

The Virginia 811 Dirt

WORKING AS ONE TO GET THE JOB DONE



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LETTER FROM THE CEO

B. Scott Crawford

It is with great excitement that I am able to share an important milestone in the history of Virginia 811. On August 19, 2023, Virginia 811 publicly launched its first mobile application, the Excavator Response Management App, or ERMA. The application, available in both the Apple App and Google Play stores, allows excavators to better and more easily manage their Locate Request Positive Responses. Specifically, but not exclusively, the application will facilitate a much more efficient means for excavators to respond to Code 60 requests, which as of January 1, 2023, allow excavators to accept or decline requests to provide clearer documentation excavator and locator did in fact reach an agreed upon alternate marking schedule. The creation, development, and launch of this application could not have been possible without the collaboration between Virginia 811, several excavating companies, and the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC); a reminder that damage prevention is never about the one, it is about the many! Learn more about this important milestone in this issue of The Dirt, where you will also learn a secret behind the way in which the application was launched!

While the development of a mobile application is exciting, it is not the only milestone Virginia 811 has witnessed this year. Working with stakeholders, including Washington Gas and the SCC, more training and resources are now available for Spanish speaking excavators. In-person training entirely in Spanish has been occurring through much of Virginia, with twelve training sessions having occurred year to date. The first all-Spanish LDPC meeting was held in July. Also of importance, the Excavator Manual is now available in Spanish. All of these efforts will help tremendously with damage prevention. I want to thank Fernando Méndez, Virginia 811; Rosemary Langowski, Washington Gas; and Brandi Carter, SCC. Their work has truly carried damage prevention several steps forward!

Another important milestone witnessed this year relates to Update tickets. For the first time in at least six years, and likely much longer, Update tickets have witnessed a decrease when compared with the same time the previous year. Currently, Update tickets are roughly 11% below where they were in 2022. This is a significant decline in Update tickets, almost entirely accounting for the overall, roughly, 2.5% decrease in ticket volume year to date. This is, arguably, directly attributed to the industry, working together, to have Update tickets that are no longer needed removed from the system. While the data clearly indicates that it is impossible to determine if an Update ticket is excessive, industry-wide discussions around the concern that some tickets may be updated when excavation is no longer occurring has drawn attention to this issue. The result has clearly been a notable reduction in Update tickets.

A new mobile application, Spanish training and resources, and a reduction in Update tickets all reflect a very important point: We, working together, are strong and can bring about significant improvements in damage prevention. From Taskforce 2022, now 2023; to the Town Hall meetings advanced in partnership with the Electric Co-ops; to LDPC meetings; to the SCC Damage Prevention Conference; to the Virginia 811 Membership meetings; to, well, the list goes on, we, as partners in damage prevention can drive damages down. Will we reach 0? Maybe, maybe not – but working together, as a broad team, we can make a positive impact and difference.

Thank you to everyone for all you do to reach this goal!

- B. Scott Crawford
President & CEO
Virginia 811

ADVANCING EXCELLENCE

Professional Development and Education Team's Transformation in 2023



2023 continues to usher in profound transformations for the Professional Development and Education Team, and our momentum shows no signs of waning. Kayla DeHart, Professional Development and Education Specialist, remains dedicated to guiding our New Selects, while Nikki Turpin, Professional Development and Education Specialist, has been diligently equipping all current team members with essential law training to ensure compliance with company regulations.



Nikki Turpin



Kayla DeHart

The New Selects have adeptly honed their skills, seamlessly transitioning from handling SAT 1.0 processing and audits to mastering phone training within the classroom setting. Their journey progressed as they participated in live call monitoring with mentors, tackled practice tickets, and ultimately began fielding calls under the watchful guidance of experienced mentors. This progressive two-step approach, though novel, has evidently proven to be a recipe for setting up these new team members for triumph.

As the New Selects approach the culmination of their training, excitement swells for the impending phase of their journey. They teeter on the precipice of elevating their capabilities to new heights. Armed with a strong foundation forged through diverse training methods, they stand poised to embrace the responsibilities that accompany independent call management. Our confidence in the preparedness of our New Selects knows no bounds as they step into this thrilling chapter.

In the interim, Nikki has not only contributed to New Select training as needed but has also revitalized the Annual Law Training framework. This endeavor aimed to infuse the training with a fresh perspective, while preserving the weightiness of the subject matter. As of July 2023, the fruits of these efforts were evident, with every team member having engaged in comprehensive law training. The training incorporated diverse methods such as SCC Train the Trainer, CBT, and an engaging Law Training Jeopardy that fostered interactivity and valuable learning moments.

Nikki's involvement extended beyond New Selects, as she actively participated in the July quarterly meeting of the Public Awareness & Training (PAT) department in Roanoke. The day's agenda commenced with an Applied Improvisation Workshop, led by facilitator Ami Trowell, which offered valuable strategies for welcoming uncertainty, embracing risk, and redefining failure.

The enriching experience left us eager to collaborate with Ami in the future. Post a productive working lunch, the team delved into a dynamic networking session. This session encompassed a mock networking exercise and a treasure trove of insights on cultivating new connections and friendships. The day's events fortified our sense of unity and purpose.

Through these combined efforts, the Professional Development and Education Team continues to chart a path of growth, adaptability, and excellence in a dynamic professional landscape.

