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To All Facility Owner/Operators,

The 2000 Georgia General Assembly enacted the Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act ("Act") and charged the Georgia Public Service Commission ("Commission") with enforcement of the provisions of the Act. The stated purpose of the Act was to "protect the public from physical harm, prevent injury to person and property, and prevent interruptions of utility service resulting from damage to utility facilities caused by blasting or excavating operations by providing a method whereby the location of utility facilities will be made known to persons planning to engage in blasting or excavating operations so that such person may observe proper precautions with respect to such utility facilities." (O.C.G.A. §25-9-2)

Several of the provisions of the Act reference the responsibilities of the facility owner/operators in order to achieve the stated goals of the Act. First and foremost of those requirements is that "all facility owners or operators operating or maintaining utility facilities within the state shall participate as members in and cooperate with the utilities protection center." (O.C.G.A. §25-9-5) O.C.G.A. §25-9-7(e), further promotes the goals of the Act by requiring that "all utility facilities installed by facility owners or operators on or after January 1, 2001, shall be installed in a manner which will make them locatable using a generally accepted electronic locating method by facility owner or operators."

It has been brought to the attention of the Commission that not all facility owners or operators are adhering to this language of the Act and that, indeed, some utility facility owners or operators are not even aware of the requirement. This letter is written to give notice to those utility facility owners or operators who are not members of the utilities protection center and are not installing their facilities in a locatable manner that they are not in compliance with O.C.G.A. §25-9.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Baker, Jr.
Chairman