
California Underground Safety Board

August 24–25, 2026

Agenda Item No. 14 Information Item – Staff Report

Senate Bill 254 Statewide Education and Outreach Implementation Plan

PRESENTER

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SUMMARY

The Board is executing Phase 1 – Outreach of the Senate Bill 254 Statewide Education and Outreach Implementation Plan¹ and preparing for Phase 2 – Development. The implementation plan supports the Underground Safety Board’s (Board) work to develop and adopt new regulations for Planning and Design and Locator Workload Threshold.

Recent Phase 1 activities include conducting statewide outreach to encourage stakeholders to provide feedback by participating in surveys and attending workshops. This participation will help inform Board decision-making during the regulation development.

As part of planning for the upcoming execution of Phase 2, research was conducted to identify effective practices used by other organizations to communicate regulatory changes that impact their audiences.

This report summarizes outreach activities and outcomes for Phase 1, as well as key research findings and next steps for Phase 2.

STRATEGIC PLAN

2020 Strategic Plan Objective: Improve Compliance by Reaching Parties in Effective Ways

Strategic Activity: Senate Bill 254 Statewide Education and Outreach

BACKGROUND

Government Code section [4216.12\(b\)\(1\)](#) requires the Board to coordinate education and outreach activities that encourage safe excavation practices.

Senate Bill 254 (2025) became effective on September 19, 2025, and made immediate changes to the Dig Safe Act of 2016 within section [4216.1](#), including that the Board must implement regulations for Planning and Design Information Exchange and Locator Workload Threshold by July 1, 2027.

¹ See [Figure A1](#): Senate Bill 254 Implementation Plan

In November 2025, the Board approved the 2026-2027 Workplan², including the Education and Outreach initiative to implement statewide education and outreach plans specifically addressing public engagement opportunities and new responsibilities to support this work.

At the Board's February 2026 meeting, the four-phase statewide education and outreach implementation plan was approved by the Board.³ Results from completed Phase 1 activities were presented at the April 2026 Board meeting.⁴

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE: PHASE 1 - OUTREACH

Statewide outreach was conducted between April 2026 and June 2026 to support public engagement activities from the Board's Planning and Design Committee (P&D Committee):

- Utility Operator Survey: Planning and Design Information Exchange (April 3, 2026 – April 30, 2026)
- Engineer and Designer Survey: Planning and Design Information Exchange (April 3, 2026 – April 30, 2026)
- Planning and Design Virtual Workshop (June 3, 2026)
- Locator Workload Threshold Virtual Workshop (June 2, 2026)

Outreach activities included phone calls, emails, and social media posts. The goals of the outreach were to:

- Increase awareness of the Board's policy initiatives so that stakeholders can help develop changes prior to those changes becoming law.
- Reach those that will be affected by changes to the law to explain the purpose and potential impacts on their work.
- Expand information available to the Board during development of regulations.

Outreach Outcomes: Planning and Design Surveys (Utility Operator and Engineer and Designer)

The P&D Committee conducted the Utility Operator and the Engineer and Designer surveys for Planning and Design Information Exchange during the same timeframe in April. The Engineer and Designer survey was created for engineers and designers that participate in the planning and design process. The Utility Operator survey was created for utility operators who may work with engineers during the planning and design process.

Statewide outreach reached a variety of stakeholders, and additional outreach was also done to reach stakeholders that will be affected by the regulation changes including utility operators, engineers/designers, and professional associations that support utility operators and engineers. Stakeholders were also notified and reminded about the surveys through notifications sent to the Board's email list.⁵

² Underground Safety Board Business Meeting, November 9-10, 2025: [Item 04: 2026-2027 Workplan](#)

³ Underground Safety Board Business Meeting, February 9, 2026: [Item 14: Staff Report](#)

⁴ Underground Safety Board Business Meeting, April 13, 2026: [Item 12: Staff Report](#)

⁵ See [Figure A2: Planning and Design Public Survey Outreach Timeline](#)

A total of 60 people submitted responses across both surveys, with Utility Operators and Engineers/Designers identified as the two largest stakeholder groups represented.

