**811 Hot Air Balloon Media Fact Sheet**

* 811 is the federally designated phone number that anyone in the U.S. can call to have the approximate location of buried utilities marked before digging. Visit [call811.com](http://www.call811.com) for more information.
* The 811 Hot Air Balloon launched in California on April 1 (the first day of National Safe Digging Month, as designated annually by Congress) and is touring the country to remind everyone to know what’s below by calling 811 at least a few days before digging so they can safely avoid striking buried utility lines when they dig. The tour will culminate in Richmond, Va. on Aug. 11, or 8/11 Day (8-1-1 on the calendar).
* [LOCAL PARTNER – include hyperlink to website] is a member of the [Common Ground Alliance (CGA)](http://www.commongroundalliance.com), the national association that promotes the importance of 811. CGA has partnered with its member Cox Utility Services to support the 811 Hot Air Balloon’s national tour.
* [LOCAL PARNTER] is encouraging [STATE OR LOCALITY] residents to keep themselves and their communities safe and connected by calling 811 before digging by bringing the 811 Hot Air Balloon to our area.

**How does 811 work?**

* One easy phone call to 811, at least [Insert notification period] prior to digging, starts the process of getting underground utility lines marked for free.
* When calling 811 from anywhere in the country, a representative from the appropriate local one-call center will answer the call to find out the location and description of the digging site and will notify affected utility companies, who will then send a professional locator to identify and mark the approximate location of lines within a few days of the call.
* Once underground lines have been marked, callers will know the approximate location of utility lines and can dig safely.
* Please visit [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com), in the “state specific” area of the website, for more information about the 62 local one call centers across the country.

**When should people call 811?\***

* Installing a rural mailbox
* Putting in a fence
* Planting trees or shrubbery
* Building a deck or patio
* Excavating a new garden area

\* These are a few common examples of when to call. Do-it-yourselfers and contractors should call at least [Insert notification period] before any digging project.

**Why call 811?**

***Every*** digging project requires a call to 811. An underground utility line is hit once every six minutes in the U.S., which can harm the environment, cause serious personal injuries, disrupt service to an entire neighborhood and potentially incur fines and repair costs.