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For additional information, please contact:

**Emily L. Ciraolo – 716-857-7861**

## **National Fuel Reminds Public to Call Before You Dig**

(April 4, 2017) WILLIAMSVILLE, N.Y. – Now that spring is here, many homeowners, business owners, schools and communities are planning outdoor landscaping projects. National Fuel reminds individuals and professionals to **Call Before You Dig**.

State law requires residents to call 811 – a free service – prior to digging in order to prevent accidental damage to underground utility lines. Before starting any landscaping, gardening or outdoor improvement projects this year, call 811, a toll-free national phone number, or visit [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com).

The national 811 phone number connects callers with local One Call Centers. Operators record the excavation locations and notify National Fuel of callers' plans. National Fuel then dispatches professional locators to mark the approximate positioning of lines for free. It's a fast, easy way to be safe and protect those within the vicinity of the project.

“All excavation projects – even small or shallow digging projects like planting trees and shrubs, or installing a fence or mailbox require a call,” said Emily Ciraolo, spokesperson for National Fuel. “Many of the pipeline leaks and emergencies we respond to each year occur when homeowners and businesses dig on their properties without knowing the location of underground utility lines. These types of accidents can be easily avoided by calling 811 before you dig – anywhere on your property.”

The Common Ground Alliance (CGA), a national association representing the utility industry and committed to saving lives and preventing damage to underground infrastructure, states that:

- There are more than 20 million miles of underground utilities in the United States.
- Every six minutes an underground utility line is damaged because someone decided to dig without first calling 811.
- When you make the call to 811, damage occurs less than 1 percent of the time.

**New York** homeowners and contractors should call 811 at least two and no more than 10 business days in advance of the start of their projects.

**Pennsylvania** homeowners and contractors should call 811 at least three and no more than 10 business days in advance of the start of their projects.

As always, if you **smell gas, leave fast!** If a rotten-egg natural gas odor is present, leave the premises immediately without turning on or off any electrical appliances and call National Fuel's emergency line (1-800-444-3130) from a different location. If you smell an odor of gas outdoors, please call National Fuel's emergency number and provide the address nearest to the site of the odor.

National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation is the Utility segment of National Fuel Gas Company, a diversified energy company that is engaged in a number of natural gas-related activities. The Utility provides natural gas service to approximately 740,000 customers in Western New York and northwestern Pennsylvania.