

2018 End of Year Analysis



This report provides a summary and analysis of Washington's damage events occurring in 2018, and a brief description about dig law complaints and training. To generate the most accurate analysis of damage events, it is important that damages are reported to Washington's Damage Incident Reporting Tool (DIRT) within the 45 day timeframe set forth in the statute.

Last year we included late reports in the end of year analysis, but decided to not go back and re-run the late reports this year. Instead, we delayed pulling the information for each quarter to allow extra time for the submitters to report. Additionally, several companies who had not submitted their reports by the deadlines were contacted and given extra time to get their damage information to the UTC.

In 2018 the UTC added a flex field to Washington's DIRT report form. This field is now included to provide a designated section for the submitter to give specific contact information for the excavator who caused damage. Prior to the addition of the flex field, contact information could only be placed in the comments section of the DIRT form. Due to this change, the UTC saw improvements in reporting information about the excavator by facility operators, especially related to damage to natural gas without a locate. Plus, the better detail in reporting has significantly helped the UTC in its ability to accurately analyze the DIRT data for enforcement and training purposes.





Changes to the DIRT Form

After more than 10 years of collecting excavation damage information, the Common Ground Alliance (CGA) revised the DIRT reporting form in an effort to collect additional meaningful data, and to refine some fields for better data collection.

The updated DIRT form became effective on Jan. 1, 2018. One of the major changes on the form were a revision of root cause options, including separating locating issues into two different categories. With these new choices, there are now 25 different root causes that can be used to identify why the damage occurred.

Additionally, the following questions are now included on the DIRT form:

- Did the event involve a cross bore?
- What was the measured depth from grade?
- Was the excavator/excavation exempt from 811 notification?
- Was the work area white-lined?



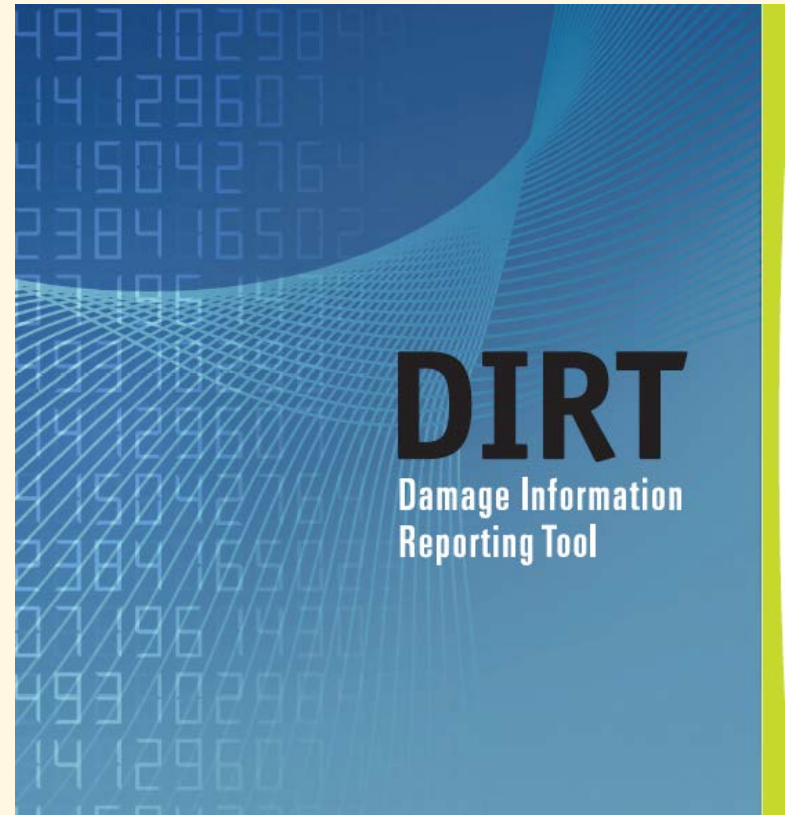
Damage Reporting

2018

Damage Reports: 2,834

Who is reporting:

- Electric: 454
- Excavator: 133
- Natural Gas: 1,763
- Public Works: 124
- Telecommunications: 287
- Other: 73



There continues to be a lack of duplicate reports in 2018 with both the facility operator and excavator submitted a report. Only 133 reports were submitted by excavators, which is 22 less than last year. Excavators and facility operators should both be submitting DIRT reports for each damage event, as outlined in RCW 19.122.053(1).



