



Media Release

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GOVERNOR BROWN PROCLAIMS APRIL “OREGON DIG SAFELY MONTH”

Reminder to call 811 before digging

SALEM, Ore. – In time for spring gardening and home improvement projects, Governor Kate Brown proclaims April as “Oregon Dig Safely Month”. This serves as a reminder to all Oregon homeowners and contractors to call 811 before digging to have underground facilities, such as natural gas pipelines, electrical utilities, telecommunication systems, as well as sewer and water lines marked.

“We join the governor in strongly encouraging individuals and companies to call 811 before digging,” said Lisa Hardie, Oregon Public Utility Commission Chair. “This is an important step when planting a tree, installing a fence, or doing a major remodel, that will help avoid injury, disruption of utility service for your community, penalties, and potential repair costs.”

The Oregon Utility Notification Center (OUNC), who operates the free 811 one-call center, will notify the affected local utility companies that serve the area of the planned project. Utility staff will visit the project site to mark the approximate location of the underground lines, pipes and cables in the planned digging area.

“Call 811 at least two and no more than 10 business days before planning to dig,” said Nate Rivera, OUNC Board Chair. “Please, air on the side of caution and call 811 even if just planting small plants. Some utility lines can run just a few inches below the surface.”

Statistics show that buried utility lines in the United States are struck every six minutes. In 2016 an estimated 379,000 line strikes occurred nationwide, 20 percent of which were due to insufficient notice to the 811 service.

To reduce the number of line strikes in Oregon, there are strong local partnerships with the OUNC, Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Oregon Public Utility Commission (OPUC) to enhance the communication link and improve safety efforts.

For more information or to request a representative to locate utility lines for an upcoming digging project, call 811 or visit digsafelyoregon.com.

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