FAST FACTS

CHANNEL	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
PHONE	304,717	30.1%
WTE	398,310	39.3%
SAT	179,281	17.7%
TRE	130,176	12.9%
Total	1,012,484	

Total Internet Originated Tickets YTD 2023

707,767

(69.9% of all tickets)



The Excavator Response Management Application Launches!

- B. Scott Crawford

The Digital Revolution, beginning ca. 1994, has necessitated businesses to embrace Digital Transformation. Those that do will continue to remain relevant to their consumer base and stakeholders; those that do not, well, they will slip away into the dustbins of history! The digital technologies available to support damage prevention and the protection of underground utilities, in turn protecting life and property, are notable. The overall industry, from 811 notification centers, to utilities, to excavators, must embrace new technologies and invest in ways to leverage technology to protect life and property. Failure to remain up to date with technology will definitively make damage prevention efforts within the industry not only antiquated, but even more serious, irrelevant to stakeholders.

In the spirit of Digital Transformation, Virginia 811 has moved to a cloud-based call switch solution, Five9. Five9 has allowed Virginia 811 to recognize the "Omni Channel" solutions Virginia 811 has sought for some time. Through this cloud-based solution, Virginia 811 has an offsite network that is driven by redundancy reinforced by East and West coast servers. For the first time in Virginia 811's history, callers entering the queue can, if calling from a cell phone, opt to receive a text with a link to allow them to enter a Single Address Ticket online. In the coming months, chat functionality will begin to be implemented for web ticket entry users. The Five9 solution has allowed Virginia 811 to embrace and implement an advanced call switch, truly aligned with the Digital Age!

A major characteristic of the Digital Age has involved mobile technology. Various applications allow users to become empowered as they are able to use both web applications and entirely new mobile applications in ways that tap into the strength of mobile devices, which provide more computing power than all of the computing power in the world in 1969 when men first landed on the Moon! The computing power of these devices is astonishing, and it is only growing in power each year. It is time the industry explores ways to tap into this power to increase our ability to prevent damages!

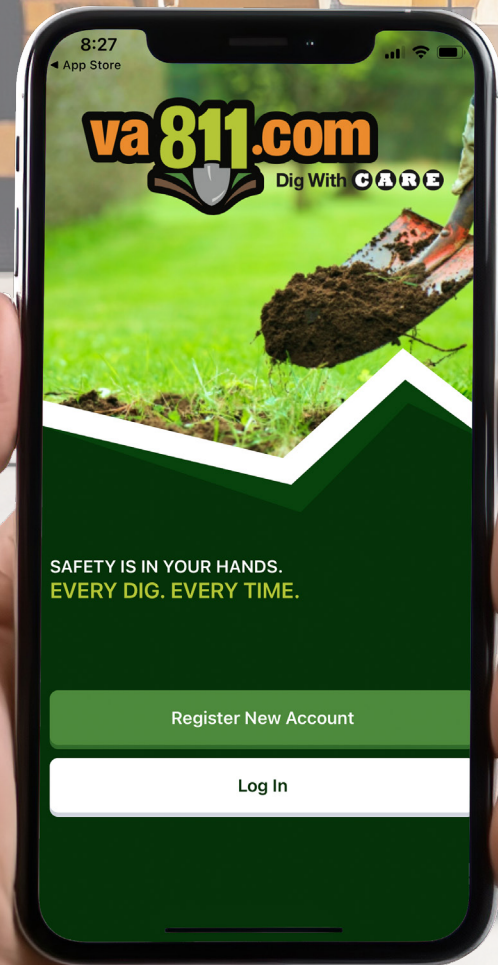
One small step for Virginia 811, but a giant step for the industry, is the recently launched mobile application, the Excavator Response Management Application, ERMA. The application, available for iPhone and Android, allows excavators to better review and, in the case of Code 60s, respond to Positive Responses related to their tickets. Positive Responses can now be viewed, in real time, by both field contacts and those who submit responses. Field contacts, whether they submitted the Locate Request or did not, can now accept or decline Code

60s. Excavators can also set the application to automatically reject Code 60s submitted after 6:00 PM the day before a Locate Request is due.

It is important to note, ERMA does not allow excavators to automatically decline all Code 60 requests. ERMA only allows excavators to set up a feature that declines Code 60 requests locators submit after 6:00 PM the night before the ticket is due to be responded to, or, in other words, 7:00 AM when the ticket is due. ERMA will definitely help excavators better manage and track Positive Responses, and it will easily allow them to review and verify all Positive Responses prior to beginning excavation, as required by law.

And what about the secret alluded to in the Letter from the CEO? Well, the icon for the application was created by Kari Harris, Virginia 811's Head of Safety and Organizational Improvement, and an AI model. She submitted the basic information related to the logo to an AI image generator and it created the actual logo. As for the description of the application found in both the App Store and Google Store? It was submitted to ChatGPT by Shana Linthicum, Head of Service and Communications. After some edits, it was this AI generated text that was used for the description of the application. So, modeling a use of AI, Virginia 811 utilized advanced technology to help facilitate the launch of this application!