Damaged Facilities:

- Cable TV: 223
- Electric: 361
- Natural Gas: 1683
- Telecommunications: 353
- Others (including Sewer and Liquid Pipelines): 32
- Water: 182





Washington's Root Cause Damage Picture

One Call Notification makes up 32 percent of the 2018 damages incidents, with 758 reports stating "No notification made to the one call center" and 78 reports listing that the excavator dug after a valid ticket expired.

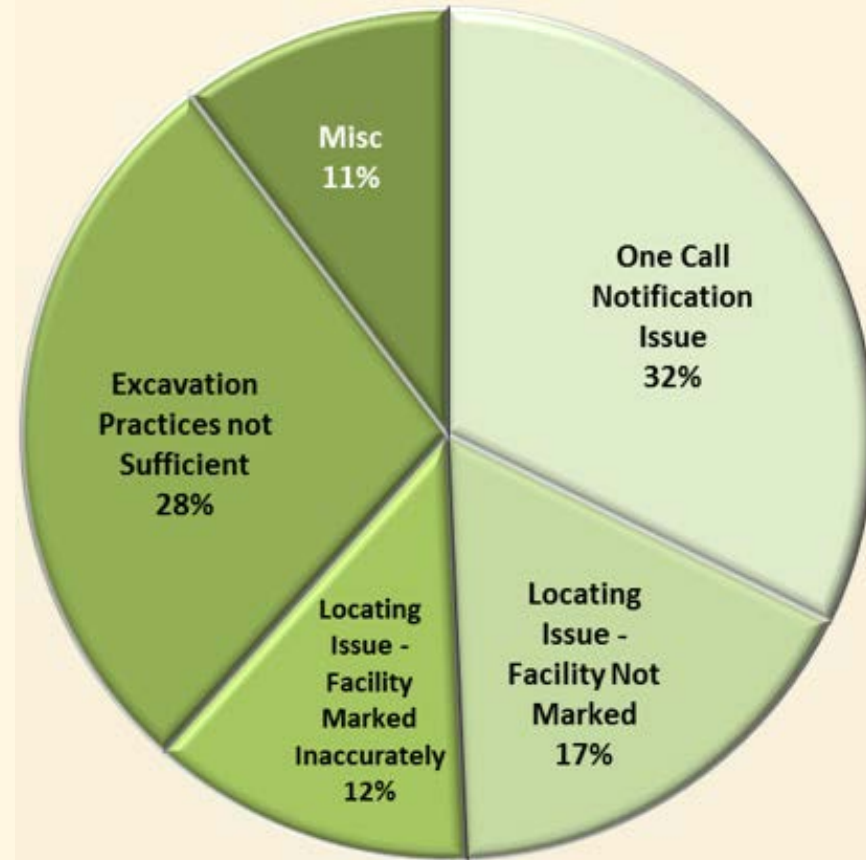
Excavation Practices Not Sufficient account for 28 percent of the reported damages, with 316 damages reports listing "Improper excavation practices" as the main reason for the damage, and 165 saying the "Excavator dug prior to verifying the marks (by pot-hole)", and 164 stating that the "Excavator failed to maintain clearance."

Locating Issue – Facility Not Marked is at 17 percent of the reports received with 318 incidents 289 damages stating the utility was "Not marked due to locator error."

Locating issue – Facility marked Inaccurately makes up 12 percent with 289 incidents stating the facility was "Marked inaccurately due to locator error."

Miscellaneous Root Cause accounts for the last 11 percent of all damages with 253 reports stating that "Root Cause not listed." When this field is selected the submitter is asked to provide a comment on the cause of the incident.

