

Summer 2020



# The SCOOP

OKLAHOMA ONE-CALL SYSTEM, INC.



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# OKIE811 Maneuvers the COVID-19

## Challenges

By OKIE811 Executive Director - Susan Bohl

I think I can speak on behalf of the OKIE811 team in saying that we are fortunate to be considered an essential service in Oklahoma and we have stayed at the helm since the pandemic began in early March. We only saw a slight decrease in requests to have underground lines located and that happened in March. Since then, our locate request volume as steadily increased by 3% to 5% above where we were the same time last year.

Our earliest challenges came when many of our member companies were faced with scaling back or reducing services. They were concerned with how they would be able to respond to the locate requests we transmit to them if they did not have the staff to handle the notices. That is when we decided to put Governor Stitt on notice that some underground facility operators may not be able to respond within the required time constraints outlined in the Oklahoma Underground Damage Prevention Act.

OKIE811 is required to comply with the law and we do not have the ability to reduce locates or only process emergency locates. We did do what we could to ensure the safety of the excavator or homeowner by printing a warning on each locate notification letting them know

that locates may take a little longer than normal due to COVID.

Fortunately, we did not, and have not had, any member companies shut down their locating and damage prevention operations. Just like most of you out there, these companies had to shift, adjust and be resilient to the ever-changing landscape of our business. We are all working together, collaborating, and doing what we can to keep Oklahoman's safe as they dig around vital underground utilities lines and pipeline facilities and ensure limited to no service outages.

We are also using this time to position ourselves for the future and using technology where we can. We are focused on business continuity and ensuring we can deliver on our mission regardless of where our employees physically work. We have begun moving our focus to the future ways of work and looking at things more creatively now than ever before.

Though we had almost half of our staff working from home before the pandemic, we did proceed with moving most of our team members home in March. However, we have kept the office open and continue to operate with a shell crew still coming in. We also moved



100% of our excavation safety programs and workshops to online, including our statewide safety EXPO we provide each year. We have had a great response to our online offerings which now also include our Podcasts. Check them out by clicking on our Education tab on OKIE811.org.

Though the changing world we are all a part of right now can be stressful and challenging, it is our time to look at our ways of work through new lenses. Let us all work together to make the world a better place!

## Membership Updates

Per the Oklahoma Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Act, all operators of underground facilities, including all state agencies and municipalities, shall participate in the statewide One-Call Notification Center.

This year, OKIE811 has experienced a small decrease in membership. We are down less than 1 percent. A list of members can be found in the Membership Directory at [OKIE811.org/membershipdirectory](http://OKIE811.org/membershipdirectory).



## The Importance of Responding to Locate Request Notifications

In accordance to the Oklahoma Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Act | §63-142.6.2, all members of OKIE811 are required to provide a response to locate request notifications received. This response can be marking the approximate location of the underground facility or communicating to the excavator when the underground facility is not in conflict of the proposed area of excavation. Responding to locate request is not only required by law, it also has many benefits such as: opening the lines of communication with the excavator, providing clarity for the high consequence areas and facilities, minimizing the need for 2nd Notice & 3rd Notice tickets, protecting the underground facilities from damage, and keeping excavators and the public safe!

### Respond via the OKIE811 Portal

Members can communicate the status of a locate request to excavators via the OKIE811 Portal. Responses can be entered by individual users or for

members who use a separate response system, can upload their responses to the OKIE811 Portal.

Excavators can view the responses from the participating members in the Portal. Excavators also receive an email notification once either all the participating utilities listed on the ticket has responded...or the specified work start date and time has been reached. If the response section is blank, that company has yet to respond via OKIE811 Positive Response service. Using the Response feature in the OKIE811 Portal can help improve the communication and many other benefits.

### Benefits of Responding via the OKIE811 Portal

- Members can add more than one response to the same locate request notification
- A response can be added for each facility type registered under the dispatch

- A response can be added to multiple locate request tickets at the same time.
- Responding via the OKIE811 Portal helps ensure excavator sees your response, especially when members are unable to reach the excavator by the contact information on the ticket.
- Members have records and reports of your responses in the OKIE811 Portal
- Excavators can view their ticket and the members' responses
- Data available in OKIE811 Portal when member's system is down
- Supervisors/Managers can monitor the responses entered by individual users or the locating service.

