

North Dakotans Reminded to Call Before You Dig

Submitted Article

Governor Armstrong Proclaims Safe Digging Month in North Dakota

“I dig here all the time.”

You might not know the area as well as you think! Even if you've excavated an area previously, erosion, settling ground and other factors can change the depth and location of utilities over time. ALWAYS contact 811 before putting your shovel to the ground!

811

Contact 811 before you dig. 811beforeyoudig.com

Governor Kelly Armstrong has proclaimed April as Safe Digging Month in North Dakota. In recognition, the North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) is reminding everyone of the potential dangers and consequences of digging without first clicking or calling 8-1-1, North Dakota's Call Before You Dig number.

“Spring has arrived, and with it comes a surge of outdoor projects. Before any digging begins, the North Dakota Public Service Commission has an essential reminder: always call 811 first,” said Commissioner Sheri Haugen-Hofart, who oversees the damage prevention portfolio. “This simple step is one of the most effective ways to prevent dangerous and costly accidents. Underground utility lines – whether gas, elec-

tric, communications, water, or sewer – are closer to the surface than many people realize. Striking one can create serious safety hazards and contributes to billions of dollars in damages each year. By making a quick call to 811, you're protecting yourself, your property, and your community. Safe digging starts with knowing what's below – don't take the risk.”

North Dakota law requires anyone conducting an excavation to notify 811 at least two business days in advance of digging. This is a free service to homeowners and farmers working on their own property/land. Personnel will be sent to mark the locations of the underground facilities, typically within a couple of days. The markings are valid for 21 days after they are placed as identified on your

excavation notice ticket. This process is coordinated through North Dakota One Call. The PSC's role is to enforce the requirements of the state's damage prevention laws and act when violations are reported to the Commission. The PSC can levy a fine up to \$25,000 per violation depending on severity.

Each year North Dakota's underground utility infrastructure is jeopardized by unintentional damage from those who fail to call 811 to have underground facilities located prior to digging. Since 2009, the PSC has received and processed 384 complaints related to violations of the Call-Before-You-Dig law. In total, approximately \$473,000 in fines have been assessed against companies or individuals who have violated the law. The consequences of striking an underground utility can be severe including explosions resulting in injury or death, service interruptions or damage to the environment.

The significant residential and business growth occurring throughout North Dakota and the increased demand for pipeline infrastructure to support the energy industry have dramatically increased demand for the One-Call Program.

Safe Digging Month is endorsed each April by the North Dakota Public Service Commission, the Common Ground Alliance and the North Dakota One-Call Board. For more information about 8-1-1 and begin your excavation notice, visit the North Dakota One-Call Board's website at www.ndonecall.com. For safety tips, best

practices and other information, visit the Common Ground Alliance website at www.common-groundalliance.com. (A copy of the proclamation is available in the attachment.)

The North Dakota Public Service Commission is a constitutionally created state agency with authority to permit, site and regulate certain business activities in

the state including electric and gas utilities, telecommunications companies, power plants, electric transmission lines, pipelines, railroads, commercial weighing devices, pipeline safety and coal mine reclamation. For more information, contact the Public Service Commission at (701) 328-2400 or www.psc.nd.gov.

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05.09 VS. WILLAMETTE VALLEY JAGUARS

05.15 VS. MESA MONSOONS

05.16 VS. MESA MONSOONS

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reminder

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