

# CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

(Information provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation and National Association of State Fire Marshals - <http://www.phmsa.dot.gov/pipeline>)



## Call 811

- A major problem in the United States is damage to underground utilities. The leading cause of pipeline incidents is excavation.
- These incidents can result in injury or death and can be prevented.
- These incidents compromise community safety, disconnect people from critical services, and cause significant disruption and environmental harm.
- All of this is caused by unsafe digging practices.
- This occurs much more often than people think. On average, about every three minutes careless digging damages a buried utility line.
- Of those incidents, thirty-three percent occur because a **free call was not made to 811** to notify the local Call-Before-You-Dig center.

## Pipeline Safety

- The 811 number is a national toll-free telephone number.
- It should be used by anyone prior to digging so that underground pipelines and other utilities can be marked and thus avoided during construction, landscaping and other excavation projects.
- Together with the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, USDOT is engaging in a national education campaign promoting safe digging practices to prevent injuries and deaths associated with incidents from pipelines.
- According to studies there are approximately 2.5 million miles of pipeline in our nation.
- One-third of major pipeline accidents are caused by someone digging and hitting a pipeline by mistake.
- Hitting a utility line while digging can be fatal.



## When Should You Call

- If you are planning to dig by yourself or hire a professional, it is considered smart digging to call 811 before each job.
- You should call even if it is small projects like planting trees and shrubs.
- The depth of utility lines varies and there may be multiple utility lines in a common area.



WEST VIRGINIA STATE MARSHAL'S OFFICE  
PUBLIC EDUCATION DIVISION  
1207 QUARRIER STREET, 2ND FLOOR  
CHARLESTON, WV 25301  
304-552-8759 EXT. 53223  
304-558-2537 - FAX

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON FIRE SAFETY VISIT:  
[www.firemarshal.wv.gov](http://www.firemarshal.wv.gov)