

## Before you Dig- Please Read!

### **Who is required to notify Sunshine 811?**

Anyone who is digging. This includes: auguring, boring, cable or pipe plowing or driving, digging, directional drilling, ditching, grading, moving earth, pipe bursting, razing, scraping, setting poles, structure demolition, trenching, use of explosives, wrecking and any other trenchless technology.

### **Do I have to notify 811 even when I am digging in a spot that was previously marked?**

Yes! Erosion and root system growth can alter the depth or location of buried lines. Also, utility companies may have worked on their lines since the last time you dug – so you must get utilities located, each and every time.

### **If I'm a subcontractor on a job, do I have to get a separate locate ticket or will the general contractor's locate ticket protect me?**

Sunshine 811 recommends that all excavators request tickets. Subcontractors can be listed in the Remarks section on the ticket, but their protection has not been challenged or ruled on in the court system. Obtain legal advice from your own attorney before relying on the actions of another party.

### **I requested to meet with the utility companies at my dig site, but no one showed up at the designated time. Why?**

Requests are just that, requests. If you want confirmation that a utility company will meet you, please contact the utility directly to arrange a date and time.

### **When should I contact 811?**

Two full business days before you want to start digging. The day you request the ticket, weekends and holidays are not included in the two full business days.

### **I've waited the required time and there are no locate marks. What do I do?**

You need to confirm that all utilities have responded to your ticket. Do this by entering your ticket number and phone numbers into the Positive Response System. Positive response will tell you if a utility is clear or needs more information from you. If the system says it's marked, then you need to contact the utility directly. Also, utilities locate only those lines they own, not private lines.

### **I do not think the locate marks for underground utilities at my dig site are correct. What should I do?**

First, check the Positive Response System to make sure any utility hasn't left instructions for you. Then, contact the utility owner directly. Contact numbers are on your ticket or in Internet Ticket Entry or you may call (800) 638-4097.

### **I've confirmed utility responses and all indicate the site is located, but when I got to the site there were no locate marks. What do I do?**

Excavation or demolition is not safe without first checking into why the marks are not there. There are a number of reasons why the marks are missing. Contact the utility directly responsible for those marks and get clarification. Contact numbers are on your ticket or in Internet Ticket Entry or you may call (800) 638-4097.

### **The locate marks have been destroyed. What do I do?**

1. Stop digging where the marks are destroyed and request another ticket. Remember to reference the current ticket number for easy retrieval.
2. You can dig in another part of the job site covered on the ticket where the marks are still visible.

## **How can I protect the marks?**

- Do not drive machinery over the marks.
- Do not place spoil piles or building materials over marks.
- Sweep paved areas often so painted marks remain visible.

## **When can the marks be removed?**

Flags and other marks are valid for 30 calendar days and may be removed after such time.

## **Where can I dig?**

You can dig in the area included on your ticket. If you go outside that area, request another ticket. If you're digging close to the marks, remember this: the marks give you an approximate location of the buried line. A good guide is to dig carefully when you're within 24-inches of the marks.

## **What happens if I hit a utility?**

Any time you hit a utility, no matter how insignificant, you must stop digging and notify the utility directly using the contact information on your ticket or call (800) 638-4097. Any slight nick to that outer coating allows moisture into the lines inside and eventually will cause problems.

## **Who is liable if I damage an underground utility after I have chosen to excavate after the required time, but before all locates were done?**

Sunshine 811 does not determine liability in any situation. Those are questions that need to be addressed with the utility. We would like to point out, however, that there is nothing that excuses you from digging safely - even when you're digging on an exemption.

# **Homeowner's Landscaping and fence questions**

## **What if the utility line runs where I want to do some landscaping?**

Consider moving your project. Research planting tips on how to plant utility friendly landscapes.

## **My projects are simple: landscaping, mailbox and fence. Do I really need to notify 811?**

Yes! Every project! Fences and mailboxes are often in areas where utilities have been installed. Those utilities can be buried just a few inches below ground! Notify 811 before you install or *replace* a mailbox or fence.

## **I have hired a contractor or landscaper to do the digging project.**

Make sure your contractor or landscaper has requested to have your yard located before they begin digging.

## **I am only digging in a small area and don't want my entire yard marked.**

If you are only planning to dig in a small portion of your yard, outline the area in white paint or white flags available at home improvement stores.