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National Safe Digging Month Reminds Companies & Individuals to Call 811 Before Digging

New York City & Long Island One Call Center Facilitates Marking of Underground Lines by its Members to Prevent Damage, Service Interruption, Environmental Harm and Personal Injury

NEW YORK – April 13, 2009 – The New York City & Long Island One Call Center, a non-profit organization that simplifies communication between its members, such as area utility companies and other operators of underground facilities, and individuals planning digging activity, is reminding residents and professional excavators of the five boroughs of New York City and the two counties of Long Island that April is National Safe Digging Month. National Safe Digging Month promotes the importance of dialing 811 or 1-800-272-4480 before beginning any digging projects.

Making the call at least two working days prior to excavation enables the New York City & Long Island One Call Center to notify its members with underground facilities in the area to mark their underground lines, aiding in the prevention of potentially expensive and harmful damage. Accidents involving underground lines may result in service interruption for area residents, leakage of dangerous materials into soil as well as injury and even death to workers.

Any work that requires digging should merit a call to the One Call Center, including both professional construction projects as well as home renovation projects including installation of mailboxes, fences or swimming pools; landscaping and tree planting.

“Before digging begins, it’s necessary for excavation workers and property owners to notify the One Call Center in order to minimize the chance of damaging underground facilities that are often expensive and time-consuming to repair,” said Roger Sampson, president of the Board of Directors, New York City & Long Island One Call Center. “The onset of spring is the perfect time to remind everyone of the importance of safe digging as it’s a popular time to begin new construction and home improvement projects. A simple toll-free call to 811 should be the first step of many safety precautions taken before you dig.”

The One Call Center operates under the laws of New York State and Code 753 which is enforced by the Public Service Commission (PSC), all of which requires excavators to notify their local One Call Center prior to beginning any digging on the site. Failure to do so is punishable by fine. Homeowners are not required by law to inform the One Call Center before digging on their property; however excavators performing work on the property of a homeowner are required to call the One Call Center. The One Call Center encourages homeowners to confirm that their hired excavators have performed their necessary duties under the law and notified the One Call Center of the proposed excavation.

About the New York City & Long Island One Call Center

The New York City & Long Island One Call Center is a member-funded, non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of underground facilities from damage due to excavation and demolition. The One Call Center's services include receiving notices of intent to perform excavation and demolition and transmitting them to its members in the specified dig area within the five boroughs of New York and the two counties of Long Island. Upon receipt of the planned excavation notification, members including utility companies and other operators of underground facilities must properly mark their underground facilities to minimize the risk of damage and injury. Located in Queens, the One Call Center accepts requests 24/7 and is easily contacted by dialing 811. For more information, please visit www.nyclionecall.com.

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