Office of Pipeline Safety

2024 Utility Performance Report

March 26, 2025

Minnesota Department of Public Safety
Office of Pipeline Safety
https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ops

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OPS background

Mission

The mission of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) is to protect lives, property, and the environment through the implementation of a program of gas and hazardous liquid pipeline inspections, enforcement, accident and incident investigations, and education.

Overview

OPS has regulatory authority over the transportation of intrastate natural gas and hazardous liquid pipeline operators throughout the state of Minnesota. Minnesota adopts federal pipeline safety standards and conducts routine inspections and investigations of intrastate pipeline operators and facilities to ensure compliance with these regulations. Additionally, Minnesota acts as an interstate agent on behalf of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) to conduct inspections and investigations involving interstate pipeline companies.

Minnesota pipeline companies operate natural gas distribution systems, liquified propane gas (LPG) systems, liquified natural gas (LNG) plants, underground natural gas facilities, and hazardous liquid pipelines. OPS also has jurisdiction over the state's damage prevention laws to ensure the safety of Minnesotans excavating in the presence of underground utilities such as pipelines, electric and telecommunications lines, and sewer and water piping.

Services provided

Inspection program: OPS routinely reviews pipeline operator procedures, training, and records. OPS also observes practices and conditions in the field to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations. Inspections are conducted to ensure pipeline systems are operated safely.

Investigations: In the event of a pipeline incident, OPS conducts investigations to ensure the pipeline operator follows proper procedures, maintains regulatory compliance, and takes steps to prevent future recurrence.

Damage prevention program: OPS is the education and enforcement authority for the "Call Before You Dig" law, Minnesota statute 216D (MS216D.04). The law requires any individual or company to call the Gopher State One Call (GSOC) Center before digging so operators can be notified to mark underground utilities. Education activities throughout Minnesota aim to prevent excavation-related damage to pipelines and other underground facilities. During the 2024 Regular Session, the Minnesota Legislature made several revisions to the law. One change was the addition of MS216D.03 Subd 5 performance reporting, which requires most utility operators to report data quarterly to OPS and for OPS to publish a report on the data collected annually.

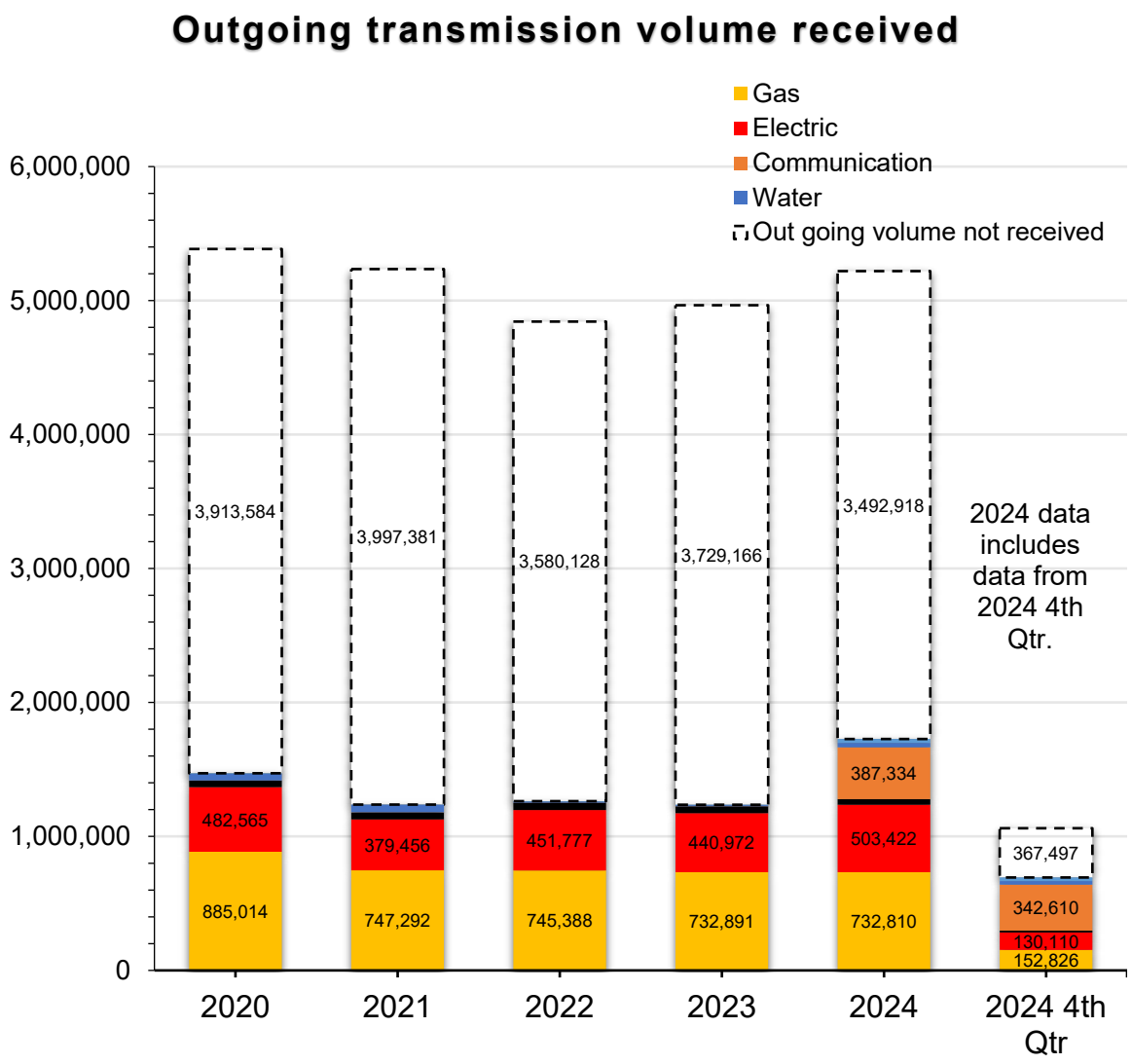
Data results

The following graphs provide information on the submitted data. Before the fourth quarter of 2024, legacy data was submitted by the pipeline industry and a handful of volunteer utility operators.

