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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Gov. Beshear Proclaims April 'Safe Digging Month'** *Focus is on preventing damage to buried utility lines by calling 8-1-1 first*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 17, 2013)** – Governor Steve Beshear has issued a proclamation designating April as “Safe Digging Month” in Kentucky.

“Kentucky has worked hard to improve awareness of the call-before-you-dig requirements in state law,” Gov. Beshear said. “But we still have far too many incidents of excavators hitting buried utility lines.”

By designating April as Safe Digging Month, Gov. Beshear said he hopes to promote and increase the use of the 811 statewide toll-free telephone number to request marking of buried utility lines

Kentucky Public Service Commission Chairman David Armstrong said that digging into buried lines is more than just a problem for utility companies.

“We have seen how such incidents can cause substantial damage to property and, in the case of electric and gas lines, severe injury or death,” Armstrong said. “Damaged lines also threaten public health and safety by interrupting vital services such as electricity, water or telephone.”

Despite efforts to promote the use of the 811 service, dig-ins continue to disrupt utility service, Armstrong said. For example, in February a cut telephone cable interrupted service to nearly 1,000 Campbell County customers, he said.

“Losing your telephone landline can compromise access to enhanced 911 emergency service,” Armstrong said. “That is much more than just an inconvenience if someone needs medical, fire or police assistance.”

In his proclamation, Gov. Beshear noted that April marks the sixth anniversary of the Federal Communication Commission’s designation of 811 as the nationwide call-before-you-dig number. Excavation activities that can damage buried lines increase in the spring, he noted in the proclamation.

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The 811 number was adopted as an easy-to-remember number to call to have utilities located prior to excavation. It replaced toll-free numbers that were unique to each state.

In 2008, Kentucky enacted a statute that expanded enforcement of laws requiring underground utility lines to be located and marked prior to most excavation or demolition activity.

Tim Vaughn, regulatory affairs director of Kentucky 811, the state's call-before-you-dig center, said that protecting buried utility lines requires constantly reinforcing the message to call before you dig.

"Gov. Beshear's efforts and the strong support of the Kentucky Public Service Commission help us immeasurably in our daily communications with utilities, contractors and the public," Vaughn said.

Kentucky 811 is a voluntary organization with more than 340 members, including most of Kentucky's largest utility service providers. A call to Kentucky 811 will result in location of underground facilities owned by its members.

Kentucky 811 is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

To obtain locations for underground facilities owned by utility service providers that do not belong to Kentucky 811, it is necessary to notify the company directly. A list of all owners of underground utility lines may be obtained from the county clerk.

More information about Kentucky 811 is available at its website, [www.kentucky811.org](http://www.kentucky811.org).

The PSC is an independent agency attached for administrative purposes to the Energy and Environment Cabinet. It regulates more than 1,500 gas, water, sewer, electric and telecommunication utilities operating in Kentucky and has approximately 90 employees.

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# Proclamation

by

Steven L. Beshear  
Governor

of the

Commonwealth of Kentucky



*To All To Whom These Presents Shall Come:*

- WHEREAS, This year marks the sixth anniversary of the launch of 811, a national "Call Before You Dig" phone number designated by the Federal Communications Commission to eliminate the confusion of multiple "Call Before You Dig" numbers; and
- WHEREAS, Calling 811 can prevent injury to workers, reduce expenses to the public and minimize damages to underground utilities; and
- WHEREAS, National Safe Digging Month (NSDM) takes a time-tested marketing concept – an awareness month – and applies it to safe digging at a strategic time of year when digging is at its peak in many areas; and
- WHEREAS, The celebration of NSDM in April reflects the start of spring with natural connections to Earth Day and Arbor Day; and
- WHEREAS, Kentucky's 811 number is the only statewide, around-the-clock resource for identifying underground facility locations, with all major utilities voluntarily participating;

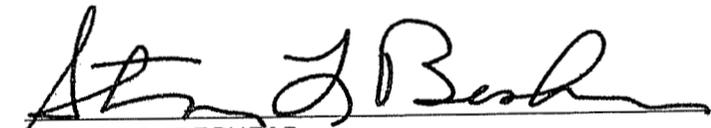
NOW, THEREFORE, I, STEVEN L. BESHEAR, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, do hereby proclaim April 2013 as

## SAFE DIGGING MONTH

in Kentucky.



DONE AT THE CAPITOL, in the City of Frankfort the 1<sup>st</sup> day of April, in the year of Our Lord Two Thousand Thirteen and in the 221<sup>st</sup> year of the Commonwealth.

  
STEVEN L. BESHEAR  
GOVERNOR

  
ALISON LUNDERGAN GRIMES  
SECRETARY OF STATE