

Issue #1

GOLD SHOVEL SCOOP



IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome!

Welcome to the first issue of **Gold Shovel Scoop**, the Gold Shovel Standard (GSS) newsletter.

GSS believes that greater transparency in all aspects of damage prevention among buried-asset operators, locators and contractors is essential to drive continuous improvement, and vital to ensure increasingly safe working conditions and communities.

Remember, **Gold Shovel Scoop** is *your* newsletter. Our program has been changing so rapidly, that we cannot keep up with the news that is out there. Let us know what you want to see in future issues, and we'll try to provide it. Also, we will run your questions in a Q&A column, so if you have anything you want covered, reach out to us at info@GoldShovelStandard.org.

In this issue, we focus on two new adopters of the GSS solution, as well as an update on the evolution of our metrics program. We also introduce you to Allen Gray, our most recent GSS Board Member; and we provide links to some upcoming conferences where you can meet and chat with GSS representatives in person.

Thanks – and please let us know your feedback.

■ The Editors

SOCAL GAS JOINS GOLD SHOVEL STANDARD

The Southern California Gas Co. (SoCalGas) has joined the Gold Shovel Standard (GSS). The combination of SoCalGas in Southern California and PG&E in central and northern California to GSS membership signals the commitment of the State of California to the highest standards of excavation safety, and to the integrity of its buried assets.

Contractors performing excavation work for SoCalGas will be required to be GSS-certified by July 31, 2017, to be eligible for future SoCalGas contracts. When the news was announced, Gina Orozco-Mejia, Vice President of Gas Operations, said, “The safety of our employees, customers, and communities we serve is our top priority. As the largest natural gas distribution utility in the nation, we hope our participation will make a significant positive impact by encouraging industry best practices for excavation safety.”

GSS salutes SoCalGas and PG&E for taking a leadership role in driving forward the commitment to public safety, and for their insistence on baseline safety management systems.

WALLKILL, NY BECOMES THE FIRST TRI-STATE MUNICIPALITY TO BECOME GOLD SHOVEL STANDARD-CERTIFIED



The Town of Wallkill, NY is the first Tri-State municipality to become a Gold Shovel Standard (GSS) member. Officials are working in coordination with Orange & Rockland, a Con Edison company, to ensure that the program achieves the maximum positive impact in protecting buried infrastructure. A video of the certification news conference and event can be seen here: [Wallkill Video](#).

Wallkill is the most recent example of the owners of water, sewer, telecommunications, gas and electric infrastructure demanding together, with a single voice, that permission to excavate be reserved for companies demonstrating excellence in caution around buried infrastructure.

The GSS-certification of Wallkill is the first step in creating a Gold Shovel Standard Community in the Tri-State area. GSS Communities are regions where permission to excavate within the community is reserved for companies with a demonstrable track record of caution around buried infrastructure. GSS Communities are places where bids to work, permits and right-of-way grants are rewarded exclusively to those demonstrating caution.

“The certification of Wallkill is similar to the city of Sacramento, which adopted GSS following the membership of PG&E,” said Dave Mauerman, an administrator of GSS. “In both cases, a major utility led by example and the surrounding community followed. Both Sacramento and Wallkill can be proud of their leadership on safety issues.”

THANKS, ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS!

GSS sends-out a “big thanks!” to the Associated General Contractors (AGC) for hosting us at their national meeting. It’s always good to connect with leaders in the field, to listen to ways to strengthen and improve the program, and we thank the AGC Board of Directors for scheduling time to meet with us.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

Gold Shovel Standard (GSS) continues to meet with several locators / contractors to gather feedback on the program. Working together with industry leaders to create the strongest program possible, we have defined several initiatives as we move forward.

GSS believes we must remove the veil that surrounds damage prevention performance; transparency in damage prevention issues is critical to driving continuous improvement. We also believe that continuous improvement for the protection of buried assets is the shared responsibility of buried-asset holders, locators and contractors.

The GSS Excavator Metrics Committee is comprised mostly of contractors (70%), and they are working to create a system of reporting that results in a series of combined metrics that are truly representative of the level of caution that an excavation company uses relative to its peers, and is perceived as fair and transparent by excavation contractors. The metrics must be reliable and not easily gamed, tricked or fooled, and, do not create new or increase existing litigation liability for contractors.

We are excited about the progress of the Metrics Committee, and expect updates in future newsletters!

LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT: MEET ALLEN GRAY

In upcoming issues, **Gold Shovel Social** will regularly spotlight GSS leadership, as well as industry movers-and-shakers. This issue, we look someone who is the most recent addition to the GSS Board, Allen S. Gray.



Allen currently serves as NC/SC Government Relations, Utility Division Director for Carolinas AGC (CAGC), a construction trade association comprised of contractors and construction-related firms that work in North and South Carolina. CAGC is a chapter of the AGC of America and the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA).

Allen is also a charter member of the Common Ground Alliance (CGA), a former charter member of the CGA Board of Directors, and former charter co-chair of the CGA Best Practices Committee. Currently, he is the co-chair of the CGA Stakeholder Advocacy Committee.

Upon joining the GSS Board, Allen said, “I am excited about the promise of the Gold Shovel Standard and look forward to working with fellow Board members in fulfilling that promise. We have an experienced, knowledgeable group of individuals with expertise in all aspects of the one-call process at the table representing the major stakeholders in underground utility safety and damage prevention. I welcome the opportunity and privilege of being a part of the team.”

Allen is a compelling public speaker, and is often on the dais discussing underground safety. He has already lent his expertise to GSS on several initiatives, and as the organization continues to grow and extend its reach, we welcome his input!

BE SURE TO SAY HELLO

Representatives of Gold Shovel Standard (GSS) will be participating in the following events. If you are planning on attending one of these events, be sure to say hello, or, email us and we'll schedule a time to sit down with you!

American Gas Association, May 2-5, in Orlando, FL. Conference details are here: [AGA Conference](#).

Michigan Electric Cooperative Operations Association, May 9-10, Gaylord, MI. For more information, call Kevin Evans at Great Lakes Energy at (231) 582-6521.

SEARCH THE GSS-CERTIFIED COMMUNITY

Your GSS-certification provides you with a valuable tool to build your business, and it's only a click away.

When potential clients are looking for contractors, the listing of GSS-certified entities can be searched by relevant skills and attributes. Be sure to provide information on your GSS certification, and link to the Website, when pitching new business. Your commitment to safety training to reduce damages and minimize the risks associated with excavating on or around buried assets is a key selling point to new clients. Use it!

This up-to-date list can be found on our Web site at: [GSS Search](#)

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