

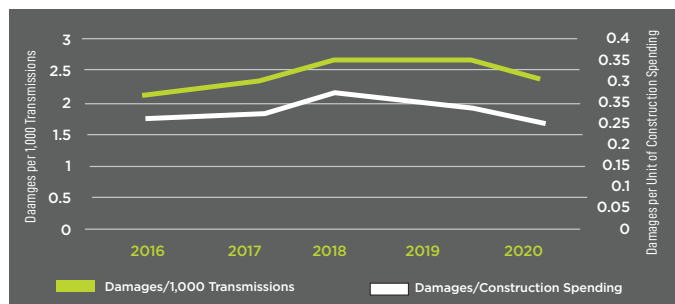


# DIRT

## 2020 CGA DIRT REPORT: KEY FINDINGS OVERVIEW

In September 2021, Common Ground Alliance (CGA) published its 2020 Damage Information Reporting Tool (DIRT) Report, which analyzed all 2020 damage and near-miss data submitted voluntarily by facility operators, utility locating companies, one call centers, contractors, regulators and others from the U.S. and Canada. To download the complete 2020 DIRT Annual Report, visit [commongroundalliance.com/DIRT](http://commongroundalliance.com/DIRT).

Over the last five years, damages have plateaued and leading root causes are driving the vast majority of damages.



5-Year trend of damages per 1,000 transmissions and per unit of construction spending (Millions of 2020 Dollars) –DIRT Report for 2020/Common Ground Alliance



- **Failure to notify** the one call center (811) is the single largest individual root cause, contributing to **32% of damages**.

- Other root cause groupings are converging to **become roughly equal** (see pie chart on page 2).

- In 2020 U.S. damages **decreased by 12%** over 2019, but the data continues to highlight a consistency in the leading root causes and contributing factors of damages.

## COMPLEXITIES OF 2020

Unique circumstances in 2020 contributed to a more complex picture of damage than in years past and help explain the reduction in reported damages.

- Construction spending **decreased by 4.2%** year-over-year when adjusted for inflation.
- The cost of construction materials **increased by 10%** in 2020, according to the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics' Producer Price Index for Building Materials and Supplies Dealers.
- Estimated damages per unit of construction spending were **down approximately 8%** year-over-year.
- Inconsistencies were present in one call center transmission data, which may account for the **2.3% increase** in estimated one call transmissions.
- Several one call centers reported **significant increases** in digging on homeowner properties, without a corresponding increase in homeowner damages.
- The **Covid-19** pandemic may have affected construction activity and **increased scrutiny of safety practices on-site**.



The estimated annual societal cost of damages to buried utilities in the U.S.

- The \$30 billion estimate accounts for direct costs (facility repair) and indirect costs (property damage, medical bills, businesses unable to operate, etc.).

## The Top 5 damage root causes reported in 2020 made up nearly 70% of the total damages reported

- **No notification** made to one call center/811
- Excavator dug prior to **verifying marks** by test-hole (pothole)
- Facility **marked inaccurately** due to abandoned facility
- Facility **not marked** due to excavator error
- Excavator **failed to maintain clearance** after verifying marks

# Top Recommendations from the 2020 DIRT Report

- 1 Capture more granular data on reasons for not notifying 811.
- 2 Explore common data collection, reporting processes and metrics for documenting and tracking late locates through the one call centers.
- 3 Consider how damage prevention efforts address the leading individual root causes.
- 4 Address damages due to “Marks faded, lost, or not maintained” that occur early in a project.

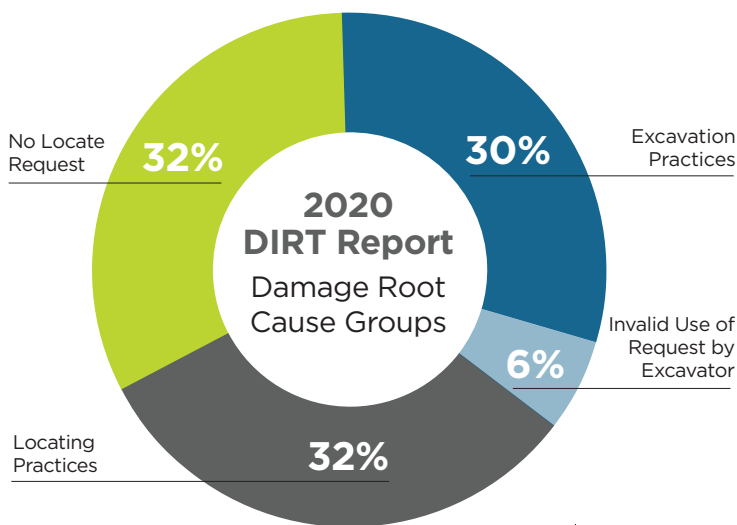
## Reported Damages by Root Cause for 2020

Coded by Root Cause Group

Root Cause	Reports	2020 % of Total	2019 % of Total
No Notification made to one call center / 811	84,918	31.81%	29.10%
Excavator dug prior to verifying marks by test-hole (pothole)	41,446	15.53%	1.94%
Facility marked inaccurately due to abandoned facility	20,569	7.71%	7.29%
Facility not marked due to locator error	17,539	6.57%	3.56%
Excavator failed to maintain clearance after verifying marks	17,128	6.42%	16.70%
Facility marked inaccurately due to locator error	15,163	5.68%	10.57%
Improper excavation practice not listed elsewhere	13,444	5.04%	4.97%
Site marked but incomplete at damage location	8,551	3.20%	0.41%
Excavator dug before valid start date/time	7,851	2.94%	9.78%
Facility marked inaccurately due to incorrect facility record/map	7,006	2.62%	2.16%
Excavator dug after valid ticket expired	5,713	2.14%	1.91%
Facility not marked due to no response from operator/contract locator	5,330	2.00%	1.27%
Facility not marked due to unlocatable facility	4,615	1.73%	1.44%
Marks faded, lost or not maintained	4,343	1.63%	1.49%
Excavator failed to shore excavation/support facilities	3,087	1.16%	3.90%
Facility not marked due to incorrect facility record/map	2,729	1.02%	0.74%
Facility marked inaccurately due to tracer wire issue	2,664	1.00%	0.14%
Excavator dug outside area described on ticket	1,489	0.56%	1.51%
Facility not marked due to abandoned facility	1,369	0.51%	0.14%
Excavator provided incorrect notification information	726	0.27%	0.25%
Previous damage	555	0.21%	0.11%
Facility not marked due to tracer wire issue	263	0.10%	0.06%
Deteriorated facility	251	0.09%	0.36%
Improper backfilling	157	0.06%	0.04%
One Call Center error	38	0.01%	0.17%

■ Excavation Practices    
 ■ Invalid Use of Request by Excavator    
 ■ Locating Practices    
 ■ Miscellaneous    
 ■ No Locate Request

### Reported Damages by Root Cause Group



DIRT Report for 2020 | Common Ground Alliance



Stakeholders interested in submitting data to the 2021 report or establishing a Virtual Private DIRT account should visit the DIRT site at [cga-dirt.com](http://cga-dirt.com).

Visit [commongroundalliance.com/DIRT](http://commongroundalliance.com/DIRT)

to download the complete **2020 DIRT Annual Report** and to **access the Interactive DIRT Dashboard**, which allows stakeholders to view DIRT data from 2018 to 2020.