

# 2025 End of Year Analysis

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This report by the Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) provides a summary and analysis of Washington's (more than 2,700) damage events occurring in 2025, 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.

The UTC pulls DIRT damage reports once a month, based on submission date as part of the analysis, outreach and education efforts. This has been extremely beneficial in capturing late reports, which may have been excluded in the past.

The UTC also continues to use a flex field in the DIRT reports to provide a designated section for the submitter to give specific contact information about 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 has seen improvements in reporting information, especially related to damage to natural gas without a locate. In addition, the detail in reporting has significantly helped the UTC in its ability to accurately analyze the DIRT data for education and training.



## DIRT Form

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The five root cause options on the DIRT form are:

1. Notification Issue
2. Locating Issue - Facility NOT marked
3. Locating Issue - Facility marked INACCURATELY
4. Excavation Issue
5. Miscellaneous

Two problematic issues with the root cause determinations are:

Excavation Issue - there is a selection choice of "Improper excavation practice not listed above" (meaning the submitter doesn't believe the damage cause fits into any of the other categories). Unfortunately, there is no comment requirement to determine what caused the damage, and it is the most used selection in the category.

Miscellaneous Issue - this category has an option to choose "root cause not listed" with a requirement to leave a comment. When examining the comments, many times the correct root cause for the damage will correctly fit into another category.



## 2025 Damage Picture

### Damaged Facilities:

- Cable TV: 42
- Electric: 330
- Natural Gas: 1236
- Other: 22
- Telecommunications: 1000
- Water: 76





# 2025 Reported Damage

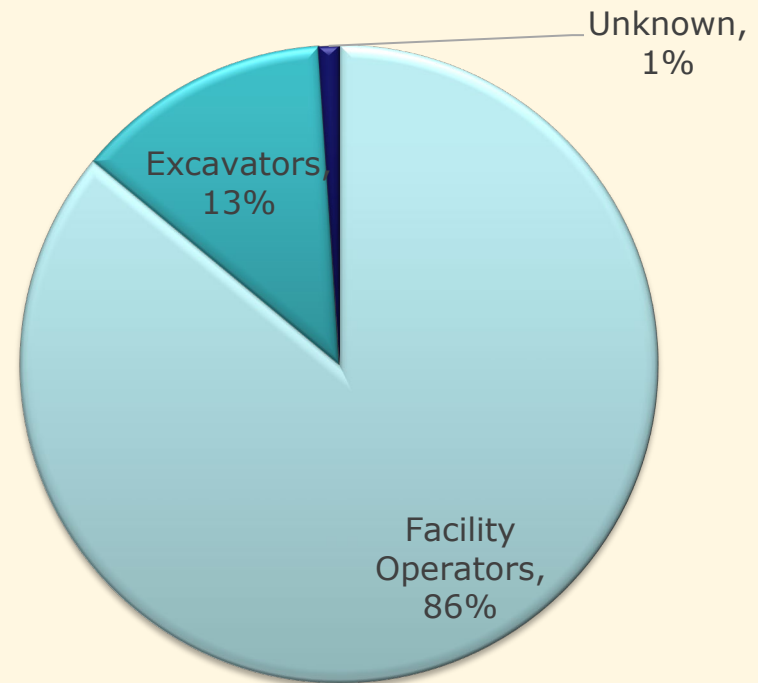
Damage reported by:

## **Facility Operators 86%**

- Natural Gas 48%
- Telecommunication 32%
- Electric 3%
- Other Facilities 3%

## **Excavators 13%**

## **Unknown 1%**



■ Facility Operators   ■ Excavators   ■ Unknown



## Locate Requests by Year

Requests for locates increased significantly in 2025 with **18,831 more** submissions than the previous year. Hoping outreach and education in 2026 will continue drive this data point up.

Year	Incoming Locate Requests	Locate Request Percentage Change (Year to Year)
2021	555,661	3.70%
2022	524,321	-5.98%
2023	488,564	-7.32%
2024	513,148	5.03%
2025	531,979	3.67%



# Washington's 2025 Root Cause Damage Picture

**One Call Notification Issue** has increased slightly percentage wise, with 36 percent of the 2025 damages incidents siting this root cause. There were 572 reports stating, "No notification made to the one call center", 73 reports that the "excavator dug after a valid ticket expired" and 266 stated that the "excavator dug outside the area described on the ticket."

**Excavation Practices** decreased slightly, with 26 percent of the reported damages, with 237 damage reports listing "Improper excavation practices" as the main reason for the damage, 160 stating the "excavator dug prior to verifying the marks (pot-hole)," and another 128 stating that the "excavator failed to maintain clearance."

**Locating Issue – Facility Not Marked** has increased to 13 percent with 201 reports listing the utility was "Not marked due to locator error" and another 52 saying the reason was due to "incorrect facility records/maps."

**Locating Issue – Facility Marked Inaccurately** accounts for 8 percent of the damages with 172 incidents stating the facility was "marked inaccurately due to locator error."

**Miscellaneous Root Cause** increased to 17 percent damages with 426 reports stating that "root cause not listed." When this selection is made, the submitter is asked to provide a comment. Many times, the comment field will be empty, or the submitter will describe the incident, identifying another root cause that should have been selected. When submitting DIRT reports, the submitter should carefully identify the actual root cause so more relevant information can be analyzed about damage incidents and their cause.

