



Annual Report 2023

Greater Chicago Damage Prevention Council

About Us

The Greater Chicago Damage Prevention Council (GCDPC) is comprised of representatives from facility owners and operators, the City of Chicago's 811 Chicago system, excavators, State and local governments, and others with a vested interest in the protection of underground facilities. The GCDPC is an independent advisory council that advocates for the collaboration and continuous improvement of damage prevention in the greater Chicago region.

Mission Statement

To provide a forum for members to work together to reduce damages to underground facilities in the greater Chicago area and, ultimately, safeguard individuals who work and live near buried infrastructure, as well as ensure continuity of utility service.

Vision Statement

The GCDPC and its members will partner together to provide education, outreach, and leading practices to all underground facility stakeholders, including individuals and organizations engaged in excavation, locators, utility owners, homeowners, One-Call centers, government agencies, and others who may interact with underground facilities. The GCDPC and its members will promote 811 Chicago within the underground facility stakeholder community and seek to contribute to the damage prevention industry. The GCDPC and its members will encourage robust, diverse, and equitable participation in membership and damage prevention programming.



The GCDPC Annual Report

The Annual Report serves as a dialog to the community on progress the organization is making in support of safety, reliability, and economic resiliency. Progress made in Chicago serves as a benchmark for the industry.

CHICAGO HAS HAD A RECORD YEAR IN DAMAGE PREVENTION



Message from the Chairman



I would like to thank membership and industry stakeholders for their dedicated support for the GCDPC in 2023. We strive to ensure public safety and economic improvement through damage prevention. This year has been marked by numerous achievements, setting the stage for future growth and development

In 2023 the GCDPC re-introduced the Excavator Safety Breakfast after a two year pause due to COVID-19. The Breakfast provides a forum for damage prevention stakeholders to discuss strategies and share resources in an effort to further our goals as well as prepare for the year ahead. Also in 2023, the GCDPC committed to join the Common Ground Alliance’s (CGA) “50 in 5” industry challenge - a goal of reducing damages to critical underground utilities by 50% in five years. GCDPC’s commitment is a testament to our mission. In its most recent “DIRT” report, the CGA recognized GCDPC, 811 Chicago, and the Chicago Department of Transportation’s (CDOT) Office of Underground Coordination (OUC) efforts to reduce utility damages in Chicago. The CGA noted that collaboration between right of way stakeholders has allowed Chicago to achieve a nation leading damage ratio.

In addition, the GCDPC’s Best Practices Awareness training program contributes to damage prevention by providing comprehensive training on One-Call requirements, safe excavation practices, and resources for excavators and operators. We are excited about the impact this critical service can continue to provide to the local industry

As we look to 2024, the GCDPC believes “All Tides Rise Together”: Locally, collaboration among excavators, utility owners, and locators can have an exponential effect on underground safety; outside of Chicago, the gains we achieve will influence national damage prevention activity; finally, reductions in utility damages spawn cost savings and economic prosperity thereby benefiting the communities in which we work. GCDPC is excited to continue to build on our current progress and expand collaboration to maximize impact on safety, infrastructure reliability, and community.

Dan R. Germeraad

GCDPC Staff

Chairman: Dan Germeraad
Peoples Gas

Vice Chairman: Mike Simon &
Jules Madison

Secretary: Matt Peterson 811
Chicago/Chicago Department of
Transportation

Treasurer: Lauren Barnett
Unground Contractors Association (UCA)

Member-At-Large: Ben Fiorito
Chicago Department of Transportation

Member-At-Large: Joseph
Delcamo
Chicago Department of Water
Management

Training Director: Lucero
Martinez Peoples Gas

GCDPC Key Performance Indicator “Snap-Shot”

Year over year, the Chicago area continues to see improvement in the number of utility damages. This improvement can be attributed to the efforts of GCDPC members.

