

IOWA 811

ONE CALLSM

The Official Newsletter of Iowa One Call

Vol. 29, No. 1

Excavator

QUARTERLY

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WHAT'S UP BELOW



A RETURN TO NORMALCY

As the first quarter newsletter of 2020 was being prepared in early March of last year, the World Health Organization had just declared the COVID-19 crisis a pandemic. There were 90 confirmed cases in Iowa at that time with no reported deaths. Less than one week later, the rate of confirmed cases and deaths in Iowa began to increase at a drastic pace. By the end of the year, 4,667 Iowans had succumbed to the disease and more than 300,000 had been infected. At the time of this writing, in preparation for the first quarter release of 2021, there are beginning signs that a return to normalcy may be possible, and even forthcoming.

There won't be any flick-of-the-switch moment when suddenly everything is normal again, and normalcy after COVID, or "with COVID," may actually be a new normal that defines what the future of "typical and ordinary" means. But there are signs. Iowa One Call (IOC) has finalized commitments for multiple large-scale public outreach programming events in 2021, including activities at the Iowa State Fair, Principal Park hosting the Iowa Cubs and at other public events during Arbor Day and Earth Day.

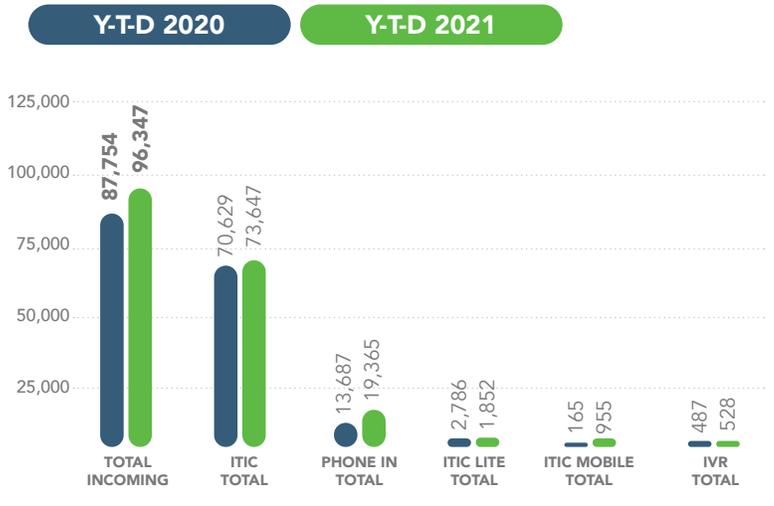


Gabby The Groundhog

Preparations for the Iowa State Fair, the state's largest public event, are in full progress and a sure sign of a return to normalcy. Due to COVID-19, the fair was cancelled last year for the first time since World War II— and only the fifth time in its 165-year history. (The other four times occurred during WWII between 1942 and 1945.) The IOC state fair exhibit will be set up in the Varied Industries Building, where IOC can interact with the public. There will be other interactive activities involving IOC at various locations at the fair. The Iowa Cubs event will be held during a home game in August, date yet to be determined, featuring IOC's own Gabby the Groundhog mascot. Gabby will throw the first pitch and an IOC spokesperson will join the play-by-play announcers during the game to touch on underground safety and damage prevention.

Iowa's COVID vaccination efforts are moving along, with more than 700,000 Iowans fully vaccinated at the time of this writing. As more people receive their vaccinations, there will be more public events scheduled and Iowa One Call will seek out additional opportunities to reach Iowans with an educational and public awareness messages about safe digging.

ITIC ACTIVITY Y-T-D



In the meantime, the number of incoming notices at the call center is up substantially from the same time last year when the pandemic was beginning to escalate. So far this year, contractors and homeowners alike have been conducting more excavations than ever before, well in advance of the “dig season,” which began April 1. Fortunately, the country’s construction industry—overall—has not been as severely impacted by the virus as other industries, and the numbers of notices being processed at the call center are a good indicator that 2021 will be a strong year for Iowa’s professional excavators/contractors.

The pandemic has significantly altered the way business is conducted, and while signs of normalcy are becoming more frequent, some of these alternative business practices will likely become part of the new normal. After more than

12 months of Zoom meetings, people may certainly be tired of web conferencing platforms—but the process does offer some advantages that make it a highly useful communications tool. It is likely to become a regular part of how corporations and small businesses conduct meetings and conferences.

