

# 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 contact Georgia 811?

- **For Safety's Sake!** Hitting an underground utility line while digging can cause damage to the environment and/or serious personal injuries.
- **Convenience:** Failure to contact Georgia 811 can result in disrupted service to an entire neighborhood and potentially incur fines and repair costs.
- **It's free.** Georgia 811 exists to prevent utility and safety emergencies, and it's a free service!
- **It's the law.** Please visit the Georgia Public Service Commission's web site at [psc.state.ga.us/](http://psc.state.ga.us/) for more information on Georgia's "Dig Law", the Georgia Facilities Protection Act.

## When should someone contact 811?

Do-it-yourselfers and contractors should reach 811 at least two business days before ANY digging project.

**A few common examples include but are not limited to:**

- Putting in a fence
- Planting trees or shrubbery
- Installing a sprinkler system
- Pool installation
- Installing a mailbox

## How does 811 work?

Notifying Georgia 811 kick-starts a process that is crucial to any outdoor digging project. Digging after utility lines have been marked prevents possible mishaps that could otherwise occur during an outdoor project. The service is free and the process is simple:

1. The digger contacts Georgia 811 by dialing the number or visiting [Georgia811.com](http://Georgia811.com) and submitting an eRequest form at least two business days prior to digging.
2. Georgia 811 then transmits the location and description of the project to the affected member utility companies. After receiving the information, these utility companies send a professional locate technician to identify and mark the approximate location of lines with colored paint or flags.
3. Once underground lines have been marked, the digger now knows the approximate location of utility lines and can dig safely.

## What if 811 is not contacted?

- An underground line is damaged every three minutes nationwide and nearly 1,000 damages are reported to Georgia 811 each month.
- Damage to underground lines can result in service interruptions, costly repair bills and fines.
- Hitting a line can also cause serious harm to the digger and other individuals.

## Why is April so important?

- April is National Safe Digging Month, as well as Safe Digging Month in Georgia by declaration of the governor.
- According to consumer behavior trends, April marks the beginning of the peak period for outdoor digging projects in Georgia and nationwide.
- Raising safe digging awareness in April encourages citizens to contact 811 during an optimum time for utility line protection.

## How has safe digging increased?

- In 2013, Georgia 811 took 945,539 requests to have underground utility lines located.
- In 2014, Georgia 811 took 1,024,888 locate requests. This is an 8.4% increase over 2013.
- For each request 8 member companies on average were notified that digging would be taking place in their service area.
- Of requests made by phone, 56% dialed 811.

## Who is Georgia 811?

Established in 1974, Georgia 811 is a non-profit organization comprised of over 775-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 is dedicated to keeping Georgia safe and connected.