Register for the Positive Response today! Take a moment to review our recorded webinars that cover the OKIE811 Member Portal, how to register for the Portal, and other features available the OKIE811 Portal has to offer

## OKIE811 Member Portal Help Page

Be sure to check out the new Member Portal Help page! This page contains great information including pdf and video tutorials about the features available in the OKIE811 Portal. Download the OKIE811 Mobile App today! The Mobile App is a simple and easy way to access the OKIE811 Portal.



# Oklahoma Excavation Safety EXPO - Virtual Sessions

The decision was made to shift our expo from a conference to 10 webinars on July 7th & 8th. We partnered with industry experts to discuss a wide range of topics from "Planning Safety

into Your Day" to "Confined Spaces." We had over 850 registrations and 12 prize winners. Did you attend any of the sessions? Let us know what you thought. Email [Education@OKIE811.org](mailto:Education@OKIE811.org).

The recordings of the virtual sessions will be available for a limited time [here](#).

## OKIE811 Podcasts



Have you checked out our podcasts yet? You can search "OKIE811" you're your favorite podcast player, or visit OKIE811 on [Podbean](#). OKIE811's Education & Outreach Liaison has interviews with industry professionals about safe excavation and damage prevention. If you would like to suggest a topic, or be a guest on our podcast, email [Education@OKIE811.org](mailto:Education@OKIE811.org).



## Additional Contact Information Needed

OKIE811 is working hard to meet the needs of our members and ensure effective communications are provided between you and those digging around your underground facilities. We are starting to gather new contact information for Design Notices as well as requesting Emergency Repair numbers to provide excavators wanting to report damages that require emergency repair.

We need your immediate response with the following information:

### Design Contact Information

To help ensure Design/Survey notifications get to the correct person in your organization,

please provide the **phone number, email address and website address** for your engineering/mapping department. With this contact information on file with your membership, OKIE811 will be able to connect the design engineers with the proper personnel in your organization and keep design projects from being submitted as a locate request. This information will be shared with companies who contact OKIE811 regarding design or survey projects. **We are also working towards setting up members to receive design/survey request notifications, separate from locate request notifications. The design/survey notification will help ensure your organization is aware of who is planning construction around your underground facilities.**

### Emergency Repair Contact Information

OKIE811 is also collecting Emergency Repair numbers. This number will be listed on the **OKIE811 website to assist callers who need to report gas leaks, damages, etc.** Please provide the Emergency repair phone number for your company. **Please be advised, these contacts will not affect who receives emergency locate request notifications for your organization.**

Please email your Additional Contacts information or any questions to [MemberServices@okie811.org](mailto:MemberServices@okie811.org).

Thank you for your continued efforts to keep Oklahomans safe!

## OKIE811 Moves Safe Digging Month Online

Just because a global pandemic breaks out doesn't mean proper safety doesn't matter. In fact, in the face of a world gripped with COVID-19 safe excavation and damage prevention have become more important than ever.

We realized this and knew we were presented with both a challenge and an unique opportunity for this year's Safe Digging Month. With in-person events being cancelled and the public being urged to stay home we quickly pivoted our operations online.

With schools being closed we took the opportunity to target young people and to educate them in the importance of safe digging. Our team came together to create a library of at-home activities including an activity book, word search, scavenger hunt, coloring sheets, and many others. These activities not only kept children engaged but also provided a reminder for many parents doing landscaping or home improvement projects on the importance of contacting 811 before they dig.

We then teamed up with our partners and members to help promote on social media these materials, as well as, best practices and safety guidelines for people doing projects at home.



# Education & Outreach Events

We want you to know why it is so important to contact OKIE811 before doing any dirt-moving activities. 811 is not just for professional excavators, it is for anyone digging - no matter how small or big the project. We want you to be safe while protecting underground facilities at your jobsite or property.

We provide virtual and in person trainings. Be sure to follow all of our social media as well as [OKExcavationSafety.com](http://OKExcavationSafety.com) to be in the know of upcoming events.



# Upcoming Member Communications & Webinars

Be on the lookout for some email communications in the upcoming months regarding the new 2021 Fee Schedule and Billing Verification to help ensure timely receipt of your OKIE811 invoice in November.