Notifications

Outgoing transmission volume received by OPS

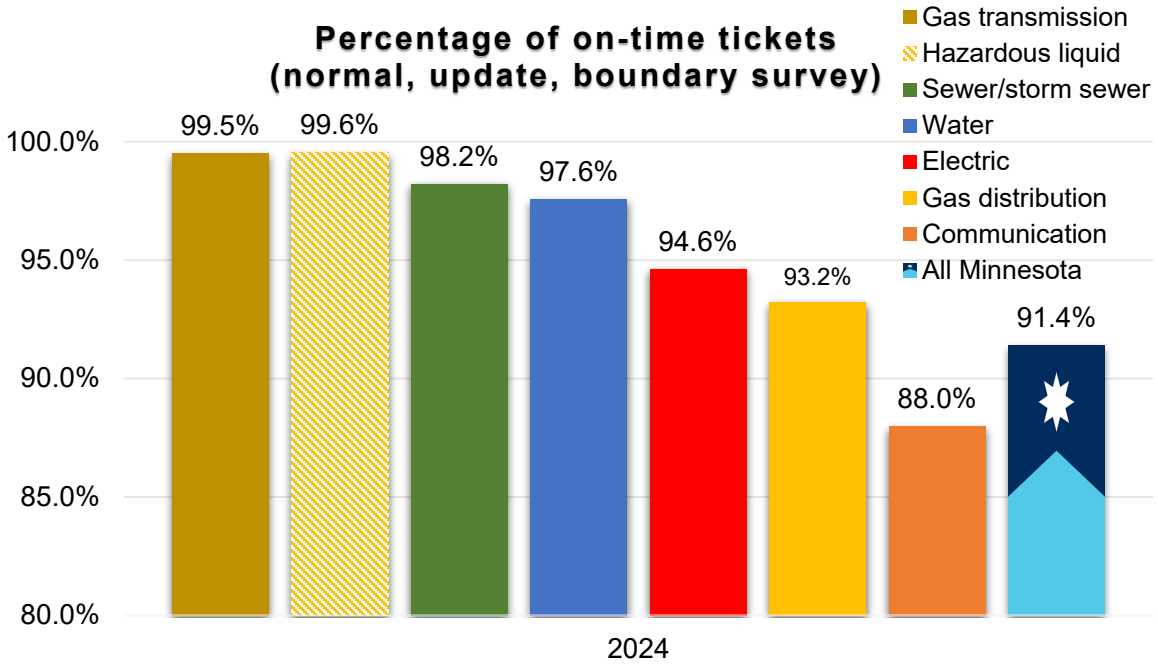
Each notification (GSOC ticket) submitted creates multiple "outgoing transmissions" to affected utility operators because every ticket has multiple utilities on it. This graph shows the total outgoing transmission volume and the corresponding volume OPS has received. This provides an idea of what percentage of data OPS receives from utility operators.



On-time ticket reporting

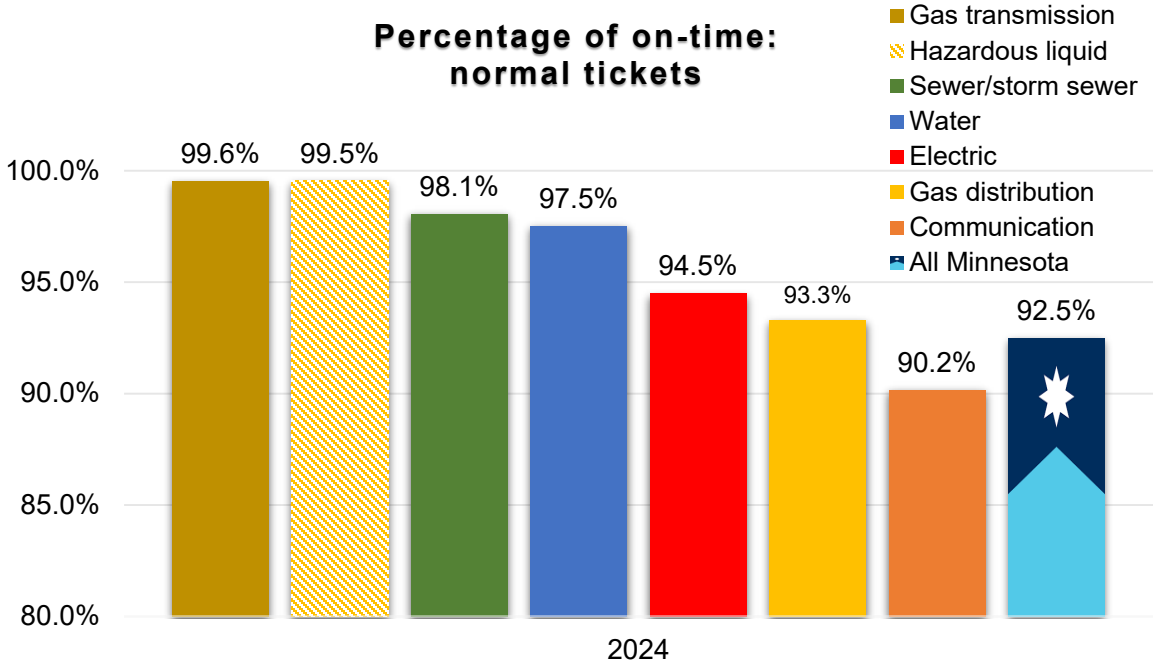
Percentage of on-time tickets (normal, update, boundary survey)

This graph shows the total percentage of notifications marked by the start time on the notice broken down by utility type.



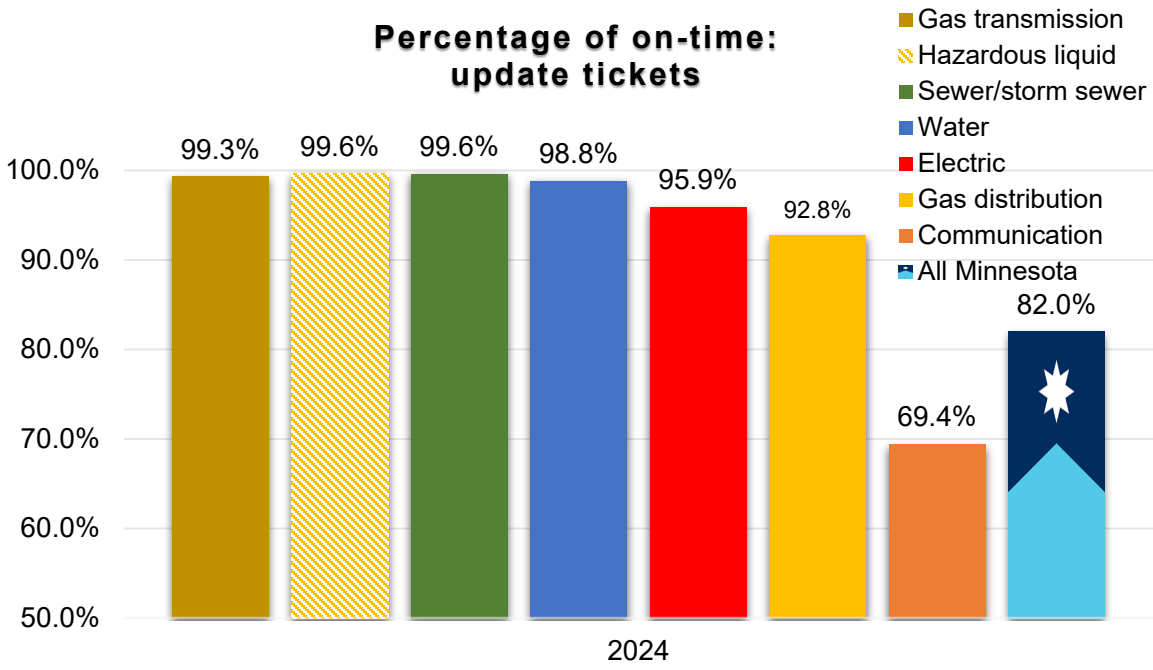
Percentage of on-time: normal tickets

This graph shows the percentage of normal notifications marked by the start time on the notice broken down by utility type.



