

**FINAL REPORT**

**ONE-CALL STATEWIDE  
UNDERGROUND FACILITY  
NOTIFICATION STUDY COMMITTEE**

Presented to the Legislative Council  
and the Iowa General Assembly  
January 1996

Prepared by the Legislative Service Bureau



Legislative  
Service  
Bureau

# FINAL REPORT

## One-Call Statewide Underground Facility Notification Interim Study Committee

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January 1996

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### MEMBERS

Senator Dennis Black,  
Co-chairperson  
Senator Joann Douglas  
Senator Eugene Fraise  
Senator Rod Halvorson  
Senator Stewart Iverson, Jr.

Representative James Van Fossen,  
Co-chairperson  
Representative William Brand  
Representative Jim Drees  
Representative Ralph Klemme  
Representative Jeffrey Lamberti

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### AUTHORIZATION AND APPOINTMENT

The One-Call Statewide Underground Facility Notification Study Committee was established by the Legislative Council for the 1995 Interim to "review current law regarding Iowa's statewide underground facility notification system to ensure that the goals of the one-call system as originally established are being met, review the notification center procedures and the impact of the notification system, both financially and administratively, on one-call participants, and make recommendations for improvements to the system."



## **One-Call Statewide Underground Facility Notification Interim Study Committee**

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### **1. Committee Proceedings.**

The Committee was authorized for one meeting day which was held on December 15, 1995. The presentations made at the December 15, 1995, meeting are summarized as follows:

**a. Iowa One Call, Underground Plant Location Service, Inc.** Mr. Terry Fox, President, Mr. Bob Hendricks, Mr. Dave Palmer, and Mr. Gary Bruns explained the history of the One Call Notification Center and discussed current Iowa One Call procedures and future plans for improving the system, including system upgrades and public education and awareness efforts.

**b. Attorney General.** Mr. Dave Sheridan, Assistant Attorney General, Director, Environmental and Agricultural Law Division, Iowa Attorney General's Office, discussed a \$10,000 federal grant which will be used for enforcement of the one-call provisions of chapter 480.

**c. Iowa Utilities Association.** Mr. John Lewis stated that it is imperative that all underground facilities operators as well as all excavators fully participate in order to make the system most effective and that it would be counter to the public interest to exempt any persons or entities of either category from the provisions of chapter 480.

**d. Utilities Division, Department of Commerce.** Mr. Curt Stamp, Legislative Liaison for the Utilities Division of the Department of Commerce, stated that the Iowa Utilities Board believes that the integrity of the system must be maintained and that all operators required to participate must do so. He continued that if some entities are exempt, Iowa's federal pipeline safety grant moneys may be jeopardized, that the current administration of Iowa One Call with the One Call Board should be maintained, and that communication and information concerns could be resolved through administrative rules and enforcement concerns could be resolved by the Iowa Attorney General.

**e. Iowa Telecommunications and Technology Commission.** Mr. Miles Arman, Director of Outside Plant Division, stated that fifty percent of the cable outages for the Iowa Communications Network (ICN) could be eliminated if one-call notification was properly used. He said that the ICN provides educational capabilities, essential government services, and life saving telemedicine services and that the State has an obligation to ensure that everything possible is done to ensure network operation.

**f. Iowa Association of Electric Utilities.** Ms. Dawn Vance, Director of Government Relations, suggested changes to chapter 480 to require that excavators provide reliable and useful locate information to operators. She said that the current system requires that the Center accept all calls from excavators regardless of the amount of information provided and that this practice results in wasted time and money.



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**g. Iowa Telephone Association.** Mr. Todd Schulz, State Director of Government Relations, stated that the Association supports the present one-call system but believes that all operators should belong to the system in order for it to work effectively.

**h. Iowa Petroleum Council.** Mr. Jason Husa, Government and Public Affairs, Williams Pipeline Co., expressed concerns with the present one-call system. He commented that the current system lacks a fail-safe default mechanism and that Williams is cautiously optimistic that some of the locate problems will be solved with the new computer mapping system being implemented by Iowa One Call. He suggested that legislative changes be made which increase oversight and accountability, provide for more enforcement of chapter 480, and create a technical advisory committee.

**i. Iowa Rural Water Association.** Mr. Jim La Plant, President, Iowa Rural Water Association and Manager of the Central Iowa Rural Water Association, and Mr. Randy Van Dyke, Manager, Clay County Rural Water District, raised several concerns regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the current notification system in rural Iowa. Mr. La Plant proposed that a rural one-call system be established that restores direct communication between the excavator and the utility. He proposed that Iowa One Call give the excavator the phone number of the affected utility and the excavator call the utility directly rather than One Call acting as an intermediary.

**j. Additional Comments.** Mr. Walt Kelly, consultant on pipeline issues, commented that there should be four overriding principles as follows: every excavator should be required to use the one-call system, there should be no exceptions; every facility operator should be required to participate; enforcement should be simple and swift and the fines imposed under chapter 480 should be reduced to a more reasonable level; and there should be increased public education.

### **2. Committee Action.**

The Committee discussed the testimony that had been presented and without making formal recommendations adjourned. It was noted that several interest groups plan to develop proposed legislation to address the concerns raised at the meeting.

### **3. Written materials filed with the Legislative Service Bureau:**

- a. Iowa One Call, Underground Plant Locator Service, Inc. - packet of material.
- b. Iowa Utility Association - summary of testimony.
- c. Iowa Utilities Board - summary of testimony.
- d. Iowa Communications Network - summary of testimony.
- e. Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives - summary of testimony.



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- f. Iowa Rural Water Association - summary of testimony - packet of material.
- g. Associated General Contractors - letter to Co-chairpersons from Dennis D. Clark, President, Rampart Corporation.
- h. Iowa League of Cities - position paper on one call.

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