Since March 2020, Iowa One Call has utilized the Zoom platform to host all of the bimonthly board meetings and breakout committee meetings. The 2021 Excavation Safety Awareness Program (ESAP), which ran from January 5 through March 23, was conducted via Zoom. All previous ESAP meetings for the past 20 years had been held in-person as live events—the obvious and much preferred method—but the web-based method certainly provided a suitable alternative that allowed IOC to reach industry stakeholders when restrictive social distancing guidelines were in place. During this year’s ESAP Zoom webinars, IOC moderators answered more questions than during any of the live meetings. This substantial increase in questions can be attributed to the web-based process and the anonymity it provided the participants.

Moving forward, IOC can leverage online conferencing platforms to provide convenient educational/training segments for interested stakeholders. An Iowa One Call segment can be included during routine safety meetings simply by coordinating with the IOC administration ahead of the meetings. Online conferencing can also be used to reach and educate out-of-state contractors about state rules and regulations before they arrive in Iowa and begin operations.

Whatever the new normal brings, the need for effective safety and damage prevention practices will not change. Complacency, inadequate planning, improper procedures and hasty decisions will continue to affect safety and damage prevention. All stakeholders, especially excavators and locators, will need to continue working together in a collaborative effort to maximize safety and to mitigate excavation-related damages. Iowa One Call is committed to maintaining the most effective state one call system possible, and will continue to provide the most advanced notification/communications processes available. The most challenging aspect of damage prevention takes place in the field after the notice has been processed by Iowa One Call. Iowa One Call is the first line of defense, but when it comes to mitigating risk at the jobsite, it is the actions—or lack thereof—of locators and excavators that makes the biggest differences.

 **Iowa One Call wishes everyone a safe and productive 2021. Dig safe!**



2021 EXCAVATION SAFETY AWARENESS PROGRAM: “ESAP GOES VIRTUAL”

This year, Iowa One Call hosted the Excavation Safety Awareness Program (ESAP) via a series of Zoom webinars. In an effort to minimize large in-person gatherings with excavators/contractors and operators due to COVID-19, the decision was made to host the 2021 program via virtual meetings. The program consisted of 12 Zoom webinars hosted over the course of January, February and March, with a variety of time slots for participants to choose from. The webinars included a question-and-answer segment following each presentation, allowing attendees to type in and submit their questions via the “Q & A” function in Zoom. Additionally, there was a prize giveaway at the end of each webinar with many gifts sponsored by underground facility operators. A special shout-out to this year’s gift sponsors: Black Hills Energy Corporation, MidAmerican Energy Company, Project Resources Group (PRG), Alliant Energy Corporation and Enterprise Products.

“ **Complacency is man’s biggest weakness. It creeps upon us when we least expect it.** ”

The primary focus of this year’s ESAP was jobsite safety and risk mitigation. Unfortunately, there were some serious excavation-related incidents in Iowa during 2020 involving underground facilities, one of which resulted in two fatalities. The incidents—one in Pella, involving two contractors electrocuted onsite during operations to install fiber communications facilities, the other in Dubuque involving a dramatic natural gas explosion in a residential neighborhood—are stark reminders of why excavation safety awareness is so important. The presentation, which included a series of PowerPoint slides and a short video, covered the different types of underground facilities and the potential risks associated with coming in contact with each type, as well as information on how to avoid potential jobsite hazards. Hopefully, this year’s ESAP message of mitigating complacency at the jobsite was not only heard at the meetings—but also put into action on a daily basis by all parties. As Jay Mullings famously said, “Complacency is man’s biggest weakness. It creeps upon us when we least expect it.”

In-person meetings, undoubtedly, are still the preferred method of hosting the ESAP meetings. They allow for more personal connections with excavators, locators and operators, and of course the opportunity to provide lunch as an incentive to participate. However, Zoom video conferencing will likely become a permanent tool used by Iowa One Call, in addition to the in-person safety meetings.

DID YOU KNOW ?

The 2021 virtual ESAP meetings via Zoom garnered an average attendance of around 67 attendees per meeting, with an average “pre-registered” total of 92 people per meeting. In total, there were just over 800 participants in attendance over the course of 12 webinars.



