



**Date:** August 11, 2022

**Location:** Hybrid via Google Meet and at 633 17th Street, Suite 500, Denver

**Present:**

	Chris Kampmann		Jeannette Jones		Mark Williams	R	Rob Martindale
	Dale Kishbaugh	R	Jim Moody	R	Patrick Fitzgerald	R	Ted Jensen
R	Dana Bijold	R	Julie McCaleb		Raymond Swerdfeger		Terri King
R	Esther Williams		Lori Warner	R	Rob Ellis		

I indicates in-person attendance      R indicates remote attendance  
 \* Indicates arrival after roll call      - indicates technical difficulties during roll call

**Note:** The meeting was recorded and started at 10:02 am. These minutes represent a summary of this meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim document. Audio recordings of the meetings can be obtained by contacting [cdle\\_safetycommission@state.co.us](mailto:cdle_safetycommission@state.co.us).

**MINUTES APPROVAL**

**A Motion was made to approve the minutes from the July 14, 2022, meeting:** A vote was taken to approve the minutes. It was approved.

**BEST PRACTICE DISCUSSION**

Third-party locators were invited to share their current workflow for Large or Complex projects.

**Brandon Leonard - Stake Center**

- Define Large/complex projects by: Duration of the ticket, length of time they will be working on ticket (in CO up to 30 days), length of project (if known), how many sub-contractors are working on the project. That determines who is assigned that ticket.
  - Anything that is more than a mile in length
  - Anything that will take longer than 30 days
  - Something like a housing project where all utilities and roads have to be put in (long project over multiple years)
- Current process: Set up meets and try to organize the workload
  - Try to stay ahead of the contractor. Usually do a couple thousand feet a day of locating.
  - Need everyone to show up - otherwise it puts a strain on everyone involved.
- Common issue : Multi-day tickets can be challenging because contractors will call in multiple multi-day tickets (eg 3 separate tickets each for a mile totalling 3 miles). They then expect all 3 miles located in the same set of days.
  - Because the law says “2 days” and even though the excavation will not be done in 2 days, some contractors still want it all marked.
  - Building relationships helps alleviate this issue.

When asked how far in advance they would appreciate a heads up about projects that are 3 miles etc, how could the locators get enough notice about the quantity of work forthcoming so that they can staff up?

- A couple weeks notice would help
- In Georgia they have a 2 step process, step one is a meet which covers the area that will be involved & establishes the work locators will do with due dates. Does not require the locator to be there every day, the contractor has to maintain marks.
  - IL (outside Chicago) is trying to mimic this process - not yet in place
  - If a contractor can't maintain marks it comes down to communication & the multi-day tickets help. And, they do need to have some responsibility to maintain marks - they are not the only ones the contractor has to go visit that day and it slows the work down when the same 200 feet is being remarked constantly.
- Comes down to contractors and locators working together. Without that collaboration (which is the problem in CO) it is challenging.
- Additional comment: Meets are beneficial and are more effective when not submitted through a meet ticket and come through in email or a higher up level.
  - When asked how a change in process will ensure everyone shows up - the response is that it has to be required/held accountable if they do not show up.
  - If the law noted what a large/complex project is and what the process must be. Notes are also taken and those are submitted to CO 811 and that information is resent to the locators (owner/operators) - including what the agreed areas and deadlines to mark are.

### **Hannibal Dennis - Vanguard**

- Defining a large/complex project: spend time gathering info from contractors, cities/counties, and utility owner/operators, and field employees (locators). Continuously follow up to try and forecast what is coming. 25,000 feet in a rural area is very different from in an urban area. It will take a different amount of time to complete.
  - Building a database to manage work volume based on areas.
  - Some projects do require an increase in staff, some do not.
  - Timeframe (to complete the project), and scope of the work impacts whether it is a large/complex project.
  - Building a relationship with contractors is key & establishing what can get done in a day is important
  - Literally spends time on the phone with various companies asking about upcoming projects.
- Bottom line, seeing trends & knowing in advance about a project is helpful. A couple months notice is best.
  - It takes a minimum of 90 days to hire and train a locator and really year for them to be competent
- Challenges:
  - short notices about a project & then managing contractors' expectations - sometimes involve facility owners of issues to help get everyone on the same page with what is feasible
  - Changing workload and staffing needs is challenging - 1,000 tickets in one area is not the same resource demand as a 1,000 tickets in another area. The needs can fluctuate as much as 40% which makes it challenging.
- Suggest a state/county database tied to CO 811 where requests for permits are tracked - since permits are step 1 for projects (CDOT, etc requires a permit) that can be parsed and tracked for trends.
  - Do track county bid sites already to try and get information.
  - When asked if facility owners are already communicating CDOT projects with locators - in general yes

