



## MISS DIG 811 -Gold Shovel Standard – FAQ'S

### *What are the benefits for an excavator contractor to participate in MISS DIG 811 Gold Shovel Standard?*

Competitive edge- MISS DIG 811 GSS excavators will have opportunities other excavators may not, and they will have a higher profile in open bid situations.

- A way to demonstrate your team's heightened commitment to safety and damage prevention
  - May satisfy requests from existing customers and retain their business
  - Create exposure to obtain new business
- Promotional/Reputation
  - Raise awareness of your focus on damage prevention within and outside of company
  - Positively impact culture, further sense of company pride
  - Helmet and truck stickers, logo usage on website and printed materials, certificate to display and share
- 3<sup>rd</sup> party review (gap analysis) of policies, procedures and training, specifically regarding damage prevention in safety management system (DP-SMS)
- Explanation of why you may charge more than others by citing investment in safety and damage prevention program
- Software tools to methodically record damage information and document conditions that could replace methods or tools that you may be spending money on separately – computer programs, apps
- Tools to measure and manage specific damage prevention characteristics, previously unavailable, that indicate safety performance
- Bringing attention to damage prevention consistently and persistently to influence thinking and behavior (culture) and reduce damages. Damages create direct costs and indirect costs to your business. Reducing damages can offer more efficient use of your personnel and equipment, improved revenue and a stronger company

### *What are the benefits for an underground facility owner to participate in Gold Shovel Standard?*

- Hiring contractor companies that are certified should translate into safer excavations.
  - Excavation site workers are trained regularly including a focus on damage prevention



- Workers have stop work authority if something is not right
- Agreement to adhere to CGA Best Practices, specifically chapter 5 (excavation), and Michigan PA 174 of 2013
- Thorough corrective action plan and incident investigation procedure
- Contractors that use subcontractors will use only GSS-certified companies with few exceptions
- Visibility into useful damage prevention measurements reflecting safety performance, not previously in existence
- Standardized measurements available to incorporate into procurement process
- Means to reduce damages from 3<sup>rd</sup> parties
- Reputation narrative – a proactive step to publicly demonstrate voluntary adoption of damage prevention program (not mandated/regulatory); reduce chances of negative publicity
- Participate in a program created by industry, for industry, and staying ahead of regulators, continuous improvement tool
- Opens communication lines in the field to talk about 3<sup>rd</sup> party safety and damage prevention program, and have specific conversation topics (certification requirements, standardized metrics)
- Expedited Permit Process- Municipalities that are also MISS DIG 811 GSS participants can provide an expedited permitting process and ROW review process for MISS DIG 811 GSS Facility Owner/Operators and Excavators.

***Does everyone in the company need to be certified?***

- Gold Shovel Standard is a company-wide certification, not individual. However, it is *affected workers* that need to be trained regularly and adhere to other certification requirements. \* *Affected workers includes all field laborers, supervisors, and other workers who work alongside until excavation is complete, but excludes administrative workers without field responsibilities, casual employee visitors, inspectors not associated with excavation, etc.*

***Can you lose certification once you have it?***

- Yes. The 2 ways to lose certification are: 1) to allow the annual subscription (recertification) to lapse, or 2) not adhering to the certification requirements.



- The intent of the program is to be inclusive rather than exclusive or punitive. Certification is NOT lost based on level of performance or reaching a threshold (number) of damages.

***What is the level of organizational commitment in order to get the certification?***

- Executive/Senior management level support and commitment is needed for certification.
- The certification process has been streamlined to minimize time and resources required by companies pursuing certification. There is no need for additional headcount to get started or ongoing. A member of the Gold Shovel team is assigned as the concierge and guide your team to show exactly what is required and the fastest path to certification.

***How is this different than standard damage control?***

- How is “standard damage control” defined?
- MISS DIG 811 Gold Shovel Standard does 2 things not previously done or available:
  - A 3<sup>rd</sup> party confirmation of an in-place DP-SMS (Damage Prevention – Safety Management System)
  - Creation of fair and transparent standardized metrics for damage prevention

***How is this incentivized and is there financial support for those willing to participate?***

- In certifying 1,100+ contractors, financial concerns have not been a hindering issue. Costs have intentionally been kept low and spread widely so the real trajectory of anyone’s business is not significantly affected. The investment in GSS primarily involves the time in starting or enhancing your DP-SMS program, which is a matter of hours and not days or weeks of effort.
- However, to encourage rapid adoption, MISS DIG 811 has set up the Great Lakes Foundation that incentivizes participation. More information is found by contacting MISS DIG 811 at: [glf@missdig811](mailto:glf@missdig811), [www.missdig811.org](http://www.missdig811.org) or 811.

***Has GSS actually worked? Is there any data to support this?***



- Currently, there is *no standardized data* regarding damage prevention. Creating that data is the primary goal of GSS. A central problem is that there is no existing method to collectively measure damage prevention performance.
- What is known is that of the initial 1,125 contractors enrolled, greater than 87% had an incomplete DP-SMS and had to create or enhance their existing policies, procedures and training.
- Initial adopters indicate that GSS has made a significant difference, simply with the GSS-certification ensuring that all are operating from a baseline standard of knowledge and protocol. And this is even before the implementation of standardized metrics.
- Since the start of GSS, damage rates have plummeted for PG&E.

***A primary focus of Gold Shovel has been the creation and eventual deployment of “Standardized Metrics.” What is that all about?***

- When performance is measured, performance improves. When performance is measured and reported back, the rate of improvement accelerates. Using standardized measurements that can be applicable for all is superior to multiple, disparate systems. Over the past year, GSS worked with a committee of primarily (75%) excavators who volunteered to define Standardized Metrics for the industry. These have been adopted by the GSS Board of Directors, and will soon undergo testing in select field locations.
- We welcome the feedback of the entire contractor community as we rollout these initial recommendations in select areas. You can leave feedback at [www.goldshovelstandard.com/metrics](http://www.goldshovelstandard.com/metrics), or feel free to call us directly. We also have a survey, [Metricsfordamageprevention.org](http://Metricsfordamageprevention.org) that you can fill out.

***If GSS becomes an ordinance, will we be prevented from digging within the city without the GSS certification?***

- Most likely yes; please check with the proper local authority regarding the specifics of an ordinance.

***What is the community outreach plan?***



- GSS defers to the communities themselves to determine how they would like to do that. GSS can support with sample communications and engagement with our communications department as desired.

*How is the damage report enacted?*

- The utility that sustained the damage should report the damage to the MPSC per Public Act 174. The entity that caused the damage to the utility would report the damage on the GSS website. Data collected from GSS would be shared with DIRT.

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