



# **UDIG**

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**755-UDIG (8344)**

Mr. Alan Olson, Chairman  
Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee  
P. O. Box 201706  
Helena, Montana 59620-1706

September 13, 2011

Re: Montana's One-Call Law

Dear Mr. Olson;

Thank you for the invitation to participate in the discussions regarding the one-call law. This item was at the top of the agenda of our most recent regular meeting on September 7, 2011.

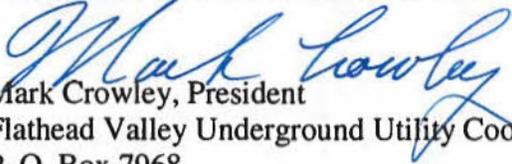
Our membership discussed this issue at length. It is the consensus of the membership that one of the best aspects of our utility coordinating council is our unique ability to deal with issues as they arise. In that way, small issues are dealt with before they become larger situations. Our service area affords us the ability to respond to most situations with a conversation over the tailgate and a hand shake.

With that said, we feel the dig law as it is currently written is functioning well and not in need of a significant re-write. A number of items did come up during the discussion and are worth pursuing regardless of whether the legislation is amended:

1. FVUCC should work closer with MUCC to track dig-ins on a statewide basis.
2. If a utility is marked and the contractor digs through it, there is no penalty other than the cost of the repair. One way this could be handled could be with increased repair costs rather than legislation and additional bureaucracy.
3. Two business days to complete locate requests is typically adequate. It can be an issue on larger projects that may take more time to complete. Again, this is something dealt with on such a rare occasion that a discussion and a handshake typically address it.
4. Design locates (a.k.a. engineering/planning locates) now carry the same time-frame for completion as standard excavating locates. Some states allow a greater time-frame for completion; such as 10 days. The reasons are several:

- They do not carry the same urgency as those associated with standard/excavating locates. Design/engineering locates do not involve actual site digging, unless pot-holing is needed.
- They usually involve a larger locating area than standard excavating locates: designers require all site information for their work; whereas standard excavating locates need only the areas where the most urgent excavation work will be done.
- If an engineering project does move forward to construction, locates will be done again for actual construction.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment and we look forward to the ongoing discussions. On behalf of the Council,

  
Mark Crowley, President  
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Cc: FVUCC  
Montana One Call Center