ERMA is currently available for download, but its full rollout is scheduled for September 25, 2023. A future update will provide excavators with more features to help them ensure their excavation sites are clearly marked. While no technology, currently, will ensure, 100%, that any site is safe to excavate, current technology, and near-future technology, will continue to push all of us in this industry toward the potential for 0 damages. We are all carrying a great weight on our shoulders; to reach the noble goal of 0 damages per 1,000 tickets and to embrace the technology that can very well carry us forward toward this goal! Without this embracing of new technologies, we will, succinctly put, remain at the status quo...or worse!



ERMA - Virginia 811
Utilities

VA811 Utilities

GET

GOLDEN SHOVEL AWARD WINNER

JOSEPH SPARROW

GOLDEN SHOVEL AWARD 2nd QUARTER

Since March 28, 2022, Joseph Sparrow has been an invaluable member of Virginia 811, currently holding the position of Regional Public Awareness Liaison. Operating as Virginia 811's representative for the Southwest region, he actively educates and trains stakeholders about the Virginia Underground Utility Damage Prevention Act, helps organize LDPC meetings in this region, and plays a central role in educating and promoting Virginia 811 processes. Joseph's involvement also extends to various events, including home shows and networking gatherings, where he ensures effective communication of Virginia 811's messages to both homeowners and industry professionals.



Yet, Joseph's role encompasses much more than meets the eye. Behind the scenes, he manages Virginia 811's collateral and SWAG inventory, oversees the distribution of marketing materials, coordinates and handles the Owl meeting camera for virtual gatherings, and manages meeting chat posts. Despite his unassuming demeanor, Joseph's contributions are immeasurable. With a perpetual smile and words of kindness, he's recognized as a driving force behind the scenes. Throughout his responsibilities at Virginia 811, Joseph's unwavering dedication shines through, reflecting his positive attitude and willingness to assist others. His steadfast commitment to safety and service permeates every facet of his work.

“ Joseph is an amazing super-power at work for Virginia 811. He may be underestimated because he is most often the quietest one in the room. Yet through his calm and composed approach, he always manages to deliver results while remaining a kind and steady influence on others. ”

Congratulations to Joseph Sparrow, the well-deserved recipient of the Golden Shovel Award for the Second Quarter!



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Team Members Celebrating
Their Service to Virginia 811 This Quarter

THANK YOU FOR YOUR YEARS OF SERVICE

Marty Mitchem

7/13/2002 | 21 Years of Service

Alixandra Dean

7/29/2019 | 4 Years of Service

Garry Finley

9/29/2004 | 19 Years of Service

Chuck Emerson

7/29/2019 | 4 Years of Service

Amanda Cottrell

8/11/2017 | 6 Years of Service

Fernando Mendez

9/2/2020 | 3 Years of Service

Nikki Turpin

7/16/2018 | 5 Years of Service

Kimberly Swope

9/2/2020 | 3 Years of Service

Kim Asbury

7/30/2018 | 5 Years of Service

Shana Linthicum

7/14/2021 | 2 Years of Service

Jerry Altice

7/29/2019 | 4 Years of Service

Brian Morehouse

8/1/2022 | 1 Year of Service



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

**HAPPY
RETIREMENT!**

A LEGACY OF DEDICATION & CARE

A Bittersweet Farewell: Celebrating Cathy Waldron's Impact



In the landscape of professional careers, there are those individuals whose influence and contributions stretch far beyond the bounds of their job descriptions. They become synonymous with excellence, dedication, and a passion for service that leaves an indelible mark on their organization and its extended community. Cathy Waldron, whose remarkable journey with Virginia 811 spans an impressive 21 years, is undeniably one of these extraordinary individuals.

From her initial steps as a founding team member to her most recent role as Members Services Liaison, Cathy's trajectory has been a testament to resilience, commitment, and a heart-driven approach to her work. Her story is one that deserves celebration, reflection, and above all, appreciation.

Cathy's voyage began with a whimsical encounter involving the mysterious "OCARS Norfield." A simple misunderstanding of a ticketing system's name led to the playful description of "old cars in the north field." This anecdote not only highlights Cathy's warm sense of humor but also foreshadows her distinctive communication style, fondly referred to as "Cathy Talk" within the organization. This unique way of connecting has become emblematic of her genuine and personable approach to solving problems and engaging with colleagues and stakeholders.

Her ability to forge meaningful connections on a personal level has been the bedrock of her success. Colleagues and stakeholders alike have been touched by Cathy's authenticity, dedication, and tireless work ethic. Her unwavering commitment to guiding members through the membership process and her instrumental role in utility mapping have solidified her reputation as a reliable and indispensable asset to Virginia 811.

But it's Cathy's personality that truly sets her apart. Her down-to-earth demeanor, coupled with her presence at meetings and events, has made her a cherished figure in the lives of everyone she encountered. Whether offering assistance, sharing insights, or simply taking the time to genuinely get to know those she's engaged with, Cathy's impact transcends her professional role.

As Cathy embarks on a new chapter in her life, her absence will undoubtedly be deeply felt within the Virginia 811 team and its larger community. Her legacy of creativity, problem-solving, and a steadfast commitment to service will resonate for years to come. Her departure marks not an end, but a continuation of her influence as an inspiration to all who have had the privilege of knowing and working with her.