Utilizing the Zoom webinar platform has served as an adequate “back-up” plan to the typical in-person meetings, and has offered some surprisingly unique benefits, including the following:

.....
800+

Total Participants

Q & A FEATURE

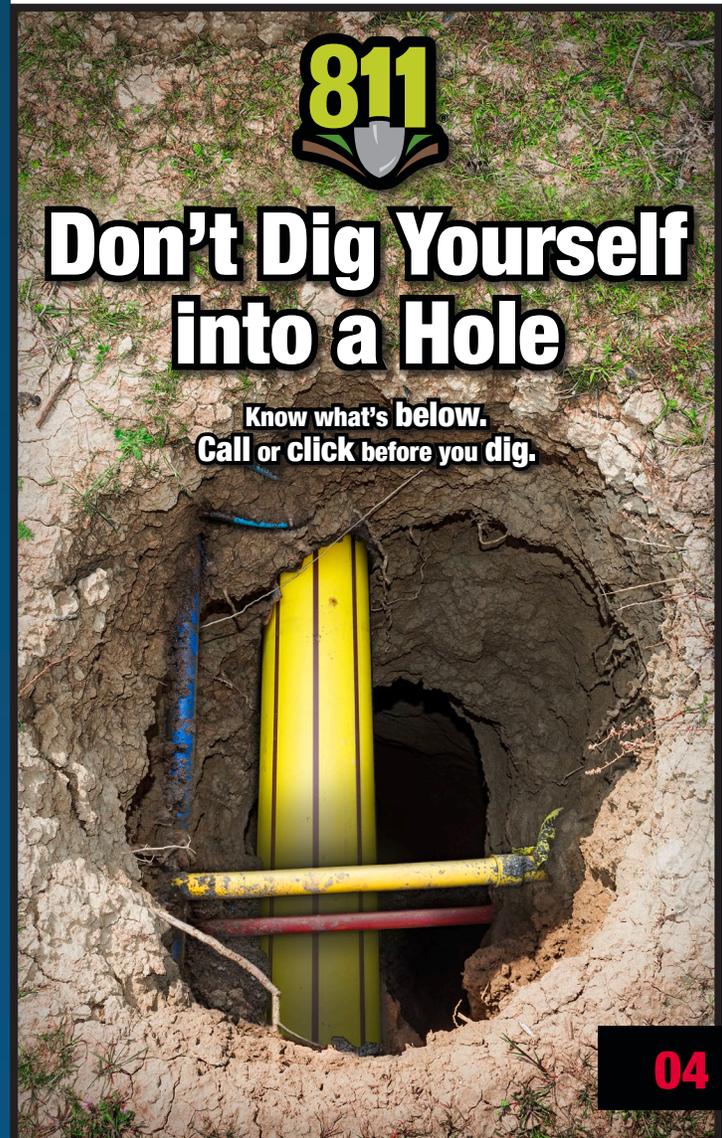
At the end of each presentation, a Q & A session was opened up and attendees were given the opportunity to type in questions for the host using the Zoom Q & A function. The questions were read aloud, followed by a descriptive answer. If an attendee’s question was not answered live, an email was sent to them with their question and an answer. Notably, the participation during the Q & A sessions was extremely high, with as many as **16 questions asked in a single webinar session**, and an average of around nine questions asked per webinar—which is much more than typically received at the in-person ESAP meetings. Following each webinar, the questions and answers were posted directly to the Iowa One Call website for the public’s viewing. The Q & As will remain on the Iowa One Call website indefinitely to serve as a valuable source of frequently asked questions from excavators, underground facility operators and locators.

ZOOM RECORDING

Another advantage to using the Zoom platform was the ability to record the entire presentation. This allowed any interested parties to obtain a YouTube link to the presentation if they could not attend one of the webinars and/or plan to use the video presentation as a training resource for their own employees. To view this year’s ESAP video presentation, visit [2021 ESAP - YouTube](#).

There are numerous requests each year for Iowa One Call admin to come and speak to a crew, which sometimes requires extensive travel for a short presentation. Many times the small admin team logistically cannot make it to these cities throughout Iowa, but with the adoption of Zoom, there are more opportunities to meet with crews throughout the state via a simple Zoom video conference. In addition to that, anyone participating on a Zoom video conference or webinar is typically more likely to ask questions via the “chat” or “Q & A” functionality, which could potentially help further educate excavators and operators in Iowa.

With the amount of despair and negativity that COVID-19 has caused our world, one positive aspect is the embracement of video conferencing platforms like Zoom, allowing humanity to stay connected in times that have been most restrictive and challenging.

