

Washington State Damage Reporting Quarter 4 DIRT Analysis

Oct - Dec 2013

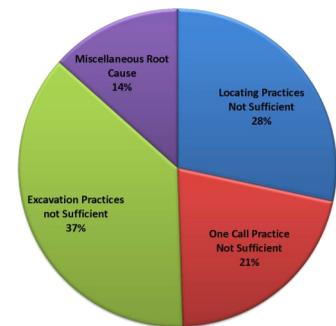
Introduction

This Washington DIRT report provides a summary and analysis of the submitted damage events occurring during the fourth quarter of 2013 (October-December). To generate the most accurate analysis of damage events, it is important that damages are reported to DIRT within the 45 day timeframe set forth in the statute. Any damages occurring during that time which were submitted after the 45 day period will not be included in the analysis report.

Trends

Fourth quarter is not a very active time of year for excavation and the numbers support that. A total of **574** damage events were submitted for Q4 2013. That is almost half as many as were submitted in Q3. We believe this to be due to the time of year, as less excavation is typically happening in the late fall and early winter due to weather. We anticipate similar numbers and perhaps even a downward trend for early 2014. There is a bit of change in the root cause category this quarter. Although **insufficient excavating practices** is down two points from last quarter at 37 percent of total damages, it is the clear winner when compared to the other damage root causes. Of the seven subcategory within insufficient excavating practices root cause, **failure to use hand tools** is the highest issues with 95 incidents. The single highest root cause subcategory, and easiest to remedy was **no notification made to one-call center**. There were a total of **120** damage incident caused by no locate being requested prior to digging. It is not a stretch to expect that if a locate was requested in each of those 120 cases, that damage could have been prevented. With the commission and Washington 811's 2014 **Call Before You Dig media campaign**, these numbers will ideally decrease with greater education about 811.

Damages by Root Cause

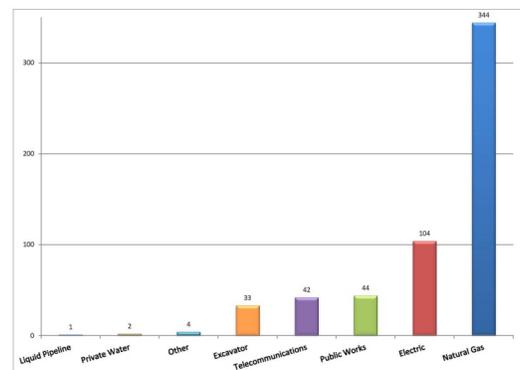


Reporting Issues

The most prominent reporting issue this quarter is the **lack of response from the excavating community**. There is a vast inequality when it comes to reporting between the utilities and excavators. Utilities are reporting at a **rate of more than 16:1**. We really need to get a better response from the excavator community. The fundamental question is why aren't excavators reporting? Is it because of lack of education, resources or just defiance? All operators of intrastate gas and hazardous liquid pipelines in the state are required by **Washington Administrative Code (WAC)** to provide any excavator who damages their facility with information about damage reporting. However, when it comes to reporting damage to a gas facility, **natural gas utilities submitted 288 reports** while only **16 excavator** submitted reports of damage to a gas facility. Perhaps education isn't the primary answer.

Not much has changed when it comes to reporting by facility operators. **Natural gas companies** are still providing the bulk of our data. We would expect that other facilities are being cut at similar rates to natural gas, and would like to see that reflected in our report. Therefore, we need to make an effort to ensure that everyone is reporting damage events to the commission within the 45 day requirement. **Expect contact from the commission** if your company is **not** reporting damages.

Reporting Stakeholders



If you have questions regarding this report or damage reporting in general, contact [Anna Gill](#).