The chart below shows the percentage of participants from each stakeholder group. Stakeholder group was self-identified by each respondent as a required field on the surveys.

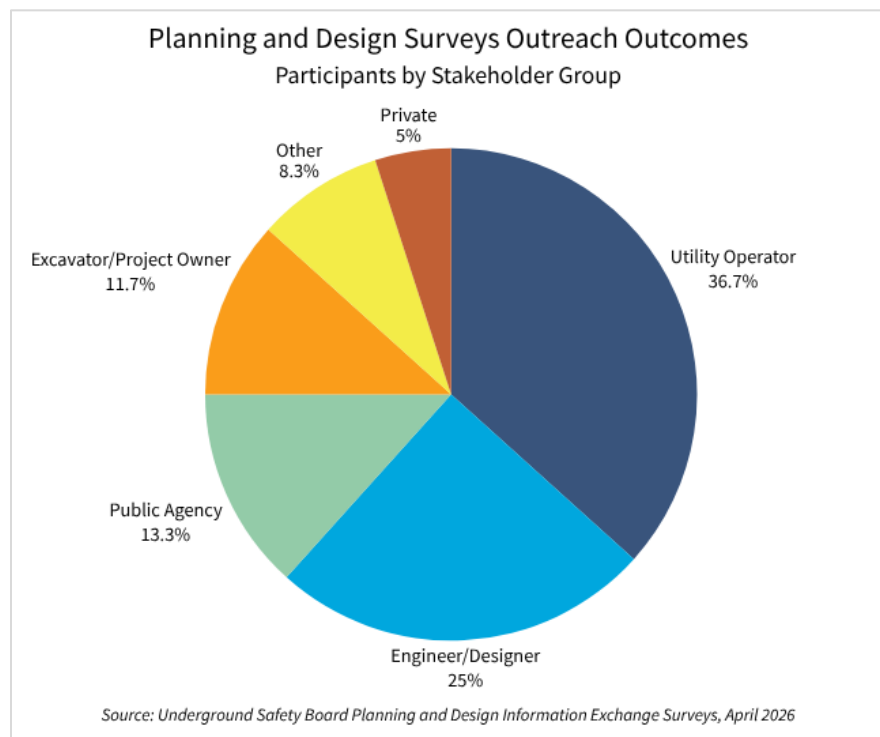


Figure 1 Planning and Design Surveys Outreach Outcomes

Outreach Outcomes: Planning and Design Virtual Workshop

The P&D Committee held a virtual Planning and Design Workshop on June 3, 2026, to gather stakeholder input on regional notification center (RNC) capabilities and infrastructure requirements. Notification of the workshop was sent to the Board's email list and outreach focused on RNCs, engineers/designers, locators, and technology platforms was prioritized for additional messaging.

The outreach for this workshop began once the workshop was noticed to the public; the outreach timeline was from May 28 – June 3.⁶ Based on available attendee data, such as company name or title, stakeholders were grouped into categories so that engagement trends could be evaluated. Findings include:

- Of the 56 people that attended the workshop, half of them were Utility Operators or Owners; however, this stakeholder group provided a low number of comments.
- Participants that represented RNCs had a 100% participation rate (all attendees from this stakeholder group provided comment).
- Most participants that represented Locators provided comment.

⁶ See [Figure A3](#): Planning and Design Virtual Workshop Outreach Timeline

Participants from Underground Service Alert of Southern California (DigAlert), Underground Service Alert of Northern California and Nevada (USA North 811), AT&T, Southern California Edison (SCE), PelicanCorp, and Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) were among those that provided comments at the workshop.

