

va811.com The Virginia 811 Dirt
WORKING AS ONE TO GET THE JOB DONE



IN THIS ISSUE

Letter from the CEO	2
New Center Software Transition	3
Election Season Safety Efforts	4
Virginia 811 Fast Facts	4
Important Mailing Address Change ..	4
New Safety Training Video	5
Updated CBT Training	5
Golden Shovel Award Winner	6
Team Anniversaries	6
Public Awareness Efforts	7
Training Tomorrow's Leaders	8
Staking University 2024	8
Display Truck Impact & Outreach	9
ChatGPT+ CGA Report Review	10
Challenges of Visualizing Data	11
Remembering Christy Penn Hale	12



On the Cover:
#WeAreVA811



LETTER FROM THE CEO

B. Scott Crawford

While Merriam-Webster Dictionary has not named its 2024 word of the year, it is more than fair to confidently assert that fiber is our industry's defining word for this year! Fiber, to be frank, truly kept us all moving (yes, a dad joke!). With the Infrastructure Bill providing federal funding for rural broadband expansion, and a strong dose of capitalist drive with competitive motivation, we have witnessed immense pressure placed on the 811 process over the past roughly three years, but most notably in 2024. 2024 has proven to be, due in large part to fiber expansion, a record year for Virginia 811 in many areas. Not only a record year with locate request volume, but a record year in 3 Hour Notices and multiple 3 Hour Notices; a reflection of the related record number of No Shows.

But the larger narrative of 2024 in damage prevention is not one of delays and processes not working at optimal levels, it is one of partnership. Within this challenging environment stakeholders representing excavators, locators, utility operators, government, and the notification center continuously met in Town Halls, task forces, Local Damage Prevention Committee meetings, and even a statewide Damage Prevention Summit. These meetings helped to accomplish two primary objectives: 1) improve communication between stakeholders; 2) identify and find solutions to challenges.

These two objectives are crucial to both continuous improvement and damage prevention. Only through continued meetings can lines of communication and networks between stakeholders be maintained and strengthened. This communication provides the means through which challenges are identified and solutions can be examined, vetted, and then implemented. Evidence of success can be found in the fact that at midsummer No Shows were 51% over the same period in 2023, but as of mid-November, the overage percentage is trending downward and has gone down roughly 20 percentage points! Yet, locate request volume still remains roughly 10% over year-to-date 2023!

Also noteworthy is that according to the Common Ground Alliance, nationwide, using the 811 process is a "coin toss," meaning it is roughly a 50-50 chance, as to whether or not an excavation site tied to a locate request is ready for excavation when the utilities are mandated to be located. This assertion is based on twelve states' data. However, in Virginia, while not where we were over the past 5 years (2019-2023), when, on average, over 85% of excavation sites were dig ready at the time the locate request was due, Virginia is witnessing 76.24% of sites being ready for excavation on time. Again, no, it is not where we have been, but this has been an unprecedented year in regard to locate request volume. It should be celebrated that in Virginia, at least relative to 12 other states based on CGA data, using 811 to have a dig ready site has much better odds than a "coin toss."

So, has there been adversity within the overall damage prevention process? Yes. But have there also been some noteworthy successes? By all means! All stakeholders in Virginia should be proud of what we are accomplishing, together. We are confronting new challenges but clearly facing these challenges together; we are working together to ensure not only that all Virginians have access to high-speed Internet, but that all the utilities needed for civilization as we understand it to exist remain intact and sound, and ultimately, that life and property are protected.

We should all be proud of the work we do, together.

- B. Scott Crawford
President & CEO
Virginia 811

The Beginning of a New Era:

Virginia 811's Transition to a New Center Software Solution - B. Scott Crawford

Over the years, Virginia 811 has enjoyed a fruitful and positive partnership with Norfield Development Partners (NDP). NDP, in one iteration or another, has allowed Virginia 811 to serve stakeholders as the notification center to help protect excavators and Virginia's underground utility infrastructure since 2002. In 2014 Virginia 811 became a part owner of NDP, along with, eventually, 8 other 811 centers.

