

Safe Digging

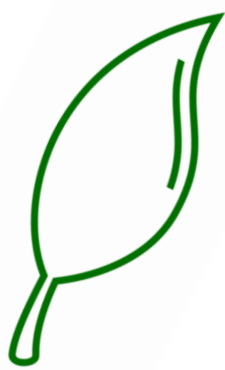
What Is It?

Safe digging, or "damage prevention," includes the steps to ensure pipelines, electrical lines, and other underground infrastructure are not damaged when breaking ground.



What Is Its Impact?

Safe digging helps avoid environmental issues and pollution by preventing pipeline breaks, sewage leaks, and more. Using innovative technology can even reduce vehicle and construction-related emissions.



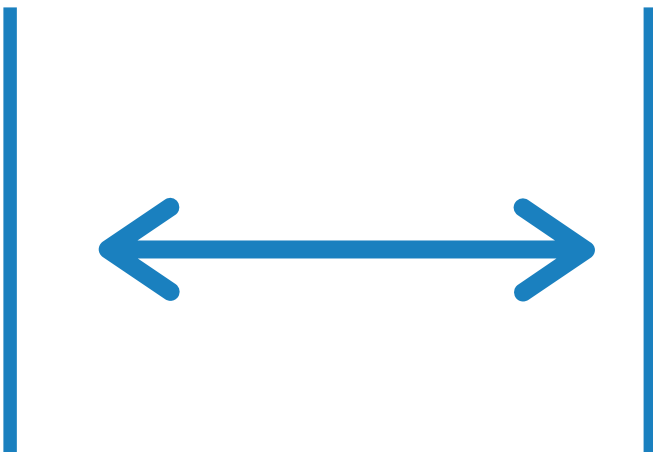
What Does It Cost?

Calling 811 is free to excavators and helps avoid costly damage. It only takes a few minutes.



Space

Spray paint marks are used to denote the path of underground lines. They include tolerance zones, so anyone digging should remain cautious even 18 inches to 24 inches to the left and right of the spray paint.



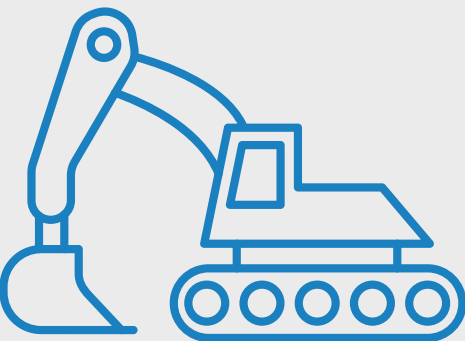
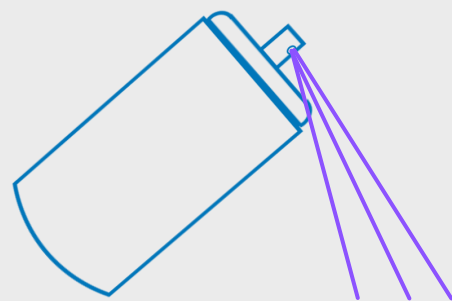
Point

Counterpoint

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| • Calling 811 is free for excavators. | ↔ | ◦ It can take up to three business days to get site markings. |
| • Landscaping or shallow digging are not as likely to hit subsurface infrastructure. | ↔ | ◦ Pipes, cables, and wires can be within two inches of the surface, so every dig requires a call to 811. |
| • Existing spray paint means subsurface infrastructure has already been located. | ↔ | ◦ Recent work or new activity may change the location of subsurface infrastructure, so new markings are required. |
| • Digging with power tools is the most efficient. | ↔ | ◦ Using hand tools or test holes may be needed to avoid damage |
| • Spray paint and other markings accurately represent what is below. | ↔ | ◦ Any party can commit an error that leads to incomplete, inaccurate, or unmarked sites. Added caution and communication between all parties is essential. |

How Does It Work?

1. Anyone digging in their yard, a field, or construction site first calls 811 or logs into their state's One-Call Center website.
2. The excavator describes the dig site and what their work will include.
3. The One-Call center sends a notification to all utility companies with subsurface infrastructure in the area.
4. Field technicians called "Locators" then come to the proposed dig site and use color-coded spray paint, stakes, or flags to mark the locations of all subsurface lines.
5. Two to three days after calling 811, the excavator can arrive on site to check the markings.
6. If all utility companies are accounted for and marking is complete, the excavator can begin to dig.
7. The excavator uses caution around spray paint markings to avoid damage and reports any issues that do occur.



Did You Know?

In the United States, there are well over 20 million miles of underground pipe, cables, and wires! Because of all that subsurface infrastructure, damage occurs far too often. Calling 811 can reduce the chance of a damage incident by up to 99 percent!

What's Next?

Greater use of innovative technology in the safe digging process will lead to fewer damages in the future. According to the Common Ground Alliance, the National Transportation Safety Board, and even the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, the use of technology to bolster communication and collaboration can reduce damage incidents by up to 67 percent.