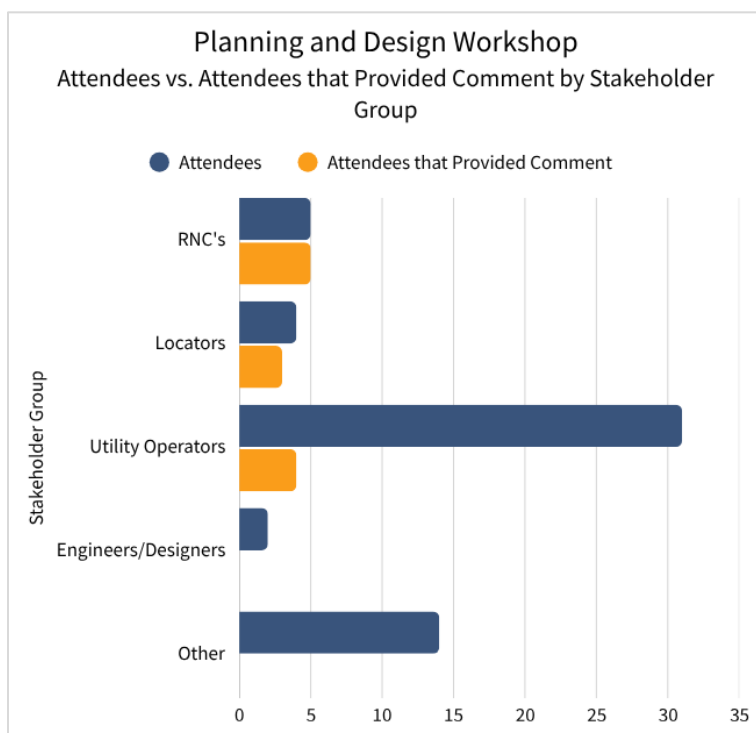


Figure 2 June 3, 2026 Planning and Design Workshop analysis of stakeholder group attendance and comment rates.

Outreach Outcomes: Locator Workload Threshold Virtual Workshop

The Ticket Process Committee (Committee) held a virtual Locator Workload Threshold Workshop on June 2, 2026, to gather stakeholder input on the ticketing process, regulatory response, and coordination tools. Notification of the workshop was sent to the Board's email list and outreach focused on utility operators and locator organizations was prioritized for additional messaging.

The outreach for this workshop began once the workshop was noticed to the public; the outreach timeline was from May 29– June 2.⁷ Based on available attendee data, such as company name or title, stakeholders were grouped into categories so that engagement trends could be evaluated. Findings include:

- Of the 70 people that attended the workshop, half of them were Utility Operators or Owners; this stakeholder group provided a high number of comments.
- Participants that represented RNCs and Locators also had high comment rates.

Participants from DigAlert, USA North 811, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), Sacramento Municipal Utilities District (SMUD), Locating Dynamics, and PG&E were

⁷ See [Figure A4](#): Locator Workload Threshold Virtual Workshop Outreach Timeline

among those that provided comments at the workshop.