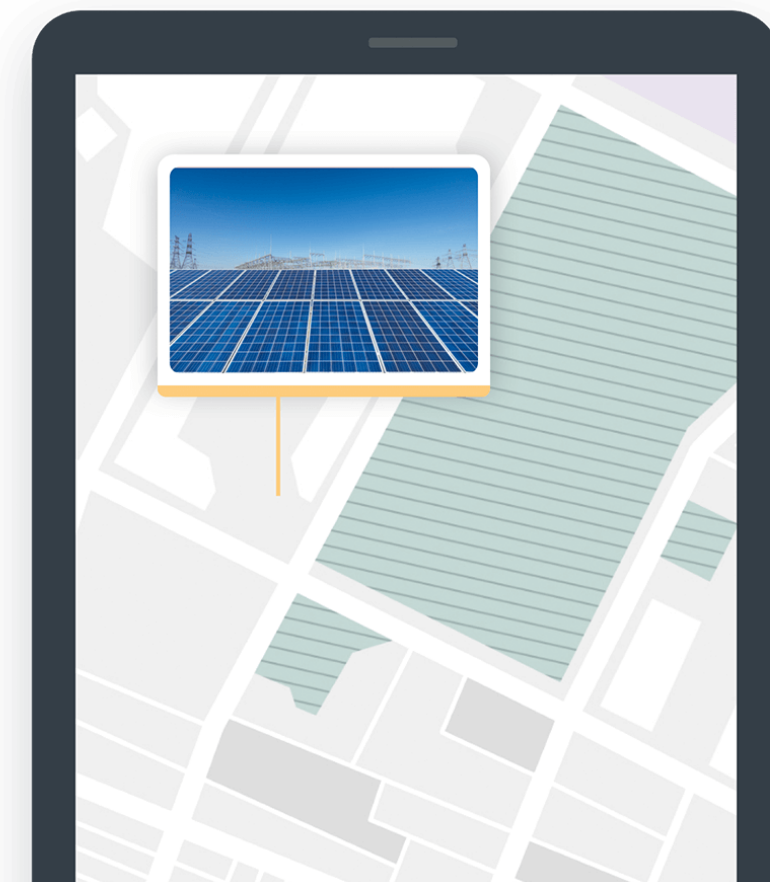
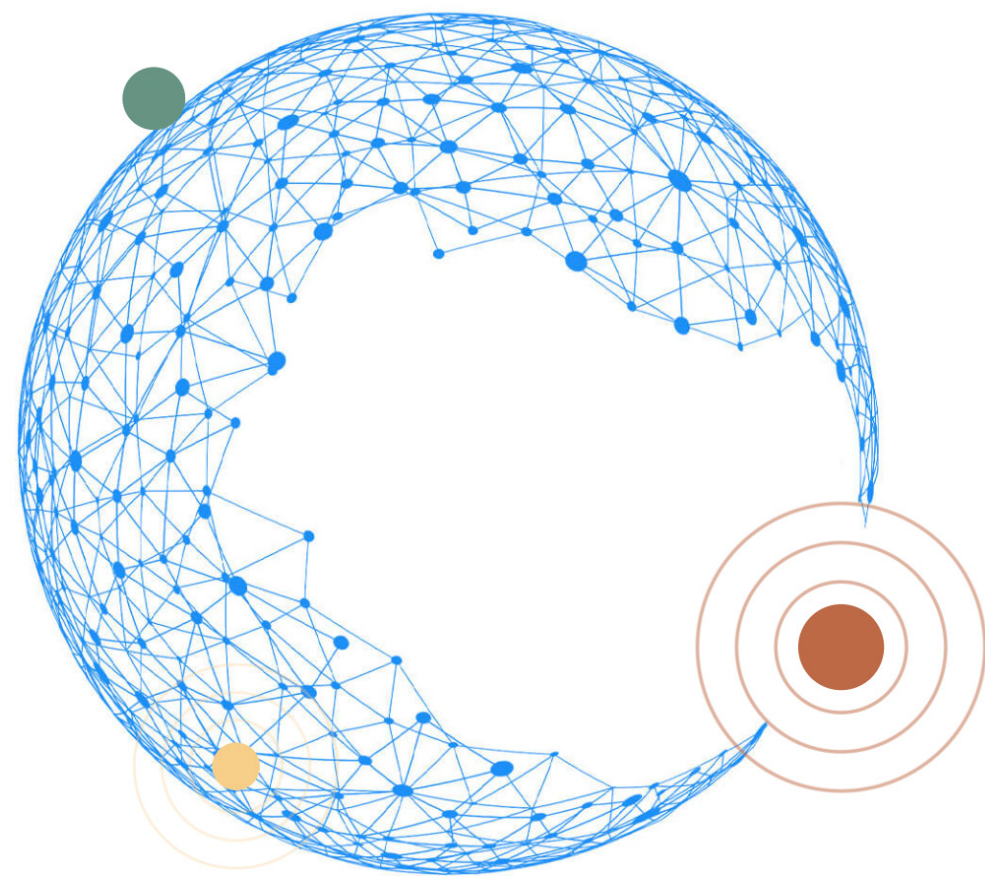
While the collaboration with its partners and NDP has yielded substantial benefits for the stakeholders Virginia 811 serves, ensuring the safe and efficient location of underground utilities across the state, Virginia 811 has decided to advance with a new center software solution. The decision to part ways with NDP has not been taken lightly, as the partnership has been a source of mutual growth and success.

Virginia 811's dedication to service and safety remains unwavering. In pursuit of this commitment, Virginia 811 began an aggressive due diligence process to identify a software provider aligned with Virginia 811's commitment to service and safety, along with continuous improvement and innovation. After this extensive process, Virginia 811 has decided to move forward with Irth Solutions. Irth Solutions will provide Virginia 811 and its stakeholders with a strong platform to facilitate member relationship, mapping, billing, and locate request entry. This platform will relate to web entered locate requests and single address locate requests as well, allowing our online users to find new efficiencies and exciting advancements in locate request entry!

Virginia 811 has always been dedicated to safeguarding excavators, Virginia communities, and Virginia's vital infrastructure. While it has been a difficult decision to leave the NDP partnership, Virginia 811 believes this strategic move is in the best interest of the notification center and all those Virginia 811 serves. Virginia 811 is excited about the limitless potential of where this project will lead us, resulting in a locate request entry platform that is better aligned with Virginia 811's vision and that will enable the notification center to better serve stakeholders and continue to prioritize safety and excellence in all that Virginia 811 does.

Virginia 811 is committed to ensuring a seamless transition for all its stakeholders during this exciting period of change. The organization will continue to provide the same level of expertise, reliability, and dedication that its stakeholders have come to expect. Virginia 811 will continue to utilize NDP's locate request entry software services until the new software is acquired and implemented. It is hoped that the full conversion to Irth Solutions will occur sometime between the end of June and October 2025.

Virginia 811 expresses its deep appreciation to NDP for their support and collaboration throughout the years and looks forward to a promising future with Irth Solutions.



VIRGINIA 811 ENHANCES **2024 ELECTION** CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE SAFE DIGGING PRACTICES



This election season, Virginia 811 built on past strategies to enhance its safe digging campaign. The focus was on encouraging excavators to schedule locate requests well in advance of Election Day and advising stakeholders to avoid scheduling locate requests on the day before or the day of the election to minimize disruption at polling locations.

Expanding the Campaign's Reach

The campaign had two main components: continued collaboration with Dominion Energy to address excavation near polling sites, and a broader statewide marketing campaign promoting proactive locate request scheduling. Together, these efforts reinforced the commitment to reducing risks and ensuring smooth operations during the election period.

Collaboration with Dominion Energy

A key component of the campaign was Virginia 811's partnership with Dominion Energy to manage excavation near polling locations. Dominion provided polling station coordinates, which Virginia 811 used to create geographic buffers around polling sites. The corresponding excavator and company information was shared with Dominion Energy.

Dominion then used its Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system to contact excavators working near polling locations, delivering a message about safe digging practices.

Amplifying Outreach

Virginia 811 also conducted a statewide campaign targeting members and excavators. The outreach included email reminders, social media posts, and resources to help stakeholders schedule locate requests proactively and avoid election disruptions.

Results of the Campaign

At the campaign's close, Dominion Energy reported that 20,319 locate requests intersected with polling locations. Of these, 4,374 unique phone numbers were identified, resulting in targeted callouts to promote safe digging practices.

Commitment to Safety and Preparedness

Virginia 811 is committed to clear communication and collaboration with members, stakeholders, and partners. Campaigns like this highlight the importance of working together to ensure safety, preparedness, and the integrity of underground utilities.