Also, be sure to visit the [Events Page](#) on our website to register for some of our live webinars on membership structure, registering assets, maintaining dispatch and billing information, plus discover all the benefits and services available to you as an OKIE811 Member!

You can also watch recorded webinars anytime by visiting [here](#).

# Transitioning to 24/7 Contacts for Emergency and Short Notice Callouts

Attention members, who currently receive Emergency and Short Notice automated call notifications for the time blocks of office and after hours or have an on-call schedule! We understand the importance of receiving these Emergency and Short Notice automated call notifications. However, with office hours and after hours' time blocks and on call schedules, there is increased opportunities for missed calls and data maintenance. There are many benefits of having a list of contacts available 24/7 versus office and after hour contacts or on call schedule.

Emergency short notice call notifications are in addition to your electronic method of receiving locate requests. We encourage everyone to consider updating to a list of contacts available 24/7 for the following reasons.

### Benefits of Switching to 24/7 Contacts:

- Minimizes the chance for error
- Lessens the opportunity for missed calls
- Efficient maintenance, you will no longer need to...

o Maintain the contacts listed for Office Hours and After Hours.

o Submit the Holidays you observe every year.

o Contact Member Services if your office is closed early due to holidays, inclement weather, or other early closures.

o Provide on call schedules.

• In these uncertain times with so many employees working remotely, 24/7 contacts could ensure the calls go directly to the person needed and no calls are missed due to not having staff in office to receive them.

• Ensuring that the automated calls go directly to the locator, could prevent any locates being missed or information being miscommunicated.

o For the calls to be most effective, the emergency / short notice calls should be directed to personnel that will be locating the underground lines.

• If your after-hours automated calls go to a Police or Fire Department, it will help ease the workload for them and not tie up essential phone lines.

### Automated Call Options:

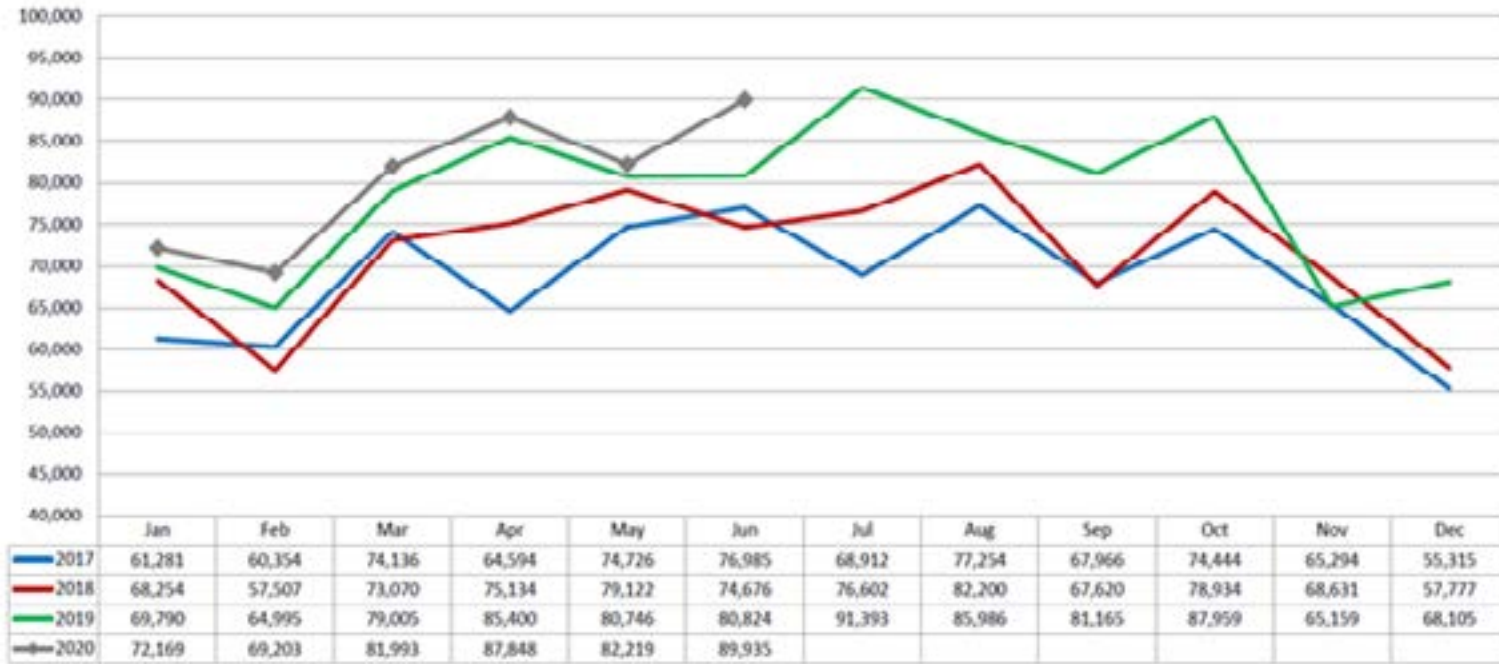
- Switch to 24/7 Contacts (No Additional Cost)
- Opt out of receiving all emergency calls all together (No Additional Cost)
- Receive EM/SN Notifications via text messages. Contact Member Services for more information. (1) phone number/ text message output.
- Have calls routed to a call center/answering service with a 24/7 phone number that rings directly to an individual. No recorded greeting or need options dialed. (No Additional Cost)
- Continue with Office/After Hours or On Call schedule and potentially incur a fee in the future.