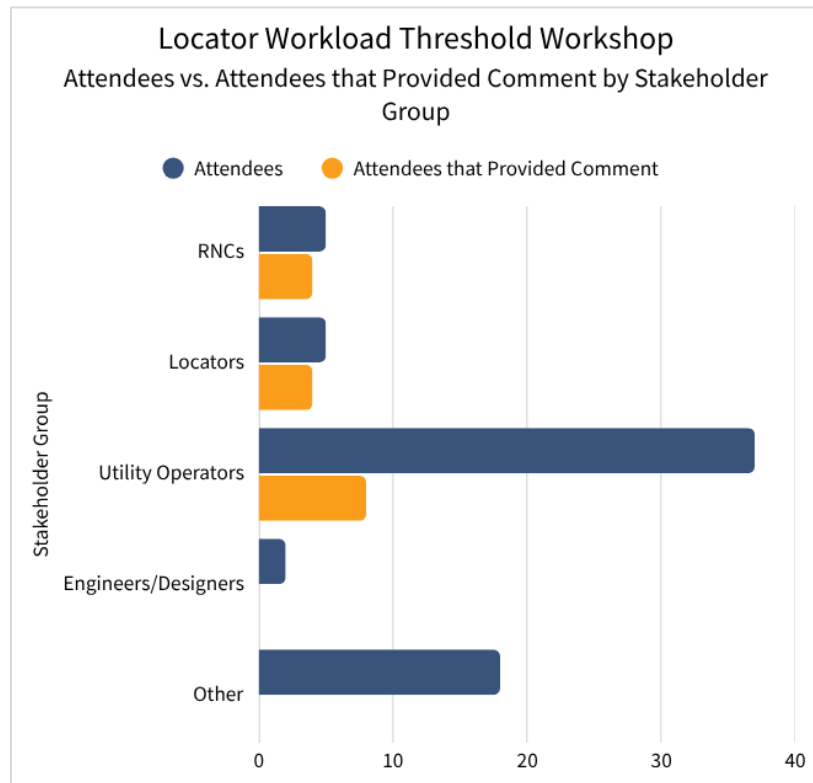


Figure 3 June 2, 2026 Locator Workload Threshold Workshop analysis of stakeholder group attendance and comment rates.

Statewide Outreach Outcomes: Key Findings

The Board evaluated the effectiveness of these outreach outcomes by reviewing whether the outreach resulted in attendance and participation from the stakeholders that will be impacted by changes to the law.

Overall key findings include:

- Engagement and active participation often occurred from the stakeholders who would be most affected by the regulatory changes.
- Utility operators continuously participated at high rates for both surveys and workshops.
- There is interest in participating in the development of these regulations from a variety of stakeholders.

These findings indicate that targeted outreach efforts were mostly successful in reaching intended audiences and communicating the importance of providing feedback during the development of new laws.

The evaluation also identified opportunities to strengthen future public outreach to increase stakeholder engagement, including:

- Building relationships with stakeholders throughout the state to expand the Board's network and reach a greater variety of stakeholders; specifically, engineers/designers and locators.

- Conducting outreach with a longer timeframe to gather feedback and encourage participation from as many interested stakeholders as possible.
- Utilizing phone calls in future outreach efforts for a more personal, relationship-building approach.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE: PHASE 2 - DEVELOPMENT

To prepare for development of awareness campaigns that inform the public about changes to the law and encourage voluntary compliance, the Board conducted research to examine how other organizations have communicated new policies and legal requirements that impact their audiences.

Examples from California's Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), Common Ground Alliance (CGA), and one-call centers from other states were reviewed to identify implementation practices that may be applicable to the Board's work.

Each implementation effort that was researched was evaluated using the following framework, which helped identify recurring themes:

- **Implementation Approach** – How organizations introduced changes to their audiences.
- **Communication and Education** – Communication methods, messaging, and educational resources used.
- **Implementation Support** – Guidance and resources provided for partner organizations.

Summary of Research Findings

The research showed that communication about changes to the law generally included:

- Development of a digital learning library and resource hub for stakeholders that may allow them to better understand what new regulatory changes mean for them.
- Creation of downloadable and printable content that can be shared by partners which may increase outreach and awareness throughout the industry.
- Development of an interactive webpage on the latest regulatory updates, key dates and events, opportunities to provide feedback, and partner toolkits that may help to keep stakeholders interested and informed.
- Creation of toolkits which allow partners to access educational materials while providing further opportunities to conduct their own outreach and spread awareness about new regulations.

Next Steps

Based on the research findings, the Board will focus Phase 2 – Development not only on communicating changes to the law, but also on helping affected stakeholders understand how those changes apply to their day-to-day responsibilities and where they can obtain educational resources. Some of the implementation approaches that will be considered include:

- Conducting early communication before new requirements become effective.
- Creating plain-language educational materials focused on practical implementation

that clearly explain the changes.

- Utilizing multiple communication channels to reach and engage different audiences.
- Developing partnerships through relationship-building with organizations that already communicate regularly with affected audiences.
- Conducting ongoing evaluations to improve implementation efforts over time.

