

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Take Preventative Measures and Call Before You Dig
St. Joseph top county for damages to NIPSCO utility lines

Merrillville, Ind. — NIPSCO urges St. Joseph county homeowners and businesses to take preventative measures by calling 811 at least two business days before starting any projects involving digging.

In 2016, approximately 40% of the instances where NIPSCO's underground utility lines were struck by homeowners, contractors, or other outside parties were avoidable. The highest number of incidences of damages took place in the area of South Bend because neither homeowners nor businesses called 811 prior to beginning projects. The same trend has continued into the 2017 dig season.

According to data collected by Common Ground Alliance (CGA), an underground utility line is damaged every six minutes. Moreover, anyone who plans to dig more than a few inches into the ground is required by law to call 811 and get the lines identified and marked.

There are more than 20 million miles of underground utilities in the United States, according to data collected by CGA, from various industry groups.

Digging without knowing the location of underground utilities increases the likelihood of an incident, which can cause serious injuries or death, repair costs, and inconvenient outages.

When calling 811, homeowners and businesses are connected to the local call center, where a representative is notified about the caller's planned dig site. A professional utility line locator will visit the dig site to mark the approximate location of underground utility lines with paint or flags. After the site has been properly marked, it is safe to dig around the marked areas. There is also the option of entering a request online at www.811NOW.com.

For additional information on 811 visit NIPSCO.com/811.

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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