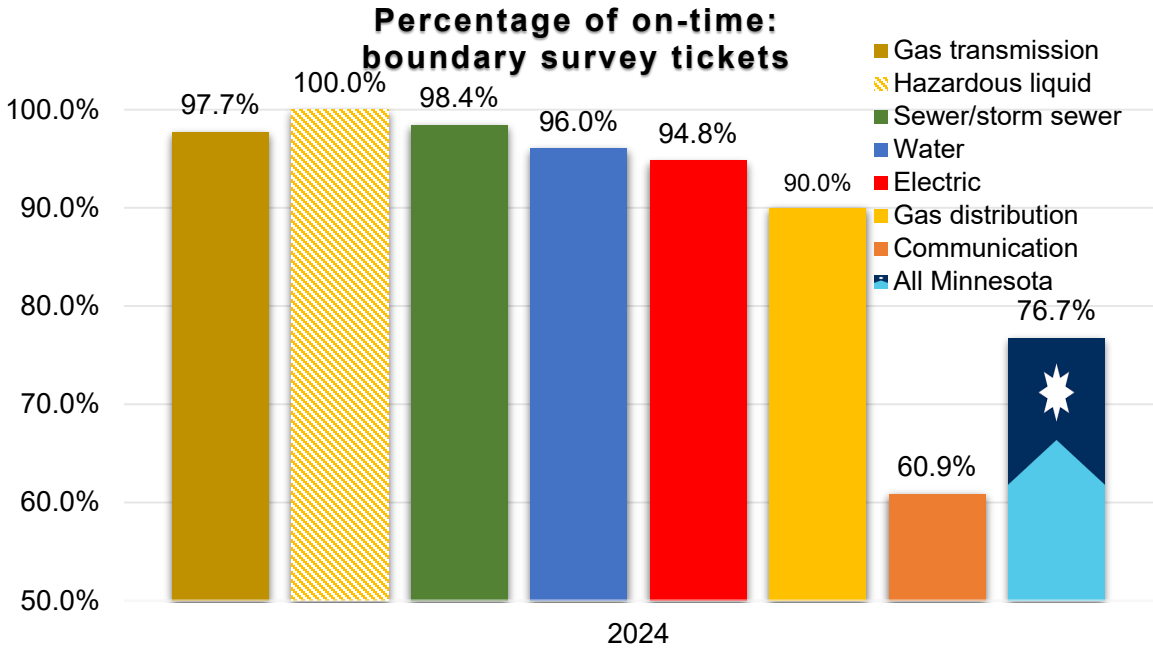
Percentage of on-time: update tickets

This graph shows the percentage of update notifications marked by the start time on the notice broken down by utility type.



Percentage of on-time: boundary survey tickets

This graph shows the percentage of boundary survey notifications marked by the start time on the notice broken down by utility type.

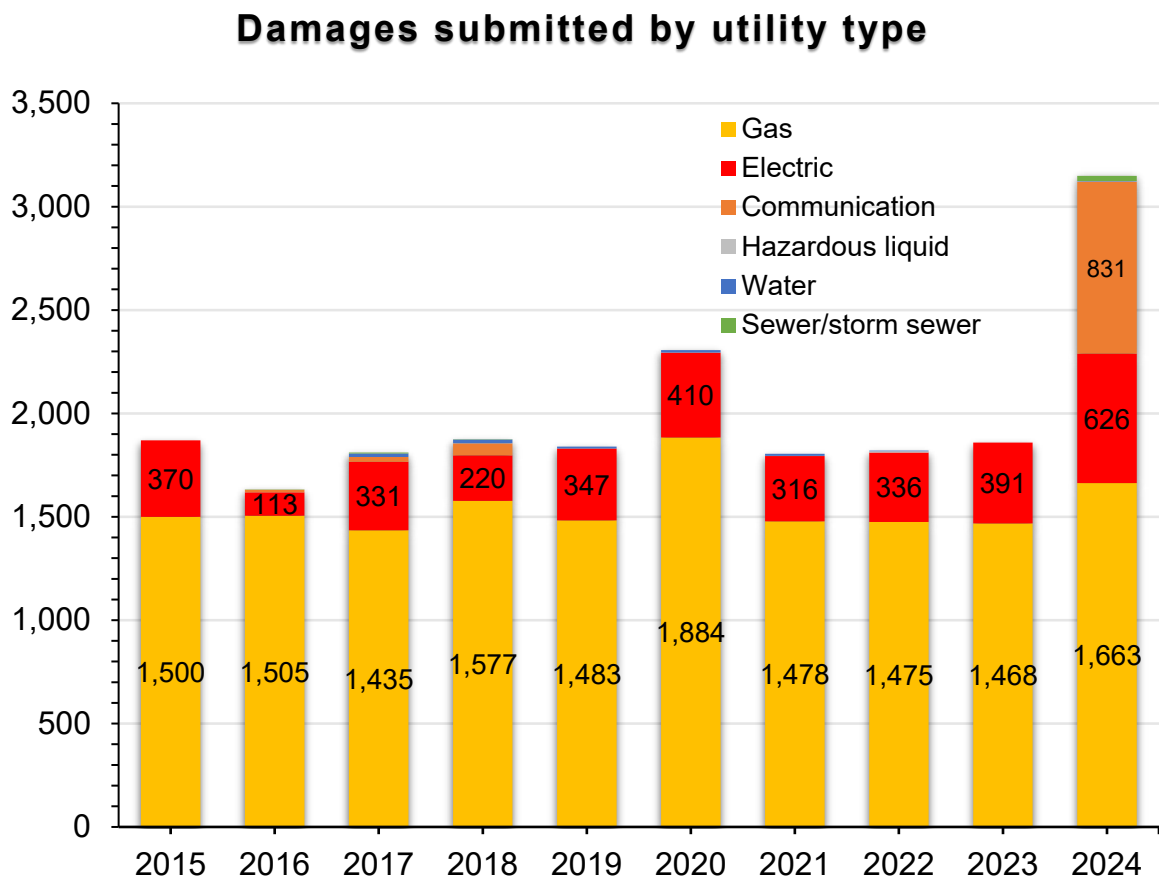


Utility damage data

Damage data submitted is specific to the root cause of the damage. The root cause is the most fundamental cause that can reasonably be identified, which, when fixed, would prevent future recurrence. Operators are asked to submit data related to excavation and non-excavation damages. Excavation is defined in Minnesota Statute 216D.01 Subd. 5 as an activity that moves, removes or otherwise disturbs the soil by use of a motor, engine, hydraulic or pneumatically powered tool, machine-powered equipment of any kind, or by explosives. Damages submitted in the excavation-related category are damages that occurred with a one-call notification made or should have been made as required by MS216D. Damages submitted in the non-excavation related category did not have a one-call notification made, and there was no requirement, which is also referred to as an MS216D exemption. Excavation-related and non-excavation-related damages are further broken down into categories and subcategories, as specified below. These categories reference state statutes and allow industry stakeholders to evaluate the adequacy of those statutes.

