

# Media Release



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## Safe Digging Month Reminds Oregonians to Contact 811 Before Digging

**SALEM, Ore.** – In recognition of National Safe Digging Month, the Oregon Utility Notification Center (OUNC), Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division (Oregon OSHA), and Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC) remind Oregonians to contact 811 before starting projects that involves digging.

Whether a professional contractor or do-it-yourselfer, all play an important role in preventing damage to underground utilities. Contacting Oregon 811 before you dig helps prevent serious injuries and avoid costly damage to essential utility services. There are three easy steps to safe digging in Oregon:

1. Submit a locate request at least two business days before digging at [Oregon811.com](http://Oregon811.com) or by calling 811
2. Wait for utility crews to mark the underground lines
3. Dig carefully

After a locate request is submitted, the OUNC notifies the utility companies that provide service to the area. Utility crews then visit the site and mark the approximate location of the underground lines, pipes, and cables able to be located, at no cost to the homeowner or contractor.

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Meanwhile, employers must follow Oregon OSHA requirements to protect workers against the potential hazards of underground utilities. Those requirements include:

1. Notifying OUNC of the proposed area of excavations at least two working days before starting an excavation.
2. Estimating the location of utilities before opening or extending an excavation.
3. Determining by safe and acceptable means the exact location of the estimated utility installations when excavation activities approach them.
4. While excavations are open, underground installations must be protected, supported, or removed as necessary to safeguard employees.

Oregon OSHA offers employers free [consultations](#) – no fault, no citations, no penalties – to improve workplace health and safety programs and practices. It also offers free [technical help](#) with understanding and applying workplace safety rules.

Most utility line strikes happen during the warmer months, when construction and landscaping activity increases. National data shows that in 2024, an estimated 196,977 instances of damage occurred across the country, and 17 percent were caused by failing to contact 811.

For more information or to submit a locate request, visit [Oregon811.com](https://Oregon811.com) or call 811.

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