

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA**

NEWS RELEASE

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Commissioner Cramer, Clark, and Kalk

****For Immediate Release****

Phone 701-328-2400

**North Dakota Pipeline Association plans local meetings on
importance of using 811**

The message is simple and direct: calling 811 prior to any outdoor digging activities could prevent serious injuries, death or damage to the environment. That's the theme North Dakota's One Call Center works hard to get across to homeowners, farmers and excavators in our state.

The national 811 "Call Before You Dig" number was designated by the Federal Communications Commission to help protect do-it-yourselfers, gardeners, landscapers and contractors from unintentionally hitting underground utility lines while working on digging projects – large and small.

Calling 811 starts the process to get underground utility lines marked for free. When 811 is called from anywhere in the United States, calls are routed to the appropriate state One-Call Center, where operators will ask for the location of the digging job and relay the information to utility companies that have facilities in that area. Within a few days, the affected utility companies send professional locators to the digging location to mark the lines.

Individuals who will be excavating near underground pipelines in North Dakota are required by law to contact the ND One-Call Center (www.ndonecall.com) by dialing 811 or (800) 795-0555 at least two business days prior to beginning their project.

The North Dakota Public Service Commission (www.psc.nd.gov) inspects, regulates and enforces intrastate gas pipeline safety requirements. [The Office of Pipeline Safety \(OPS\), within the U. S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration \(PHMSA\)](#) inspects, regulates and enforces interstate gas pipeline safety requirements and both interstate and intrastate liquid pipeline safety requirements.

In addition to One Call Center notifications, the North Dakota Pipeline Association (NDPA) - www.pipelineawareness.org/ndpa was created in 2006 to maintain an ongoing relationship with local Emergency Responders and Public Officials, to provide fire fighters, law enforcement officers, emergency medical technicians and all other emergency responders who may be the first to arrive at the scene with information they need to safely handle a pipeline incident.

Beginning in Bismarck, the NDPA has 18 meetings scheduled across the State in 2011. These meetings are sponsored by the pipeline companies, are for pipeline emergency preparedness. These meetings are spread out across the State to ensure critical information for safely responding to pipeline incidents is coordinated between emergency responders and pipeline operators in your local area.

“If you receive an invitation to attend one of the NDPA Pipeline Awareness meetings, I encourage emergency response personnel to attend”, says North Dakota Public Service Commissioner Brian Kalk. “You will have the opportunity to learn about responding to a pipeline emergency and to meet local pipeline representatives who will answer any questions you may have”

Commenting on the meetings, Sally Fossum, Public Awareness Coordinator at Alliance Pipeline says, “For pipeline operators to reach the highest levels of public safety and environmental protection, relationships with emergency officials must be developed and maintained.”

Approximately 7,000 miles of pipelines crisscross North Dakota, safely transporting natural gas, crude and other energy products every day to homes, businesses and to other parts of the country. Pipelines transport products that are part of our everyday life and contribute to North Dakota’s community tax base. Ongoing development of oil and gas exploration and production in North Dakota makes the topic of pipeline safety even more important. While pipelines are the safest and most efficient method of transporting energy, they are typically buried and can be inadvertently damaged. Therefore, ensuring the location of all buried pipelines and underground utilities prior to digging is critically important.

The NDPA 2011 Pipeline Awareness meeting schedule can be found at www.pipelineawareness.org/ndpa.