Damage Root Cause	2024	2025
One Call Notification Issue	31%	36%
Excavation Practices Not Sufficient	33%	26%
Locating Issue - Facility Not Marked	12%	13%
Locating Issue - Facility Marked Inaccurately	10%	8%
Miscellaneous Root Cause	14%	17%

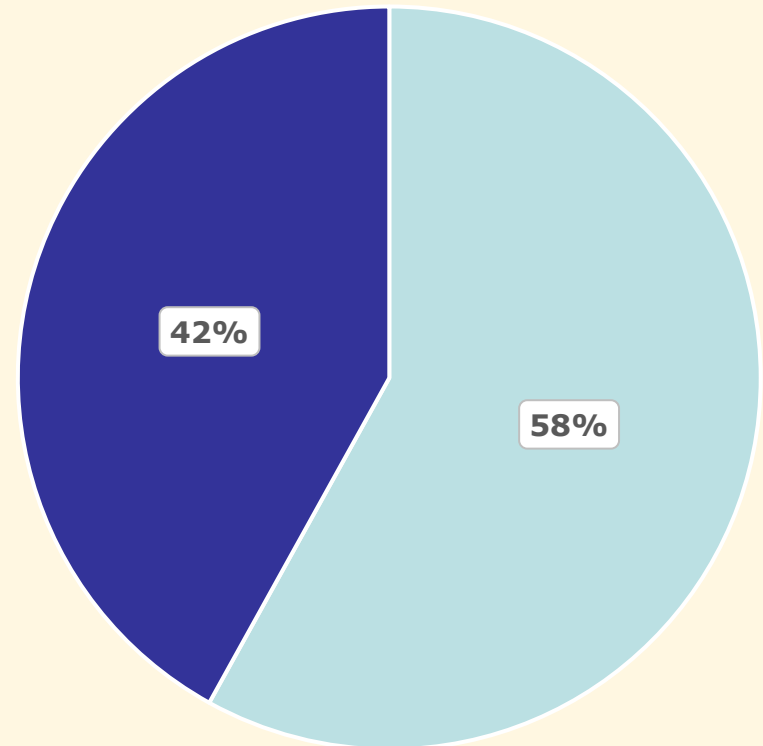


## 2025 Locate Requests

Fifty-eight percent of the 2,706 DIRT damage reports submitted in 2025, were shown to have a valid locate request made prior to starting excavation.

This is an increase of three percent from last year, and a reminder that more work needs to be done through training, education and outreach about the importance of securing a locate.

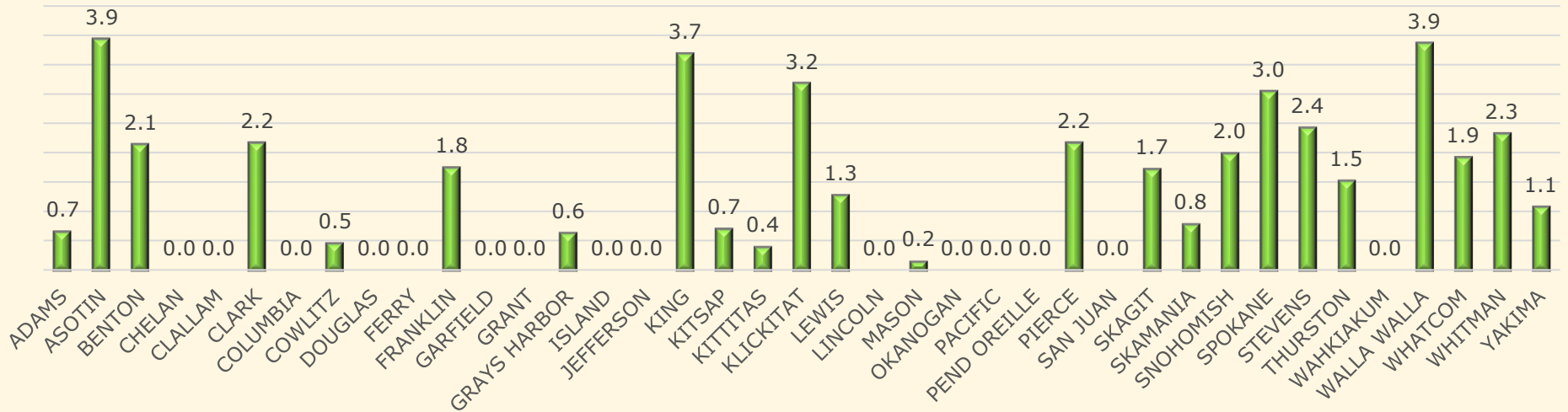
■ Yes - Locates   ■ No - Locates





# 2025 Damages by County

## Damages by County per 1,000 Locate Requests



The statewide average is **2.3 damages per 1,000 locate requests** in 2025 and is 0.1 higher than last year's statewide. It should be noted that the numbers for smaller counties may look higher since they have fewer requests for locates and we base the average on damages per 1,000 locate requests.



## 2025 Complaints, Enforcement Actions

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The UTC continued to work with the Washington Dig Law Safety Committee (Safety Committee), resulting in 30 recommendation referrals to the UTC for investigation.

In 2025, the UTC sent 271 technical assistance warning letters to 171 professional excavators and 100 homeowners, who damaged natural gas facilities without first securing a valid locate. The number of homeowners causing damage decreased in 2025 (39 less than last year).

UTC staff initiated 103 investigations on parties who allegedly violated the dig law.

Total monetary penalties levied by the UTC in CY2025 totaled \$203,000. However, many penalty assessments included a deferral option, provided the offender complete a National Utility Contractor Association (NUCA) Dig Safe training within 90 days of the penalty assessment notice.



# 2025 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 related to excavation and underground utilities.

We continued to offer online Dig Safe training for all of 2025, (but did not reinstate online locator training). We even provided in-person training during the busy construction months.

In 2025, 188 people completed the NUCA Dig Safe online training, earning a two-year certificate. Additionally, in 2025, 169 people attended our in-person NUCA Dig Safe trainings; and 78 people earned a two-year Staking University or Staking University California Utility Locator certificate for completing the two-day course.





**For questions about this report, please contact:**

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