In the realm of organizations, it is individuals like Cathy Waldron who remind us that the heart and soul of any endeavor lies in the hands and hearts of its people. Her retirement symbolizes the closing of a remarkable chapter while opening doors to new possibilities. As she sets forth on a well-deserved journey filled with joy and fulfillment, join us in celebrating Cathy Waldron, a beacon of dedication, compassion, and excellence. Thank you for your 21 years of unwavering service and for shaping the landscape of Virginia 811 in ways that will forever be treasured. Your impact is immeasurable, and your legacy will continue to shine brightly.

Thank You For Your 21 Years of Service to Virginia 811.





PAT Summer Highlights

A Busy Quarter for the Team



The past three months have been a whirlwind for our dedicated Public Awareness and Training (PAT) team. Amid the scorching heat of summer 2023, the team enthusiastically embraced a slew of training sessions, marketing events, and conferences, showcasing their resilience and commitment.

The summer season saw the PAT team actively participating in a series of Local Damage Prevention Committee (LDPC) meetings held across the state. But the team's endeavors didn't stop there. Our liaisons embarked on a journey across the state, delivering general 811 presentations and hosting training classes tailored to the new law changes that came into effect on July 1, 2023. The months of June and July witnessed Virginia 811's Law Change Town Hall meetings, ensuring everyone was well-versed on the recent updates to the law.

And in an innovative twist, our team brought education to where it was needed most. When attending our classrooms wasn't possible, our liaisons donned their work boots, personal protective equipment, and hit the field. This hands-on approach allowed them to engage with professionals unable to attend formal sessions and provided a chance to witness real-world installations, repairs, and emergencies.

Our PAT liaisons also embarked on ride-alongs with Locators, a fantastic opportunity to grasp the intricacies of locates, blueprint interpretation, and the daily challenges faced by locators.

Throughout June, July, and August, the team has been able to educate over **2500** individuals through their efforts. As we transition into the fall season, the Virginia 811 team remains steadfast in its commitment to furthering damage prevention awareness, and we continue to receive invitations for conferences, meetings, and trainings, setting the stage for a promising year ahead.

Wondering How Virginia 811 Can Assist You?

If your organization is interested in training, conferences, or partnering for community events, reach out to **Brian Morehouse, Manager of Public Awareness**, at bmorehouse@va811.com to schedule a training session tailored to your needs.



Illuminating Partnerships:

Harnessing the Power of VA811's LED Display Truck

In today's fast-paced world, where capturing attention is an art and effective communication is essential, Virginia 811 has harnessed the power of technology to amplify our message and impact. The shining star of our outreach efforts? Our LED display truck.

The LED display truck isn't just any vehicle; it's a mobile marvel that highlights our organization's commitment to safety, education, and community engagement. With its vibrant LED screens illuminating messages, graphics, and information, the truck transforms itself into a roving educational canvas.

So if you're looking for a unique way to promote your organization and messaging at your next event, Virginia 811 offers our members, our excavator community, and in-kind organizations, an innovative marketing opportunity.

Stand out from the crowd by having our display truck at your next event. Combining your safety messaging and brand with ours is a win-win for everyone.

Best of all.... it's free of charge!

To Reserve the Virginia 811 Display Truck
visit: VA811.com/truck-request/
Making an Impact When We Partner Together



STATEWIDE LDPC MEETING UPDATE

Virginia's Local Damage Prevention Committee (LDPC) meetings are going strong in 2023, attracting substantial participation from our member, excavator, and locator communities. Notably, last August marked the revival of LDPC meetings, with the 2022 session in Fredericksburg kicking off these meetings again after a hiatus of over three years. Since then, the program has flourished, hosting more than 18 in-person LDPC meetings across various regions, including a virtual Spanish-speaking LDPC. Our sincere gratitude extends to the hosts and sponsors who have contributed to the success of these events.

The momentum continues as we prepare for Virginia 811's inaugural LDPC meeting on the eastern shore, scheduled for Tuesday, September 12th, making this a long anticipated meeting for stakeholders in this region.

Additionally, the first Roanoke-area LDPC meeting in nearly four years took place on August 22nd. Following a year of efforts to revive the Southwest Region of Virginia, this gathering attracted a substantial crowd of 40 individuals representing over 20 different organizations. Virginia 811 team members Anna Holtz, Quality Assurance/Quality Control Supervisor,

and Kerry Bradley, Operations Supervisor, were also present to provide a Q&A session on Web Ticket Entry, the Virginia 811 Academy, and the Locate Request Best Practices guide.

"We aimed to provide valuable Virginia 811 tools and resources at the Roanoke meeting. As Kerry and I are both local to this meeting, we saw the opportunity to foster collaboration with stakeholders and offer them in-person tools, tips, and tricks to support their work," explained Anna Holtz.

Brian Morehouse, Virginia 811 Manager of Public

Awareness, emphasizes, "Our goal is to offer relevant information and current insights at every LDPC meeting. We can regularly find these resources in our local communities and can organize guest speakers to keep our meetings fresh and informative over time."

Please be sure to regularly visit the Virginia 811 Events calendar for upcoming meetings in your area. To access the Events calendar, simply visit: VA811.com/events/. Additionally, please refer to the information below to learn how to register for notifications regarding statewide or regional meetings happening near you.