### **Jason Stroud - Olameter**

- There is value in knowing when a project has finished its engineering phase, and is entering the excavation phase.
  - Knowing who will be involved in the project allows initial communication to be established, and establish correct points of contact, and get on the same page in general.

- I-70 project is a good example of getting advanced notice. It allowed a couple locators to get trained and positioned for the work.
- Best practices are helpful when all parties are on board, and if the excavators can meet their financial goals that will be key in the system working.
  - Timelines being met - knowing what the deadline is
  - Initial meets are critical

General comments after the aforementioned guests spoke:

- Fiber projects need a special team that just does locates for this work
- Contractors coming from out of state that do not know the CO law is a challenge. The general contractor (who pulls the permit), or the facility owner (if they pull the permit) needs to manage these sub-contractors.
- Have to set expectations where all parties agree on the scope of work that can be done in a day

### **Chris Barker and Scott Dunlavy - USIC**

- Agree with all other speakers that helping protect utilities and keep contractors on schedule is a mutual goal. Also agree the I-70 project is a good example of things working well.
- As an example, of the 5 housing projects occurring in Colorado Springs, everyone calls in tickets differently
- Having established project teams is helpful; need advanced notice to do this.
  - Sourcing staff takes time (about 90 days) - just training is 4 weeks
- Only allowing a maximum distance on a ticket is helpful, advanced notice is the most helpful.
  - When the special projects overburden the system it taxes the locators performing standard tickets - and it leads to employees leaving.
- Throughout a large project the system is taxed because sites can be marked up to 3 times before excavation actually occurs

When asked what the difference between I-70 and housing projects are? Response:

- Right of ways and roads do not include backyards, dogs and locked gates (which requires time and education).
- Fiber is always a new project in new places vs a road project which needs remarking and the locator becomes familiar with the area.
- Written notes provided by USIC regarding how they define/frame large or complex projects:
  - Complex ticket: takes multiple resources (more than 2) or more than 8 hours to locate
  - Complex project ticket: takes more than 30 days

General comments:

- A database with permits/upcoming projects would help locators in managing workload
  - Approved permits and timeline for completion & scope of work to be performed/what locators might encounter would be helpful
- Central organization for all tickets related to projects would help increase efficiency to get locators to the next location.
- If contractors could work with locators to create a manageable and agreed upon schedule for marking areas that stay ahead of the excavation, and also does not change. This allows marks to be placed where work is actually occurring.
- System should recognize the metro area vs a rural area - that will impact work timing.
- Communication - who, when, and how to get the notice to everyone is a key challenge to work on for the Best Practice.
- Role for CDOT & other municipalities to help in the communication?!
  - 64 counties with varying levels of resources and processes.
  - CDOT - part of the permit approval process is notification to the utility companies; perhaps this can become part of the process for other entities.
- Consider guidance on the timing for locates to occur (what are reasonable expectations); expanding on that - in both cases consider the differences between urban and rural:

- Best Practice for owners/locators
- Best Practice for excavators (project managers)
- Best Practice for Permitting Authorities
- Still want to give energy towards a special ticket that creates a meet - if can't force them then strongly encourage attendance & have a back up (meet or other resource to share information).
- Still need to determine what qualifies as a Large/Complex project (maybe not every project that takes over a week even qualifies)

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- Discussed what to present at the Full SC meeting
- Consider looking at the Georgia process and how that might impact the CO Best Practice; prior to that compile all notes.

The next meeting is September 8, 2022.

Meeting adjourned at 11:54 am.