

Goal: To drive better decision making and quantify results by proactively gathering and analyzing available data to glean relevant and actionable information.

Beyond simply analyzing and reporting on damage data each year, there are two primary outcomes we aim to achieve:

- 1) **GUIDING DIRECTION:** With all of the data available to us, how can we make better informed decisions about where to focus our efforts and allocate our resources?
- 2) **PROVING EFFECTIVENESS:** How can we use data to measure our effectiveness and prove our results? Are we moving the needle?

The Data and Research Committee supports the needs of the Board and other committees to help support and guide better informed decisions. The board has data readily available from organizations including Common Ground Alliance/DIRT, One Call Concepts, Oregon Public Utility Commission and others, but there are untapped opportunities through improved stakeholder involvement and industry relations.

On an annual basis, OUNC staff provides a DIRT report to the OUNC and OUCC boards, as well as a legislatively required annual report to the Oregon Legislature and Governor.

Objectives:

- Pursue current information: talk with damage prevention people from contractors (companies, AGC, NWUCA), ask them to come and talk with the committee/board.
- Improve two-way communication and information sharing with local UCC's – especially monthly damage reports and emerging issues/trends.
- Produce a comprehensive issue summary on currently available data, and what other sources could be beneficial.
- Invite a CGA representative to give updates on DIRT and industry trends a couple times a year.
- Leverage board member affiliations and those entities they represent.
- Look into the “WHY” damages are occurring - do we truly understand why damage is happening and how we can prevent it?
- Gather trends and see what we can learn from them.
- Maintain relationships and collaborate with other states – especially border states with overlapping issues, excavators and locators that routinely cross lines.
- Report on qualitative feedback from trainings and presentations.

2. PROVIDING OVERSIGHT

Goal: To support the growth of OUNC Board and Committee members to ensure that processes and procedures comply with laws and regulations.

As with any volunteer board, it is important that there are clear roles and expectations for members and officers as well as structure and systems for the Board and its committees. These elements are essential to creating a highly efficient board with low turnover and strong leadership development and succession.

OUNC is committed to being transparent, accountable and focused on continual improvement in our administration. All board members have an equal voice and the board welcomes involvement, concept submission forms and testimony from interested stakeholders

Objectives:

- Ensure due diligence: Verify key decisions are based in research and reason. Refine calendar notices, shared files/resources and communications for better preparation.
- Manage risks: Follow Oregon Public Meeting Laws, ethics laws, public information requests, legal action, accounts receivable, rulemaking process.
- Follow protocol: Roberts Rules of Order, Policy and Procedures, and OUNC Standards manual are followed.
- Track Performance: Ensure that management is performing their responsibilities and that the board has the information it needs to make decisions.
- Addressing red flags: Taking appropriate action when there are signs of potential wrongdoing or misconduct.
- Fiduciary responsibility: Ensure a sustainable budget and equitable rate adjustments for members/stakeholders. Arrange for third-party review of finances.
- Maintain compliance: File all mandatory reports and establish and monitor systems to ensure the Board is following all relevant laws and regulations.
- Foster culture: Ensure the Board's culture reflects its mission and strategy and remains a safe and ethical place as members come and go.
- Enhance orientation and onboarding: solidify committee and Executive committee structure, operating guidelines, officer/board member expectations and training.
- Succession planning: Fill key roles with capable individuals when/before current leaders leave, retire, or move to new positions. Shadow in advance when possible.
- Reconsider board and committee meeting frequency as needed.



3. DELIVERING QUALITY SERVICES

Operations Goal: To maintain a state-of-the-art notification center that ensures accurate, timely and consistent services that help excavators and locators work together to protect underground facilities and ensure public safety.

Ensuring the dependability and continuity of this vital service in Oregon is paramount to the mission of the Oregon Utility Notification Center. With ITICnxt enhancements, electronic positive response and integration of artificial intelligence, the center is leveraging technology to improve the quality of notification that results in better locates. In the end, these factors can combine to reduce damage to underground facilities.

Objectives:

- Report and track user satisfaction and feedback about the 811 system, including calls and ITIC system users. Gain insights into how the center is utilized by Oregonians.
- Improve cost effectiveness by achieving discount thresholds for ITICnxt usage, supported through communication and training.
- Encourage adoption of electronic positive response through outreach and training.
- Manage contract and competitive request for proposals process.
- Utilize tools and data on volumes and ticket ratio to inform service tariff adjustments.
- Query successes, challenges, trends and programs from other states.

Training and Education Goal: To support training programs that ensure locators, excavators, and operators help avoid damages and losses incurred during excavation.

The Oregon Utility Notification Board supports high quality training programs to prevent damage, accidents and losses associated with digging and excavation. This includes online and in-person excavation safety classes, and in person locator training classes.

Objectives:

- Strengthen partnerships with organizations that can support and enhance OUNC training programs. Continue building out “training corps” of instructors to present.
- Pivot from 101 in house course toward CGA modules, ideally with CEUs.
- Present at conferences and events with partners such as Landscape Construction Contractors, CCB, OSHA, GOSH, PUC, NWUCA, AGC, cities, counties, utilities, etc.
- Collaborate with permitting agencies and safety officials with large companies.

