



Utilities Protection Center of Georgia

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Calling Before You Dig, Just got Easier
--- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ---

Duluth, GA – May 1st, 2007 – The Utilities Protection Center of Georgia (UPC), in partnership with the Common Ground Alliance and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announce the launch of a new nation-wide, three digit “Call Before You Dig” number, 811. This new number, 811, works like UPC’s existing “Call Before You Dig” number 1-800-282-7411 while providing the ease of three digit dialing to have underground utility facilities located and marked to help prevent injury and damages.

811 is a new FCC-designated national N-11 number created to eliminate the confusion of multiple “Call Before You Dig” numbers across the country. This new number will route your call to one of the 62 One Call centers located in the US. The call will be routed based on the area in which you are dialing from. This call will start the process of notifying the appropriate member utility companies within your area of proposed excavation. It is these utility companies who will send out “locators” or locate technicians to the proposed excavation site to mark underground utility lines. The call and the service is provided free of charge to the caller. - Calling 811 also creates a safer working environment for all those at or near the excavation site. Nationally this number is set to be functional by May 1, 2007. Locally, in Georgia, the UPC has already begun receiving calls, as phone companies have come into compliance with the FCC mandate ahead of schedule.

“811 will not take the place of the UPC’s existing ‘Call Before You Dig’ number. It is an additional number for the center that is designed to work in Georgia and across the U.S. When calling 811 in our state, you will still be connected to the UPC,” states Claudette Campbell, UPC Executive Director.

“UPC believes that safe digging is a shared responsibility,” Campbell shares. “Successful sharing always takes good communication and we are dedicated to communicating proposed excavations to our member utility companies from locate requests generated by our excavators and homeowners. We also commit ourselves to educating excavators, member utility companies and the general public, about the responsibilities of safe digging.”

UPC strives to encourage four Dig Safely practices to all its stakeholders: 1) Call before you dig. 2) Wait the required amount of time. 3) Respect the marks. 4) Dig with care.

Risky assumptions about the location of underground utility lines, some of which can be buried at shallow depths, can lead to injury, loss of life or property and or service outages. Also, in the state of Georgia, digging without first calling UPC could result in the issuing of fines by the Georgia Public Service Commission. A copy of the Georgia “Dig Law” can be found at the UPC Website, www.gaupc.com.

Established in 1974, the UPC is a non-profit organization comprised of member utility companies throughout Georgia that benefit through reductions in lost time, accidents, service interruptions and costly repairs. It is estimated that the UPC notification system has saved its member utilities and the public at-large from millions of dollars in expensive repairs across the state. The program is credited with helping to prevent countless potentially life threatening situations and the dangers and inconveniences associated with service interruptions. To have your proposed excavation site’s utility lines marked, please call UPC at 1-800-282-7411, from Atlanta 770-623-4344 or simply dial 811. UPC continues to accept online locate requests as well. For more information about UPC, its service or damage prevention resources, please visit www.gaupc.com.

The Common Ground Alliance (CGA) is a member-driven association of nearly 1400 individuals, organizations and sponsors in every facet of the underground utility industry. Established in 2000, CGA is committed to saving lives and preventing damage to American underground infrastructure by promoting effective damage prevention practices. CGA has established itself as the leading organization in an effort to reduce damages to underground facilities in North America through shared responsibility among all stakeholders. For more information, visit CGA in the Web at www.commongroundalliance.com.