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IUB supports National Safe Digging Month, encourages 811 calls for utility location

(Des Moines) – More than 40 percent of American homeowners who plan to plant a tree, landscape a yard or install a fence or mailbox this spring likely will not make a required 811 call to have their underground utilities located before digging begins, according to a survey conducted by the Common Ground Alliance (CGA), a national association dedicated to protecting underground utility lines.

Iowa law requires that any resident or professional excavator contact 811, or Iowa One Call, a minimum of two business days before digging to prevent serious injuries, service disruptions, and costly repairs that could occur when buried gas, electric, communications, water or sewer lines are damaged. The CGA survey also found that nearly half of all Americans who plan to dig have no experience with the 811 process. Placing an 811 call or submitting information online to IowaOneCall.com notifies operators with underground utility facilities of the intent to dig, and utility companies will respond within two business days by marking underground utilities with color-coded paint marks or flags that tell an excavator where utility lines are located.

In support of National Safe Digging Month throughout April, the Iowa Utilities Board joins Common Ground Iowa and Iowa One Call in reminding Iowans to be safe and help protect underground utility lines by following these steps in advance of any digging projects:

- Always call 811 at least 48 hours before digging, regardless of the project depth or familiarity with the property. Plan ahead by calling on Monday or Tuesday for weekend projects, providing ample time for the approximate location of lines to be marked.
- Confirm that all lines have been marked before beginning a project and consider relocating any project that is close to utility line markings.
- If a contractor has been hired, confirm that the contractor has called 811. Don't allow work to begin if utility lines aren't marked.

Iowa's One Call center is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Learn more by visiting the [Call 811 website](#) for complete information.

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The Iowa Utilities Board regulates utilities to ensure that reasonably priced, reliable, environmentally responsible, and safe utility services are available to all Iowans

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