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## News

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### **U.S. Department of Transportation Grants Over \$1 Million to Improve State Pipeline Safety Programs**

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) today announced the release of \$1.06 million in One Call grants to help improve state pipeline safety programs. The grants are intended to minimize risks to excavators, protect the environment and reduce the incidence of excavation damage to underground facilities.

“Failure to call before digging can result in property damage, tragic accidents and even fatalities,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. “These One Call grants will help state utility commissions save lives and prevent damage to pipelines and the environment. It is especially fitting that we are releasing them now, during National Safe Digging Month.”

On April 4, 2011, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood also launched a national pipeline safety initiative to repair and replace aging pipelines to prevent potentially catastrophic incidents. Secretary LaHood called upon U.S. pipeline owners and operators to conduct a comprehensive review of their oil and gas pipelines to identify areas of high risk and accelerate critical repair and replacement work.

Secretary LaHood also announced federal legislation aimed at strengthening oversight on pipeline safety, as well as plans to convene a Pipeline Safety Forum on April 18th in Washington, DC, to gather state officials, industry leaders, and other pipeline safety stakeholders in order to discuss steps for improving the safety and efficiency of the nation’s pipeline infrastructure.

The grants announced today will help support the work done at state One Call centers. Call centers respond to people doing home improvement projects as well as professional excavators, then notify local utility companies and send locators to mark the locations of underground lines, pipes and cables before any digging begins. One Call grants were first authorized in 1995 in response to several serious accidents caused by excavation.

The number of gas distribution leaks caused by excavation damage has dropped by more than 45 percent thanks to an aggressive public awareness campaign and the introduction of the 811 number for One Call centers, which was established in 2007.

“These grants will help fund important One Call centers that make the excavation process safer,” said PHMSA Administrator Cynthia Quarterman

The grants were awarded based on the recommendations made by six [National Association of Pipeline Safety Representatives](#) and four representatives from PHMSA.

The award recipients are listed below:

- Alabama - \$24,312;
- Colorado - \$42,979;
- Connecticut - \$42,979;
- Delaware - \$11,007;
- Georgia - \$42,979;
- Illinois - \$42,979;
- Indiana - \$33,831;
- Iowa - \$31,503;
- Kansas - \$42,979;
- Louisiana - \$42,979;
- Maine - \$42,979;
- Maryland - \$9,500;
- Michigan - \$10,450;
- Minnesota - \$ 42,979;
- Mississippi - \$42,820;
- Missouri - \$9,500;
- Nebraska - \$28,602;
- Nevada - \$42,979;
- New Jersey - \$42,979;
- New Mexico - \$42,979;
- New York - \$42,941;
- North Carolina - \$ 9,500;
- North Dakota - \$9,500;
- Ohio - \$18,996;
- Oregon - \$40,018;
- Puerto Rico - \$9,500;
- Rhode Island - \$42,979;
- South Carolina - \$9,500;
- South Dakota - \$42,927;
- Texas - \$42,979;
- Vermont - \$42,979;
- Virginia - \$ 25,064;
- Washington, DC - \$42,979; and
- Wyoming - \$7,832.

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