

NATURAL  
GAS

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# AGA Perspective

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**AGA**  
American Gas  
Association

The logo for the American Gas Association (AGA) is located in the bottom right corner. It features the letters "AGA" in a bold, sans-serif font, with a stylized flame icon above the letter "A". Below "AGA" are the words "American Gas Association" in a smaller, sans-serif font. The background of the slide is a dark blue gradient with a large, semi-transparent blue circle on the right side. In the background, there is a close-up image of a gas stove burner with a blue flame.

# General Observations

- Excavation exemptions exist in some form of every state's Damage Prevention law
- Often these exemptions have been in place since the inception of these state laws
- Types of Exemptions:
  1. Homeowners (for 'light' excavation)
  2. State DOTs and municipalities
  3. Agricultural
  4. Railroad
  5. Other

# General Observations

- Exemptions are a contradiction to the message we have pushed for over a decade -- “Always Call Before You Dig”
- Exemptions send a message that certain types of excavation do not pose a risk to underground facilities and do not jeopardize the safety of the public or the excavator
- Even if an excavation damage caused by an exempt excavator does not result in injury, it’s still a safety risk, wastes resources and undermines our mission of getting all excavators to call before they dig

# Additional Thoughts

- Exemptions for excavations less than 12” – Many examples of these excavations going deeper. Most will not stop the dig to call and wait for markings
- Pipelines may be less than 12” due to erosion and soil movement
- Digging with hand tools can cause damage to the pipeline.
- Calling 811 is always free, so exempt excavators seemingly have nothing to lose

**29% of damages to natural gas distribution facilities are due to “Notification not made”**  
*CGA Natural Gas Distribution Facilities Report, March 2013*

# *CGA Natural Gas Distribution Facilities Report, March 2013*

- 66,728 excavation events on NG distribution facilities
- 23,369 were not preceded by a locate request (36%)
- Occupants/farmers least likely to notify (80% of damages involving this group were not preceded by a locate request).  
***“Exemptions from this particular type of excavator are probably influencing the noticeably higher percentage of lack of locate requests...”***

# AGA's Position

- Certain exemptions may be warranted, but only if data shows they pose no safety risk.
- Data needs to be collected at the state level to determine which types of exemptions truly represent no risk to safety.



## Data From An Informal AGA Survey:

- State DOTs exempt from One Call caused as few as 0.1% of damages for one operator and as high as 6% of damages for another operator
- Municipality exemptions have caused significant damages for some operators and little to no damages for others
- Hand-tools resulted in >20% of the excavation damages incurred by one operator



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