



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GOVERNOR PENCE DECLARES APRIL “SAFE DIGGING MONTH” ACROSS INDIANA

Hoosiers are required to contact Indiana 811 at least two working days before digging

INDIANAPOLIS (April 04, 2016) – In conjunction with the ninth annual National Safe Digging Month campaign, Governor Mike Pence has declared April to be Safe Digging Month across Indiana. National Safe Digging Month is formally recognized by the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate and has earned the support of nearly every state governor across the country.

“As April marks the traditional start of digging season, we are using this month to strongly encourage both private individuals and professional excavators to contact 811 before engaging in any type of outdoor project that requires moving dirt,” said Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) Chair Carol Stephan. “Contacting 811 is critical to keeping Hoosier communities safe and connected.”

When calling 811 or visiting 811now.com, homeowners and contractors are connected to Indiana 811, which notifies local utility companies that someone intends to dig. Professional locators are then sent, free of charge, to the requested work site to mark the approximate locations of underground facilities. Across the United States, every six minutes an underground utility line is damaged because someone decided to dig without first finding their buried utilities.

By law, digging projects must begin with contacting Indiana 811. Installing a mailbox, building a deck and planting a tree are all examples of digging projects that should begin only after all buried facilities have been located and clearly marked with paint and/or flags. Homeowners are exempted from calling if they are digging on their own property with hand tools to a depth of 12 inches or less. However, striking a single buried utility can cause serious injury or death,

expensive repair fees, fines and inconvenient outages of everything from running water to 911 services. We encourage all Hoosiers to call 811, no matter how small the digging project.

The depth of utility lines can vary, even changing over the course of a year. Erosion, previous digging projects, landscaping and uneven surfaces all affect where a utility might be located underground. Even when digging only a few inches, the risk of striking an underground utility line still exists.

Remember, contact 811 at least two full working days before you want to begin your project. It's for your safety, your family's safety – and it's the law.

For more information, visit www.call811.com.

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About the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC)

The IURC is a fact-finding body that hears evidence in cases filed before it and makes decisions based on the evidence presented in those cases. An advocate of neither the public nor the utilities, the IURC is required by state statute to make decisions that balance the interests of all parties to ensure the utilities provide safe and reliable service at just and reasonable rates. For more information, please visit www.in.gov/iurc.