



History

The Ohio Utilities Protection Service (O.U.P.S.) was founded in 1972 as a nonprofit collaboration of the Ohio Bell Telephone Company, East Ohio Gas Company and Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company. Charged with protecting Ohio's underground infrastructure, the alliance provided notification to facility owners about planned excavation activities. Within its first year, O.U.P.S. processed 13,678 digging notices. In the years to follow, the organization expanded membership and developed its departments. Over the years, the incorporation of technology and modernization of everyday operations has solidified the organization's position as a damage prevention industry leader.

In 1989, Senate Bill 174 required all Ohio utility companies to participate in a protection service and in 1990 Senate Bill 264 required all Ohioans to call before digging. Three years later, O.U.P.S. began developing marketing and public education initiatives, targeting homeowners and excavators and broadcasting the message of safe digging and in 1996 became the first one call notification center in the nation to have a Web site.

O.U.P.S. stepped into the 21st century with a laser-eye on relevant technology and strives to maintain its standing as an industry innovator. The year 2000 saw the launch of i-dig, a free, real-time online processing system that allows contractors and excavators to submit digging requests online. In 2006, the organization began re-branding initiatives that resulted in a logo change. Then in 2008, the operations department made the switch to a state-of-the-art ticket entry system.

Over 40 years after O.U.P.S. took its first ticket, it now has over 1,300 member companies and receives over 1 million digging and excavation notices each year – resulting in approximately 6.5 million outbound notices to member companies.

The O.U.P.S. mission is to prevent damage to member facilities and promote public safety by providing an efficient and effective communication and education process. O.U.P.S. serves as a vital communication link between excavators and facility owners while educating the public about the importance of safe digging.