

Damage Prevention Legislation Tabled in Alberta Legislature

Proposed legislation could help save Albertans \$350 million a year

CALGARY, ALBERTA (Nov. 29, 2018) – At long last, provincial damage prevention legislation has been tabled in the Alberta Legislature. Bill 211, the *Alberta Underground Infrastructure Notification System Consultation Act*, was put forward for first reading by MLA Dave Schneider on November 28, 2018. The bill not only passed first reading on Wednesday, but was also referred to the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship.

“This is a momentous day for Alberta’s damage prevention stakeholders,” says Darcy Hurlock, chair of the Alberta Common Ground Alliance. “The introduction of Bill 211 paves the way for comprehensive damage prevention legislation in Alberta.”

Bill 211 proposes that a committee of the Legislative Assembly recommend amendments to legislation that will improve safety for excavators and further protect underground infrastructure in Alberta. The committee will consult with key stakeholders in Alberta on the process for a safe damage prevention process, including mandatory registration of buried infrastructure with Alberta One-Call Corporation (AOC).

“They may be hidden from sight, but we can’t afford to ignore Alberta’s buried facilities,” says Darcy Hurlock, chair of the Alberta Common Ground Alliance. “Ongoing data shows that there’s still an increasing risk to the integrity of Alberta’s underground infrastructure, as well as public, worker and community safety, from uncontrolled excavations.”

- Over 50% of damages are a result of not submitting a locate request to Alberta One-Call prior to excavation.
- There are approximately 11 line hits per work day in Alberta.
- Damages result in societal costs, which include deployment of emergency services, evacuations, and environmental mitigation. These damages cost Albertans over \$350 Million per year.
- The average societal cost of a single damaged facility is \$80,000.

An example of how damages can impact a community is Grande Cache. They have been without phone or internet five times in the past 24 months, for 18 hours at a time. Anyone with less than a quarter tank of gas can’t leave town to drive to Edmonton or Grand Prairie unless they have cash on hand because electronic payments don’t work at their local gas station.

About ABCGA:

The Alberta Common Ground Alliance (ABCGA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving worker safety, public safety, and protection of the environment. This is achieved through identifying and validating, and promoting the adoption of effective ground disturbance and damage prevention practices.

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