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NEWS RELEASE

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New Before-you-dig Guide Available ***PSC teams with Kentucky 811 to prevent damage to buried utilities***

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 9, 2009) – As part of efforts to protect buried utility lines, a compact guide to safe excavating practices is now available in Kentucky.

The Kentucky Public Service Commission (PSC) is assisting Kentucky 811, the state's call-before-you-dig center, in making the guide available to contractors, utility companies, equipment rental centers and others.

"Hitting buried utility lines during excavations still occurs far too frequently in Kentucky," PSC Chairman David Armstrong said. "This guide provides the information people need to avoid such incidents, which can and often do result in substantial property damage and can cause injuries or even death."

In recent years, Kentucky has taken several steps to reduce damage to buried lines. In 2007, 811 was adopted as an easy-to-remember number to call to have utilities located prior to excavation. It replaced a 10-digit toll-free number.

A statute that took effect last year expanded enforcement of laws requiring underground utility lines to be located and marked prior to most excavation or demolition activity.

The laws governing safe excavation, the marking process and other aspects of safe excavations practices are all explained in the new guide. The spiral-bound booklet fits easily into a pocket, a tool box or a vehicle glove compartment.

"We would like to see this booklet become part of the basic equipment of anyone who might encounter buried utility lines in their job or while doing work on their own property," said Tim Vaughn, regulatory affairs director of Kentucky 811.

Kentucky 811 is distributing the booklets at industry association meetings, trade shows and through its Web site, www.kentucky811.org. To request a copy, go the site and click on the "Ask Tim" link: http://www.kentucky811.org/contact_us.php.

PSC engineering staff members also are handing out copies of the booklet as they travel the state to inspect utilities or to investigate accidents or complaints.

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Kentucky 811 will be distributing the guide at the inaugural Safety Day conference of the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Kentucky, which is being held in Lexington on Friday.

“I can think of no more appropriate venue in which to reinforce the message that it is critical to know what’s below before you dig,” Armstrong said. “The PSC commends Kentucky 811 for its leadership in helping to protect our underground utility lines.”

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 100 employees.

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ADVISORY TO EDITORS – MEDIA OPPORTUNITY

The AGC of Kentucky Safety Day Conference is from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. EDT on Friday, Sept. 11, at the Holiday Inn North, 1950 Newtown Pike in Lexington.

Kentucky 811 staff will be present until 2:30 p.m.

PSC staff will be present and available for interviews from 11 a.m. until noon.



This trenching machine was burned when the operator hit a buried natural gas line. A request to mark the line had been placed with Kentucky 811, but the line had not yet been marked when the trenching work began.