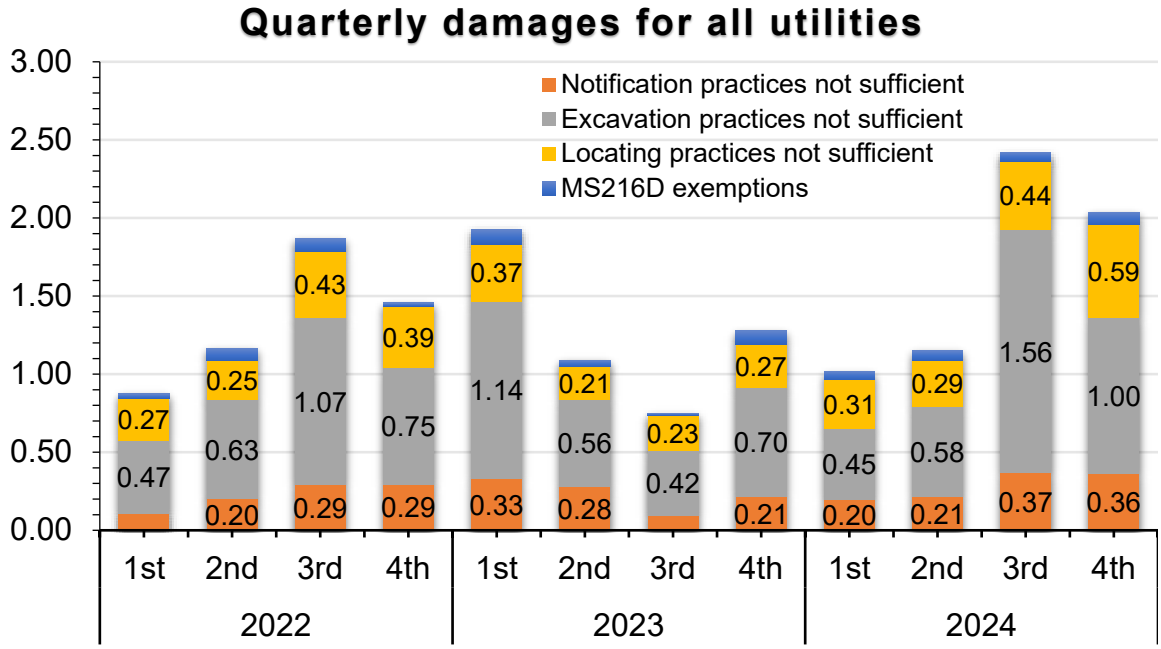
Total damages submitted to OPS by utility type

This graph shows the total number of damages submitted by utility type each year.



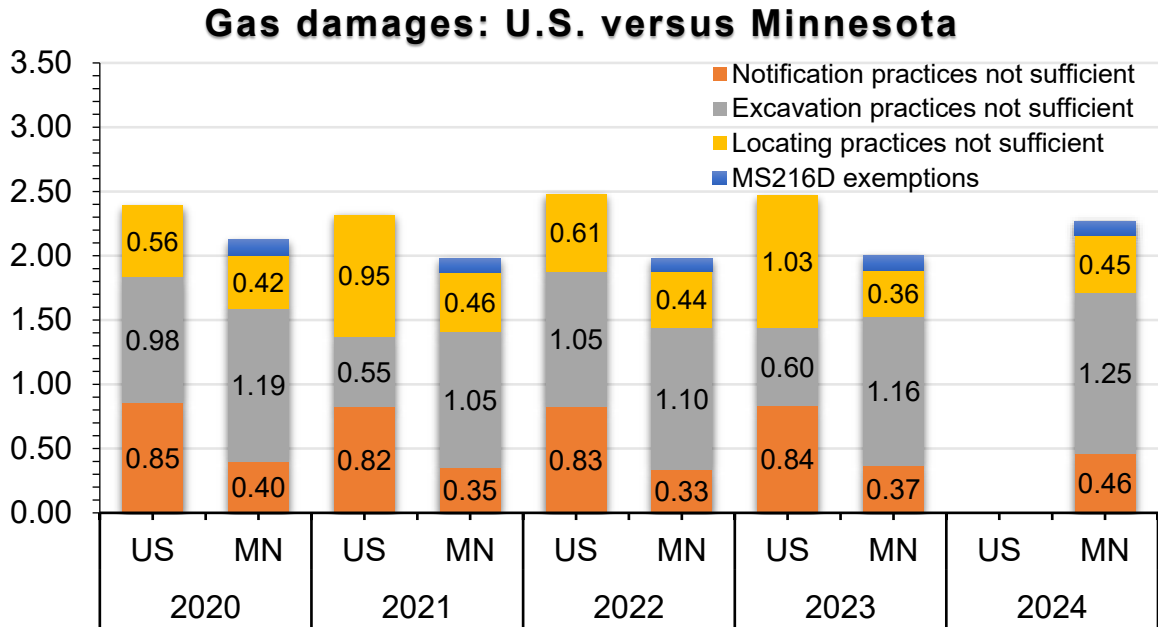
Quarterly damages for all utilities

This graph shows the damage rate per 1,000 notifications broken out by the damage cause type for each quarter of each year.



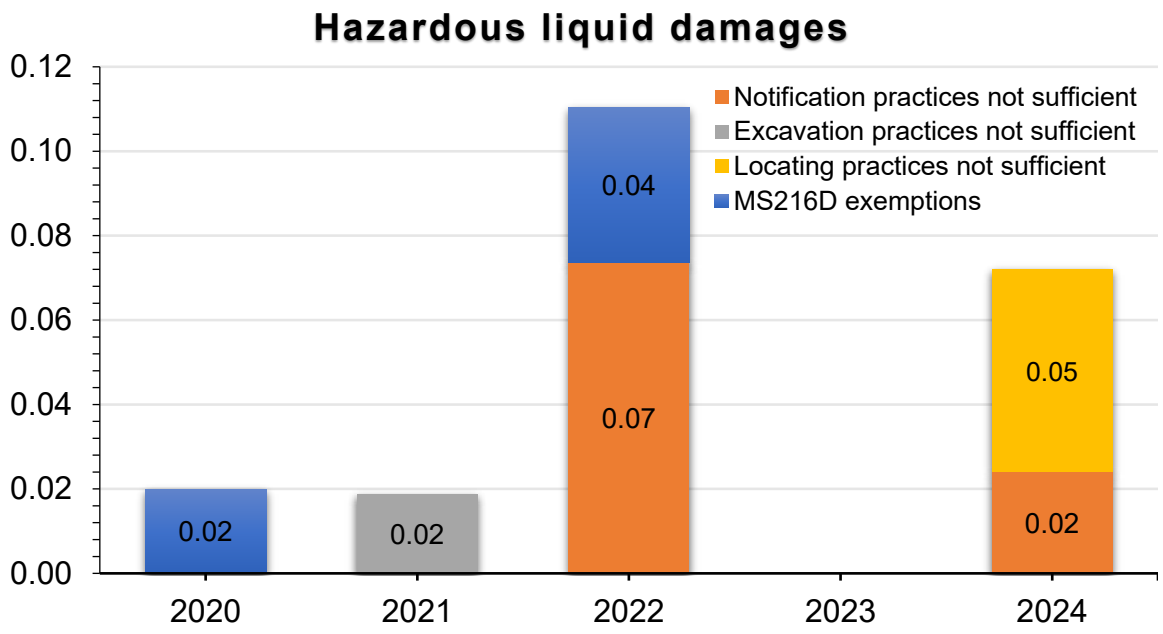
Gas damages: U.S. versus Minnesota

This graph shows the damage rate per 1,000 notifications for gas utilities by the damage cause type for each year. It also uses data from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) to show a comparative national damage rate excluding Minnesota. 2024 US data has not yet been published.