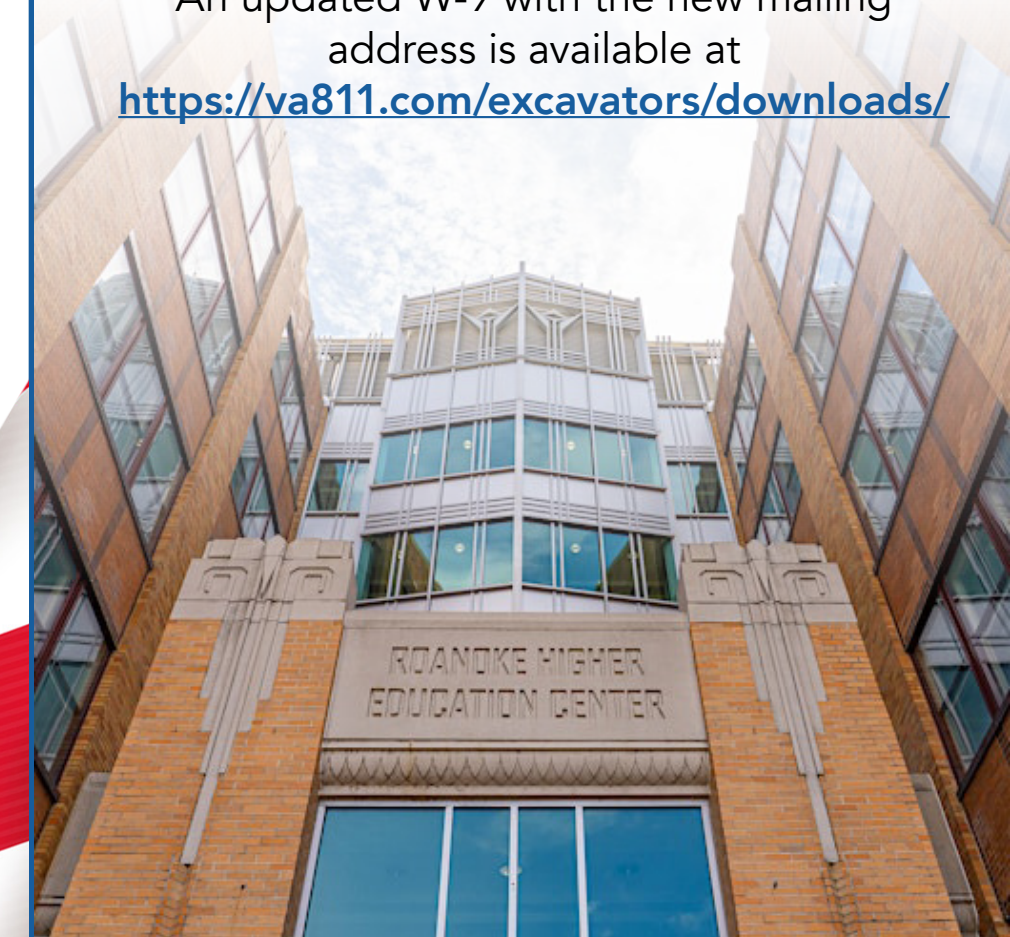
IMPORTANT CHANGE NOTICE:

Please note the updated mailing address for Virginia 811:

Virginia 811
108 N Jefferson St.
Suite 312
Roanoke, VA 24016

Thank you for updating your records accordingly.

An updated W-9 with the new mailing address is available at <https://va811.com/excavators/downloads/>



811 FAST FACTS

CHANNEL	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
PHONE	436,885	27.82%
WTE	649,368	41.36%
SAT	260,947	16.62%
TRE	222,978	14.20%
Total	1,570,178	

Total Internet Originated Tickets YTD 2024

1,133,293

(72.18% of all tickets)

Dig With CARE Keep Virginia Safe!

New And Improved CBT Training Launching Soon!

Virginia 811, in collaboration with the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC), is excited to announce the upcoming release of the revised "Dig With CARE: Keep Virginia Safe" Computer-Based Training (CBT) course, anticipated to launch in January 2025. The updated course has been refined to emphasize the most recent law changes ensuring that users gain the essential knowledge needed for safe excavation practices.

CBT covers the key requirements outlined in the Virginia Underground Utility Damage Prevention Act and the associated Rules for Enforcement of the Act. It is designed to help professionals and homeowners avoid damaging underground utility lines while performing excavations or demolitions using hand or mechanized equipment.

This initiative represents a collaborative effort between Virginia 811 and the SCC to enhance safety and compliance in the excavation industry, protecting both workers and the essential underground utilities that serve Virginia's residents and businesses.

Check the CBT Training Link for the Updated Course **COMING SOON!**



<https://partner.its-training.com/va811/index.html>



Collaboration in Action

New Damage Prevention Training Video

We're excited to announce the release of our new Virginia 811 Damage Prevention Training video, a product of teamwork between Virginia 811, Utiliquest, and Glo-Fiber/Shentel.

This video highlights the essential safety practices of hand digging and damage prevention, providing valuable guidance to the excavation community. Our shared commitment to safety and education is what makes partnerships like this so important, and we're proud to work alongside such dedicated teams.

A special thanks to the UtiliQuest crew for their expertise in staging the locating process and to Glo-Fiber/Shentel for their unwavering support in bringing this project to life. We also extend our gratitude to everyone who participated and contributed to the success of this project. Together, we are promoting safer digging practices and preventing unnecessary damages in the field.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTzN7YsNvxl>

SHARE THIS VIDEO ON YOUR CHANNELS
Safety Is Always a Team Effort



GOLDEN SHOVEL AWARD WINNER

Golden Shovel Award
3rd Quarter 2024

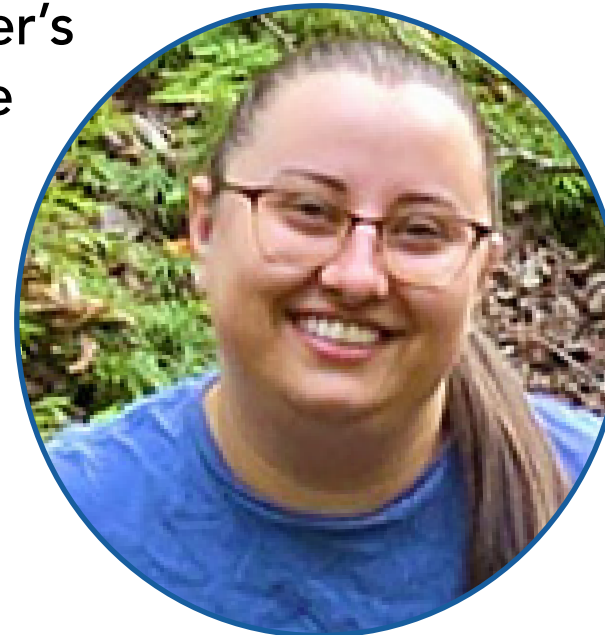
NICOLE HODGES



Virginia 811 is proud to announce Nicole Hodges as this quarter's Golden Shovel Award recipient. Hired in April 2021, Nicole serves as a Senior Damage Prevention Specialist, consistently going above and beyond in her mentorship role.