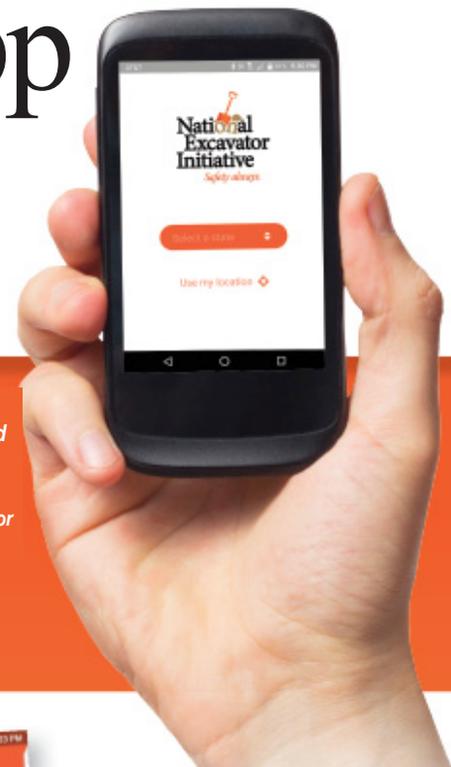


YouTube



2021 Excavation Safety Awareness Program

INTRODUCING THE Safe Excavator App



State laws pertaining to excavation (or digging) vary – and finding the specific information you’re looking for quickly can be a challenge.

The **Safe Excavator App** makes it easy to find state-specific excavation information including the following requirements or events:

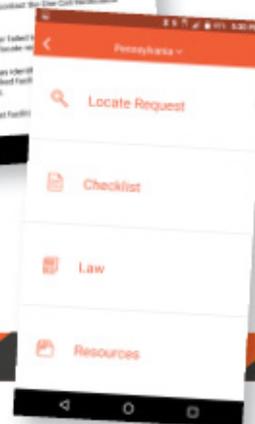
- ▼ Advance notice or wait time
- ▼ Pre-marking ('whitelining')
- ▼ 811 ticket information
- ▼ Names of local enforcement agencies and 811 call centers, also connecting you electronically to submit a locate request
- ▼ Includes safe digging tips + checklist

PLEASE CONTACT
Lindsay Sander
713.208.0273
LNS@SanderResources.com
WITH ANY QUESTIONS.



FREE to download in the App store (Apple) and Google Play (Android)

Search "safe excavator" or "safeexcavator" and look for the orange shovel



As simple as...
1...2...3!

- 1 Select a state
- 2 Pick an activity
- 3 Research your topic

www.safeexcavator.com



Know what's below.
811 before you dig.

The National Excavator Initiative is an effort to raise the awareness of a critically important program: 811.

Contacting 811 before digging is the single most critical action an excavator can take to help ensure their health and safety are protected, while at the same time preventing financial harm and environmental impact.



GETTING BACK TO NORMAL

Doses Administered to Iowa Residents

1,806,921

Individuals Completing Two-Dose Vaccination (2nd Dose)

702,714

Number of individuals that have received all of the required doses of the two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series.

Individuals Completing Single-Dose Vaccination (1 Dose)

78,510

Number of individuals that have received one dose of the single-dose COVID-19 vaccine series.

In 2021, Iowa One Call is gearing up for a year of normalcy in stark contrast to 2020. The year 2020, of course, was one of event cancellations, working from home and extreme precautions taken due to the outbreak of a global pandemic. The good news for 2021: the release and distribution of a vaccination. According to *USA Today*, the United States is on track to have administered more than 150 million vaccine doses by April 30, 2021. President Joe Biden also said that he would direct states, tribes and territories to make all adults eligible for vaccination by May 1, 2021. In addition, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds announced that beginning April 5, all Iowan adults would be eligible for COVID-19 vaccination.

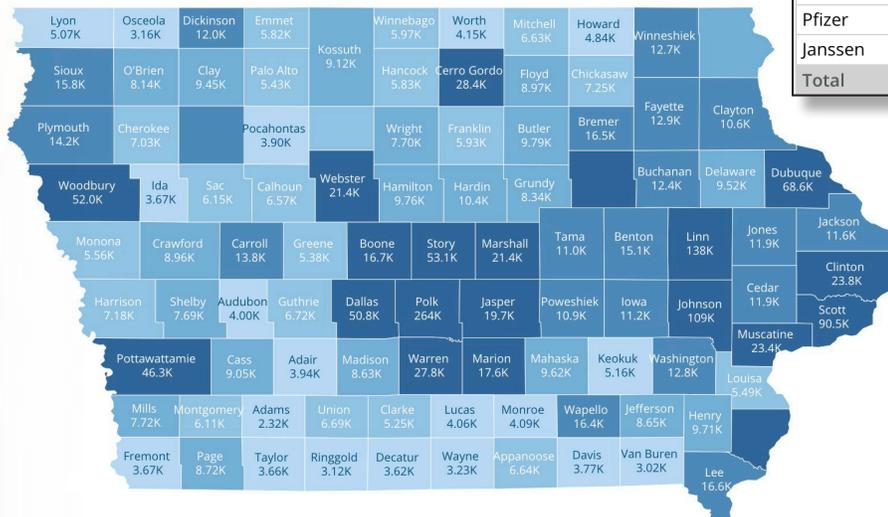
Unlike last year, the Iowa State Fair will be back in action this August and Iowa One Call plans to participate on all accounts. As usual, the plan is to have the Iowa One Call booth display set up in the Varied Industries Building from day one until the end of the fair—handing out homeowner and farming

