



DigAlert Newsline

Celebrating 35 Years

Good food and smiling faces were easy to find as DigAlert celebrated its 35th anniversary on September 13th with a delicious barbecue. The Board of Directors joined together with the staff in the festivities. The Center was decorated in honor of the day and there were nostalgic reminders of USA's past on display.

On June 16th, 1976, a horrific construction incident occurred along Venice Boulevard in Los Angeles that resulted in the deaths of nine people and extensive property damage. It sparked a need for safer digging standards and encouraged the start of Underground Service Alert of Southern California. In spite of there being more than 100 one call centers already operating across the country, this was a definite pioneer adventure for this

area. At that time, membership was voluntary. There were no laws governing marking or notification. In the beginning, geographical coverage was only Orange County. Starting this new enterprise were the Hood Corporation, which acted as the contractor, and the principle members Southern California Gas Com-

pany, Pacific Bell Telephone, and General Telephone. It began in a small office in Garden Grove with only a few member utilities and even fewer employees. It was based on the belief that accidents can be prevented if contractors and utilities work together and simply communicate with one

another. DigAlert became the voice for that communication link. Over the years the membership has grown until it now stands at over 900 members. The protected infrastructure now includes gas, oil, electric, communication, cable, water and sewer lines. Originally covering only



Orange County, the coverage now extends over nine counties: Inyo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles,

Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, San Diego and Imperial. The members range in size from the very small to the very large and even municipalities. The concept that binds them all together is simple: the safest way to dig is to call before you dig.

Inside this issue:

Emergency?	2
SLIP	2
Time Savers	3
Expressit!	3
A Diamond Gem	3
It's All About Communication	4



Emergency?

If you are questioning whether a particular situation falls into the category of an emergency or something else, there actually is a definition of an emergency stated in the California One Call Law. An emergency is a sudden, unexpected occurrence, involving clear and imminent danger, demanding immediate action to prevent loss or damage to life, health, property or essential public services. There have been tickets called in recently for water main break repairs and replacement of power poles due to traffic accidents. There have been emergency tickets for gas service repairs and sewer repairs. More questionable might be what kind of imminent danger warrants an emergency ticket for a swimming pool excavation in Blythe in the middle of summer or an emergency tree stump grinding. Just because the caller has not planned ahead to allow the full two working days' notice required by law does not mean it is an emergency. It would be a short notice ticket. The locators will get to it as soon as possible. It should not be a priority over someone who has properly planned ahead and respects the locators for the hard work that they do.

The Center is here to relay your request and not here to judge. If you are calling in an emergency location request, you will need the following information:

The contact name and phone number of the person on site who can answer questions about the emergency (without this piece of information, you cannot qualify for the emergency designation)

Plus the following as requested on all tickets:

- How the location is delineated in white (paint or stakes or other means?)
- Location of the emergency - including county and city as well as if it will be entering into the street or sidewalk
- Will there be boring, explosives used, or if vacuum excavation will be used to expose the lines
- The type of work that will be performed
- For whom the work is being done
- Permit # - if applicable
- When will the work start - will it be done on the weekend or at night



Water Gushing...Emergency - Yes



Swimming Pool.... Emergency - No

S.L.I.P.

SLIP (Sewer Lateral Inspection Program) was created by the local gas agencies. Underground Service Alert has added a phone prompt directing callers on how to contact the proper agency. So, when you dial either 811 or 1-800-227-2600, you will be given options on how your call can be directed. If you are

calling to initiate a new ticket, press 1...if you are calling regarding an already existing ticket, press 2...if you are calling because you are experiencing a sewer blockage and suspect it could involve a natural gas line and wish the local utility to investigate, press 3. For more information on SLIP, please visit

their website at www.socalslip.com.



Time Savers

DigAlert Express - DigAlert Express allows you to submit a location request (for a single address only) online without any software and/or training. Requests made through DigAlert Express require a minimum of a two (2) working day notice. [Use DigAlert Express Now](#)

Web Update - Web Update allows you to update and request remarks through your web browser. No training or software is needed. [Sign up now](#)

WebTE Lite - WebTE Lite is a limited version of WebTE that allows you to update, request remarks, send a no show, and cancel existing DigAlert tickets. This version does not require training but does require either adjustments to Internet Explorer settings or DigAlert provided software. [Sign up immediately](#)

WebTE - WebTE is the full version and allows you to input, update, remark and correct all of your DigAlert tickets. To use this version you must meet all of the requirements and attend a training class held at USA/SC Corona, CA. office. [Sign up for classes.](#)



Expressit!

Possibly the time has arrived to introduce a new phrase. It's no longer just "call before you dig" because so much is being done on the internet now. When someone uses Twitter, they tweet. On FaceBook, people post. Possibly when someone uses DigAlert Express, they can Expressit! DigAlert Express can speed the ticketing process along and is available at your convenience – 24/7- and no waiting on the phone for the next available representative to help you. So, submit your single address locations any time, night or day....just Expressit! It's fast and, just like all DigAlert tickets, it's still free. DigAlert Express can be found on the internet at www.digalert.org. As for choosing new phrases, another good one is "ticket first, safety always."

A Diamond Gem

A letter from President Ann Diamond



Time – a finite duration. Something most of us wish we had more of. With current economic realities in California most of us have to do more in the same amount of time. How can you meet all your responsibilities of damage prevention within this finite duration? How can I make the most of my time? USA/SC has a couple of suggestions – update your DigAlert on line anytime, enter your single address locations via DigAlert Express 24/7, call 8-1-1 late mornings or Wednesday through Friday for quicker service.

Time – to appoint or choose the moment or occasion for; schedule. Give the locators enough time to mark their lines - at least 2 working days but you can give them up to 14 calendar days before you start digging. The more time you can give the better. Also take the time to mark in white the area where you will be digging. This will help the locators to schedule their time to mark the area as they don't have to search the area where you'll be working or have to call you for more information which interrupts your time.

Time – the right occasion or opportunity. Every time you dig, get a DigAlert number – either by calling 8-1-1 or entering via our web site www.digalert.org. Let Underground Service Alert of Southern California assist you in managing your time.



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Call Before You Dig

Founded in 1976, Underground Service Alert of Southern California is the state mandated regional notification one call center for anyone planning an excavation in Imperial, Inyo, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara or Ventura counties. Our mission is to prevent damage to underground infrastructure through education, advocacy and operation of an effective, efficient communications link between excavators and infrastructure owners.

We're on the Web
www.digalert.org



**Know what's below.
Call 811 before you dig.**

It's All About Communication



Communication today is not limited to the telephone. When Underground Service Alert began, the computer age was also in its infancy. Information was taken over the telephone and written down by hand and then transmitted by teletype or telephone to the members.

Today, thanks to modern technology, a DigAlert ticket can be transmitted to the involved members in less than a minute and often the caller has a copy of the ticket he has just finished relating to the CSR before he hangs up his phone.



And just as telephones have evolved to become cell phones and are now smart phones, the ticket that was always taken by one person talking to another person over the phone, can now be completely done on the computer without any words ever spoken.



The "caller" initiates the ticket online by filling in all of the blanks on the DigAlert Express form. Once it has been reviewed and approved by DigAlert staff, it is given a ticket number and progresses on its way.