Virginia 811 Liaisons By LDPC Region

Fernando Mendez

- Northern Virginia Region 1
- Northern Virginia Region 2
- Northern Virginia Region 3
- Central Virginia Region 2
- Spanish Language Virtual Meeting

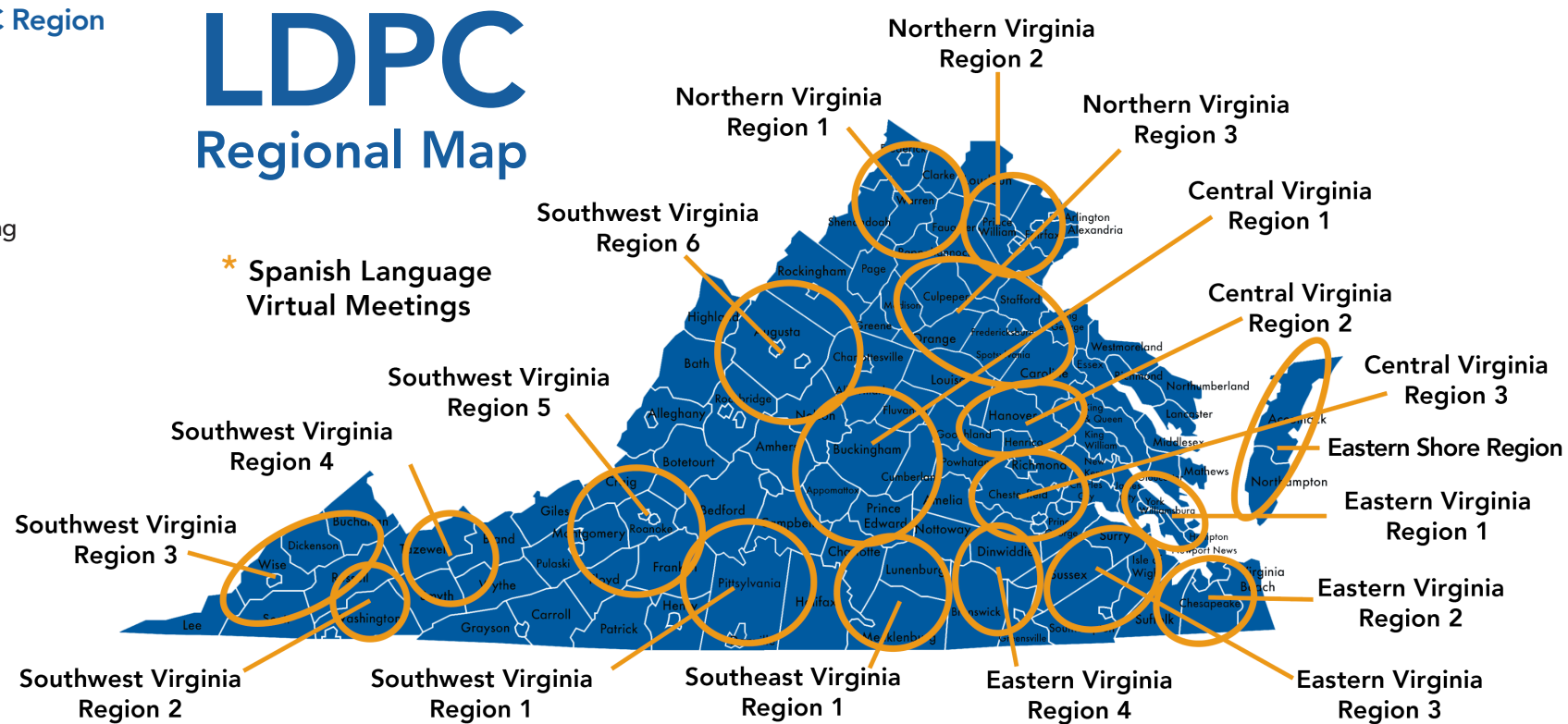
Molly Avery

- Central Virginia Region 3
- Eastern Shore Region
- Eastern Virginia Region 1
- Eastern Virginia Region 2
- Eastern Virginia Region 3
- Eastern Virginia Region 4

Joseph Sparrow

- Central Virginia Region 1
- Southeast Virginia Region 1
- Southwest Virginia Region 1
- Southwest Virginia Region 2
- Southwest Virginia Region 3
- Southwest Virginia Region 4
- Southwest Virginia Region 5
- Southwest Virginia Region 6

LDPC Regional Map



You can now opt to receive notifications for the LDPC sessions of your choice. Simply visit the VA811.com website, navigate to Resources, select Training, and at the bottom of the page, sign up for the meetings in your area, or for state-wide notifications for LDPC meetings.

SIGN UP FOR LDPC MEETING NOTIFICATIONS

Sign up for email notifications for LDPC meetings happening in your region or receive notifications for meetings statewide.



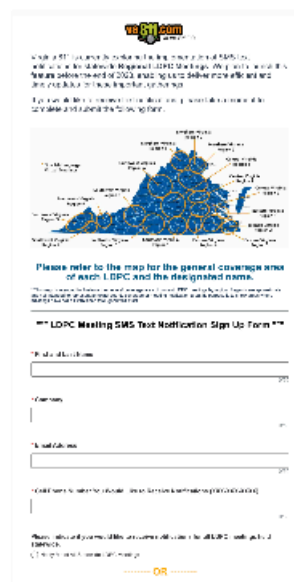
Email Alerts



Text Messages



Scan the QR code to complete and submit your information.



