



Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Safety Patrols prepare for summer construction season

The Sask 1st Call Safety Patrols will enter their third year of operation on May 2nd, and will continue promoting safe digging across the province until the construction season ends Oct 31st. Thanks to the Safety Patrols and other damage prevention programs, the Crown utilities have seen a 32 per cent reduction in damage to underground facilities since 2014.

“Face-to-face discussion and education are the heart and soul of this program,” said Daryl Posehn, Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Common Ground Alliance (SCGA). “Contractors and homeowners respond very well when a patroller stops to check at an excavation site. To me, these conversations are one of the main reasons the Safety Patrols are successful, and why there’s more awareness around safe digging.”

The Patrols are a collaboration between Sask 1st Call, the SCGA and the three utility Crowns (SaskEnergy, SaskPower and SaskTel) to reduce the number of contacts to buried power, natural gas and telecommunications infrastructure.

Patrollers visit job sites to check that contractors and homeowners have requested line locates before excavation begins, and that they are following safe digging practices when digging near marked lines.

“The Safety Patrollers have experience working with underground utility lines, but also understand the tight time frames projects are under,” said Barb Tchozewski, Sask 1st Call Manager. “One of the challenges we find is that some people assume they know where buried lines are without getting them marked. Hitting an underground line can cause a service outage, damage equipment, or even result in serious injury, as well as result in an expensive bill. All of this can be prevented by ensuring you contact Sask 1st Call before starting your digging project and follow safe digging practices when excavating around marked lines.”

There were more than 140,000 requests to Sask 1st Call for line locates in 2015, and submitting a line locate request is easier than ever thanks to Sask 1st Call’s mobile app, which has been used by over 300 contractors since its spring 2015 launch. New this year, excavators using Sask 1st Call’s website can access Google imaging to virtually white line their digging site, so utility locators know in advance where digging will occur.



The Safety Patrols will be in neighbourhoods in the Saskatoon and Regina regions, as well as the communities of Weyburn, Estevan, Yorkton, Moose Jaw, Melville, Swift Current, Rosetown, Kindersley, Prince Albert and North Battleford.

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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