KPI	2022	2023	Change
Locate Tickets	261,248	290,448	11.2%
Transmissions	2,155,683	2,364,958	9.7%
Damages	1,043	950	-8.9%
Damage Ratio	0.48	0.41	-19.2%
GCDPC Training	N/A	100 +	N/A
Economic Return	N/A	\$5.4M	\$5.4M

Continuous Improvement - Industry

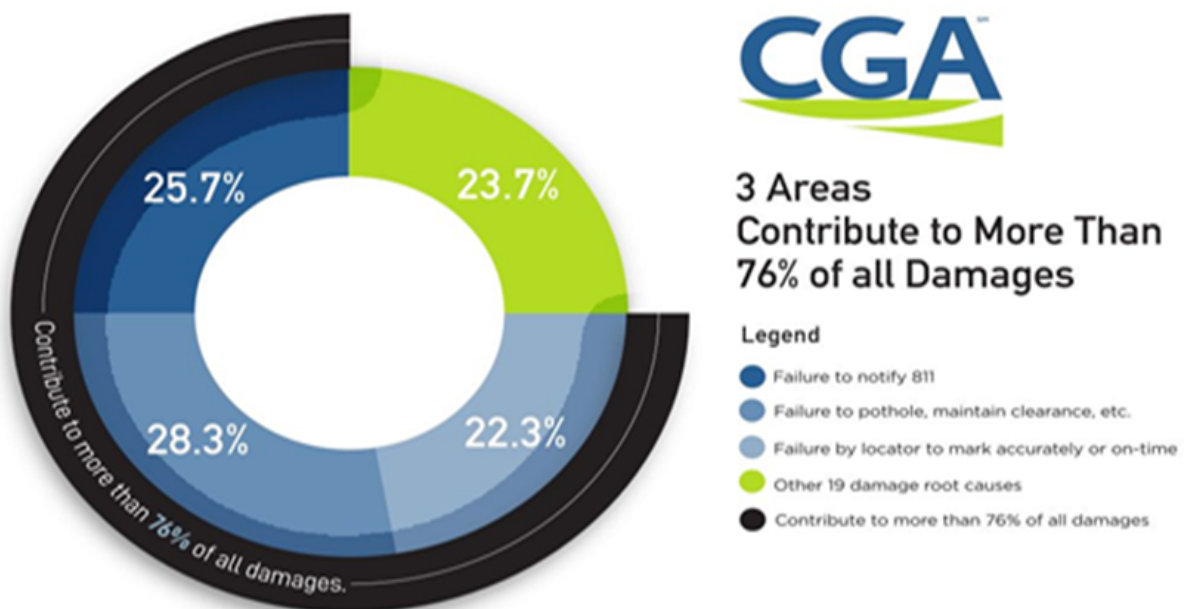
In February of 2023 the Common Ground Alliance (CGA), the national nonprofit trade association dedicated to protecting underground utility lines, people who dig near them and their communities, issued its “50 in 5” industry challenge to stakeholders with a goal of reducing damages to critical underground utilities by 50% in five years.

During this announcement Sarah K. Magruder Lyle, president and CEO of CGA, noted that The Common Ground Alliance’s damage prevention stakeholders have worked diligently to make communities safer by reducing dig-ins – but that we are now at an inflection point as an industry. “I encourage every stakeholder to meet our ‘50 in 5’ challenge and commit their organizations to making bold choices and investments as we look to cut annual damages in half by 2028.

CGA’s “50 in 5” challenge aims to address damages to our Nation’s critical assets head-on by bringing damage prevention advocates together around a targeted set of strategic, data-driven priorities.

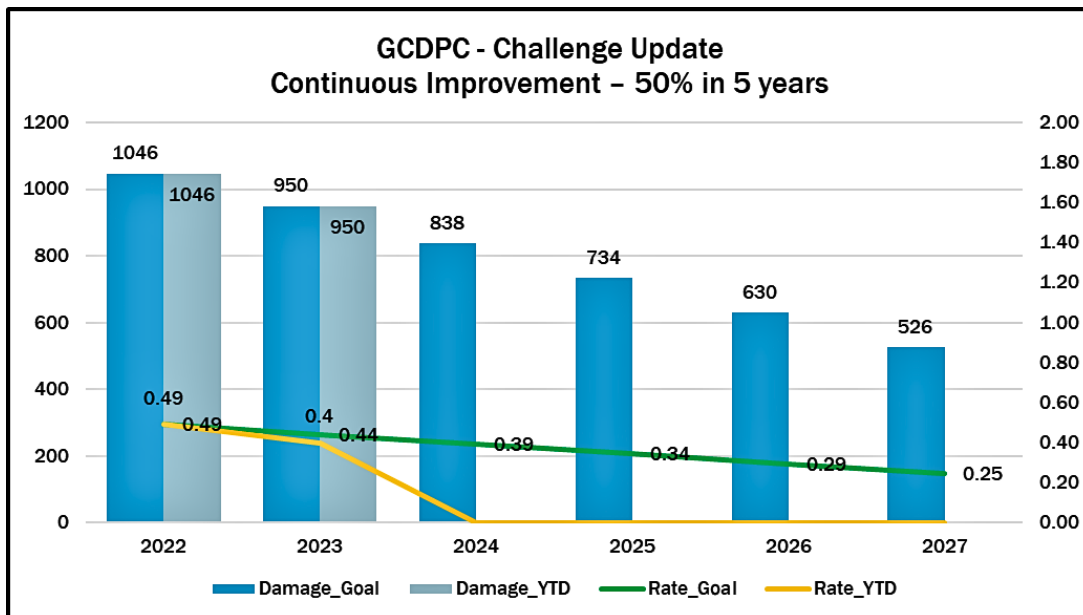
The “50 in 5” call-to-action encourages the damage prevention industry to concentrate on **three focus areas**:

1. Effective and consistent use of 811:
2. Key excavator practices (potholing, maintaining clearance, etc.)
3. Accurate, timely utility locating:



Continuous Improvement – Chicago Embarks on the “50” in “5” Challenge

In May of 2023 the GCDPC Membership took on the industry-driven challenge to meet 50% reduction in 5 years. Since embarking on this challenge, the excavation communities have met and surpassed the annual target in 2023 with the community reach a .4 damage rate, well below the .44 target. This has been accomplished through collaboration of stakeholders and innovation in engineering and excavation practices supported by a proactive and robust One-Call notification center. The trajectory over the next five years appears promising for Chicago to achieve this ambitious goal.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Locates

Locates are notifications made by excavators to the one-call center to provide notification that an excavation will be taking place. Proper use of the one-call center continues to be a challenge for the industry which is directly connected to the public awareness 811 “Call before you dig” campaign. In 2023 we saw a net positive in one-call tickets submitted in Chicago through online entry or by telecommunications. This is an indication of increased public awareness and safety in the community.

YEAR	LOCATES (ANNUAL)	LOCATES (MONTH)	TREND/CHANGE
2023	290,448	24,204	↑ 7.6K
2022	198,834	16,569	↓ (1K)
2021	206,799	17,233	- NA

One-Call Transmissions

One-Call ticket transmissions directly correlate to the underground facilities that are in proximity to an excavation (Locate Ticket). The total transmissions can indicate the complexity of excavation within the one-call territory and the challenges faced by both the locator and excavator in which diligence and coordination is required. In 2023 we saw an increase in complex excavations in Chicago however we identified a net decrease in utility strikes. The metric is an encouraging sign that collaboration in both the planning and excavation phase, especially in complex projects has produced safe excavations.

YEAR	TRANSMISSION (S) (ANNUAL)	TRANSMISSION(S) (MONTH)	TREND/CHANGE
2023	2.4M	197,079	↑ 209K
2022	2.2M	183,333	↑ 8K
2021	2.1M	175,000	- NA