811 DAY August 11th - National Safe Digging Day

A Week-Long Celebration for a Monumental Day!



Virginia 811 embraced the spirit of 811 Day, celebrating the entire week with a multitude of captivating events spanning the Commonwealth. The festivities included dynamic sponsorships at prominent baseball parks, county fairs, speedways, and field visits - all dedicated to broadcasting the vital 811 Day Safe Digging Message!

For the second consecutive year, Virginia 811 partnered with Papa John's Pizza and introduced Virginia Natural Gas as a 2023 sponsor. Papa John's offered an \$8.11 pizza deal across 27 Hampton Roads locations using the promo code **811DEAL**. Over 50,000 pizza boxes featured the offer, promoting 811 Day, Virginia 811, Virginia Natural Gas, and safe digging. An additional coupon provided \$5 off orders over \$20, with over 8,000 coupons distributed in Richmond and Eastern Virginia.

As a cornerstone of our annual 811 Day festivities, the Public Awareness & Training (PAT) team made surprise statewide work site visits throughout the week, delivering hot Papa John's pizza, cold beverages, and Virginia 811 swag. These gestures of appreciation are aimed at thanking stakeholders who prioritize safety and the protection of underground utilities during excavation activities. Public Awareness Liaisons **Molly Avery** and **Joseph Sparrow** visited over 16 crews in the field, delivering more than 50 pizzas while gaining insights into underground gas line installations in Chesapeake and the Peninsula.

Virginia 811 teamed up with Columbia Gas to kick off our 811 Day efforts by sponsoring the Norfolk Tides baseball game on August 6th. Columbia Gas unveiled their new mascot, **Digger Dog**, at the game, and Digger even had the honor of throwing out the first pitch.

Virginia 811 also joined forces with Dominion Energy for a sponsorship at the Richmond Flying Squirrels game at The Diamond in Richmond, Virginia, on 811 Day. The event drew a crowd of over 6,500 enthusiastic fans. **Brian Morehouse**, Manager of Public Awareness, oversaw the 811 marketing table, and Digger Dog of Columbia Gas again took to the mound for the first pitch of the night.

On 811 Day, Virginia 811 had a concurrent sponsorship at the Salem Red Sox baseball game in Salem, Virginia. Public Awareness Liaison **Joseph Sparrow** engaged fans at our 811 marketing table positioned at the venue entrance, and also had the honor of throwing out the first pitch.

Throughout the week, our display truck journeyed through various 811 Day activities, spanning Chesapeake, Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Newport News, New Kent, Richmond, and concluding in Courtland, Virginia, where our liaisons hosted a marketing table at the Franklin South Hampton County Fair.

Further north, Regional Marketing Liaison **Fernando Mendez** participated in a successful LDPC meeting in Northern Virginia hosted by Washington Gas. Following the meeting, Washington Gas held their annual Safety Day event for 811 Day.

The initiatives of this year's 811 Day campaign engaged a wide audience of Virginians, highlighting the significance of reaching out to Virginia 811 before commencing any digging endeavor.

We deeply appreciate the contributions of our partners
Dominion Energy, Virginia Natural Gas, Columbia Gas, and Papa Johns Pizza of Hampton Roads
for their invaluable contributions to an unforgettable week of 811 Day celebrations.





Upcoming Virginia Pipeline Awareness Meetings



Coordinated Response & Excavator Exercise Pipeline Safety Program (CoRE-EX)

CoRE-EX is a combination program where excavators learn pipeline safety alongside first responders. CoRE-EX aims to bring pipeline operators, first responders, and excavators together to pre-plan for pipeline emergency response. Each meeting will demonstrate a local pipeline incident scenario to exchange resources and capabilities of all included. The CoRE-EX program engages all through interaction with pipeline representatives and interaction with the audience.

WISE, VA September 12, 2023 5:30 PM	LEBANON, VA September 13, 2023 5:30 PM	ABINGDON, VA September 14, 2023 5:30 PM
BLACKSBURG, VA September 18, 2023 5:30 PM	ROANOKE, VA September 19, 2023 11:00 AM	MARTINSVILLE, VA September 20, 2023 5:30 PM
SOUTH BOSTON, VA September 21, 2023 5:30 PM	LYNCHBURG, VA September 25, 2023 5:30 PM	PALMYRA, VA September 26, 2023 5:30 PM
RUCKERSVILLE, VA September 27, 2023 5:30 PM	HARRISONBURG, VA September 28, 2023 5:30 PM	FRONT ROYAL, VA October 2, 2023 5:30 PM
MANASSAS, VA October 3, 2023 11:00 AM	CULPEPER, VA October 4, 2023 5:30 PM	FREDERICKSBURG, VA October 10, 2023 11:00 AM
SANDSTON, VA October 11, 2023 11:00 AM	COLONIAL HEIGHTS, VA October 12, 2023 5:30 PM	EMPORIA, VA October 17, 2023 11:00 AM
SMITHFIELD, VA October 18, 2023 11:00 AM	VIRGINIA BEACH, VA October 19, 2023 5:30 PM	

To register for a CoRE-EX meeting in your area, go to VA811.com/events/

MAJOR MILESTONE 1,000,811 TICKET FOR 2023



Every year, Virginia 811 eagerly anticipates a significant milestone: the millionth ticket entered for the year. However, this year, we decided to infuse some extra excitement by setting the winning number at **1,000,811**.

