



Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Expansion of the Safety Patrol Program reaching more Saskatchewan communities this construction season

The Sask 1st Call Safety Patrols are hitting the road again starting May 1st and, for the next six months, will be monitoring digging activity in more Saskatchewan communities. The program, the first of its kind in Canada, was launched as a pilot project in 2014 for the Saskatoon and Regina regions and will now be patrolling in nine additional communities.

In 2014, the three Crown utilities – SaskEnergy, SaskPower and SaskTel - saw a reduction of 32 per cent in overall damage to buried infrastructure compared to 2013. This was due to the variety of safety programs, including the Sask 1st Call Safety Patrols.

This year's program will again include the Saskatoon and Regina regions, while adding Weyburn, Estevan, Yorkton, Moose Jaw, Melville, Swift Current, Rosetown, Kindersley, Prince Albert and North Battleford. Travelling in marked Sask 1st Call vehicles, the Safety Patrollers stop at job sites to check that contractors and homeowners have requested line locates before digging begins, and are safely digging around marked lines.

“The response to the Safety Patrols from contractors and homeowners has been extremely positive, as people appreciated the face-to-face interaction with the Patrollers,” said Daryl Posehn Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Common Ground Alliance (SCGA). “Expanding the program will help keep even more job sites safe this year, as our members are expecting another very busy construction season.”

The Crown utilities partnered with Sask 1st Call and the SCGA to start the patrol program after seeing an increase in damage to buried lines from activities following new home construction such as landscaping, fence and deck installation, and driveway paving.

While the Patrollers are getting back to the basics with a “boots on the ground” grassroots approach, Sask 1st Call is also using technology to encourage the digging community to request line locates, with a new App released for 2015.

“The Sask 1st Call App allows users to request line locates on their smartphone, making the process simpler – and faster - than ever before,” said Barb Tchozewski, Manager at Sask 1st Call. “Using Google Maps to identify the exact location where digging will be

done, users can virtually ‘white-line’ their project area, add photos of the work site from their smartphone and use latitude and longitude to pinpoint rural land locations.”

Requesting a line locate, including through the App, is free. For more information go to www.sask1stcall.com or call 1-800-866-828-4888 and allow two full working days notice.

Watch for the marked Sask 1st Call vehicle in your community and remember, next time you dig, dig safe.

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The Saskatchewan Common Ground Alliance (SCGA) is a member-driven, non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring worker and public safety, environmental protection and the integrity of services by promoting effective damage prevention practices in connection with underground infrastructure activities. For more information please go to www.scga.ca

Sask 1st Call is a not-for-profit “**Call Before You Dig**” underground facility location service for contractors and homeowners who are planning to dig or excavate. Within two working days of the request, the member companies of Sask 1st Call will locate the underground facilities at the project site, allowing work to continue without impacting buried infrastructure, or disrupting service to customers. Sask. 1st Call has over 65 members (including SaskEnergy/TransGas, SaskPower, SaskTel and pipeline companies) and represents more than 400,000 kilometres of buried infrastructure across Saskatchewan. For more information please go to www.sask1stcall.ca