

# 811 Media Fact Sheet



Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.

## What is 811?

811 is the national number designated by the Federal Communications Commission to help protect do-it-yourselfers, landscapers and contractors from unintentionally hitting underground utility lines while working on digging projects – large and small.

## Why call 811?

For Safety's Sake! Hitting an underground utility line while digging can cause damage to the environment, serious personal injuries, disrupt service to an entire neighborhood and potentially incur fines and repair costs. Calling 811 in Georgia is also the law.

## When to Call 811?\*

- Installing a rural mailbox
- Putting in a fence
- Planting trees or shrubbery
- Building a deck or patio
- Excavating a new garden area

\* These are a few common examples of when to call. Do-it-yourselfers and contractors should call at least two business days before any digging project.

## How Does 811 work?

- One free and easy phone call to 811, at least two business days prior to digging begins the process of getting underground utility lines marked, which is a free service.
- Georgia 811 will answer the call to find out the location and description of the digging site and will notify affected member utility companies, who will then send a professional locate technician to identify and mark the approximate location of lines with colored paint or flags.
- Once underground lines have been marked, callers will know the approximate location of utility lines and can dig safely.
- Please visit the Georgia Public Service Commission's Web site for more information about Georgia's "Dig Law", the Georgia Facilities Protection Act. <http://www.psc.state.ga.us/>

## What happens if people don't call?

- Failure to call before digging results in more than 200,000 unintentional hits annually across the United States.
- Not calling 811 before digging results in one unintentional hit every three minutes, which can lead to injury, repair costs, fines and expensive and inconvenient outages.
- Knowing approximately where underground utility lines are buried before each digging project helps to prevent these situations.

## When to mark your calendars?

- **April** is Safe Digging Month in Georgia by declaration of the Governor and across the nation in many other states. This month recognizes the importance of calling before all outdoor digging projects.
- April 2010, Georgia 811 took 81,042 requests to have underground utility lines located. For each request, on average, 8 member companies were notified that digging would be taking place in their service area.

## Who is Georgia 811?

Georgia 811 will be an industry leader in preventing damage to utility facilities and in promoting safety and efficiency through high quality and economical notification service; providing education and encouraging compliance with applicable laws.. Established in 1974, Georgia 811 is a non-profit organization comprised of over 700-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 UPC provides training and education while encouraging compliance with all applicable laws.