CONCLUSION

As the Senate Bill 254 Statewide Education and Outreach Implementation Plan progresses, the Board's efforts will remain focused on providing timely, accessible, and effective information that supports understanding, informed compliance, and improved public safety.

APPENDIX

Figure A1: Senate Bill 254 Implementation Plan

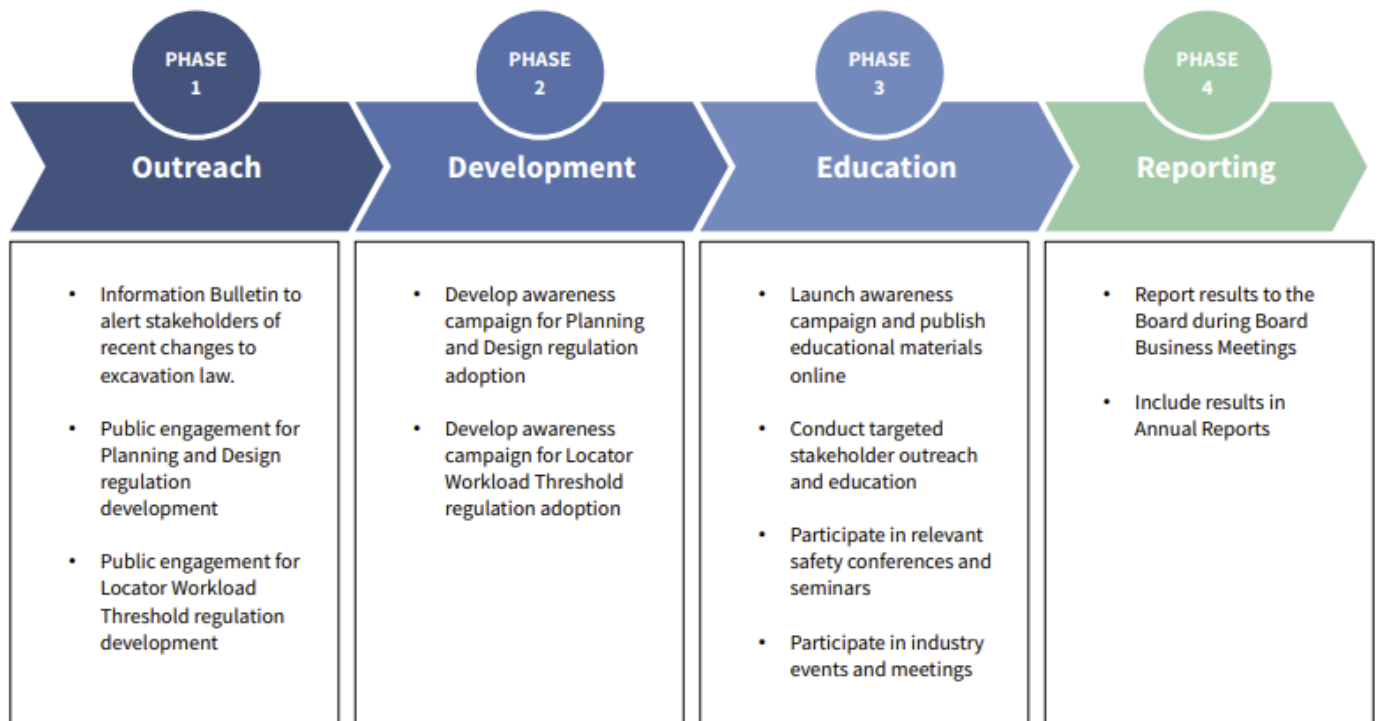


Figure A2: Planning and Design Public Survey Outreach Timeline

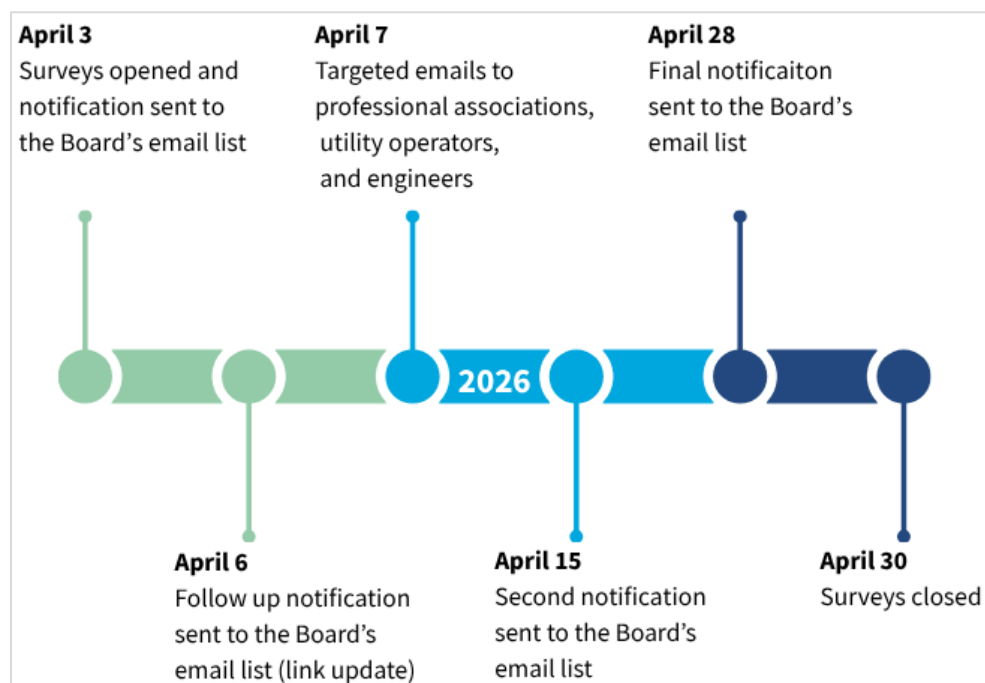


Figure A3: Planning and Design Virtual Workshop Outreach Timeline

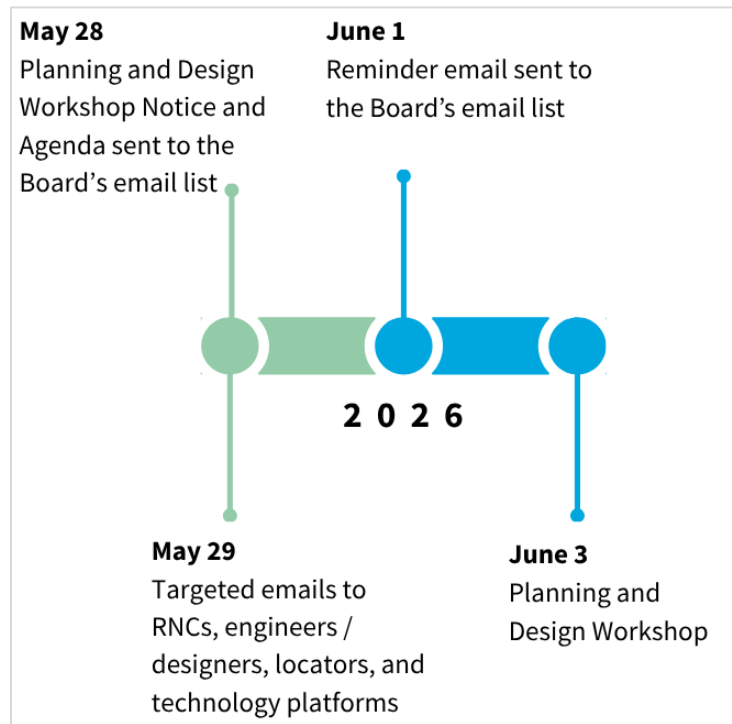


Figure A4: Locator Workload Threshold Virtual Workshop Outreach Timeline

