

Toronto Hydro urging contractors to obtain locates in an effort to prevent underground cable strikes

In an effort to reduce damages caused by underground cable strikes, Toronto Hydro's Damage Prevention Team and Public Relations Department have been gathering and analyzing data comparing the volume of locate requests to underground cable dig-ins over the past three years.

When comparing the data, it's clear there's been a steady increase in requests for locates and Toronto Hydro is reporting a corresponding decrease in dig-ins. Specifically, the year-to-date volume of locate requests has increased by 11% between 2016 and 2018, with the projected total damages for 2018 showing a decrease of 5% from 2016.

While this seems like a small number, it represents a move in the right direction - even small decreases can make a big difference! Dig-ins cause hundreds of thousands of dollars in damages each year and present significant safety risks.

But there are still opportunities for improvement. The top three causes of underground cable hits involve improper excavation practices, with the vast majority of incidents being related to contractors using heavy machinery. In fact, the majority of dig-ins can be traced back to failure to maintain clearance by an excavator.

And even though Toronto Hydro provides free locates upon request through Ontario One Call, the service is often not utilized by contractors.

In light of this information, Toronto Hydro is now focusing communication surrounding dig-ins on contractors. The utility is highlighting the importance of contacting Ontario One Call to obtain locates prior to excavation and following the locates meticulously. Toronto Hydro also urges contractors to contact the utility if they are having any issues with their locates, whether it be help reading them or any other concern. The Damage Prevention Team stresses that contractors should use Toronto Hydro as a resource to help ensure locates are done accurately and safely by calling if they have any uncertainties.

To contact Toronto Hydro's Damage Prevention Team, phone:

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