

# 811 Media Fact Sheet

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## What is 811?

811 is the national number designated by the Federal Communications Commission to protect do-it-yourselfers, gardeners, landscapers and contractors from unintentionally hitting underground utility lines while working on digging projects – large and small.

## Why call 811?

Every digging project requires a call to 811. It's also required in the Underground Facility Damage Prevention and Safety Act, Chapter 556, Florida Statutes. Hitting an underground utility line while digging can result in environmental harm, serious personal injuries, inconvenient utility outages, potential fines and high repair costs.

## When to Call 811?\*

- Installing a mailbox
- Putting in a fence
- Planting trees or shrubbery
- Building a deck or patio
- Excavating a new garden area

*\* These are a few common examples of when to call. Do-it-yourselfers and contractors should call at least two full business days before any digging project. To dig on Saturday, make that call on Tuesday or Wednesday.*

## How does 811 work?

- One free, easy phone call to 811, at least two full business days before digging, starts the process of getting underground utility lines marked for free.
- Calling 811 from anywhere in Florida connects you to Sunshine State One Call of Florida, Inc. The representative asks several questions, including address and contact information, to pinpoint where you will be digging. Utility companies with underground utilities near that area will be notified. Utility companies send their professional locators to identify and mark the approximate location of lines within a few days of the call. The utility is located within 24-inches of the paint mark.
- Once underground lines have been marked, callers know the approximate location of utility lines and can dig safely.
- Please visit [www.callsunshine.com](http://www.callsunshine.com) for more information.

## What happens if people don't call?

- Failure to call before digging results in more than 200,000 unintentional hits annually across the United States.
- Failure to call before digging results in more than one unintentional hit per minute nationwide.
- Hitting a utility line can result in minor or serious injuries, utility outages to an entire neighborhood, expensive repair costs, and hefty fines.

## When to mark your calendars?

- April is Safe Digging Month in Florida. This month recognizes the importance of calling before all outdoor digging projects.
- National Safe Digging Month also occurs in April and is recognized by the Common Ground Alliance and its stakeholders.

## Who is behind 811?

In Florida, Sunshine State One Call works with all damage prevention industry stakeholders in an effort to prevent damage to underground utility infrastructure and ensure public safety and environmental protection. These stakeholders include utility companies, locating agencies, excavators and contractors. The Common Ground Alliance is the national damage prevention organization behind the 811 campaign. It also represents a continuation of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Common Ground Study. For more information on Florida's law, visit [www.callsunshine.com](http://www.callsunshine.com).