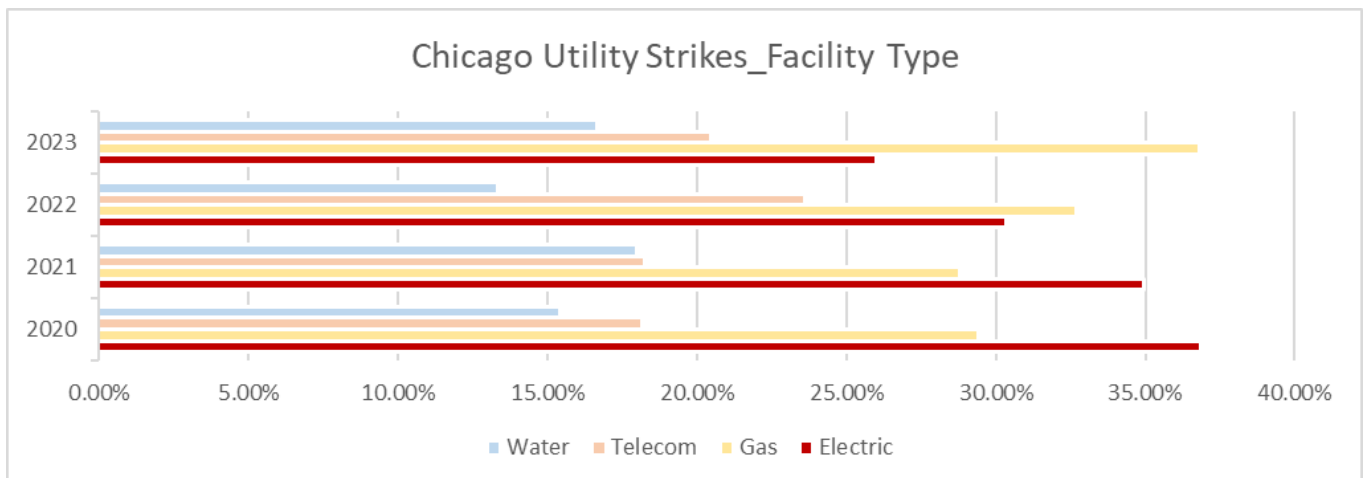
Underground Utility Strikes

Underground Utility Strikes are a result of a potential breakdown in the damage prevention process. In 2023, as a result of collaboration by key stakeholders leveraging tools available, coupled with a strong emphasis of planning through the OUC, Chicago continues to see a year over year decrease in utility strikes despite an increase in excavations and the overall complexity of those excavations. This progress has allowed Chicago to obtain an industry leading damage ratio of .40 - well below the industry average.

YEAR	DAMAGE (ANNUAL)	DAMAGE (AVG./MONTH)	DAMAGE RATIO	TREND/CHANGE
2023	950	79.1	.40	↓ (93)
2022	1043	86.9	.49	↓ (102)
2021	1145	95.4	.54	- NA