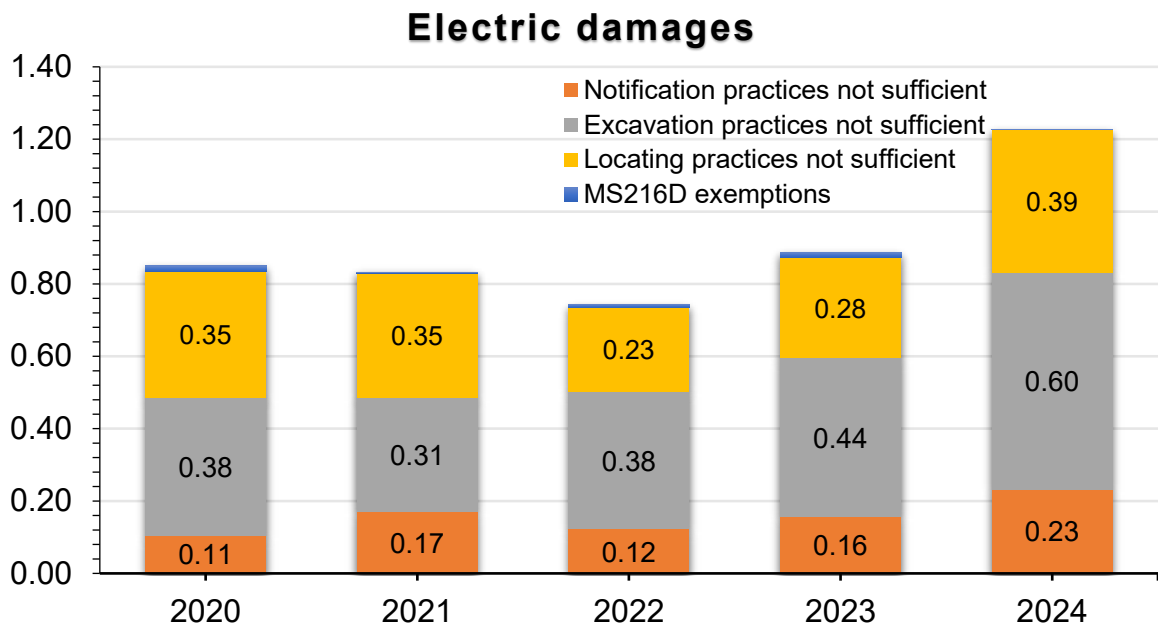
Hazardous liquid damages

This graph shows the damage rate per 1,000 notifications for hazardous liquid pipelines by the damage cause type for each year.



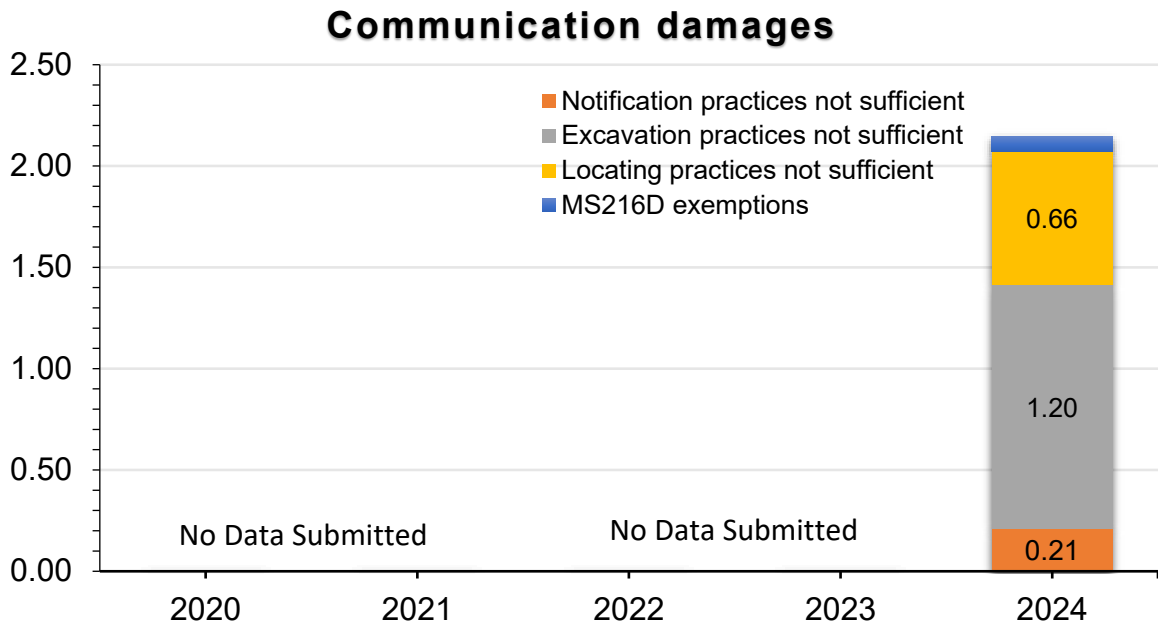
Electric damages

This graph shows the damage rate per 1,000 notifications for electric utilities by the damage cause type for each year.



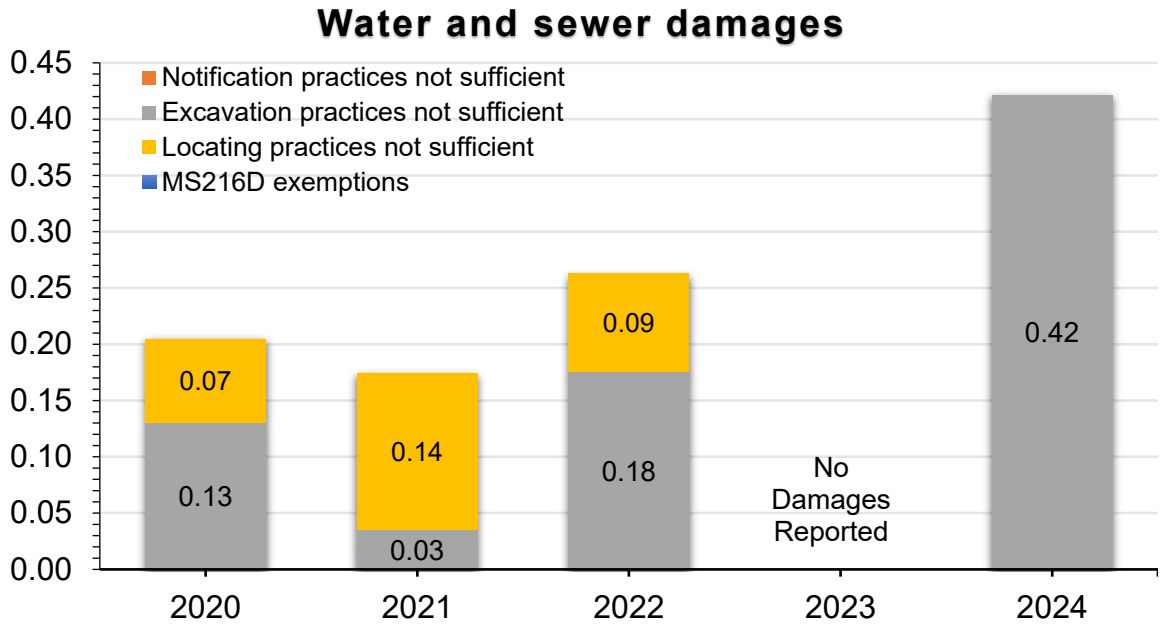
Communication damages

This graph shows the damage rate per 1,000 notifications for communication utilities by the damage cause type for each year.



