



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

Governor Proclaims April 2012 is Safe Digging Month Safe Digging is No Accident

Duluth, GA April 11, 2012– April has been declared Safe Digging Month in Georgia by Governor Nathan Deal. Joining Deal in a ceremony today at the State Capitol were Georgia Public Service Commissioners Doug Everett and Stan Wise, staff from Georgia 811 and representatives from utility owner/operators, locate contractors and technicians as well as professional excavators and contractors.

“Georgia has recognized Safe Digging month for more than 20 years, encouraging homeowners and professionals to call before digging. Safe Digging Month was first celebrated nationwide in 2007 with the rollout of 811 (the national call before you dig number). This year we celebrate five years of 811 and National Safe Digging Month. Through its nationwide use, 8-1-1 is recognized as the way that we are able to keep both the public and the professional excavator safe.”

“Calling 8-1-1 is the best way to prevent damage to our underground utilities,” said PSC Commissioner Stan Wise, “When underground utilities are damaged, everyone loses.”

Last April, Georgia 811 took 75,096 requests to have underground utility lines located. For each request, an average of seven member utility companies were notified that digging would be taking place in their service area. By the end of the 2011, Georgia 811 had taken over 839,500 requests to have lines located, this created over 10.2 million notifications to member utility companies.

“In 2007, the roll out of 811 made the number that needed to be dialed more memorable. Now, in 2012 Georgia 811 introduces eTicket on www.Georgia811.com. eTicket allows homeowners to apply on line for their locate request. Two easy, free methods to keep Georgia safe and connected,” explains Claudette Campbell, President and CEO of Georgia 811.

Contacting Georgia 811, by phone or online, begins an important communication process to member utility companies who have service in the area of your project. “The smart and safe way to dig is to always call 811 before every digging project, every time. Installing a mail box, fence, pool or even if you have hired a professional to do work for you, all digging projects need to be done safely. It not only saves lives, but money and time. If you have dug in the past without calling, don’t make that mistake again. The call is free and having the underground utilities marked is free,” shares Campbell.

PSC Commissioner Doug Everett said, “I want to remind anyone who excavates to call before you dig by placing a call to 8-1-1. It’s free and it’s the law. By calling before you dig, we can prevent the disruptions and economic losses that can occur when underground utilities are damaged.”

A free call to 811, or applying through eTicket at www.Georgia811.com, begins the process of having underground utility lines marked. Georgia 811 notifies member utility companies where and when you plan to dig. These member companies dispatch locate technicians to mark the underground lines with colored paint and/or flags. By respecting the location of the paint marks and flags you can avoid dangerous contact with underground facilities.

PSC Commission Chairman Tim Echols said, “We are pleased to join with the Governor and all interested groups in working together to prevent damages from occurring to the state’s underground utility facilities. Our common goals are to prevent the interruption of utility services and personal injuries that result from accidents which damage underground facilities. Since the passage of the Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act in 2000, Georgia has built a damage prevention program that ranks in the top five in the nation.”

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Notify Georgia 811 at least two (2) business days before excavation begins. Know what's below. Call before you dig. Dial 811 or apply on line with the new eTicket at www.Georgia811.com.

Established in 1974, Georgia 811 is a non-profit organization comprised of over 750-member utility companies, including cities and counties throughout Georgia that benefit through reductions in lost time, accidents, service interruptions and costly repairs. Georgia 811 has been an industry leader in preventing damage to underground utility facilities and promoting safety and efficiency through high quality and economical notification services. In addition, Georgia 811 provides training and education while encouraging compliance with all applicable laws.

Georgia 811 strives to encourage four Dig Safely practices: 1) Call before you dig. 2) Wait the required amount of time for marking. 3) Respect the flags and marks. 4) Dig with care.

Georgia 811, keeping Georgians safe and connected. Contact Georgia 811 before you dig, every project, every time, dial 811 or online at www.Georgia811.com. For more about the Georgia "Dig Law", visit the Georgia Public Service Commission's website at www.psc.state.ga.us.

Photo Outline: Underground utility damage prevention stakeholders gather in honor of the occasion as Governor Deal Proclaims April Safe Digging Month in Georgia

Pictured, L-R

Meghan Chestnutt, Georgia 811
Bill Edge, Georgia Public Service Commission,
Jeff Patton, AT&T and Georgia 811 Board Member
Pat Wingo, AT&T and Georgia 811 Board Member
Frankie Ridgon, Ellijay Telephone and Georgia 811 Board Member
Commissioner Stan Wise
Richard Krauss STS/Utiliquest
Steve Murphy, Atlanta Gas Light and Georgia 811 Board Member
Claudette Campbell, President and CEO of Georgia 811

Darrol Mitchell, Georgia Power Company and Chair for the Georgia Utility Coordinating Council
Isaac Weathers, Georgia 811
Governor Nathan Deal
Commissioner Doug Everett, Georgia Public Service Commission
Paul McChesney, Colonial Pipeline
Vikki McReynolds, Georgia Utility Contractors Association
Jim Weldon, Georgia Power
Maria Copeland, Georgia 811
Michael Bell, Georgia 811
Suzanne Taylor, AT&T and Georgia 811 Board Member
Todd Edwards, Association of County Commissioners of Georgia
Megan Estes, Georgia 811
Tom Tarver, Southern Natural Gas and Georgia 811 Board Member
Bob Murphy, Georgia 811

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