Root Cause of Damage





Locate Requests by Year

Requests for locates have continued to grow each year, and 2018 was no exception with nearly **9.5% more requests** than the previous year.

This can be attributed to advertising and educational efforts by many different stakeholders, and enforcement actions that create awareness about the law as it relates to obtaining a locate prior to excavation.

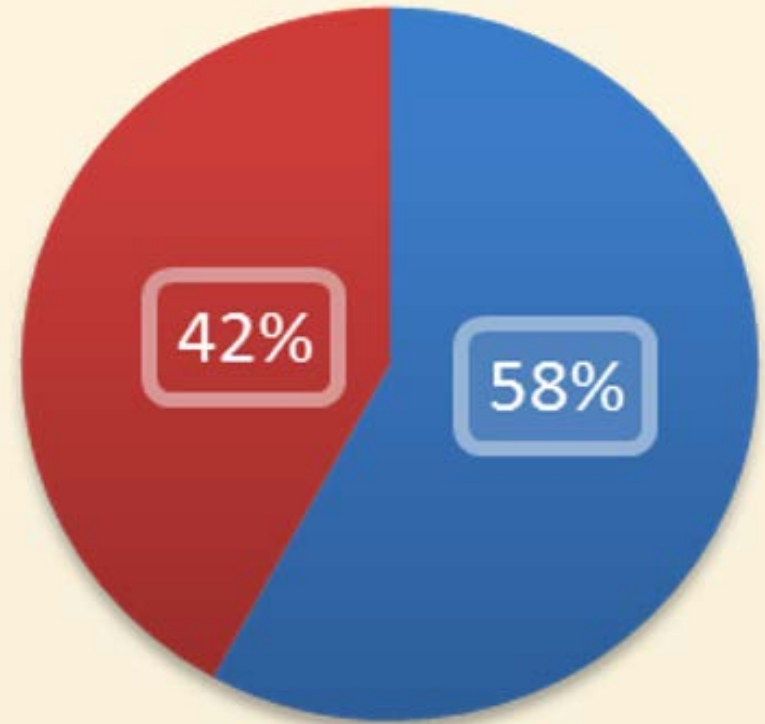
Year	Incoming Locate Requests
2014	353,296
2015	366,320
2016	398,003
2017	488,242
2018	534,550



Locate Requests

According to the 2,834 DIRT damage reports submitted for entire year, there were 1,643 (or 58 percent) that showed a Locate Request was made prior to excavation. While there were less damages than last year, this percentage rose four percent over the last year.

