



The INGAA Foundation, Inc.

GOLD SHOVEL STANDARD UPDATE

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Gold Shovel Standard ®



GSS Background

Gold Shovel Standard (GSS) is a nonprofit organization committed to improving workforce and public **safety**, and the **integrity** of vital buried infrastructure. GSS believes that greater **transparency** in all aspects of damage prevention among buried-asset operators, locators and contractors is essential to drive **continuous improvement**, and vital to ensure increasingly **safe** working conditions and communities.



GSS Background

- A third-party confirmation of an in-place Damage Prevention-Safety Management System (DP-SMS) for the protection of buried assets, a role served nowhere else
- An ambitious effort driven by industry (including contractors and locators) to create fair and transparent metrics for damage prevention similar to other safety metrics (LTIR, EMR, TRIR, DART, etc.), a gap filled by no other program



GSS Intro

- GSS believes that further significant reduction in line strikes is limited unless all responsible parties (owner/operators, locators, and contractors) continuously improve, and measurements underpin continuous improvement.
- Fair and transparent metrics are a very effective and underutilized means of driving continuous improvement.
- Standardized metrics for damage prevention are superior to inconsistent and assorted measurement schemes.
- The absence of standardized metrics to measure the performance of individual companies in damage prevention is a glaring gap in our ability to continuously improve.



Standardized Metrics

That an important task is hard, must never be an excuse for not doing that important thing.



Contractor Concerns

- Fairness
 - Subjectivity
 - Normalization for opportunity to strike
 - Transparency for operators and locators
- Liability
- Misuse



Metrics

- www.goldshovelstandard.org/metrics
- Entering limited evaluation / pilot
- Circulate results after pilot phase
- Starting point for testing; not a finished product (Plan-Do-Check-Adjust)
- Highly specific definitions of what to report
- Highly specific definitions of how to reporting
- Highly specific formatting and presentation



Metrics and Contractor Concerns

- Contractor controls contractor information access
- In-house operator crews subject to same measurements
- GSS doesn't interpret or evaluate the data
- No single metric; series of measurements to paint an accurate picture
- Uses minimally subjective criteria
- Normalized 3 different ways
- Sensitive information is not stored in GSS



Contractor Committee Statement

“Many of us were skeptical and dubious about the possibility of success when we started this endeavor. As a group, we have come to support these efforts and believe that broad adoption of these measurements will have a meaningful impact on the frequency of damages, be helpful to our businesses, and give a voice in data to illuminate and address many long-held challenges faced by excavators.”



Recap

- Significant progress on contractor concerns / metrics
 - conditional based on continuing course
- Limited, but accelerating progress on O/O and locator certification and measurements
- Continued rapid expansion of program



Contact Us

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Remaining Concerns

- GSS continues to struggle with the normalization/equalization of the data and metrics
 - Volume of work, type of work, area of work, etc.
- The “Standard”/program is only being foisted on excavators/contractors, thus far
- Some companies do their own locating but, vast majority are using contract locators that have a cost/billing structure where they are paid by the ticket, so...
 - They are incentivized to “clear” as many tickets as they can, as quickly as they can
- There is a seemingly low liability cap on contract locators so, when they DO get it wrong, there are few/minimal repercussions.
- Overall, there does not seem to be enough focus in the construction industry (as a whole) on getting the locates done accurately



Remaining Concerns cont.

- GSS reporting is not required for “damages to assets on private property where the owner doesn’t participate in the one-call process.”
 - Fundamental issue = Municipalities are often exempt from damage prevention responsibilities, and yet reporting damages to water and sewer facilities is required.
- Unmarked facilities are encountered all the time. Are GSS facility owners willing for all projects to be shut down when unmarked facilities are encountered?
- Rather than creating a scoring/grading metric based on utility strikes, develop a system that verifies the critical elements of a company’s excavation safety and training program.