Nicole's willingness to learn and help others learn has made her an invaluable asset to her team. Her upbeat demeanor and enthusiasm shine through in everything she does, from guiding her teammates to ensuring locate request accuracy.

Congratulations, Nicole, and thank you for your dedication to excellence and teamwork!



“ Since stepping into her Mentorship role in January 2024, Nicole has demonstrated exceptional dedication to her work. Her attention to detail, thoughtful corrections, and valuable advice have greatly improved the locate request entry process, prioritizing safety and the protection of people and public utilities. Nicole's positive attitude, giving spirit, and eagerness to learn truly shine through in her interactions, making her an invaluable asset to the team. ”

CONGRATULATIONS NICOLE!



Team Members Celebrating Their Service to Virginia 811 This Quarter

Scott Crawford

12/19/2016 | 8 years of service

Mark Raleigh

11/29/2021 | 3 years of service

Devian Trevey-Boitnott

12/4/2017 | 7 years of service

Karen Wiseman

11/29/2021 | 3 years of service

Vanessa Dye

11/29/2021 | 3 years of service

Jeremy Berrios

12/5/2022 | 2 years of service

Stephen Schultes

12/5/2022 | 2 years of service

Together they bring a combined
28 years of experience to the Virginia 811 team!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR YEARS OF SERVICE

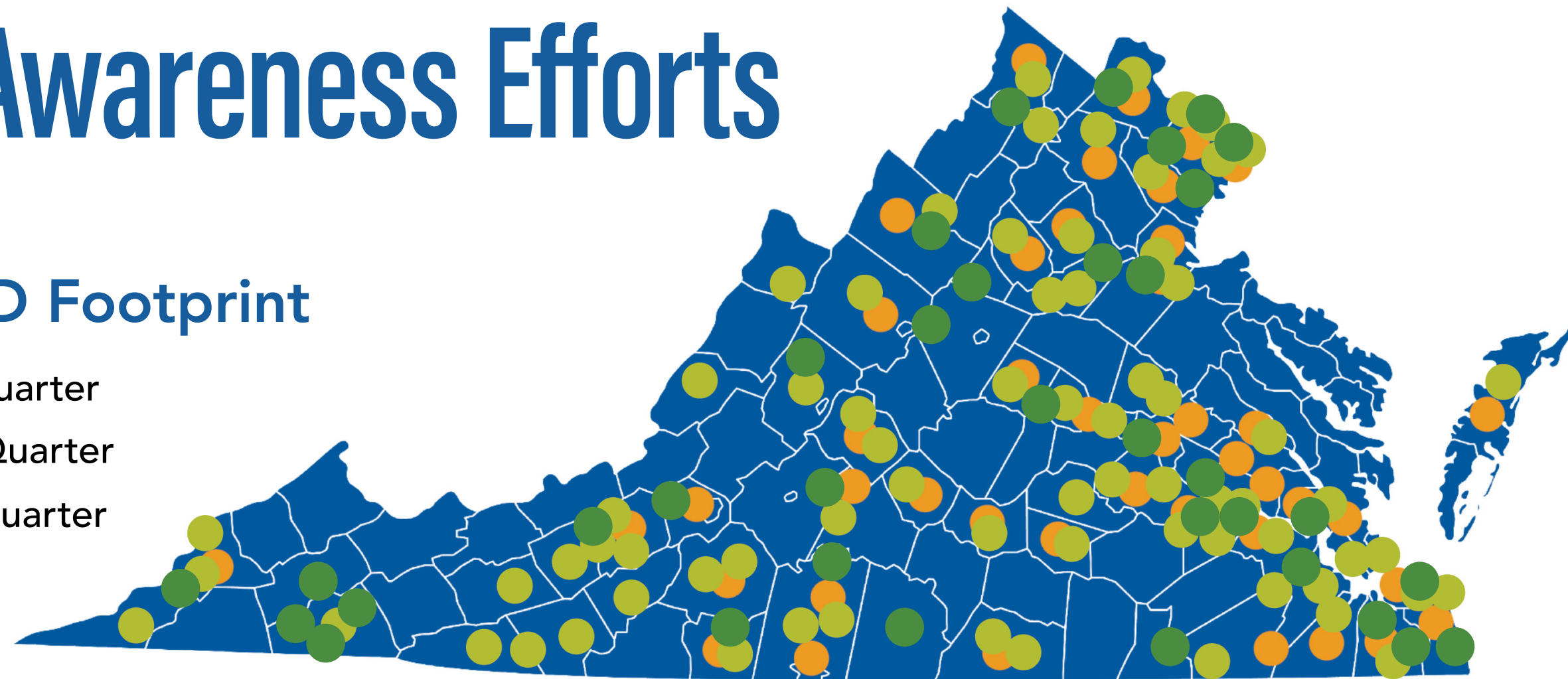


Virginia 811 Public Awareness Efforts

4,362
Individuals Trained YTD

2024 YTD Footprint

- 1st Quarter
- 2nd Quarter
- 3rd Quarter



- 2024 Girls In Real Life Construction Experience | Roanoke
- 2024 VDOT Career Fair | Fairfax
- BARC Electric Safety Day | Lexington
- Bristol Rent-All Inc. | Abingdon
- Bristol Rent-All Inc. | Bristol
- Broad Run High School | Ashburn
- Builders Fence Company | Sterling
- C&W Landscaping Inc. | Falls Church
- Carter Rental | The Cat Rental Store | Abingdon
- Charles City County Parks & Recreation County Fair | Charles City
- Cross Creek Nursery & Landscaping | Midlothian
- Culpeper Fiesta Festival | Culpeper
- D & B Rental Sales & Services | Sterling
- DCS Equipment & Tool Rental | Lebanon
- Deehan Landscaping Inc. | Falls Church
- Dominion Energy Training Center | Chester
- E.C. Pace Company Inc. | Roanoke
- Eastern Region 1 LDPC | Hampton
- Eastern Region 2 LDPC | Chesapeake
- Eastern Region 3 LDPC | Smithfield
- Garden Center at Tractor Supply | Midlothian
- Hambleton Lawn & Landscape | Fairfax
- Henderson Inc. | Williamsburg
- Hydro-Tech Irrigation | Sterling
- Kingstowne Lawn and Landscape | Alexandria
- Lehman Construction Corp. | Chesapeake
- Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority | Arlington

