Be safe – and call 811 – every time you dig

The free 811 call helps prevent injuries and damage to underground utilities

ALLENTOWN, Pa. (April 10, 2024) – If you're breaking ground on a spring project – a pool, a new fence or mailbox, or landscaping work – don't start any digging until you call 811. It's free, simple and can prevent injuries and damage to underground utilities.

April is National Safe Digging Month, which serves as an annual reminder about the importance of making safe digging a priority at every job site, regardless of the month. Calling 811 helps ensure that a crew will visit the work site to mark the existence of underground utilities, including underground power lines, so that those doing the work will avoid contacting them.

"We want all of our customers to stay safe around electricity," said Doug Haupt, public safety manager at PPL Electric Utilities. "This is the prime season for yard work and home construction projects, and we want to remind everyone that digging before you know what's below can have disastrous consequences. We urge all of our customers to call 811."

Pennsylvania law requires an 811 call at least three business days before digging with any power equipment. Once the call is placed, a crew is sent out to survey the area and mark it with spray paint and flags where underground utilities – power, water, sewer and gas lines and other utilities – are located.

Common Ground Alliance (CGA), an association committed to raising public awareness about excavation safety, says hundreds of thousands of dig-ins to underground utilities occur annually. Those dig-ins have potential to cut residents off from critical services or cause serious personal injury.

When calling 811, be prepared to provide the following information:

- The county and municipality in which the planned dig is located.
- The street name and address.
- The nearest intersecting/cross street to the address.
- Details of the dig site, including the area of the property where excavation will occur and what kind of work is being done.
- When the project is scheduled to take place.
- The name of the company doing the work (if applicable). Contractors must make their own 811 call.

If you see digging going on in your neighborhood and believe an 811 call may not have been placed (no paint or flags), make the call yourself to keep everyone safe and prevent damage to underground lines.

"Making contact with power lines, overhead or underground, can have devastating consequences, so we encourage everyone to call 811 before any digging project on their property," Haupt said. "And remember: the law requires the call."

Visit pplelectric.com/safety for more information on safety for contractors, first responders, kids and customers.

About PPL Electric Utilities
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