brochures, magnets, pens and the fan-favorite yard sticks—and educating the masses of Iowa about the importance of digging safely. Iowa One Call plans to partner with KCCI News Channel 8 and do a live interview at the fair to promote safe digging and damage prevention. Iowa One Call also plans to host a social media contest and giveaway centered on the Iowa State Fair festivities.

Additionally, Iowa One Call plans to host a promotional event this fall at the Iowa Cubs baseball stadium, Principal Park. The event will give Iowa One Call several opportunities to advertise the message of safe digging at the ballpark, using the following tactics:

- The Iowa One Call logo displayed on the Principal Park videoboard during all regular season home games—which will be visible at least six to 10 times per game
- A personalized public address and scoreboard recognition throughout the game
- A live radio interview broadcast with an Iowa One Call rep and the voice of the I-Cubs
- A mascot-themed event sponsored by Iowa One Call with participation from Cubbie Bear (I-Cubs mascot), Gabby the Groundhog (Iowa One Call mascot) and other mascots of Des Moines area sport teams

Total Doses Administered by Recipient County of Residence



Vaccine Manufacturer	Doses
Moderna	882,677
Pfizer	915,656
Janssen	78,510
Total	1,876,843

COVID-19 Info as of 04/12/21
coronavirus.iowa.gov



APRIL 2021 SAFE DIGGING MONTH

On March 4, 2021, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds signed a proclamation declaring April “Safe Digging Month” in Iowa. Safe Digging Month is a nationally recognized month that began in 2008 as a way to encourage all Common Ground Alliance (CGA) stakeholders and state one call centers to promote the safe digging message in one voice when digging activity begins.

Each year, Common Ground Iowa (CGI) initiates communication with the Iowa governor to sign an executive order declaring April as Safe Digging Month in the state. Typically, representatives from CGI and Iowa One Call meet with Governor Reynolds at the Iowa State Capitol to observe the signing of the proclamation. There was no in-person signing this year due to COVID-19 precautions in place at the Capitol, but it’s encouraging to see the proclamation was still signed. Furthermore, given the unimaginable amount of tasks Governor Reynolds is faced with in leading a state through a global pandemic—and her finding time to recognize the damage prevention industry—it’s extremely telling about the seriousness of protecting our underground utility infrastructure and respecting hazards presented by striking said underground utilities.



2021 PROMOTIONS

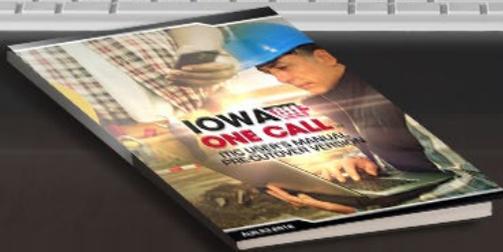
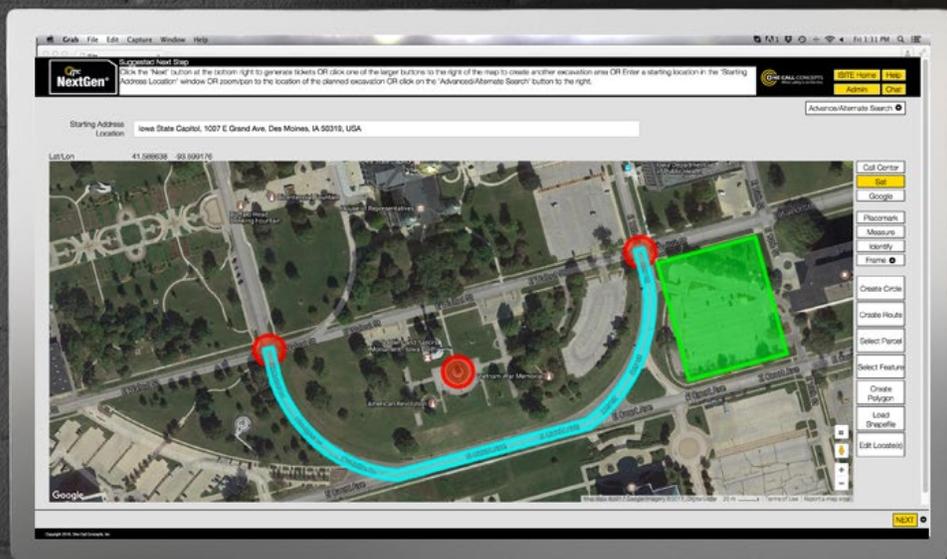
CONTESTS AND GIVEAWAYS