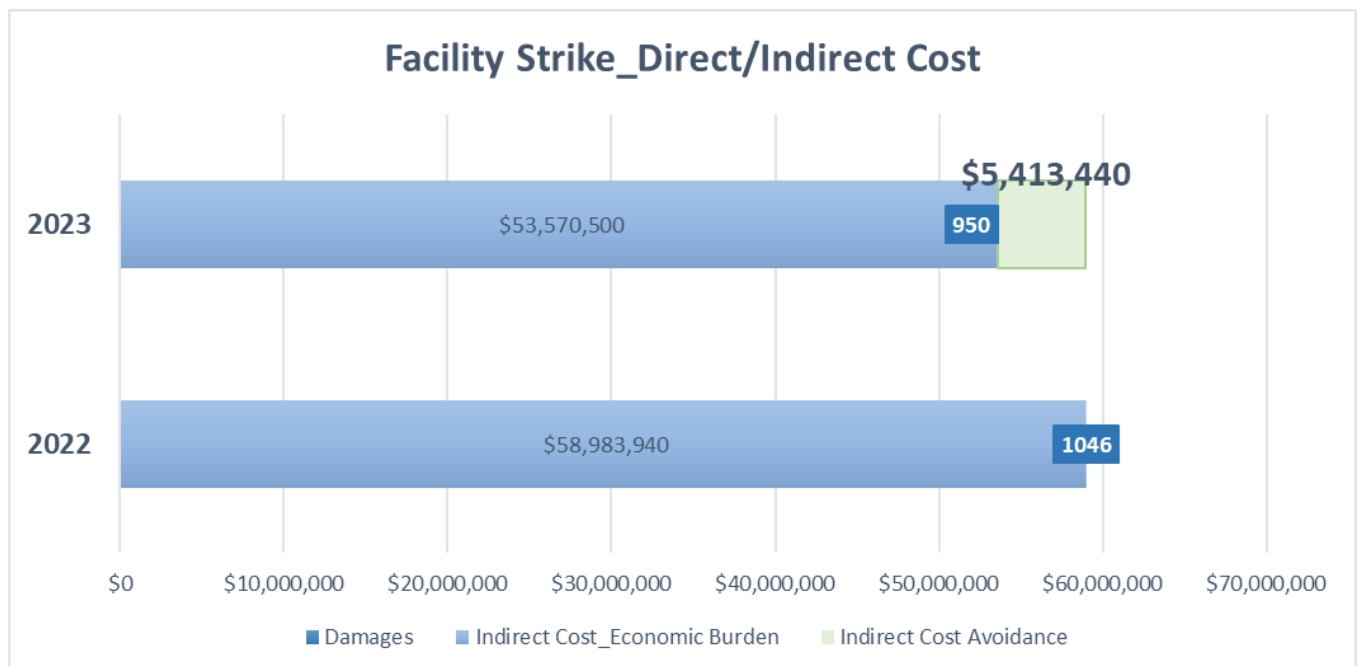
Utility Strike – Facility Type

Utility strikes by facility type is a critical metric for the excavator and facility owner. This data allows the Operators to evaluate the current risk to proactively mitigate future damages and provides notice to the excavator that diligence should be taken when near these highly struck utility types. In 2023 Natural Gas Pipelines were the most damaged at 37% with Electric utilities following behind at 26% of the total damages. The 2022 Common Ground Alliance reported that Natural Gas and Telecommunications were the most commonly damaged facilities industry-wide. The Chicago area is aligned with this data. The GCDPC mission is to highlight this risk to the community and work together to resolve the current challenges.



Supporting Chicago Mission of Safety, Robust Infrastructure and Economic Opportunity

Resilient Chicago seeks to address these challenges by creating a more connected city where residents, neighborhoods, institutions, corporations, and government agencies are successfully connected in pursuit of economic opportunity, safety, security, and sustainability for all.



Estimated Cost Per 2019-2020 CGA DIRT Case Study ~56K per utility strike

With a direct correlation to “Building a New Chicago” and in alignment with Chicago’s Key Resilience Challenges, the GCDPC has taken proactive steps in conjunction with the engineering and the excavation communities to reduce utility strikes through innovation, which has achieved greater public safety, reliable infrastructure and has achieved a cost avoidance of 5.4 million dollars of economic burden. As fruits of this impact, Chicago can now reinvest back to the community through the Resilient Chicago Strategy and have a targeted benefit to economic and social advancement while bolstering the resilience in the community.

OUTREACH & AWARENESS

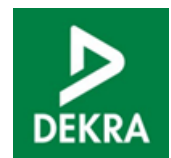
GCDPC Members Collaboration – 2023 Meetings

The GCDPC met 8 times in 2023 to discuss general business and best practices in the excavation community. This year, the primary topics included privately owned facilities with a focus on the Chicago Business District and OUC review and leveraging this process to resolve underground conflicts prior to the excavation. In addition, GCDPC was able to expand opportunities with PHMSA and the ICC to discuss federal and state initiatives and review opportunities for Chicago to support these critical goals. We want to thank the hosts of these meetings in which council members were able to tour the Gardine plant at DWM, training facilities at both ComEd and Peoples Gas, and were provided opportunities to explore services offered by MEADE Pipeview and the 811 Chicago One Call.



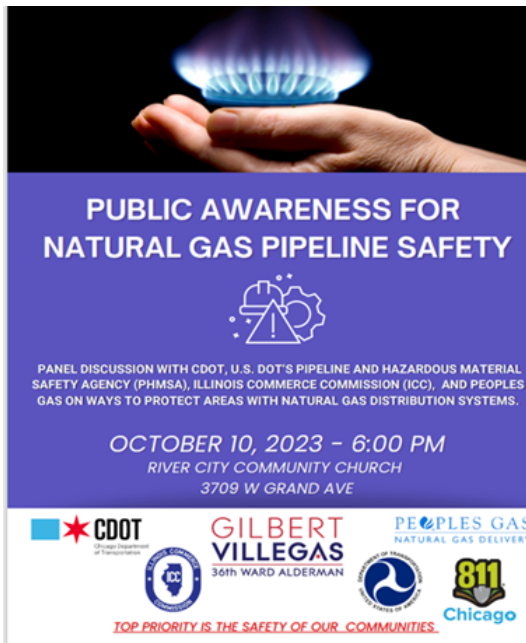
GCDPC Excavation Breakfast – May 2023

In May 2023, the GCDPC held the Annual Excavation Safety Breakfast. The event was held at the UIC and incorporated keynote speakers, including Gia Biagi, Commissioner CDOT; Andrea Cheng, Commissioner DWM; and Sam Hall, Vice President CGA, to discuss the importance of damage prevention and keynote projects in Chicago. Joshua Mrozowsky, DEKRA North America, discussed the principles of safety. The event was attended by over 300 individuals across the regional stakeholders’ groups from Chicago, Illinois, and Indiana, both from professional positions and field supervision. The event included the GCDPC and its membership committing to the CGA Industry Initiative of 50% in 5 - a goal led by the Common Ground Alliance to reduce utility strikes by 50% in 5 years. The GCDPC, in partnership with the excavation community, has met this goal and continues to innovate to lead the industry on this initiative.