- NOVA Landscape Construction | Vienna
- NOVEC Safety Day | Ashburn
- NOVEC Safety Day | Gainesville
- NOVEC Safety Day | Manassas
- Orellana Lawn & Tree Services | Fairfax
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Abingdon
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Blacksburg
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Colonial Heights
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Culpeper
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Emporia
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Fredericksburg
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Front Royal
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Harrisonburg
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Lebanon
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Lynchburg
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Manassas
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Martinsville
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Norton
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Palmyra
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Roanoke
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Ruckersville
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Sandston
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Smithfield
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | South Boston
- Paradigm CoRE-EX Training | Virginia Beach
- Potomac Lawn Professionals | Falls Church
- Prince George County Utilities | Prince George

- Rentals Unlimited | Sterling
- Roanoke Rail Yard Dawgs Hockey Game | Roanoke
- SAB | Sterling
- Southern Trust Home Services | Roanoke
- Southwest Tool Rental | Norton
- Southwest Va Region 7 LDPC | Waynesboro
- Staking University | Chesapeake
- Staking University | Chester
- Staking University | Lorton
- Sunbelt Rentals | Sterling
- Sunrise Landscape and Design | Sterling
- Texas 811 | Texas
- The Home Depot Fire & Safety Day | Richmond
- The Rental Hub, Inc. | Chilhowie
- Town of Boydton | Boydton
- VA Damage Prevention Summit | Ashland
- VA811 Membership Meeting | Fairfax
- VDOT Williamsburg Residency | Williamsburg
- Virginia American Water | Alexandria
- Virginia American Water | Woodbridge
- Virginia Beach Public Utilities Safety Fair | Virginia Beach
- Virginia Technical Institute | Altavista
- VMDAEC Girl Power | Palmyra
- VMDAEC Training Center | Palmyra
- Weco Rentals | Abingdon
- Wheat's Landscape | Vienna

Engaging the Next Generation

Virginia 811's Youth-Focused Outreach this Quarter

This past quarter, the Virginia 811 Public Awareness and Training (PAT) team dedicated significant time to youth-centered career events, sparking early awareness about safe digging practices and the importance of underground utility safety. From interactive activities to educational talks, the team engaged young audiences at various job fairs, school events, and community gatherings, planting the seeds of responsible utility practices for the future.

These outreach efforts are essential as they help foster a safety-first mindset among the next generation. By connecting with youth and highlighting the value of utility safety, Virginia 811 is ensuring that the principles of safe digging remain strong and that future homeowners, skilled trades professionals, and community leaders grow up with a solid understanding of the importance of 811 and underground damage prevention.

As we continue to reach more young Virginians, we're building a safer state with each interaction—creating a foundation that will benefit communities for years to come.



Advancing Locator Expertise

Virginia 811 Hosts Another Successful Year of Locator Training

Virginia 811 remains dedicated to supporting and enhancing the skills of utility locators across the state. In response to high demand, we partnered again with Staking University to host a series of 2-day, in-person Locator Training classes in October and November 2024. These sessions offered participants the chance to refine their skills through both classroom instruction and hands-on fieldwork.

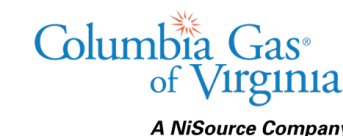
To ensure a personalized learning experience, each class was limited to 20–22 students. Participants brought their own equipment to practice essential locating techniques, including grounding, cable running, and accurate locates for various utility types. The training was tailored to benefit both new and experienced professionals looking to deepen their expertise.

The Virginia 811 PAT team also participated, gaining firsthand insight into the tools and challenges locators face. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of attendees stating they would recommend the training to others. Virginia 811 looks forward to building on this success.



THANK YOU

To Our Member Partners Who Generously Hosted These Training Events





MILES OF IMPACT

Virginia 811's Display Truck Drives Home the Safe Digging Message

Virginia 811 is incredibly proud of our display truck—a powerful tool for spreading the safe digging message across the state. With bright LED signage and engaging messaging, the truck plays a key role in our outreach efforts, reinforcing public awareness about damage prevention. Studies show that mobile LED displays like ours have a recall rate of over 80%, ensuring the message resonates long after it's seen. Our display truck reaches up to 20,000 - 40,000 people daily in busy areas, making tens of thousands of impressions.

Tim Poole, our dedicated display truck driver, plays a critical role in ensuring that our safe digging message reaches the right audiences at the right times. His commitment allows us to make a direct, memorable impact at events, parades, and public spaces across Virginia.

You don't need to look any further than the impressive display truck statistics from this past quarter, which highlight Tim's dedication to helping Virginia 811 connect with and engage our communities. These stats serve as a valuable indicator of our impact, and we're excited to share them with you every quarter.

We invite our partners and the underground utility damage prevention community to include us in your events. Bringing our display truck to your gatherings lets us support and amplify our shared mission of safety and awareness. Thank you for helping us make a difference—together!

The Virginia 811 display truck boosts 811 recall rates to over **80%!**

VIRGINIA 811 DISPLAY TRUCK EFFORTS FOR 3rd QUARTER 2024



Miles Driven: 2,400



Truck Displays: 30



Estimated Impressions: : 600K - 1.2M



ChatGPT's Review of the Common Ground Alliance's Index Score

by ChatGPT+

The following essay was written by ChatGPT+, a Natural Language Generator developed by Open AI. The prompt to which ChatGPT+ responded was: "Review and critique the 2023 Common Ground Alliance Report and its Annual CGA Index Score"

The newly introduced CGA Index in the 2023 DIRT Report represents a significant advancement for the damage prevention industry by offering a national, benchmarked approach to tracking underground utility damages. Designed with a "50-in-5" goal to reduce damages by half over five years, the CGA Index serves as a strategic tool to measure year-over-year progress and identify areas needing targeted interventions. While promising, the Index has limitations and raises questions about data accuracy, consistency, and the effectiveness of its methodology in truly capturing the industry's complex challenges.

Firstly, the CGA Index's strength lies in its ability to consolidate and analyze multi-year DIRT data alongside publicly available metrics, which allows it to offer a broader view of damage trends. This approach enhances our understanding of geographic and environmental factors, as the index utilizes predictor variables like the concentration of industry-relevant companies, urbanicity, and precipitation. By incorporating these factors, the Index can provide tailored insights that support data-driven damage prevention strategies.

However, the accuracy of the Index is inherently limited by the voluntary nature of DIRT submissions, which restricts its scope. The Index depends on consistent reporting from stakeholders, and while it uses a subset of "consistent reporters" to enhance reliability, this voluntary basis can lead to gaps in data, creating potential inaccuracies in damage estimates. This reliance on voluntary reporting suggests that the CGA Index may underrepresent actual damage occurrences, especially in areas with lower reporting compliance. In regions or counties with less robust data submission, modeled damage estimates may not fully align with on-ground realities, potentially skewing the effectiveness of targeted prevention efforts.