Please be advised that a 24/7 Contact is optimal for the maintenance of your emergency/short notice calls. In the future, Members may incur an additional fee. Please email [MemberServices@okie811.org](mailto:MemberServices@okie811.org) with your updated 24/7 Contacts.

Be sure to watch our new recorded webinar explaining

Emergency/Short Notice Call Notifications and options available to you!

## Oklahoma One-Call System, Inc. Incoming Tickets - Trend by Month



## OKIE811 Ticket Trends

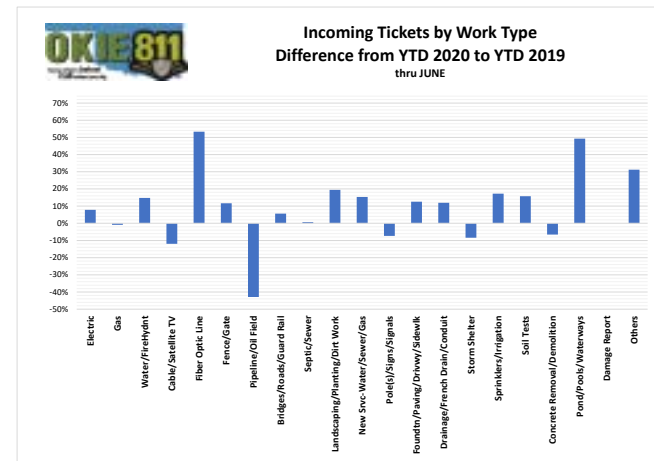
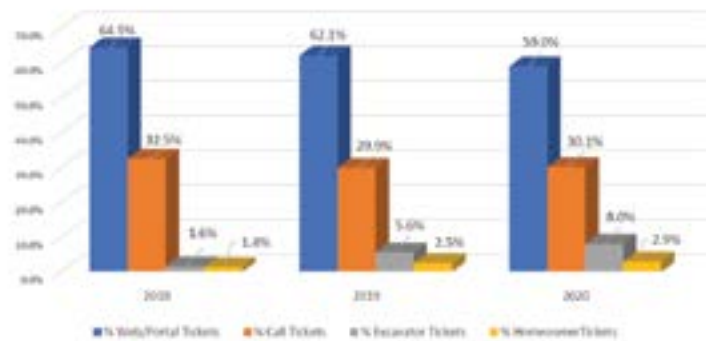
2020 has been one for the record books in more ways than one. While it seems that the world has been in tailspin due to the pandemic, Excavators continue to stay busy. OKIE811 has received record numbers of inbound locate requests every month so far in 2020.

Roughly 30% of the inbound volume contin-

ues to come in via old fashioned phone calls. OKIE811 continues to look at ways to improve and simplify the online submission process to speed things up for everyone involved. Over the past year more and more excavators have signed up for direct submission and now account for 8% of all tickets processed.

Readers may be curious as to where the increase in locate requests are coming from. While we've seen increases for several work types, the most notable are Fiber Optic Lines and Pond/Pools/Waterways.