4. MAXIMIZING OUTREACH

Goal: To change behavior by reaching the right people with the right messages at the right time.

Reaching active diggers in ways that impact their behavior *before* beginning excavation is critical. The ways that we communicate with a homeowner will also differ from our efforts to reach contractors and professional excavators. We need many different tools in our communications toolbox to be effective, and prioritize our efforts where the biggest, most meaningful impacts can be made.

Objectives:

- Develop excavator focused messaging and content to encourage use of Searchandstatus.com, ITICnxt, positive response. Leverage notification center messages/invoices, and monitor users to gauge effectiveness.
- Pursue creative and cost effective sponsorships such as: baseball, rodeos, racing, creative piggyback/PSA opportunities alongside professional and college sports
- Change audio/video messaging to focus on excavators and best practices.
- Include QR code in all communications that we offer trainings.
- Reach out to small government agencies, parks departments.
- Pursue grant funding for educational/outreach funds.
- Attention spans are short and competition is high -- need messaging to be focused and engaging. Consider creative approaches as well, such as gas pumps, portapotties, rental company websites, in store announcements.
- Outreach to permit departments, especially in areas with aggressive broadband infrastructure investments/projects.
- Partner with stakeholders to take information back to their organizations, such as AGC and home builders.



5. RULEMAKING AND BEST PRACTICES

Goal: To ensure that the governing documents (Oregon Administrative Rules, OUNC Policy and Procedures Manual, OUNC Bylaws and related statutes) are accurate and consistent with damage prevention and public safety mission of the Oregon Utility Notification Center.

The Governance Committee and the Board as a whole are responsible for reviewing and recommending revisions as needed to several core, guiding documents for the organization. This also applies to Oregon Administrative Rules (Chapter 952, Division 1), and Oregon Revised Statutes (757.542-757.599).

OUNC monitors updates of the Common Ground Alliance Best Practices Guide to ensure proposed changes do not deviate from industry standard best practices.

Objectives:

- Recommend changes to governing documents to the Board.
- Assist the Board in understanding the role of policy versus operational rule when considering revisions.
- Ensure consistent usage of concept submissions/issue briefs to affirm Board support and awareness of our work.
- Follow established procedures and protocols for rule or law changes.
- Write to a plain language standard with rules, policies and procedures, and seek DOJ review/approval when applicable.



APPENDIX

- **Historical Timeline**
- **SWOT Analysis**



HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Over the past 50 years, there have been many key milestones at the state and national level that have enhanced the protection of underground utilities and improved public safety:

1970 – Oregon Utilities Coordinating Council is created as a nonprofit organization to encourage utilities, public agencies, contractors and others in Oregon to coordinate underground installations and to develop and implement measures to protect them.

1987 – Oregon Utility Notification Center is founded/underwritten by three member facilities, Northwest Natural Gas, GTE, and US West Communications. The center covered the three counties in the Portland metro area and Clark County, Washington soon thereafter.

1995 – Oregon Utility Notification Center is granted the powers of a state agency with the passage of Senate Bill 559, sponsored by Senator Lenn Hannon and Representative Bill Markham. At the time the law passed, there were approximately ten call centers operating throughout the state, each with their own phone number and set of member utilities. This unifying bill was requested by Northwest Natural Gas and championed by a legislative committee of utility industry leaders with support from the Oregon Public Utility Commission. An interim board was established during the transition.

1997 – Oregon’s excavation laws and board of directors for the Oregon Utility Notification Center formally take effect on July 1, 1997.

1998 – Congress passed the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, directing the U.S. Department of Transportation to study best practices nationwide for enhancing worker safety, protecting vital underground infrastructure, and ensuring public safety during excavation activities.

2000 – Common Ground Alliance is established with the mission of preventing damage to underground utility infrastructure and protecting those who live and work near them. This national organization promotes best practices in excavation, locating and policymaking.

2002 – The national Pipeline Safety Improvement Act requires all utility services to establish an abbreviated number for locating underground utilities.

2005 – 811 is declared by the Federal Communications Commission as the universal number to call before you dig. This created a unified point of contact for 71 regional services that covered the location of underground utilities.

2019 – Morrison Award is created to celebrate excellence in protecting underground utilities in honor of the late Jarrod Morrison (1974-2017). He was an Oregon Utility Notification Center Board Member and employee of Portland General Electric, whose commitment to damage prevention and safe excavation was greatly respected.

2021 – Oregon Utility Notification Center hires its first Executive Director to advance its damage prevention mission.



SWOT ANALYSIS

There are a multitude of internal and external forces that can impact our work in a variety of ways. One way of acknowledging and planning for these factors is to conduct a SWOT analysis. SWOT simply stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Our primary objectives are to keep the call center/system working for all, maintain rules to coincide with the dig laws, proactively build awareness and encourage best practices. So what could stand to help or hurt our work in these areas?



A useful acronym to apply alongside the SWOT analysis is VUCA, which stands for volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. It describes the environment of constant, unpredictable change that OUNC operates within. The concept challenges traditional, outmoded approaches to management and leadership, countering volatility with vision, uncertainty with understanding, complexity with clarity, and ambiguity with agility.