Another round of Iowa One Call contests and giveaways is slated for 2021. Hosting giveaways on social media has allowed IOC to connect with followers and increase awareness of the importance of calling 811 or visiting iowaonecall.com at least 48 hours before digging. There will be a social media contest and giveaway tailored to “dig season” kick-off and celebrating April as “Safe Digging Month.” There will also be giveaways throughout the summer months (notably the Iowa State Fair) and the fall season, where many homeowners aim to plant trees and make other home improvements that involving digging. Be sure to follow the [Iowa One Call Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/iowaonecall) for a chance to win some great prizes.

UTILITY BILL INSERT

This year, Iowa One Call developed a mailing insert that will be included in the MidAmerican Energy Company (MEC) utility bill for April. The insert reminds Iowans to click iowaonecall.com or call 811 before digging occurs, and spells out specific activities that would constitute a notification to IOC. Also included on the insert are the APWA color codes and what underground utilities each of the paint/flag colors represent. MEC serves more than 500,000 customers in Iowa, which gives IOC the golden opportunity to reach hundreds of thousands of Iowans with the message of digging safely and protecting what really matters.

TIPS FOR MAPPING PRECISELY AND ACCURATELY



CHECK OUT THE NEXTGEN ONLINE TICKETING TUTORIAL [HERE!](#)

1. Use the right tool for the job – ITIC NextGen offers a diverse array of mapping options to fit every scenario.
2. Don't over-map – ITIC NextGen builds the locate request from the mapping. Over-mapping a work area can result in wasted time and resources.
3. Double-check your work – use the different map views and/or Google street view to help ensure you've mapped accurately and completely.

2021 ADVERTISING

The mission of Iowa One Call is to operate “a statewide notification system to provide effective communications to protect the citizens and underground facilities of Iowa.” To support the mission statement, IOC is committed to executing effective outreach and marketing programs that educate all Iowans about safe digging practices and protection of underground facilities. Advertising is an essential component of educating the citizens of Iowa about why it’s important to click (iowaonecall.com) or call 811 at least 48 hours before any digging is done.

IOC has finalized its 2021 commitments for another great year of advertising and outreach efforts. The advertising campaign, as usual, will be deployed heavily throughout the months of April through October, which is when digging activity is typically at its highest.

MIKE ROWE

Iowa One Call signed a commitment for another year of utilizing Mike Rowe licensing, taking advantage of the popularity and likeness of celebrity Mike Rowe. For those that may be unfamiliar with him, Mike Rowe is an American television host, narrator and former opera singer. He is known for his work on the Discovery Channel series “Dirty Jobs” and the series “Somebody’s Gotta Do It,” originally developed for CNN. Mike Rowe has a remarkably recognizable voice and face, which allows IOC to leverage the message of digging safely and avoiding coming into contact with underground facilities.

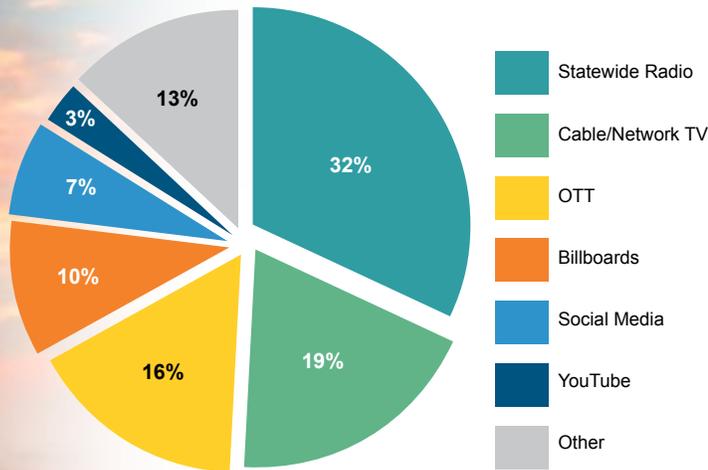
The Mike Rowe team has developed a series of Public Service Announcements and advertisements that help promote the critical importance of safe digging and damage prevention. Many of the spots include an animated character (“Micro Mike Rowe”), Mike Rowe’s alter ego, who inevitably experiences the negative consequences of what can happen when digging without first contacting 811. Collaborating with a nationally recognized celebrity such as Mike Rowe will allow IOC to further the mission of reducing damages and keeping Iowans safe.



