



Media Contact:

Amy Blanton

Energy Resources Communications Coordinator

(252) 972-1269

amy.blanton@rockymountnc.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 29, 2021



Pictured is an Energy Resources gas division employee locating an underground natural gas service line

City celebrates National Safe Digging Month

Rocky Mount, N.C. – In observance of National Safe Digging Month in April, the city of Rocky Mount Energy Resources department is reminding homeowners and businesses to always call 811 before beginning any digging project.

Digging without knowing the approximate location of underground utilities can result in serious injuries, service disruptions and costly repairs when gas, electric, communications, water and sewer lines are damaged. 811, the national call-before-you-dig number, is free of charge to all excavators.

Everyone who calls 811 is connected to a local one call notification center that will take the caller's information and communicate it to local utility companies. Professional locators will then visit the dig site to mark the approximate location of underground utility lines with spray paint, flags or both. Primary power, gas and telecommunication lines will be marked by the utilities. However, utilities and service providers are not responsible for marking private lines, such as secondary water, sewer or power lines. Water, sewer and storm drain lines are only marked within the right of way or to the meter, and not on private property. Lines from the right of way or meter to the residence or business, including water and sewer lines, are private lines and will need to be located by a private line locator. Once all underground utilities have been accurately marked, it is safe to begin digging around the marked areas.

“Calling 811 a few days before any planned home improvement projects that require digging, including common landscaping projects like planting trees and shrubs, is critical to preventing incidents like service outages and serious injuries,” says Chris Beschler, director of Energy Resources.

As part of National Safe Digging Month, Energy Resources encourages homeowners to take the following steps when planning a digging project this spring:

- Always call 811 a few days before digging, regardless of the depth or familiarity with the property.
- Plan ahead. North Carolina law requires you to call at least three business days before you begin your digging project. Calling on Monday or Tuesday for work planned for an upcoming weekend, for example, would provide ample time for the approximate location of lines to be marked.
- Confirm that all lines have been marked.
- Consider moving the location of your project if it is near utility line markings.
- If a contractor has been hired, confirm that the contractor has called 811. Don't allow work to begin if the lines aren't marked.
- Visit www.nc811.org for more information about 811 and the safe digging process.

About Rocky Mount

The city of Rocky Mount, located in the Coastal Plains of North Carolina, was incorporated in 1867 and lies in Edgecombe and Nash Counties. Rocky Mount is a two-time All-America City on the Tar River. Serving as the Gateway to Eastern North Carolina, the city's 875 employees serve approximately 58,000 residents daily.

The city's mission is to advance community well-being, safety and quality of life by delivering excellent public services and actively collaborating with the community toward a fulfilling and

inspired future for its citizens. As a publicly owned utility, the city of Rocky Mount is committed to safe, reliable service for its customers and operates in Nash and Edgecombe counties, providing customers with electricity, natural gas, water, wastewater (sewer), refuse, recycling and/or stormwater services. To learn more, visit www.rockymountnc.gov for news and updates.

###