Oklahoma One-Call System, Inc.  
Trends by Ticket Source  
As of JUNE 2020



## Contact Us!

For any questions about your OKIE Membership and the services available, please contact Member Services at: [MemberServices@okie811.org](mailto:MemberServices@okie811.org)

For any questions about your OKIE811 Membership Account or Invoice, please contact Member Billing at: [MemberBilling@okie811.org](mailto:MemberBilling@okie811.org)



## Get 811 Safety Certified Anytime Online!

Did you know that you can gain the competitive edge for your excavation company? Get 811 Certified today. This comprehensive training is a self-led online certification course. In as little as 2 hours, you will learn the importance of and how to Think, Plan, and Prevent. The course

contains interactive modules as well as animated video clips to further your understanding. This program is tailored to train a multitude of learning styles to ensure comprehension. To learn more and become 811 certified, go to [OKIE811.training](http://OKIE811.training)

## How to Request Safe Excavation Education

Does your organization understand the importance of safe excavation and damage prevention? OKIE811 provides FREE education to professional excavators. We have both in-person and online training available for your company.

To request training, you may visit our website: [OKIE811.org/educationrequest](http://OKIE811.org/educationrequest) or email [Education@OKIE811.org](mailto:Education@OKIE811.org).

For individual 811 Certification go to OKIE811 training to get certified today!

## OKIE811 Webinars Explore New Topics for Members and Excavators

With the advancement of technology the face of education and the way people learn around the world is changing and evolving. In an effort to expand our reach OKIE811 expanded into online education with a series of informative webinars and offers weekly opportunities for excavators and members to log in and learn more about specific areas of OKIE811. These webinars are presented by different staff members from different department that are the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) of the information they are presenting. We cover a wide variety of topics for both excavators as well as members and it is an excellent opportunity to interact with us live and have your questions answered. If you are unable to attend a webinar, you may go view the recording anytime on our webinar channel. For a full list of upcoming webinars, check the schedule below.



### JULY TRAININGS

- July 22 Safe Excavation & Damage Prevention
- July 29 Ticket Types

### AUGUST TRAININGS

- August 5 Understanding Your Membership
- August 12 Service Areas Mapping
- August 19 Safe Excavation & Damage Prevention
- August 26 Safe Digging Practices

### SEPTEMBER TRAININGS

- September 2 2021 Fee Schedule & Billing Verification
- September 9 Member Responsibilities
- September 16 5 Steps to Safe Digging
- September 23 Scope of Work
- September 30 Maintaining Dispatch Information & Underground Assets

- It is crucial to maintain the data on file with OKIE811 to ensure locate request notifications are received. As personnel changes are made within a member's organization, the information on file with OKIE811 can quickly become outdated.
- Please go visit <http://www.okie811.org/memberservices/> to submit any dispatch changes. Changes can be made any time throughout the year
- When assets change in ownership, each company is responsible for maintaining and

updating their own membership account.

- Membership Announcements, publications, event updates, and educational resources are always available at OKIE811.org.
- Please be on the lookout for the new 2021 Fee Schedule coming soon.
- Annual Billing will be in November, you can expect your invoice during the 1st week of November.

The OKIE811 Offices will be closed the following dates for holidays:

Monday, Sept 7 - Labor Day

Thursday, Nov 26 - Thanksgiving Day

Friday, Nov 27 - Friday After Thanksgiving

Thursday, Dec 24 - Christmas Eve

Friday, Dec 25 - Christmas Day

OKIE811 will accept all types of locate requests via phone on the following state holidays or the observed holiday date, however, the start date of the ticket will be the next business day:

Veteran's Day - (Observed) Wednesday, Nov 11



**Put 811  
at the top  
of your  
summer  
to-do list**



**OKIE811**

**EXCAVATOR SAFETY DAY**

**OCTOBER 7, 2020**  
Lawton, OK

**WWW.OKEXCAVATIONSAFETY.COM**

Planning any outdoor digging projects this summer? Always call 811 beforehand to protect underground utilities and keep you and your family safe.

Call 811 or visit [Call811.com](http://Call811.com) before digging.



**August 11 is 811 Day**

**Be sure to call and get underground lines marked before every digging project!**