MEDIA DEPLOYMENT

IOC will be deploying the Mike Rowe advertisements across a mix of media outlets, including radio, television, outdoor (billboards), over-the-top (OTT), YouTube, social media and pay-per-click ads. Traditional advertising, or the “usual” venues for media placement (e.g. radio, broadcast television, outdoor billboards) is still very prevalent in any advertising strategy, and IOC plans to utilize these traditional outlets heavily. For example, 32 percent of IOC’s advertising budget is allocated toward a statewide radio campaign. In addition to

Iowa One Call Advertising Budget



radio, cable and network television takes up roughly 19 percent of the total advertising budget, and 10 percent of the total budget is allocated toward outdoor advertising (billboards).

In addition to traditional advertising methods, IOC has invested heavily into the world of streaming and digital advertising in recent years. Streaming and digital advertising are very measurable in terms of viewership and knowing who actually sees your ad. They have also proven to be a cost-effective advertising method. Over-the-top is a media service offered directly to viewers via the internet. OTT bypasses cable, broadcast and satellite television platforms—the types of companies which traditionally act as controllers

or distributors of such content. Interestingly, more people now subscribe to a streaming service (69 percent) than pay for cable TV (65 percent), according to a study from Deloitte.

In regards to IOC advertising, 16 percent of the total advertising budget is being used for OTT advertising efforts alone. Additionally, about 7 percent of the ad budget is allocated toward social media advertising/pay-per-click ads, and 3 percent invested into YouTube advertising. In the world of social media and video content, YouTube is considered the leader of the pack, and IOC only plans to invest increasingly more into YouTube advertising. According to Pew Research, 74 percent of adults in the United States use YouTube, which is more than Facebook (68 percent of American adults) and almost twice as much as the next runner-up, Instagram (40 percent of American adults).

Leveraging digital advertising methods such as OTT, social media and YouTube—in combination with traditional media efforts like radio, TV and outdoor—should allow IOC to effectively educate lowans about the importance of safety and damage prevention when putting a shovel into the ground.



UPDATE: AGREED-TO-MARKING-SCHEDULE

As previously reported, the process by which operators and locators can use the “Agreed to Marking Schedule” ticket status option has been revised. As of February 15, 2021, operators/locators may no longer submit the status of “Agreed to Marking Schedule” unless these five new required fields have been completed:

1. The name of the excavator with whom the agreement was made
2. The date and time when the agreement was made
3. The new time that has been agreed to (when the locating and marking will occur)
4. The telephone number of the excavator with whom the agreement was made
5. The locator’s credentials

