INCIDENT Response Talking Points (AFFECTED PARTY)

When a utility is damaged and it affects the lives of people in the community, the media will reach out to the parties involved for a quote about the incident. It is important to address the current situation and steps being taken to fix the problem. Although this incident may not have been caused by a failure of the excavator to call 811, consider using this opportunity to educate the general public that incidents like these can be prevented by calling 811 prior to all digging projects.

Please take a moment to review the following 811 talking points. Although you may already feel comfortable with the 811 message, it’s imperative to review these points so you can incorporate them into your answers. Whenever possible, please localize your message to reflect stakeholder support of 811.

Key points for all interviews:

* Every digging project requires a call to 811.
* Calling 811 at least [Insert notification period] prior to digging notifies utility companies of the intent to dig and gives representatives time to mark the appropriate lines.

What is 811?

* 811 is the national number designated by the Federal Communications Commission to prevent the unintentional strike of underground utility lines while digging.

Who should call 811?

* Everyone! Homeowners and professional excavators alike need to call prior to all digging projects — large or small.

Why should people call 811?

* Ensuring that the approximate location of underground utility lines are clearly marked before digging reduces the risk of striking a line, which can lead to serious injuries, disrupted service to an entire community, and potential fines and repair costs.

How does 811 work?

* 811 can be called from anywhere in the country.
* A representative from your local one-call center will answer the call to determine the location and description of the digging site.
* The affected utility companies will be notified of the intent to dig.
* The utility companies will each send a professional locator to the digging site to identify and mark the approximate location of the underground lines.
* When lines have been marked, you are free to dig carefully around the marks.

When should someone call 811?

* Lines need to be marked for each separate project, such as installing a rural mailbox, putting up a fence, planting trees or building a deck.
* Call at least [Insert notification period] prior to digging to allow time for professional locators to mark the approximate location of utility lines.
* Even if you’ve hired a contractor, make sure the contractor calls 811 to have lines marked.

What happens if you don’t call?

* Hitting an underground utility line while digging can cause serious injuries, disrupt service to entire neighborhoods, and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

Who is behind 811?

* The Common Ground Alliance (CGA), a leading association created to prevent damage to the underground utility infrastructure and ensure public safety and environmental protection, promotes 811 along with organizations from 16 stakeholder groups.

Where can you learn more about 811?

* To learn more about 811, visit [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com).