Water and sewer damages

This graph shows the damage rate per 1,000 notifications for water and sewer utilities by the damage cause type for each year.



All utilities notification practices not sufficient

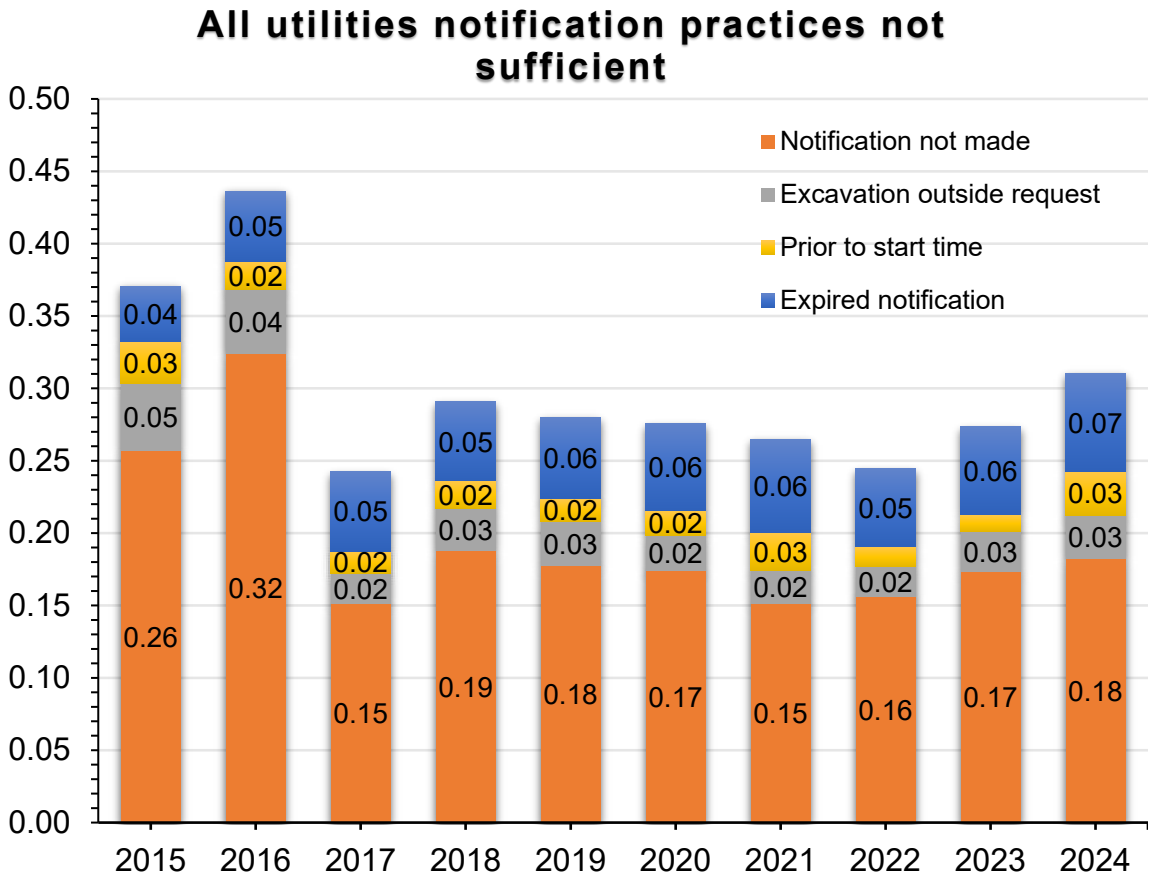
This graph shows the damage rate per 1,000 notifications for all utilities specific to the cause type "notification practices not sufficient." The graph further breaks down the damage cause into subcategories. They are:

Notification not made (no locate ticket) — MS216D.04 Subd. 1(a): The excavator did not make a notification to Gopher State One Call (i.e., no locate ticket).

Excavation outside request — MS216D.04 Subd. 1(b)(2): The excavator performed excavation outside the limits described in the notification.

Prior to start time — MS216D.04 Subd. 1(a): The excavator began excavation before the notification's start time.

Expired notification — MS216D.04 Subd. 1(a): The excavator previously had a notification, but the notification had expired, and a new notification was not made.



All utilities 'excavation practices not sufficient'

This graph shows the damage rate per 1,000 notifications for all utilities specific to the cause type "excavation practices not sufficient." The graph further breaks down the damage cause into subcategories. They are:

Failed to determine precise location — MS216D.04 Subd. 4(a): The excavator failed to determine the precise location of the marked facility, within two feet on each side of the located marks, before starting excavation (e.g., damaged by excavation equipment, not potholing, no hand digging).

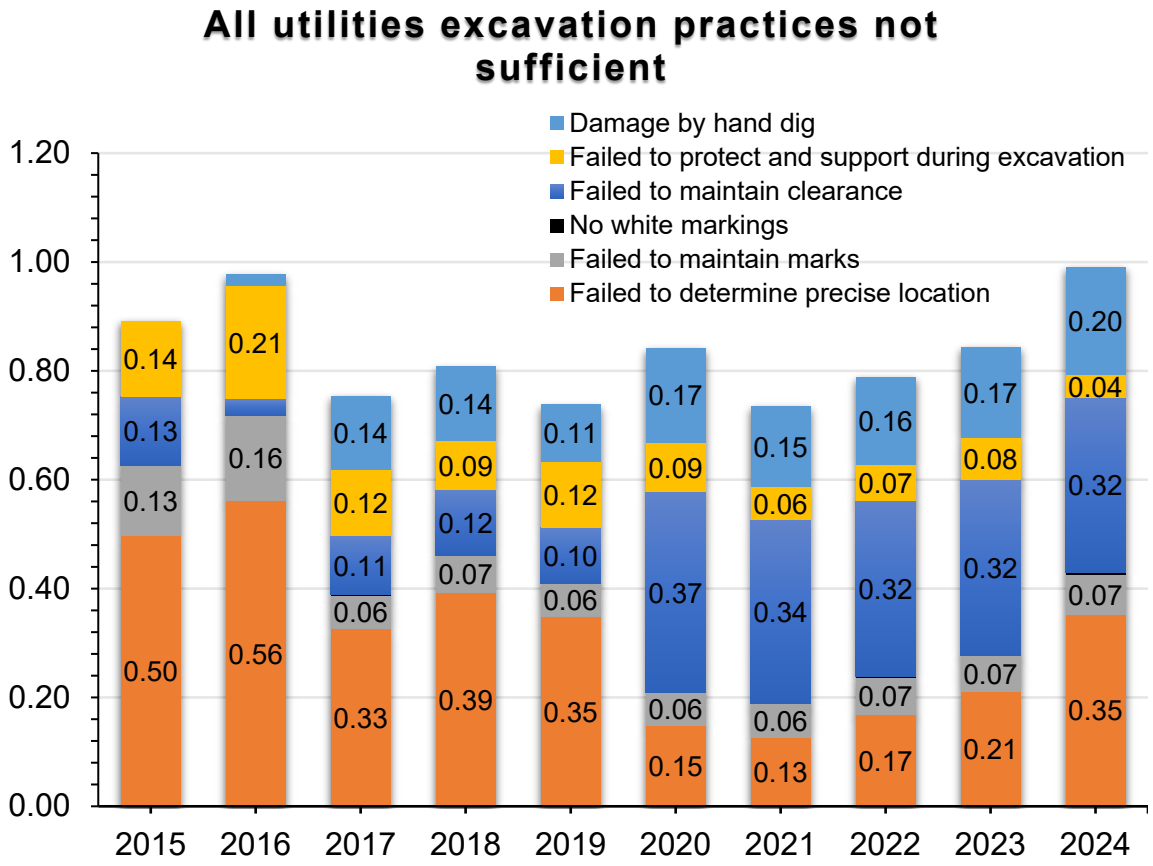
Failed to maintain marks — MS216D.04 Subd. 4(d): The excavator failed to maintain, preserve, or protect marks (i.e., marks destroyed after work started).