Moreover, the Index uses an 80th percentile benchmark for county-level damage estimates, a choice aimed at mitigating outliers and underreporting. While this method provides a conservative estimate, it raises questions about whether it adequately captures the true extent of damages. By relying on the 80th percentile rather than a broader or more granular approach, the Index risks oversimplifying complex, localized issues that may vary widely between urban and rural areas or even between states with differing regulatory landscapes. Consequently, while it does offer an improvement over previous measures, the Index might not capture the full nuances required for precise, region-specific strategies.

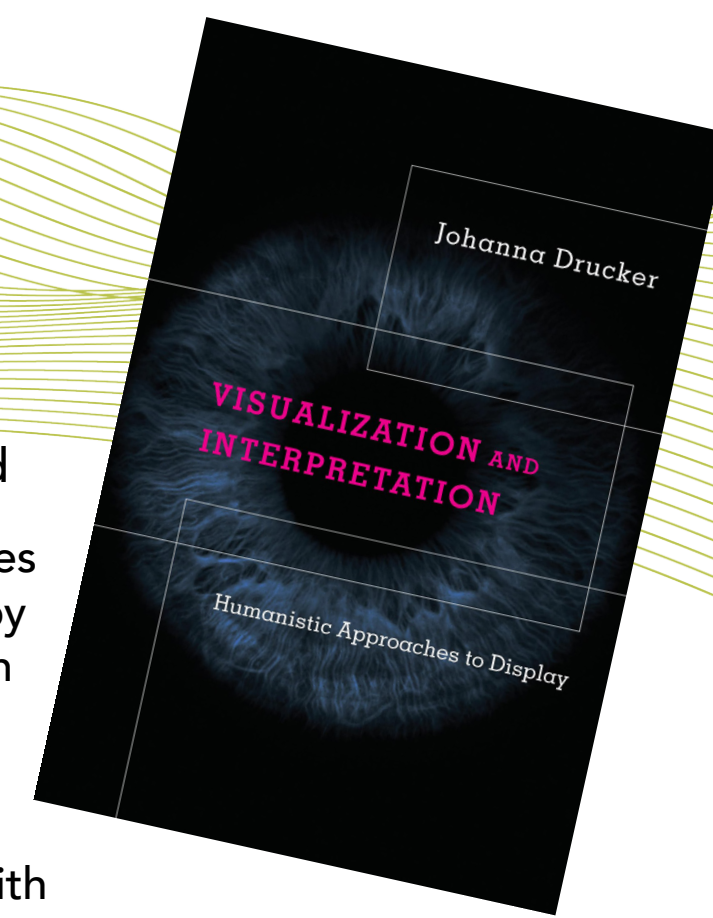
The report acknowledges that the CGA Index is not a direct representation of damages but rather a predictive model. This distinction is essential because it highlights a potential discrepancy between the index score and the actual number of incidents, underscoring the need for stakeholders to interpret the Index as part of a broader analytical toolkit. Furthermore, the model's baseline set in 2022 as a year-zero benchmark is beneficial for tracking long-term progress but could also obscure short-term fluctuations or sudden increases in damage rates driven by external factors, such as new infrastructure projects or economic changes.

In conclusion, the CGA Index is an innovative and necessary step forward in quantifying and addressing utility damages. While it offers valuable insights and a structured approach to measuring progress, its limitations remind stakeholders of the importance of comprehensive, high-quality data and the need for continued refinement in data collection practices. The Index's effectiveness will ultimately depend on the industry's commitment to reducing data gaps and enhancing reporting accuracy, enabling the Index to reflect a more precise landscape of damage prevention challenges and successes.

**Illustration Provided by ChatGPT+
The Challenge of using Incomplete Data
to Make Data-Driven Decisions,
Digital Art, ChatGPT+ and B. Scott
Crawford, 2024**

The Challenges of Visualizing Data:

Book Review of *Visualization and Interpretation: Humanistic Approaches to Display* by Johanna Drucker - B. Scott Crawford



Data-driven. We in business hear it all the time. Our perception may quite well be aligned with reality as the Google Ngram Viewer, which calculates the frequency a word is used in digital documents, by year, visualizes the meteoric rise of this term beginning in the mid 1990s with the Digital Revolution (see Image 1). The visualization of this basic data set suggests, the number of times “data-driven” is included in digital publications from 1800 through 2022, should be straightforward and a reflection of Truth: data-driven is a relevant and heavily used term during this timeframe!

However, the simple Ngram visualization fails to represent any information tied to the methodology behind this data-driven assertion. How many publications are represented within the dataset examined? Are these publications biased toward a particular language and/or culture? Is this truly a statistically significant and valid sampling of 100% of the publications between 1800 and 2022? What about more colloquial terms pre-dating the computer age emphasis on data? How does this visualization compare to terms such as “inductive” or “probabilistic,” words denoting a similar connotation as “data-driven”? Image 2 indicates these words vastly supersede the use of data-driven during the time period between 1800 and 2022, suggesting that this idea of being “data-driven” is really nothing new and suggesting these words continue to dominate, compared to data-driven, the nomenclature surrounding this concept. Data-driven is just new verbiage reinforcing an older concept: the use of objective evidence to drive decision-making.