Landon White, Assistant Project Manager at Down Under Construction in Sterling, Virginia, marked the entry of the 1,000,811th ticket for 2023 as an Update. To commemorate this occasion, Virginia 811's Regional Marketing Liaison, Fernando Mendez, treated the entire office team at Down Under to a pizza lunch, along with some special Virginia 811 swag.

Landon attributes his success in utilizing Virginia 811's online tools to the training he received through the Virginia 811 Academy. This training equipped him with the necessary tools and skills to efficiently process his requests online. He emphasizes, "The Academy's training videos provide clear, step-by-step instructions that are self-explanatory and easy to follow."

Much like Landon, if you find yourself in need of updating, canceling, or re-marking your Locate Requests, remember to utilize the TRE online option, just as Landon did. This process is quick, easy, and typically takes less than 30 seconds to complete. For those handling a substantial volume of tickets like Landon, the time savings can truly accumulate. Just take it from him!

Library of Virginia Raises Virginia 811 Awareness



Recognizing the importance of promoting safe digging practices, the Library of Virginia (LVA) is now spreading the 811 Dig with CARE message across its **94 public libraries** in Virginia. Their aim is to establish connections with public libraries throughout the Commonwealth to advocate for responsible digging practices.

In anticipation of 811 National Safe Digging Day, Virginia 811 provided shareable resources accessible through our website, tailored for libraries to share via their communication channels. Going above and beyond, LVA also distributed Virginia 811 Homeowner brochures, available to library visitors. To maximize outreach, they strategically scheduled a dedicated Facebook post about Virginia 811 Day on August 11th.

This collaboration between Virginia libraries and Virginia 811 exemplifies a proactive approach to community safety and information dissemination. By combining efforts, we seek to reinforce responsible digging practices, creating a positive impact statewide.

Both LVA and Virginia 811 share the goal of facilitating direct interaction between Virginia 811 and library programming staff, leveraging the familiarity we established in August.

Virginia 811 Shareable Resources

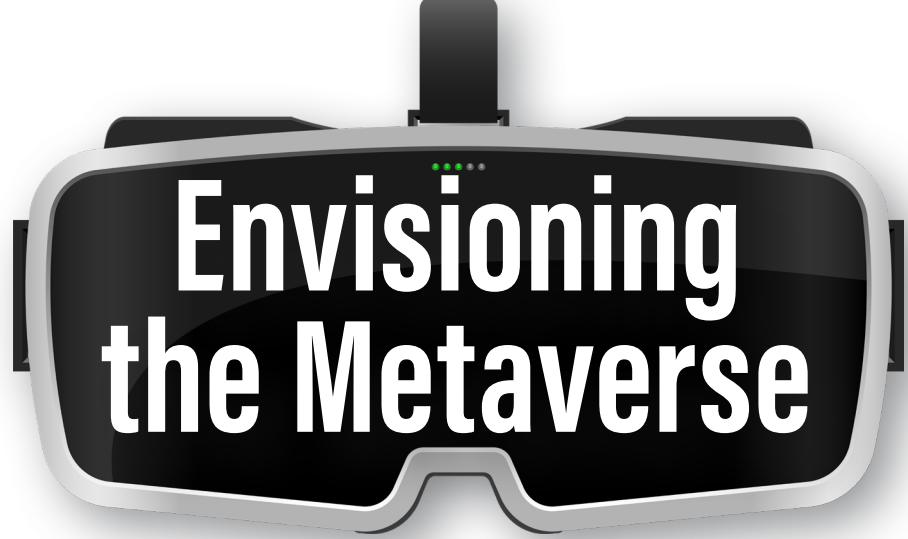
811 DAY SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS
[DOWNLOAD HERE](#)

HOMEOWNER BROCHURE
[DOWNLOAD HERE](#)

811 DAY PIZZA DEAL SOCIAL MEDIA POST
[DOWNLOAD HERE](#)

A heartfelt thank you to LVA for your invaluable support!

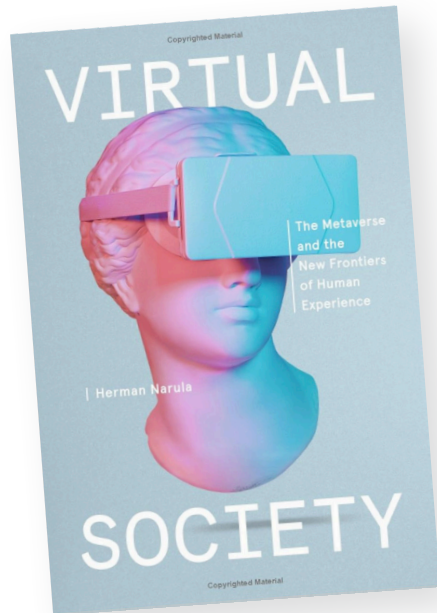




Book Review of *Virtual Society:* The Metaverse and the New Frontiers of Human Experience

by Herman Narula

- B. Scott Crawford



The “Metaverse” is a truly foreign land. Not only is it a foreign land due to its digital and virtual nature, but due to its general vagueness in regard to what it actually is! What do we mean when we refer to the “Metaverse”? Is it simply Facebook’s attempt to reposition itself to remain relevant in a fast-paced industry where Moore’s Law is a cruel tyrant over those who cannot keep up? Is it simply the digital environment one can enter with cumbersome headgear? Is it more about gaming and wasting time than substantive experiences that truly matter? All of the above? And ultimately, is this concept new and strictly tied to the Digital Age of which we are now a part – or is it rooted in humanity’s ancient past?

