



PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
April 2, 2012

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Mayor Vincent C. Gray Proclaims April as National Safe Digging Month *The PSC reminds local residents to call 811 before all digging projects*

Today Mayor Vincent C. Gray issued a proclamation commemorating April 2012 as District of Columbia Safe Digging Month. The announcement reminds District homeowners to call 811 before starting any outdoor digging projects.

“District residents need to keep their own safety and that of their neighbors in mind before they begin digging on their property – because in an urban environment, you never know what might be located beneath the surface,” Mayor Gray said. “That’s why I am proclaiming April as D.C. Safe Digging Month, and encourage our property owners to be cautious and diligent.”

April marks the start of spring digging season, so Mayor Gray and the District of Columbia Public Service Commission (PSC) are encouraging homeowners to call 811 before they dig to prevent injuries, property damage and inconvenient outages. A utility line is damaged by digging once every three minutes nationwide, and one-third of these incidents are caused by failure of the professional excavator or homeowner to call 811 before beginning their digging project.

When calling 811, homeowners are connected to District One Call, which notifies the appropriate utility companies of the intent to dig. Professional locators are then sent to the requested digging site to mark the approximate locations of underground lines with flags and/or spray paint. Once lines have been accurately marked, digging can begin around marked lines. The homeowner or a hired contractor performing the digging operation should call 811.

“We join the Mayor in strongly encouraging individuals and companies to call 811 before they begin digging,” said PSC Chairman Betty Ann Kane. “By having underground lines marked, homeowners are making an important decision that can keep help them and their communities safe and connected.”

Striking a single line can cause injury, repair costs, fines and inconvenient outages. Every digging project, no matter how large or small, necessitates a call to 811. Installing a mailbox, putting in a fence, building a deck and laying a patio are all examples of digging projects that need a call to 811 before starting.

Visit www.call811.com for more information about 811 and the call-before-you-dig process.

The Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia is an independent agency established by Congress in 1913 to regulate electric, natural gas, and local telephone companies in the District of Columbia.

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