

Your Energy Connection



March 2014

National Safe Digging Month

Rocky Mount Public Utilities (RMPU) reminds you to celebrate National Safe Digging Month in April by using the free 811 service to “Call Before You Dig.”

Every digging job deserves a call, even small projects like planting trees or shrubs. The depth of utility lines varies and there may be multiple utility lines in a common area. Utility lines need to be properly marked because even when digging only a few inches, the risk of striking an underground utility line still exists.

Choosing not to call 811 before beginning a digging project could have serious results, such as injuries, disrupted service to entire neighborhoods, fines, and repair costs. You can avoid these unnecessary consequences by making one free phone call to 811 two days prior to digging.

Safe Digging Process

1. Call 811 to speak with a North Carolina 811 customer service representative. To determine which utilities to contact, the representative will ask you a few questions, such as the location of the dig, a description of the digging project, and the length of time you plan to dig.
2. At the end of the call, you will be given a number that can be used to check the status of your locate request. You can also use the number to update your request if the digging will take longer than expected. *Please note that any lines not installed by a utility must be located by a private locating service in addition to 811.*

3. North Carolina law requires you to wait two full business days before you begin digging. While you wait, it’s a good idea to mark where you plan to dig with white paint or flags so the utility locators know the exact location of your excavation.

After the Call

Once the locate request has been completed, the underground utilities will be marked by paint, stakes or flags with the following color codes:

- **Red:** Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit and Lighting Cables
- **Yellow:** Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum or Gaseous Materials
- **Orange:** Communication, Cable TV, Alarm or Signal Lines, Cables or Conduit
- **Blue:** Potable Water
- **Green:** Sewer or Drain Lines
- **Purple:** Reclaimed Water, Irrigation and Slurry Lines

Tolerance Zone

The state of North Carolina requires a clearance of 30 inches on each side of the marked utility line. This buffer area is called the Tolerance Zone. If digging must occur in the tolerance zone, use extreme caution and dig with a hand shovel.



Visit the RMPU Communications page at www.rockymountnc.gov/utilities/communications.html to watch a video on the “811 Call Process” or to read the “NC 811 Homeowner’s Guide to Safe Digging.”



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**



Because knowing what’s below protects you and your family.

Right Tree in the Right Place

Trees make a great addition to any landscape. Before you plant, however, it is important to know what the tree will look like as it nears maturity. To determine the amount of overhead space needed, check the tree's mature height and canopy spread. Also, consider the tree's form or shape. For example, a columnar tree will grow in less space, but round and v-shaped species provide the most shade.

It's also important to determine the underground space needed by considering the tree's rooting habits. Before beginning any digging project, always call 811 to have underground lines, pipes and cables marked.

Choosing the right type of tree and location can also help you save energy. Deciduous trees lose their foliage (i.e. leaves) during cold weather. When planted on the south and west sides of the home, they save energy by creating shade in the summer and allowing sunlight to warm the home in the winter.

50+ ft. in height

Tall trees, such as:

maple, oak, spruce, and pine

25 to 50 ft. in height

Medium trees, such as:

washington hawthorn and goldenrain tree

Less than 25 ft. in height

Small trees, such as:

redbud, dogwood, and crabapple

50 ft.

20 ft.

For additional information, visit the **Tree Trimming** page at utilities.rockymountnc.gov or www.arborday.org. For assistance with selecting the right tree location, call Allen Richardson at (252) 467-4856.

E-newsletter available

Would you like to receive *Your Energy Connection* newsletter by email? Send your request to energyspecialist@rockymountnc.gov to start receiving the monthly e-newsletter!

Use your smartphone to scan the QR code for quick access. Free QR-code readers are available for download from your app store.



Earn credits on your electric bill with the Load Management Program!

By using Load Management switches, RMPU is able to hold down the cost of providing power. These savings are passed on to you in the form of a monthly credit on your electricity bill.

There is no cost to you for the switches or installation. Plus, earn **UP TO \$129 PER YEAR** in credits!

- *Water Heater: \$2.00 credit per month*
- *Heat Strips: \$15.00 credit given for three months of winter (January, February, and March).*
- *Central Air Conditioner: \$20.00 credit given for three months of summer (July, August, and September).*

Start saving today! Call (252) 467-4803 or sign up online at www.rockymountnc.gov/utilities/loadmanagement.html.



Celebrate Arbor Day!

**Friday, April 4, 2014
10:00 - 11:00 a.m.**

**Roscoe Batts Village
102 Donovan Ct.
(formerly called Townhouse Ct.)**

Free to the public

The event will include:

- Mayor and city council presentations
- Performances by local schools
- Presentation of the Tree City awards to the City of Rocky Mount
- Arbor Day Kids program awards presented to Faith Christian, Rocky Mount Preparatory and Benvenue Elementary schools
- A live tree planting

