Locating Underground Utilities Before You Dig Meeting Kit



WHAT IS 811 ONE-CALL?

Call 811 before excavating on any piece of commercial or residential land, including your own private property. It’s a free service. Technicians will be sent to the site to locate public utilities using electromagnetic equipment. Then, they mark any that run from the street to the service meter. This will help homeowners and professionals prevent damage to public water, sewage, power and natural gas lines.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UNDERGROUND LOCATORS

Private utility locators are necessary to mark out electrical, gas, septic, water and drainage lines on private, residential, commercial, and municipal properties.

Once you call “811” it does not mean you can proceed with digging. One call location crews only locate public utility lines.

SECOND CALL – PRIVATE UTILITY LOCATOR

Before starting your project, you will likely need to make a **second call**. The call will be to a private utility locator to find and demarcate underground electrical lines, gas pipes, and more on private, residential, commercial and municipal land.

WHAT ARE PRIVATE UTILITIES?

Private utilities are the lines that run beyond the service meter. For example, electrical cables that go from the meter to a house or building would be considered private. For safety and liability reasons, it’s important to have these lines accurately and properly marked before starting to dig, even on your own property. To have these marked, you will need to call in a private underground utility locator.

Most properties have unmarked private utility lines, but they present a real danger for anyone digging. It’s important to have all lines located and marked. Examples of underground utilities that might be hidden on your property.

- Electricity for exterior lighting,
- Propane lines,
- Septic pipes,
- Sprinkler systems,
- Gas for heated pools,
- Power for a detached garage

WHERE DO YOU HAVE PRIVATE UTILITY LINES?

- Neighborhood communities,
- Apartment complexes,
- School grounds and college campuses,
- Medical facilities,
- Industrial areas,
- Commercial property including a parking lot,
- Government facility.

Private owners are responsible for maintaining these types of cables and pipes.

IMPORTANCE OF PROPERLY LOCATING UTILITIES BEFORE DIGGING. TRAINED EXPERTS PREVENT INJURY

Standard operating procedure before any project that breaks ground is to call 811, the national “call-before-you-dig” phone number. From there, the service will trigger a request for utility companies to mark the location of underground lines. But what happens if someone lacks awareness about what’s buried beneath the ground? A person digging with a shovel, spade, or another tool with metal components could put themselves and others around them at risk of electrocution if they strike a high-voltage electric line.

AVOID OUTAGES AND DISRUPTIONS BY LOCATING UTILITIES

While human safety is paramount, there is a significant risk of causing a service outage when digging without locating utilities. Unknowingly cutting a line could cause a home, neighborhood, or even an entire section of the city to lose power, water, or telephone functionality. But there are other disruptions beyond just service outages that can occur if digging takes place before locating utilities first.

FINAL WORD

The risks and potential damage by unknowingly cutting a line could cause a home, neighborhood or an entire section of city to lose power. Striking a gas line can result in a building’s evacuation while hitting a water main can require a boil-water advisory.