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NUCA's Excellence In Underground Awards Unveiled

Changes In Underground Construction Deliver A New Look To NUCA Top Jobs

(Fairfax, Virginia) – The National Utility Contractors Association is proud to unveil this month the updated “Excellence In Underground Awards.” Formerly known as the NUCA Top Jobs Awards, this new launch of the rebranded NUCA’s eminent project awards reflects the changing nature of recognition for these apex projects of American underground utilities construction.

“Our members build spectacular projects for their communities,” said Doug Carlson, NUCA’s Chief Executive Officer. “The ‘Excellence in Underground Awards’ program allows our members to recognize the complexity of their peers’ work and publicly congratulate them on their achievements. The winning public works projects deserve the highest honors, and we’re proud that NUCA provides the premier awards program in our industry to recognize these achievements.”

The 2022 Excellence In Underground Awards continues the industry’s tradition of recognizing outstanding projects that exhibit innovative solutions to challenging obstacles and produce the highest quality results from our industry’s tradecraft, design, and employee labor. The competition is open to all NUCA contractor members in good standing. Members submit their applications online at nuca.com, the association’s comprehensive website.

Projects are awarded in 10 award categories: Gas Distribution, Water Distribution, Trenchless Technologies, Electrical Power, Oil and Gas Pipelines, Water or Treatment Plants, Sanitary Sewer Collection, Excavation/Site Development, Communications, and Shale Gas Play. Out of these categories, an Overall Excellence In Underground Award is voted on by members and awarded.

NUCA’s existing award program for member’s projects was first instituted in 2017, with annual awards being recognized since then. NUCA leadership decided earlier this year to update the Top Jobs award program and reflect the more complex nature of their member’s infrastructure projects, and to encourage more NUCA members to seek recognition for their employee’s hard work and completed projects. Part of that update would include rebranding features such as the award’s name and logo, which was completed earlier this month.

NUCA member’s jobs are primarily heavy civil engineering construction involving water and wastewater infrastructure projects. However, our members also build the underground phases of many other construction projects, including highways, airports, bridges, ports, commercial buildings, data centers, power stations, broadband, natural gas, pipeline, and subsurface electrical lines. In 2017, the last year statistics are available, the U.S. utility construction industry built \$152 billion worth of infrastructure projects.

The standards developed for project submission remain the same as the former NUCA Top Jobs awards:

- All projects must have been completed during the calendar year, with submission deadline for that year remaining as December 31st.
- Companies are not limited to number of projects submitted per category, and they may enter the same project in more than one category or more than one project in the same category or different jobs in more than one category. Only a single project may be selected as a finalist in one category, and projects involving serious injuries or fatalities are not eligible.
- Finalists' applications will be on display at the NUCA annual meeting or convention for attendees to review, vote on, and select overall winners in each category. Category finalists are judged by an independent panel selected by the NUCA Awards Committee.

The first Excellence In Underground Awards will be awarded to eligible NUCA members at the March 13, 2022 Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada. Membership solicitation for the 2022 awards began last October, with the nomination's deadline for 2022 entries ending December 31. Nominations for 2023 projects will open again in early October.

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About The National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA)

Founded in 1964, the National Utility Contractors Association represents more than 1,900 U.S. utility and excavation contractors, manufacturers, and suppliers who provide the materials and workforce to build and maintain our nation's intricate network of water, sewer, gas, telecommunications, and electric infrastructure. NUCA is found online at www.nuca.com, and can be followed on Twitter at [@NUCA_National](https://twitter.com/NUCA_National). The association's Twitter hashtags are #NUCAdigs and #WeDigAmerica.