



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Fuel Reminds the Public to Call Before You Dig

Erie, Pa., April 2, 2019 – In recognition of Safe Digging Month this April, National Fuel is reminding homeowners and professional contractors to Call Before You Dig.

Pennsylvania state law requires residents to call 811 – a free service – before digging in order to prevent accidental damage to underground utility lines. Digging without knowing the approximate location of underground utilities can result in serious injuries, service disruptions and costly repairs. Before starting any landscaping, gardening or outdoor improvement projects this year, call 811, a toll-free national phone number, or visit www.call811.com. 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.

The national 811 phone number connects callers with local One Call Centers. Operators record the excavation locations and notify National Fuel. 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 home improvement projects like planting trees and shrubs, or installing a fence or mailbox require a call,” said Carly Manino, 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,” Manino said.

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. This figure equates to more than one football field's length (105 yards) of buried utilities for every man, woman and child in the U.S.
- By calling 811 before digging, the likelihood of damaging a utility line is less than 1 percent.
- Thirty-six percent of homeowners who plan to dig this year for projects like landscaping, installing a fence or mailbox, or building a deck, pond or patio, will put themselves and their communities at risk by not calling 811 prior to digging.

As always, if you smell gas, leave fast! If a rotten-egg natural gas odor is present, leave the premises immediately and call National Fuel's emergency line, 1-800-444-3130, from a different location. If you smell gas outdoors, call National Fuel's emergency number and provide the address nearest to the site of the odor. To learn more about natural gas safety, visit www.nationalfuelgas.com/forhome/gassafety.aspx.

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 more than 750,000 customers in Western New York and Northwestern Pennsylvania. For more information, visit www.nationalfuelgas.com.

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