



NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION *NORTHERN, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN DISTRICTS*

For Immediate Release:
April 1, 2020

Mississippi Public Service Commission Urges Homeowners and Contractors to Dig Safely

JACKSON, MS – The Mississippi Public Service Commission, in accordance with recognizing April as National Safe Digging Month, is reminding the public to evaluate the critical need of digging during the COVID-19 pandemic. Homeowners and contractors should utilize MS 811 to have utilities marked before digging.

“Our highest priority is the safety of Mississippi residents and workforce.” Chairman Dane Maxwell said. “Unless an outdoor project is essential, homeowners and contractors should postpone the project or call 811 first. Damaging an underground natural gas pipeline, even a minor damage, can cause a leak or rupture, lead to evacuations, or other detrimental consequences.”

“Mississippians are doing their part to help slow the spread of COVID-19. While MS 811 remains fully operational and that utilities are deemed critical personnel, it is important to avoid sending utility crews into neighborhoods unless it is absolutely necessary – to help protect residents and those essential workers” said Commissioner Brandon Presley of the Northern District.

“Spring is traditionally a busy time for yard work and home improvement projects,” said Central District Commissioner Brent Bailey. “However, we are now living in unprecedented times and first responders need to focus on the COVID-19 crisis. For the safety and welfare of all Mississippians, we are asking that citizens delay projects that involve digging, and if excavation is necessary, please utilize the free service offered by MS 811.”

Whether you are a professional excavator or working on an at-home project, it is imperative that you evaluate the critical need of the digging project during this pandemic.

Due to the high stakes during the COVID-19 pandemic, we are asking homeowners and contractors to delay non-essential digging. If you must dig, take extreme caution and make sure you ALWAYS call 811 first to have utilities marked before you dig. Dial 8-1-1 at least two days before digging. Calling 811 is free and helps protect millions of miles of underground utility lines that are necessary for everyday life.

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