Herman Narula, co-founder and CEO of Improbable (<https://www.improbable.io>), a London-based technology company, attempts to advance a clearer understanding of the Metaverse, as well as his vision of where technology may be leading us in regard to finding greater fulfillment in life through our connectivity within the Metaverse. Admittedly, this book requires a fairly open mind about what the future may hold. Narula advances a vision where we will enter into a post-human existence and witness an evolutionary process, or experience “speciation,” where the Metaverse will create a digital driven evolution of humanity where humans will morph into something incredibly sophisticated. With such high-minded assertions and somewhat radical vision of how technology is on the cusp of shaping a historically unprecedented future, this book requires the reader to suspend beliefs about the limits of technology and Hollywood’s depictions of the Metaverse as being dystopian in nature. Narula challenges the reader to envision the Metaverse as an opportunity to greatly enhance our lives and help all of us find greater fulfillment in life.

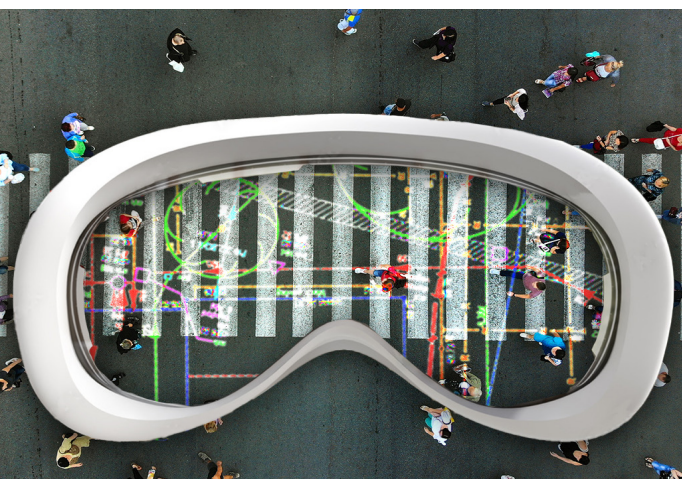


But first, what is the Metaverse? According to Narula, the Metaverse is “a network of meaning that links various worlds within a set and facilitates transfer of value between them.” Within this context, Narula begins his book with an interesting historical reflection that suggests the Metaverse is not new but has, and is, an integral part of the human experience. From pre-history constructs of imagined worlds related to the afterlife, to philosophical constructs of imagined utopias, Narula suggests that virtual constructs are not new. For example, continuing into the contemporary era, beliefs about Heaven and Hell, rooted in the ancient period, influence how Christians interpret the real world and live within it. These constructs, virtual in nature, create a Metaverse as the virtual world and real world intersect. It is from this construct of the Metaverse, where virtual and real intersect and create understandings and experiences, that Narula formulates his vision of a new, digital-based Metaverse.

Narula suggests we must embrace a new and different, post-industrial, understanding of work and fulfillment. To Narula, the Metaverse will allow all of us to find experiences within a virtual world that, ultimately, will seamlessly interact with the real world, allowing us to find levels of fulfillment current work experiences fail to achieve. Moving away from classic behaviorist theories about “carrot and stick” management styles, Narula suggests the Metaverse will facilitate a work experience better aligned with self-determination theory, where intrinsic fulfillment can be obtained, and extrinsic rewards become less important.

In short, the creation of a digital-based Metaverse that simulates incredibly real experiences, that in turn will directly intersect real-world events, will surpass historical constructs of a Metaverse. The digital-based Metaverse will lead to an existence unlike anything humans have witnessed. Virtual worlds and the real world will blend to allow for new levels of personal introspection and experience. Arguing such experiences will be less dystopian, such as represented in movies like *The Matrix*, these experiences will drive satisfaction and higher levels of personal and professional growth.

Virtual Society is arguably a difficult work to fully embrace. Possibly Narula puts society on a timeline, culminating in a post-human (think almost “cyborg”) existence that is closer than it may actually be, but the work is worth reading. For one, it helps the reader recognize that technology is moving extremely fast, allowing humanity to find a level of virtual experiences that could potentially revolutionize life as we know it. However, possibly the greatest message Narula advances is that we, as leaders in business, need to explore how we can create greater fulfillment for our teams, aligned with self-determination theory as opposed to industrial-based models driven by behaviorism. Whether in the real world or virtual worlds, it is increasingly evident that fulfillment, rather than simple production, leads to stronger teams and can carry businesses closer to reaching their visions and missions. Digital-based virtual worlds may help this experience, allowing businesses to find new, virtual, arenas to both engage stakeholders and create unprecedented rewarding experiences for those on the team engaging stakeholders.



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