No white markings — MS216D.05(2): The excavator failed to provide white or black marks in winter conditions before utility locating, which led directly to an error in marking the facilities and caused the corresponding damage.

Failed to maintain clearance — MS216D.05(3): The excavator failed to maintain clearance between the underground utility and cutting edge of equipment (e.g., damaged by bucket, damaged by directional drill, damaged by trencher).

Failed to protect and/or support during excavation — MS216D.05(4): The excavator failed to support or protect exposed facilities (e.g., no supports under utility causing damage, soil damaged utility during excavation).

Damage by hand dig — MS216D.05(5): The excavator had a valid locate request and was exposing the facility with non-mechanized equipment, which caused damage (e.g., damage with a shovel, spade, or pickaxe).



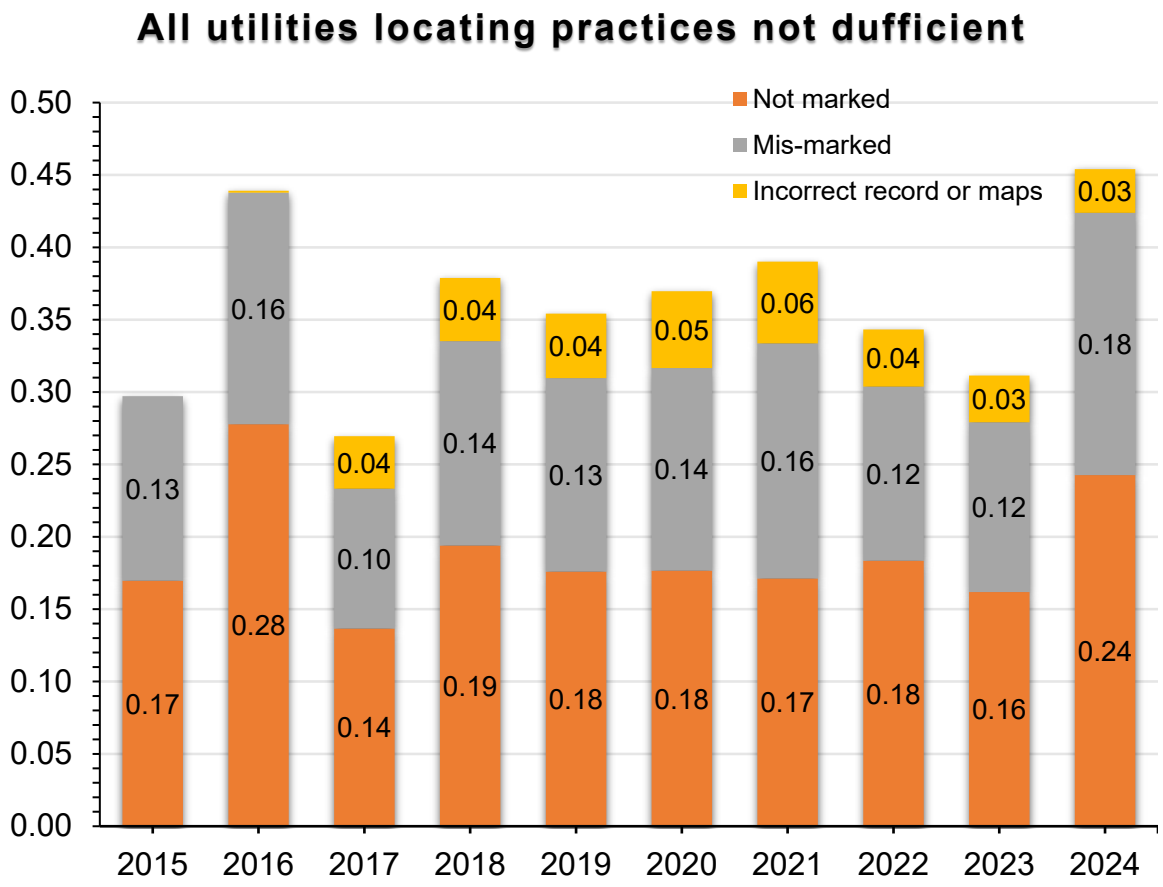
All utilities 'locating practices not sufficient'

This graph shows the damage rate per 1,000 notifications for all utilities specific to the cause type "locating practices not sufficient." The graph further breaks down the damage cause into subcategories. They are:

Incorrect records or maps —Minnesota Rule 7560.0150 Subpart 1: Facility records or maps were incorrect, leading to facilities not being marked or mis-marked.

Not marked — MS216D.04 Subd. 3(a): The facility was not marked as shown on records or maps (i.e., the locator did not see utility on mapping, above-ground facilities were not noticed in the field, and could not be found or marked).

Mis-Marked — MS216D.04 Subd. 3(c): The facility was marked as shown on records or maps, but marks were outside the 2-foot tolerance zone (i.e., the signal bled off onto another utility).



All utilities MS216D exemptions

This graph shows the damage rate per 1,000 notifications for all utilities specific to exemption currently allowed by MS216D. The exemptions are:

Non-mechanized equipment with no locate request needed or made — MS216D.01 Subd. 5: No locate notification was needed or made, and the damage was caused by non-mechanized equipment (e.g., damage caused by a shovel, stake, post, or forming rod).

Extraction of minerals — MS216D.01 Subd. 5(1): Damage was caused during the extraction of minerals not requiring notification to Gopher State One Call (i.e., damage while mining).

