

Minutes : Wednesday, 11/4/2015 Meeting

MNCGA – Ag Awareness Committee (Updates/comments from meeting are in red)

I. MEETING VENUE:

Wednesday, November 4, 2015 @ 10 AM
Korterra Office - 18946 Lake Drive East, Chanhassen

Participants:

Barbara Cederberg, GSOC
Estelle Richard, GSOC
Claude Anderson, MNOPS
Mike Mendiola, MNOPS
Justin Larson, Xcel Energy
Nick Nicholson, Enterprise Products
Bill Butcher, Nustar Energy

II. Review revised 2015/2016 Ag related opportunities list for corrections and any additions. (Meeting List attached)

Discuss opportunities with new organizations: (See attached meeting list for meeting discussion)

- U of M Extension Educator meeting, Barbs webinar presentation to their staff.
- MN-SD Equipment Dealers Association 2015 Annual Convention, Sioux Falls, South Dakota December 6–8, 2015
- Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Annual Convention, Bloomington, MN, December 6-8, 2015

Discuss member resource needs/participation in near-term meetings: : (See attached meeting list for meeting discussion)

- MN Assoc. of Watershed Districts, Alexandria, December 7-9, 2015
- LICA (Land Improvement Contractors of America), New Ulm, January 6-8, 2016
- Minnesota Water Wells Association, St. Cloud, Jan. 25-27, 2016
- MN Ag Expo, Mankato, January 27-28, 2016
- Tri City Paving Area Safety Meeting, Little Falls, Jan/Feb 2016

III. Ongoing committee damage prevention initiatives:

- Update on Agricultural Extension Agent Association opportunities. (Barb working on developing relationship with extension educators. Opportunity for a spring group presentation)
- Participation in CGA's Regional Virtual DIRT program (Barb has examined existing available records. Poor MN operator participation. Does not add much to existing

MNOPS data base. Has a good potential to provide info from all types of operators, but needs stakeholder buy-in that it is worthwhile to participate.

c. Update on GSOC proposal to conduct a small scale (county wide) focused marketing effort. (Estelle and Barb working with Farm Bureau (Leadership meeting is Jan. 24-25) to develop questions to include in meeting discussions).

d. Consideration of member question: Appropriate level of drama (ie damage caused fires or spills), (recall StarTrib farm safety series) in a presentation intending to persuade excavator adoption of safety practices. (Preserve a balance that depends on the audience, photos emphasizing family, for explosion/fire graphics provide exposure but be careful not to oversaturate to avoid excessive worry)

e. Consideration of comments from Bill Butcher. Bill raises some important point in the attached memo, some of these are itemized below. Our group may be in a position to address some of these issues... We may have suggestions as to referring some issues to others for consideration. To help determine relevance to us, our groups Mission Statement is provided below.

- 1) Excavator misunderstanding GSOC and utility operator's role in one call process.
- 2) Excavators need to locate private lines.
- 3) Excavators not white marking, while stating on the ticket the site has been white marked. (Excavators cut and paste generic instructions not relevant to actual site)
- 4) Contact person on ticket is not familiar with project site as is providing instructions on ticket that are not even relevant to the project. (No field contact info provided)
- 5) Contact person on ticket is filtering positive responses so excavator is not made aware of operator's special instructions.
- 6) Contractor not notifying operator when excavating so a watch dog can be sent.
- 7) Electronic verification by contractor that positive response and special instructions have been received.
- 8) Implementation of E-Meet (electronic white marking) option.
- 9) Additional education needed on importance of line markers.

These elements are representative of common problems in the field. These items should initially be reviewed by MNCGA for prioritizing as to which ones need to be addressed first.

Barb- Same problems every year. What do we need to do to change the status quo and begin solving these ongoing problems. Use statutes, education, awareness – focus on 1 or 2 priorities each year to make some progress.

Suggestion to discuss rural related operator Best Practices at our Committee Meetings. – Consensus that this would be a helpful topic to include on our agenda.

-811 window cling, sticker door handle tags for excavator equipment reminders when spotted on R-O-W, but operator not on-site. Possibility for 2016

IV. Item review prior to MNCGA website publication (Do we need to provide info in non-english?) (Add MNCGA logo to poster, solicit input on pre-excavation checklist) (Go ahead and publish)

- a. Poster for distribution to equipment dealers, feed mills, ect. (attached)
- b. Brochure discussing underground private utilities. (attached)
- c. Brochure concerning tiling and ditching safety. (attached)
- d. Pre-excavation checklist (from 2013 Excavation Safety Guide) (attached)

V. Schedule Next Meeting (New Location)

Next meeting is:

February 2, 2016 @ 10:00AM

GSOC Office -1100 Centre Pointe Curve, Mendota Heights

Mission Statement – Purpose of the Ag Awareness Subcommittee of the Minnesota Regional Common Ground Alliance

The Ag Awareness Subcommittee purpose is to promote and enhance excavation safety in agricultural, forested and other rural areas.

The Ag Awareness Subcommittee serves as a resource for underground facility owners, operators, government agencies, excavators, industry associations, service providers and the general public to address issues related to improving safety and reducing damages to underground utilities. The Ag Awareness Subcommittee encourages stakeholders with an interest in identifying and addressing some of the unique challenges to improving excavation safety in rural areas to participate in this subcommittee and assist with its efforts to:

- Increase participation of rural excavators in the one-call system;
- Serve as a resource for identifying and disseminating best practices for rural excavation;
- Coordinating and participating in public awareness and education programs for rural audiences; and
- Sharing and disseminating damage prevention tools and technology.