Public Safety in Underserved Communities – October 2023

The GCDPC, in partnership with the Chicago Dept. of Transportation, Illinois Commerce Commission, PHMSA, and Peoples Gas, held a panel discussion in Chicago’s 36th ward to focus on public safety by providing awareness on digging dangers, use of the 811 Chicago one-call system, and what to do in the event of a natural Gas Emergency. The GCDPC is focused on bringing safety and opportunity to underserved & disadvantaged communities by bolstering engagement and addressing barriers to equal opportunity.



GCDPC Best Practice Excavator Training

In 2023, the GCDPC, led by the Training Sub-Committee, held various training courses, including open courses and personalized courses, in which the GCDPC team traveled to the contractors’ field locations. The training focuses on excavation rules and regulations, excavation and locating techniques, and awareness of available tools, such as the excavation checklist and mapping that excavators can use in the field to ensure safe excavations. This training is a partnership with various stakeholders, including 811 Chicago, Peoples Gas, ComEd, and the Chicago Department of Water Management, and is offered in English & Spanish. In 2023, the GCDPC trained over 100 individuals on excavation safety and best practices.

2022 Achievement Awards

Each year the Council recognizes members of the local damage prevention community for their contributions to damage prevention. The following individuals were recognized for their long-term impact and dedication to safety.

Frank Bedtke

GCDPC Chairman – Fmr.
Damage Prevention Leader
HBK Engineering



Vipul Kapoor

Area Manager
Peoples Gas



Jai Kalayil

Deputy Commissioner
Chicago Dept. of Transportation



Previously Recognized Members

2018

John Just – Peoples Gas
Dylan Hradek – NPL
Eitel Singleton – Chicago Dept. of Transportation
Joe Terrell – Com Ed
USIC
Electrical Conduit Construction

2019

Greg Preisch – Electrical Conduit Construction
William Houghton – Peoples Gas
Western Utility

2020

Kevin O’Leary – John Burns Construction
Chris Mordus – Meade
Electrical Conduit Construction

2021

Tony Abruscato – Get Growing Foundation
HBK Engineering
Department of Electrical Operations

2024 Goals

The Council recognizes that while coming off a successful year, the mission will require focus and expanded collaboration. Our 2024 “Play Book” will include the following targets:



GCDPC Targets

- ✓ Proactively reach stakeholders and critical decision-makers in the planning and design phase of projects to bring awareness of their role in damage prevention.
- ✓ Bridge the collaboration gap between planning and execution to supporting more informed and safer decisions during the underground phase of a project.
- ✓ Provide awareness and education on the damage prevention toolbox available to the community.
- ✓ Recognize that successful infrastructure projects continue to be the backbone of the greater Chicago area, enhancing safety, quality of life, and supporting economic development.



Measurement of Success

- ✓ Performance of the GCDPC will be measured across the industry accepted data sets with emphasis on the progress against the local 50-in-5 challenge

Members

GCDPC membership is open to all organizations which excavate, locate, or own utilities, or any combination of the preceding, in the greater Chicago area, or otherwise have an interest in the furtherance of the Council’s mission and vision, including entities that support excavators, locators, or utility owners in the greater Chicago area.

811 Chicago	ESCH Supply	NICOR
Aldridge Construction	HBK	NPL
American Surveying & Engineering	Henkel’s and McCoy	Pan-Oceanic
Ardmore Roderick Group	INTREN	Peoples Gas
AT&T	Joel Kennedy	PipeView America
Badger Construction	John Burns Construction	Trice Construction
Chicago Department of Transportation	Jules Madison	Underground Contractors Association (UCA)
Electrical Conduit Construction	MEADE	USIC
Chicago Department of Water Management	JULIE One-Call	Western Utility
ComEd	Lee Jensen Sales	

Final Thoughts

If you have any questions on membership or how to get more involved in the damage prevention community in the greater Chicago area please visit [GCDPC.Org](https://www.gcdpc.org)