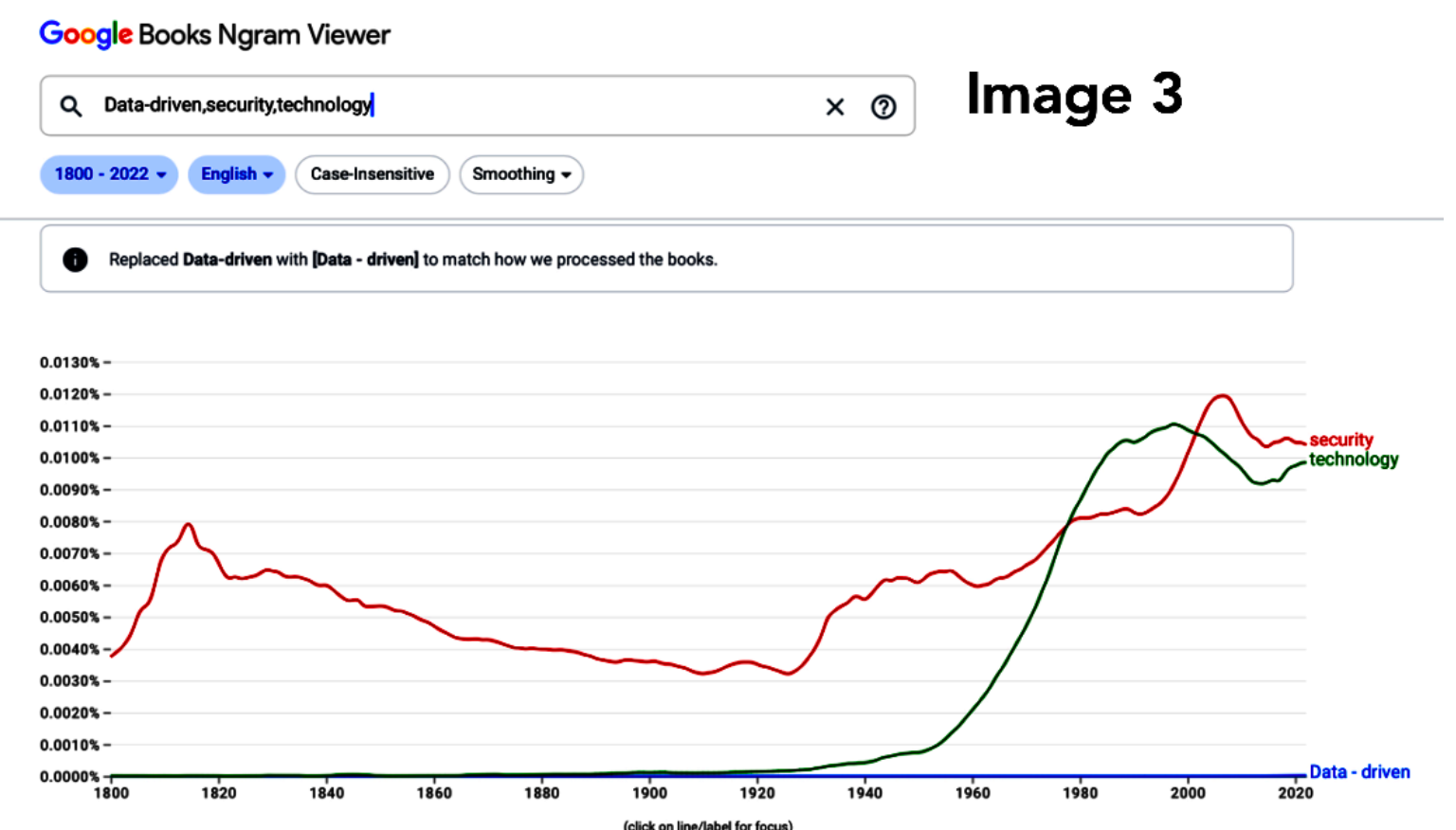
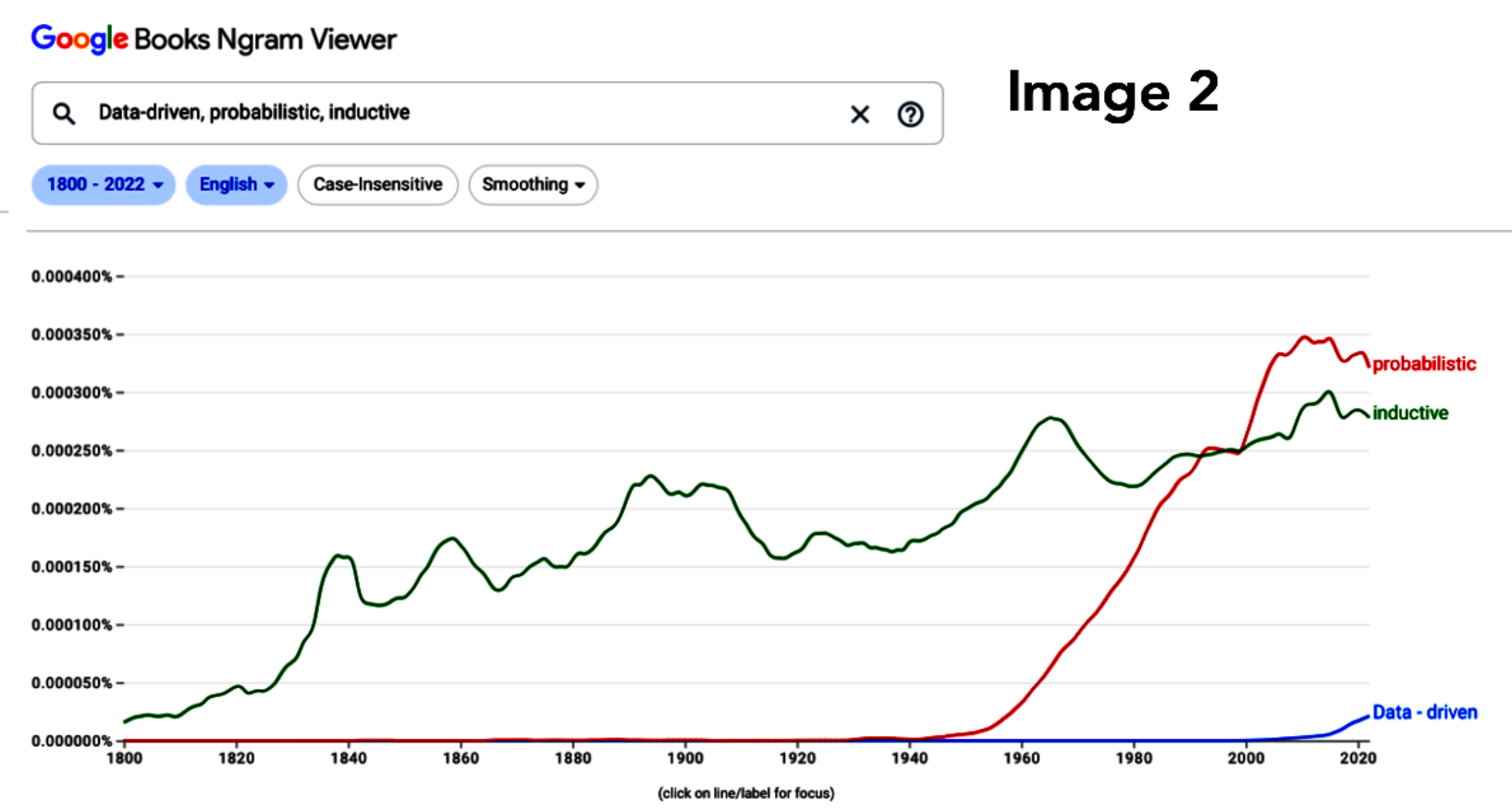
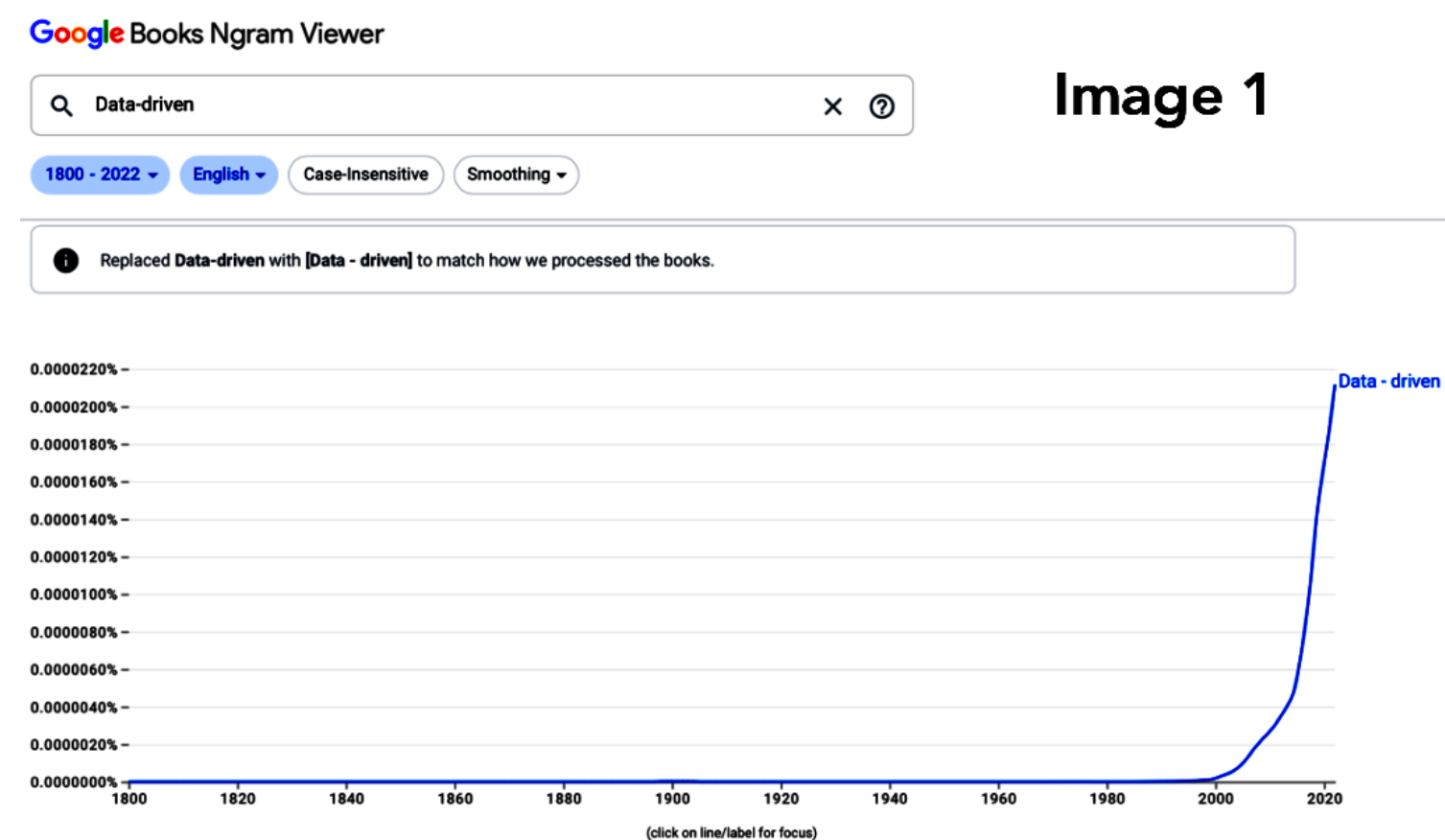
More importantly in understanding this visualization of word usage is the Y axis. An exaggerated upswing of “data-driven” after 1990 may not be as dramatic when it is recognized that the occurrence in publications is less than 10 thousandths of a percent of publications examined. For example, when “security” and “technology” are added to the visualization, these words force data-driven, visually, to a level of obscurity (see Image 3).

