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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**National 811 Day on August 11th Is a  
Reminder to Always Call 811 Before Digging**

**Protect Yourself and Stay Safe While Digging**

Whether you are a “do-it-yourself” homeowner or a contracted professional, before starting landscaping or home improvement projects, it is essential to protect yourself and stay safe when digging.

Most people are surprised to learn that there are more than 100 billion feet of underground utilities in the U.S. This equates to more than one football field’s length of buried utilities for every man, woman and child in the country, according to Louisiana One Call, an organization dedicated to protecting the safety of people who dig near underground utility lines.

Every six minutes in the U.S., an underground utility line is damaged because someone did not call 811, the national “Call Before You Dig” phone number, or connect online at [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com).

Each year, August 11 (8/11) is a reminder to dig safely and lawfully. It’s important to dial 811 or connect online to have the approximate location of underground utilities and pipelines marked, whether you’re installing a fence, deck or swimming pool; planting a tree; or beginning any excavation project at home or on your property.

Protect yourself and those around you from injury by contacting 811. Not only is it the law in Louisiana, but also knowing where pipelines and underground utility lines are buried prevents unintentional damage, service interruptions, potential fines and costly repairs.

(MORE)

You must contact 811 every time, even if you have done so previously for a similar project, as the depth of utilities can vary, and there may be multiple utilities located in the same area.

## **Contacting 811**

When you contact 811, information will be collected about your digging plans, and local pipeline and utility companies will be notified about your project.

Representatives will be sent to mark the approximate location of underground utilities using color-coded paint, flags or stakes. If there are no underground utilities in the area, they will mark “clear.”

The advance notice required to have underground utilities marked varies by state. Louisiana requires 48 to 72 hours (excluding weekends, holidays and the day the call was made).

### Planning Your Project

- Regardless of the depth of your digging or your familiarity with the property, always contact 811 before starting a project that involves digging.
- If a contractor has been hired, confirm they have done so. Don't allow work to start until all utilities have been marked.
- After you have waited the required time for markings, if utilities have not been marked, you must contact 811 again to check the status of your request before digging. Also confirm whether the markings have an expiration date and when they will need to be re-marked.
- If your project is located near the paint, flags or stakes, contact the underground operator for the specific steps you should take.

Protect your safety, the safety of the community and the environment by digging with care.