

National 811 Day - Dig It!

Put safety first for earth-moving projects

PPL Electric Utilities



Calling 811 before an excavation project is like wearing your seat belt — both can help save your life.

Sunday (8/11) is National 811 Day, a time to call special attention to the need to always call 811 so underground utilities can be marked before digging starts. In Pennsylvania, state law requires the call to be made any time powered equipment is used. Calls also need to be made at least three business days before digging starts.

“We recommend homeowners and contractors call 811 or 1-800-242-1776 for all digging jobs, not just those involving power equipment,” said Rich Muza, PPL Electric Utilities’ project manager for underground facilities and damage prevention. “Calls can be made 24 hours a day, every day of the year.”

The Common Ground Alliance, an association dedicated to reducing damage to underground utilities and promoting digging safety in North America, says calling 811 is the key to success.

According to the alliance, damage occurs less than 1 percent of the time when an excavator notifies a local one-call center before digging. The group estimates the total number of damages could be reduced by nearly a third if all digging were preceded by a request to locate underground utilities. PPL Electric Utilities responded to about 240 accidental digging contacts with its underground lines in 2012. Of that total, more than 40 percent were not preceded by an 811 call.

“Underground cables serve many newer housing developments and carry the same voltages as overhead lines,” Muza said. “If you dig into them, you risk serious injury or death. We want everyone to stay safe.”

Information on 811 and safe digging can be found at www.pa1call.org, www.call811.com or www.commongroundalliance.com.

More safety information for customers, contractors and first responders can be found at www.pplelectric.com/safety.

“Information and awareness are vital to our efforts to reduce contacts with our underground lines,” Muza said. “We want people to think about 811 as they would other safety practices, like wearing their seat belt or taking shelter in a thunderstorm. We want it to become second nature.”

PPL Electric Utilities Corporation, a subsidiary of PPL Corporation that provides electricity delivery services to about 1.4 million customers in Pennsylvania, consistently ranks among the best companies for customer service in the United States. More information is available at www.pplelectric.com.

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