



# Call 811 Before You Dig

Located underground is a complex network of pipes and wires for critical services such as electricity, natural gas, communications, water, sewage and other utilities. Unsafe digging can damage equipment. If you plan to dig anywhere – from large construction jobs to home projects – smart digging means **calling 811 before each job**. This is the first step in helping you to dig safely and avoid damaging critical utilities.

## Miss Utility: 811

Anywhere within the state of Maryland call 811. Have utility lines marked before you dig - at home, in your neighborhood, at work.



## Be Safe

Striking an underground utility line while digging can cause harm to you or those around you, disrupt service to entire neighborhoods, and potentially result in fines and repair costs defined by [Maryland's Miss Utility law](#).


Never assume you know what is below. Nationwide, one out of every three damages to underground utilities is the result of digging without calling 811. **Note: Damage to existing MetCom infrastructure resulting from a failure to contact Miss Utility may result in claims by the Commission for damages incurred.**

## Dig Carefully

Once a site has been marked or cleared by the Miss Utility, contractors are required to carefully "hand" dig (*ie. with a shovel*) around the marked lines without utilizing **mechanized/electric/power equipment** within 18 inches of the marked lines (Maryland requirement). If the utility is not found, contractors shall not excavate within 10 feet (in all directions) of the marked lines until the utility has been located and/or a remarking is requested.

Also consider designing your project to avoid digging close to the underground facilities. Never use mechanized equipment near marks or exposed pipes or wires. Remember that utility marks will not indicate depth, and settling ground, erosion and other factors cause the location of pipes and wires to change over time.

| Color  | Utility Type                               |
|--------|--|
| Red    | Electric, Cables, Conduit, Lighting Cables |
| Yellow | Natural Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum         |
| Orange | Communication, Phone, Cable, Fiber Optic   |
| Blue   | Water                                      |
| Green  | Sewer                                      |
| Purple | Reclaimed Water                            |
| White  | Proposed Excavation                        |
| Pink   | Temporary Survey Marking                   |



## Steps to Safer Digging

**Make the call.** One free, simple phone call to 811 will notify all appropriate utility companies of your intent to dig. You can also contact Miss Utility online at [missutility.net](http://missutility.net).

**Provide advance notice.** Contact 811 at least two full business days (but no more than ten days) prior to digging to ensure utility lines are properly marked.

**Provide your project info.** When you call, a representative from Miss Utility will ask for the location and description of your digging project.

**Allow utilities to mark underground lines.** Miss Utility will notify MetCom and other affected utilities that will then send professional locators to the dig site to mark the exact location of any underground lines. Use your ticket number to check on the status of your request with Miss Utility at 1-866-821-4226 or [www.MissUtility.net/searchstatus](http://www.MissUtility.net/searchstatus).

**Understand the location marks.** Each type of buried utility has its own color code (see below). Marks may be painted on the surface of the ground or located with flags.

**Who will be locating the water and sewer utilities.** Effective 7-1-2021, the Metropolitan Commission will be utilizing PRO COMM Engineering & Locating Services to perform all utility locations for existing water and sewer. The contractors will be representing the Commission and will be identified as an authorized agent for utility locating services. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact 301-737-7400 extension 301.

