

PRESS RELEASE
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June 2024 Is “Trench Safety Month”

Safety Education on Working Around Trenches and Excavations Highlight June Utility Construction Industry Events

(Fairfax, Va.) – June 2024 has been declared “Trench Safety Month” by the National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA), further highlighting its innovative educational and safety program, the annual “Trench Safety Stand Down” week to be held this year June 17-21.

For the past eight years in June, NUCA has held the innovative Trench Safety Stand Down (TSSD) Week for the utility construction industry. This year’s event, sponsored by NUCA National Partners National Trench Safety, Sunstate Equipment Co./Trench Safety Rentals, and United Rentals, will occur at hundreds of jobsites across the nation, reaching tens of thousands of our member’s valuable employees.

TSSD Week is a series of organized events held by NUCA and industry professionals – both member and non-member organizations – to emphasize the message of safety around jobsite trenches and excavations. The event week is strongly supported by OSHA and the Trenching and Excavation Safety Taskforce (TEST). TSSD Week is used by industry safety professionals to hold safety training, educational seminars, live demonstrations of trench rescues, and other activities to reinforce the message of trench safety.

Due to the enthusiastic success of NUCA’s trench safety program and last year’s Trench Safety Month, NUCA once again declared June to be “Trench Safety Month.” The association is devoting the entire month of June to getting the message out to the public and non-NUCA industry companies about the importance of employee safety when working underground or in and around trenches.

In an effort to grow this strong message of safety, the national association will be leveraging the safety messages of TSSD through NUCA’s social media channels, internal publications, and the construction trade press to emphasize several key safety ideas well known through our TSSD materials.

NUCA is also partnering this month with the Trenching Excavation Safety Taskforce (TEST) to share information about staying safe in and around excavations. The partnership, announced in April, will be promoting awareness of trench safety, the many training programs offered to industry members, and to help ensure employees stay safe while building our nation's vital core infrastructure projects.

Selecting June as Trench Safety Month is a natural tie-in to the lessons and demonstrations being completed at thousands of NUCA member jobsites during TSSD Week. In 2023, more than 25,800 industry employees and first responders at over 2,480 jobsites, from 455 organizations, took part in the stand down. Our industry's employees learned the importance of being safe around jobsite excavations and trenches from peers and experts alike.

NUCA and the utility construction industry members seek out every measure possible to reduce risks on our jobsites, which we all know can be a dangerous place to work if someone is unaware of its hazards. Recent national statistics on trench injuries and deaths show an increase in fatalities, with OSHA reporting 39 trench collapse deaths in 2022, up from 15 fatalities in 2021. These accidents can be avoided with thorough training in excavation safety procedures and techniques.

Participation in Trench Safety Month and TSSD has become more important in recent years, as our industry begins gearing up for more water, wastewater, broadband, electric, and highway projects financed by the federal 2021 infrastructure law supported by NUCA. Our industry is seeking tens of thousands of new employees to work on these projects—and every one of them will need safety training.

Time and time again, evidence shows that the key to significantly reducing the risks associated with our industry is employee training and reinforcement through safety events such as the TSSD Week.

The social media hashtag is **#TrenchSafetyMonth**.

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About The National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA)

Founded in 1964, the National Utility Contractors Association represents over 2,000 U.S. utility and excavation contractors, manufacturers, and suppliers who provide the materials and workforce to build and maintain our nation's intricate network of water, sewer, gas, telecommunications, and electric infrastructure. NUCA is celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2024. NUCA is found online at www.nuca.com, and can be followed on Twitter at **@NUCA_National**. The association's Twitter hashtags are #NUCAdigs and #WeDigAmerica.