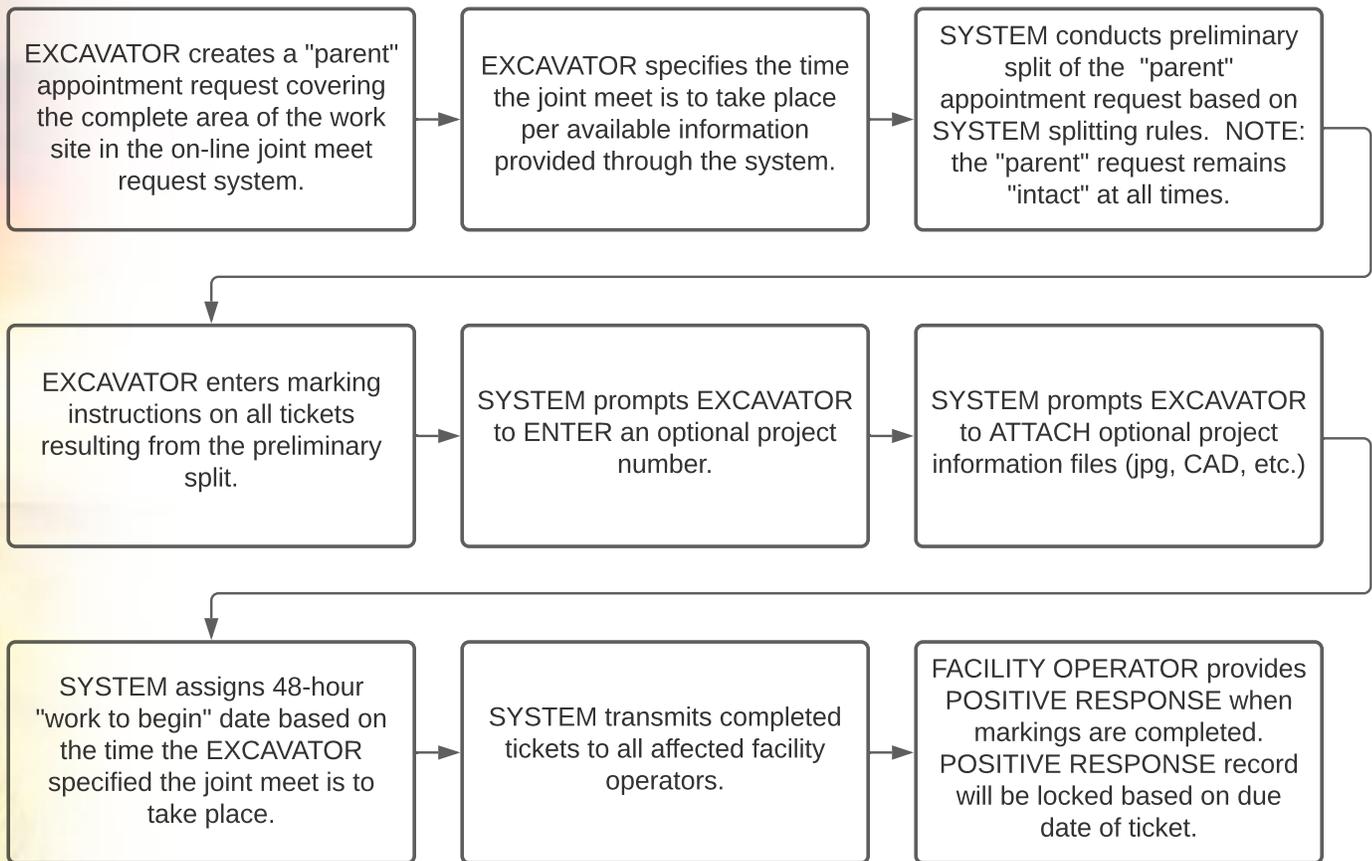
In order to implement the revised process, underground facility operators had to synchronize their digital communications systems with the Iowa One Call notification system. Operators were provided a 12-month window to complete the necessary system configurations. Not all underground facility operators made the required configurations, which means they will no longer have access to the electronic Agreed to Marking Schedule status code.

Moving forward, excavators who receive the electronic Agreed to Marking Schedule status will also have access to responses given by the locator(s) to the five required questions. This will help excavators evaluate and assess tickets with the Agreed to Marking Schedule status.



ONLINE JOINT MEET SYSTEM

Development of the new online joint meet notification system has been completed and will be rolled out for implementation this April. The online system will replace the old dial-in joint meet ticket process. The new system will provide users all the benefits of the online ITIC system, including precision electronic mapping tools and the ability to bypass calling into the center, effectively eliminating any potential "on hold" times. Here is a breakout flowchart of how the system will be implemented:



Meet Appointment Selection: Ticket: Ptkk

County: POLK Place: DES MOINES

Appt. Date: 02-19-2021 Time: 12:00 PM Day of Week: Friday

Select Meet Time

- 08:00
- 09:00
- 10:00
- 11:00
- 12:00
- 01:00
- 02:00
- 03:00

OTHER INFO

MEET WILL TAKE PLACE AT BLACK HAWK COUNTY, CITY OF UNION TWP AT 8110 BUCK RIDGE RD UNION TWP

NextDay

IN THE NEWS



Local Excavation and Safety News From Around the Web



April is Safe Digging Month - Call 811 Before You Dig

icn.iowa.gov

April is annually recognized as National Safe Digging Month. As construction activity starts to pick back up across the State, we want to remind all Iowans and contractors to be safe and always call 811 before any construction or digging projects. The call is free and Iowa law requires everyone to locate underground utilities before digging... [\[Learn More\]](#)

COVID-19 Vaccine Information

coronavirus.iowa.gov

The Iowa Department of Public Health is coordinating the COVID-19 vaccine distribution effort in Iowa. For more info on eligibility in Iowa, click [here](#).

If you have general questions about the vaccine, call 211. Resource specialists are available 24 hours a day to answer basic questions. Check with your health care provider with questions specific to your health situation... [\[Learn More\]](#)

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www.IOWAONECALL.com

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