

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Plan Ahead. Pick Up the Phone Before the Shovel
Safe Digging Month Reminds of Importance of Calling 811

Merrillville, Ind. — In recognition of National Safe Digging Month, NIPSCO reminds customers and contractors to call 811, the free, national call-before-you-dig phone number, at least two business days before starting any digging project.

Calling 811 is not only important for personal and public safety, it's the law. Digging without knowing the approximate location of underground utilities can result in damage to gas, electric, communications, water and sewer lines, which can lead to service disruptions and serious injuries.

In addition to the risk of serious injury, not calling 811 could result in fines up to \$10,000 and the cost to repair any damages.

No matter how small you think the project is, whether it's installing a mailbox, planting trees or performing any other outdoor digging project, NIPSCO encourages everyone to take the following steps:

- Always call 811 or enter a request online at www.811NOW.com two business days before the start of any digging project.
- Tell neighbors, coworkers, family and friends about 811 if they discuss their plans for an outdoor home improvement project with you.
- Plan ahead—Indiana 811 is always open. Just make sure you call at least two working days in advance of your project start date.
- Avoid starting projects until you're sure all lines are marked. 811 will read a list of companies that should respond.
- Choose another location on the property for a project if the original planned site is near utility line markings.
- If your excavation is within two feet of any marked facility, only use hand tools or vacuum excavation with extreme caution.
- If a contractor has been hired, confirm that a call to 811 has been made. Don't allow work to begin if the lines aren't marked.
- After the site has been accurately marked, it is safe to begin digging carefully around the marked areas.

NIPSCO utilizes two outside companies to assist with marking underground facilities for customers – Utility Resource Group, LLC (URG) and UtiliQuest. As an enhanced offering, NIPSCO customers will now receive an electronic confirmation that their requested project area has been located.

Visit NIPSCO.com/811 for more information and safety tips.

About NIPSCO: Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO), with headquarters in Merrillville, Indiana, has proudly served the energy needs of northern Indiana for more than 100 years. As Indiana's largest natural gas distribution company and the second-largest electric distribution company, NIPSCO serves approximately 810,000 natural gas and 460,000 electric customers across 32 counties. NIPSCO is part of NiSource's (NYSE: NI) seven regulated utility companies. NiSource is one of the largest fully regulated utility companies in the United States, serving approximately 4 million natural gas and electric customers through its local Columbia Gas and NIPSCO brands. More information about NIPSCO and NiSource is available at NIPSCO.com and NiSource.com.

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