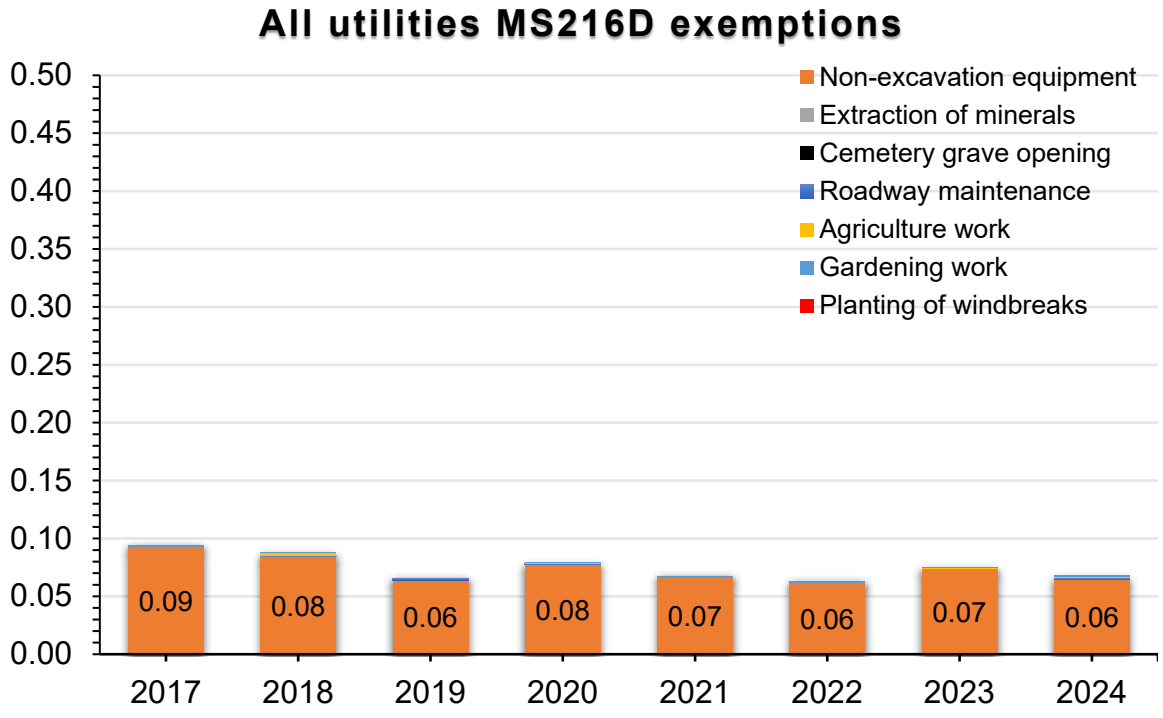
Cemetery grave opening — MS216D.01 Subd. 5(2): Damage was caused during the opening of a grave in a cemetery, not requiring notification to Gopher State One Call.

Roadway maintenance — MS216D.01 Subd. 5(3): Damage caused during the normal maintenance of roads and streets not changing the original grade or ditch and not requiring notification to Gopher State One Call (e.g., snow plowing).

Agriculture work — MS216D.01 Subd. 5(4): Damage was caused during plowing, cultivating, planting, harvesting, or similar work during crop growth, tree planting unless depth exceeds 18 inches, and not requiring notification to Gopher State One Call.

Gardening work — MS216D.01 Subd. 5(5): Damage was caused during gardening unless depth greater than 12 inches and not requiring notification to Gopher State One Call.

Planting of windbreaks — MS216D.01 Subd. 5(6): Damage was caused during the planting of windbreaks, shelterbelts, and tree plantations unless the depth was greater than 18 inches and did not require notification to Gopher State One Call.



Submitting utility operators

The following 129 utility operators submitted data for the fourth quarter of 2024. This accounted for approximately 65 percent of the notification volume for GSOC. OPS is currently identifying additional utility operators who should be submitting data.

Al-Corn Clean Fuel LLC.

Alliance Pipeline L.P.

Arvig

Austin Utilities

Bagley Public Utilities

BP Pipelines (North America) Inc.

Brownton Municipal Natural Gas

CAMP THISTLEDEW

Centennial Utilities

CenterPoint Energy

Centra Pipelines Minnesota Inc.

Chandler Co-op

Chandler Coop Edgerton

CHS HALLOCK

City of Argyle

City of Battle Lake

City of Bloomington

CITY OF CLARISSA/EAGLE BEND

City of Clearbrook

CITY OF COHASSET

City of Duluth

City of Eagan

Great Lakes Gas Transmission LP

Great Plains Natural Gas

Greater Minnesota Gas

Greater Minnesota Transmission, LLC

Hawley Public Utilities

Great River Energy

Heartland Corn Products

Hibbing Public Utilities

High Plains Cooperative

Hutchinson Utilities

Kandiyohi Power Cooperative

Lake Country Power

Lake Region Electric Coop

Lake Region Energy Services

Lake Wapogasset Bible Camp-Wilderness Canoe Base

Lakes Gas Company

Lumen / CenturyLink

Magellan Pipeline Company, LP

Marathon Pipe Line LLC

MEC Holding LLC

Metronet

Midco

City of Fairfax municipal Utilities

City of Fosston

City of Hallock

City of Henning

City of Hopkins

City of Lake Park

City of Maple Grove

City of Maplewood

City of Minneapolis Dept of Surface Water and Sewers

CITY OF MORGAN

City of Plymouth

City of Randall

City of Roseville

City of Round Lake

City of Saint Paul Public Works Sewer Utility

City of Saint Paul Traffic Division

City of Sandstone

City of Shakopee

City of St. Cloud, MN - Fiber

City of St. Louis Park

City of Stephen

City of Tyler

City of Warren

City of Winnebago

Clara City Telephone Company

Comcast

Minnesota Energy Resources

Minnesota Power

MINNESOTA POWER COHASSET

MINNESOTA POWER LASKIN

MNDOT

MP Nexlevel LLC (MPVER01)

New Ulm Public Utilities

New York Mills Municipal Gas

North Dakota Pipeline Company, LLC

Northeast Service Cooperative

Northern Border Pipeline Company

Northern Natural Gas

Northern States Power Company

NORTHWEST GAS

Northwest Natural Gas LLC

NuStar Pipeline Operating Partnership L.P.

Nuvera

Owatonna Public Utilities

Paul Bunyan Communications

Paul Bunyan Natural Gas LLC

Pembina Cochin LLC

People's Energy Cooperative

Perham Natural Gas Company

Petroleum Fuels Co

Sacred Heart Telephone Company

Saint Paul - STPLWT07 - ST Paul Parks

Community Coops of Lake Park

Community Utility Co.

Connexus Energy

Consolidated Communications of Minnesota Company

Co-op Service INC.

Dakota County IT Dept (DAKOTA01)

Dakota Electric Association

Dakota Natural Gas

Dooley's Natural Gas LLC

East Central Energy

Enbridge Energy, Limited Partnership/Enbridge Pipelines (Southern Lights) LLC

Enterprise Products Operating LLC

Federated Telephone Cooperative

Ferrellgas

Flint Hills Resources, LC.

Gardonville Cooperative Telephone

Goodhue Gas

Saint Paul Regional Water Services

Sheehan's Gas Company

Sjoberg's Inc.

Starbuck Telephone Company

State of MN Office of ET (SOMITG01 and SOMITG02)

Stearns Electric Association

Suburban Propane

Thompson Gas LLC

Two Harbors Municipal Gas

United Natural Gas, LLC

VAL-ED Joint Venture, LLP dba 702 Communications

Viking Gas Transmission Company

Virginia Department of Public Utilities

WBI Energy Transmission

Westbrook Public Utilities

Zumbrota Telephone Company

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact the Office of Pipeline Safety at 651-201-7230 or dps.mnops.response@state.mn.us.