Solely on its own, the Google Ngram visualization of the use of data-driven in digital publications is limited and fails to account for a host of subjective, interpretive variables.

While not mentioned or discussed in Johanna Drucker’s book *Visualization and Interpretation: Humanistic Approaches to Display*, the critique of Google Ngram above was inspired by her overall argument. In her work, Drucker advances a compelling argument related to the challenges of visualizing data. Drucker argues that methodologies tied to the humanities should be explored in relation to data visualization. Too often data is displayed as Truth, while the humanities question this overall assertion about knowledge as the humanities recognize the role subjectivity and bias play as a barrier between humans and Truth. This is not a surrender to nihilism, but rather a recognition that our relationship with Truth is complex and multifaceted. The humanities can provide insight into allowing this complex relationship to be better understood. Drucker argues in the case of data visualization, this humanities-based methodology must be reflected within the ways in which we portray data.

One important message Drucker reinforces is that data is not Truth. Data is driven by interpretation at each level. Starting with the query driving the exploration of data through how the data is gathered and finally how the data is displayed, interpretive biases and subjectivity occur throughout. With interpretation and subjectivity being present, data should not be seen as Truth. Going back to the opening reflection on “data-driven” decisions, we in business must understand this to both recognize the weaknesses inherent in data and to drive us to ask questions about data and related visualizations. Simply accepting the visualization of data, out of a belief in data’s hegemony and unquestionable Truth, is not only ill advised, but also dangerous.

Visualization and Interpretation is not a light read. While her argument spans only 137 pages, each page requires reflection and contemplation as the themes are incredibly thought-provoking and intense. Those committed to exploring better ways to visualize data should take the time to reflect on her argument and explore ways to improve data visualization by accounting for the variables involved in gathering and constructing knowledge reflected in data visualization. A 36-page Appendix provides examples of how the humanities can directly impact a host of data visualizations and techniques. This helps demonstrate, at a practical level, some of the more esoteric and complex intellectual constructs within the wider work.





In Loving Memory of Christy Penn Hale

Christy Penn Hale, a cherished former team member, dedicated 22 years to Virginia 811, leaving a lasting impact on our organization and the many stakeholders she so faithfully served.

Christy embodied kindness, compassion, and dedication—a true inspiration to all who had the privilege of knowing her. Her warmth and unwavering spirit will always be remembered, and she will be deeply missed.

Thank you, Christy, for your remarkable contributions and for touching so many lives. You will forever hold a special place in our hearts.