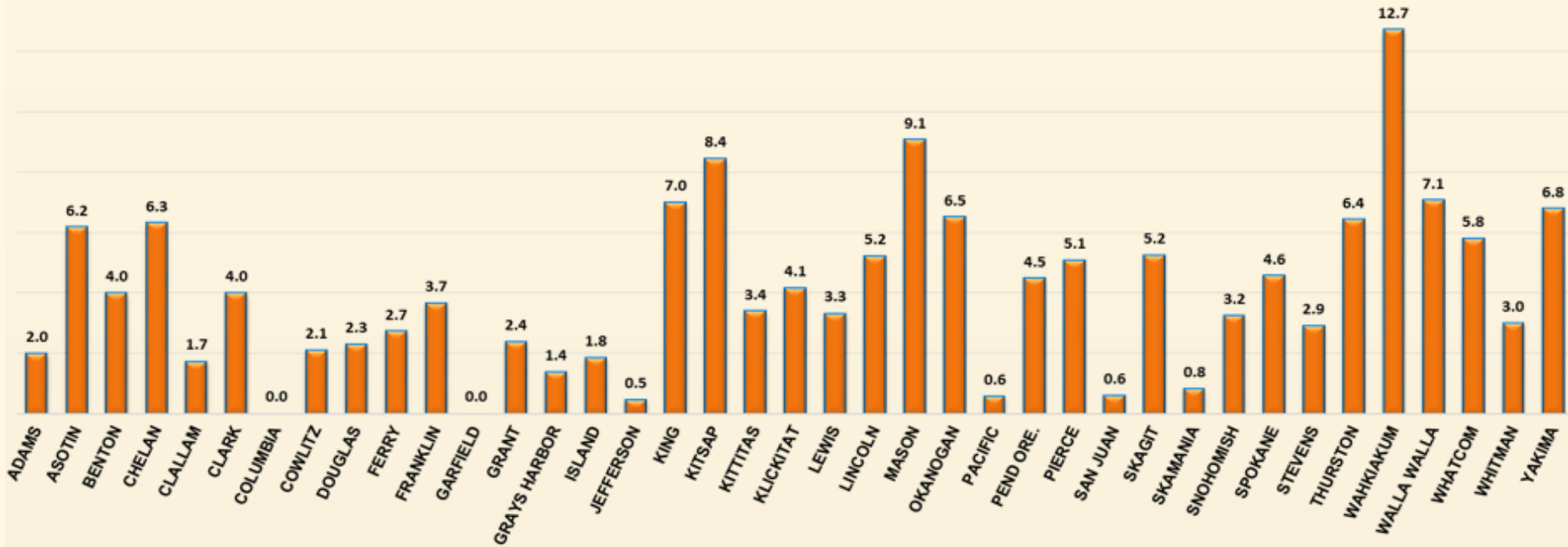
Note: This is separate data point from Root Cause. A person may indicate that no locate was performed, and still identify a different root cause for the damage incident. For example in 2018, we found 433 reports stating there was no locate request, yet the submitter used a different root cause for the damage.



■ Yes Locates ■ No Locates



Damages by County per 1,000 Locate Requests



In 2018, there was an **average of 5.3 damages per 1,000 locate requests**, and is the lowest since we began evaluating this data point. In 2015, there were seven counties with over 10 damages per 1,000 locate requests, and now only one.

This lower number can be attributed to the advertising efforts by many stakeholders about the importance of calling for locates. It is also due to the efforts of a lot of people who hold meetings about safe excavation practices, and host 811 educational booths at trade shows, fairs, home shows, and other events. The Dig Safe and Locator trainings hosted by the UTC throughout the state in 2018 have also helped lower this number.



2018 Complaints, Enforcement Actions

In 2018, the Washington Dig Law Safety Committee (Safety Committee) received 86 complaints of alleged violations of RCW 19.122, which resulted in 16 recommendation referrals to the UTC.

Safety Committee recommendation referrals resulted in penalty assessment orders of \$69,000. Deferrals in the amount of \$43,600 were offered if the violator(s) either completed Dig Safe training and/or had no additional violations for one year.

UTC staff also performed 91 separate investigations of damage to natural gas or liquid pipelines without a locate in 2018, resulting in 30 penalty assessment orders and \$69,500 in penalties. Deferrals of \$17,000 were also offered on these penalty assessments if the excavator incurs no additional violations for one year.

In addition, the UTC sent technical assistance warning letters to 247 professional excavators and 179 homeowners, who damaged natural gas facilities without first securing a valid locate.





2018 Training

All fines collected through penalty assessments are deposited into the Damage Prevention Penalty Account which can only be used for educational purposes to improve worker and public safety relating to excavation and underground utilities.

In addition to the Damage Prevention funds, the UTC used funds from a Federal PHMSA Grant to help with the cost of a couple of classes. A total of 14 classes were held using these combined funds. Six one-day NUCA Dig Safe trainings and eight two-day Staking University Locator trainings. Because of the ability to use these funds, all of the trainings were offered completely free of charge to the participants.

The trainings were and held in the following locations:

Six NUCA Dig Safe Training Classes (1-day):

Olympia	Walla Walla	Vancouver
Spokane	Yakima	Renton

Eight Staking University Locator Training Classes (2-day):

Vancouver	Tacoma	Renton (2 classes)	
Longview	Wenatchee	Richland	Yakima

ALMOST 400 PEOPLE COMPLETED TRAINING IN 2018

