



South Carolina  
Office of Regulatory Staff

# THE WATER WELLSPRING

*A Flowing Source of Information for Water and Wastewater Utilities*

*Winter 2014*

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## Mandatory Membership



### Take Your Membership to the Next LEVEL

Legislation passed by the S.C. General Assembly in 2012 mandates membership to South Carolina 811 (SC811) for public utilities such as water and wastewater utilities (among others). Water or sewer lines are not the only things that can be damaged during a dig. Service interruption can be a major source of customer complaints and negative publicity. When used to its full advantage, SC811 can be a very valuable asset to its members in terms of damage prevention and safety programs.

As defined by law, all “operators” must join SC811. Section 58-36-20 Definitions and Section 58-36-50 (B) (1) – (4) of the SC Underground Facility Damage Prevention Act define operators and specify the parameters and deadlines for membership as follows:

Operator means any person, public utility, communications and cable service provider, municipality, electrical utility, electric and telephone cooperatives, and the South Carolina Public Service Authority as defined in Titles 5, 6, 33, and 58, Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, who owns or operates a facility for commercial purposes in the State of South Carolina.

“All operators are required to join the association and utilize the services of the notification center.

(1) Operators that are members of the existing association on the effective date of this act must remain members.

(2) Operators with more than fifty thousand customers or one thousand miles of facilities who are not members must join the association within one year from the effective date of this act. (June 7, 2013)

(3) Operators with more than twenty-five thousand customers or five hundred miles of facilities, who are not members, must join the association within two years from the effective date of this act. (June 7, 2014)

(4) All operators that do not meet the thresholds described in items (1), (2), or (3) must join the association within three years from the effective date of this act. (June 7, 2015)”

### **Member Tiers and Benefits: Make your Membership Count**

Choose the membership type that fits your organization.

There are different levels of membership. Some companies pay per locate, while others pay a fixed rate.

**Type One:** Is your company large or medium sized? The annual costs would be based on how many locates are generated in your service area.

**Type Two:** Are you a small company? The annual fixed rate may best suit your organization because the costs do not vary from year to year.

**Type Three:** Don't forget the locating companies – their membership type is constructed just for them.

Choose the billing and payment type that fits your organization

- Would you like to be billed monthly or quarterly? Or would you rather choose to pay annually?
- Would you like to receive your invoices electronically or would U.S. Postal mail work best for you?
- How about payments – would you rather have your accounting staff issue payments or would you prefer to use electronic funds transfer? SC811 can set up a plan that is as unique as your company.

Access and amend your map data

You have the option to update your member database with the click of a mouse or contact SC811 and have their expert staff do it for you. Their trained staff will show you how to access your company's private membership boundaries, modify it as new areas are added, or delete areas that no longer apply. Taking advantage of this service ensures that your membership mapping data is current.

Locate Notice Management

All locate notices are sent through a secured email, yet there are many ways to view them. Examples include viewing a regular text email, having the address attached to a map along with the locate request number, or having the map including a visual “push-pin” marker indicating where the address is located. Knowing what works for your company is the first step to making it count!

Data tracking

Would you find it helpful to know where the locate notices are being generated in relation to your underground facilities? Make your membership count by contacting the expert staff at SC811 to view a list of reports available to members.

Presentations

Would you like for SC811 staff to conduct on-site education or assist with your training meetings? Contact their expert staff, and they will construct a program that fits your needs.

In addition to other services provided, SC811 stores electronic and voice-recorded data. Other benefits include after-hours emergency notification, public awareness assistance with programs, and bi-lingual handouts. All stakeholders have representation on the Board of Directors.

To apply for membership, complete a membership application form that provides administrative information as well as information about your facilities. A service area map must also be provided so that SC811 can overlay the map to its GIS system. After SC811 verifies that the submitted map is correct, their staff can calculate the number of locate notices that touched your service area in the previous twelve months and provide you a price quote for membership based on that information.

To request a membership form or for more information about membership, please contact Member Services Director Bernie Clegg at [bclegg@sc1pups.org](mailto:bclegg@sc1pups.org) or by calling 803-939-1117, Option 8.

View the entire SC Underground Facility Damage Prevention Act at <http://www.sc1pups.org/SCStateLaw.aspx>



## Annual Reports – 2013

Letters reminding utilities to file annual reports for 2013 will be mailed in January. The annual reports will be available on the ORS website in PDF format. Please make sure that your utility downloads the correct class report (i.e., Class A utilities should download a Class A annual report). Utilities that provide both water and sewer services must complete a separate annual report for each industry. Annual reports are due no later than April 1, 2014. Any utility needing additional time to submit its annual report must make the request for an extension in writing to the ORS. Any utility needing more than 30 days after the due date must make its request for an extension in writing to the Public Service Commission.



## Save the Date!

The ORS Water/Wastewater Department will be offering a workshop in 2014 currently planned for March (exact date is pending). This year's workshop will not encompass a full day, but you can receive credit for the time attended. We will provide more information in the coming weeks. If you have any suggestions for workshop topics, please let us know.



Henry N. Webster, II, CPA

## *Our Deepest Sympathy...*

Mr. Henry N. Webster, II, CPA and auditor with the ORS, unexpectedly passed away on December 2, 2013. Henry was a manager in the New Nuclear and Telecommunications division of the Audit Department. Henry occasionally testified in water and wastewater rate cases.

We will all miss Henry and ask that you keep his family in your thoughts and prayers.

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## THE WATER WELLSPRING

Published by the South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff  
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