**Campaign Overview: Alabama 811’s 8:11 a.m. Advertising Blitz**

**Background**

In preparation for National Safe Digging Month (NSDM) in 2013, Alabama 811 found a creative way to make its annual spring advertising campaign have an even bigger impact. The organization ran a multi-station 811 radio advertising campaign at 8:11 a.m. every morning throughout the entire month of April 2013 and into early May. Each morning at 8:11 a.m., a radio DJ read a live ten-second message promoting 811, broadcasting the call before you dig message repetitively during morning drive time – an excellent way to raise awareness. In addition to the 8:11 ads, the organization’s NSDM media campaign also included web banner ads, sponsorship of radio NASCAR coverage and other ad spots.

**Execution**Alabama 811 recommends the following steps for implementing an 8:11 811 advertising blitz:

* **Research radio stations** –Research stations in your area that attract the right demographic for the 811 safety message. Alabama 811 chose a sports radio station that broadcasts NASCAR races, because CGA research indicates that people who dig are likely to consume this type of media.
* **Contact an ad sales representative** – Once you have determined which radio station(s) fit the call before you dig demographic best, reach out to an ad sales rep to discuss the possibility of running daily ad spots at 8:11 a.m. The rep should be able to let you know about the feasibility of your proposal and may be able to offer additional sports broadcast sponsorships or advertising opportunities that would work well for spreading the 811 safety message within your budget. Be certain that if you are an association or not-for-profit One Call Center that you advise the representative of your status for the possibility of reduced rates.
* **Create your ‘reads’ or ad spots** – Create the “read” that the station will use each morning at 8:11 a.m. Alabama 811’s read was as follows: “It's 8:11am. Alabama 811 wants to remind you to call 811 before you dig. Be safe. Know what's below, always call 811 before you dig. This message brought to you by Alabama 811.” For pre-made ad spots, consider using CGA’s new PSAs which can be downloaded from CommonGroundAlliance.com.
* **Measure success** – Request statistics on listenership and impressions from your ad sales rep to measure the reach of your 811 radio campaign.

**Timeline**The 8:11 a.m. advertising campaign is useful during both NSDM and surrounding 8/11 Day. Alabama 811 recommends beginning to research radio stations at least one month prior to when you’d like to start advertising, and reaching out to an ad sales rep a few weeks in advance.

**Results**
NSDM 2013 was a successful one for Alabama 811. The organization reached 650,000 Alabama residents through its 8:11 a.m. advertising blitz and complementary components, including sponsoring NASCAR radio coverage and displaying banner ads on station websites. For more information about this campaign, contact Michele Dory at mdory@al811.com.