



## NEWS RELEASE

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## SoCalGas Brings Awareness to Safe Digging Practices in Honor of National 811 Day

*Utility reminds customers to contact 811 before digging to prevent damage to underground utility services*

LOS ANGELES, August 11, 2020 – In observance of National 811 Day, [Southern California Gas Co.](#) (SoCalGas) reminds homeowners and professional excavators to put safety first and contact 811 before starting any construction projects. This free service connects homeowners and professional excavators with the Underground Service Alert, who is responsible for relaying important information surrounding the planned dig site with appropriate utility companies. After a request is received and processed, professional utility technicians will then either mark their underground infrastructure or notify the individual if there are no underground lines. Marking utility lines before construction helps protect public safety, prevents injuries, and reduces the potential for service costly repairs for homeowners.

“At SoCalGas, the safety of our employees, customers and the general public comes first. Failing to contact 811 can have tragic consequences,” said Gina Orozco, vice president of gas engineering and system integrity at SoCalGas. “A year ago, we lost one of our own when he responded to a damaged service line.”

“The health and safety of our employees, customers and the community always come first. Contacting 811 is free, effortless and essential in making sure you and your families are protected from dangers of an accidental dig-in, which can lead to serious injury, costly property damage or service interruptions,” said Gina Orozco, vice president of gas engineering and system integrity at SoCalGas. “Whether you’re setting up a new fence or simply working in your yard – remember to contact 811 at least 2 business days prior to digging to keep you and your family safe against preventable damage.”

This year, to bring even more attention to the importance of contacting 811, SoCalGas is partnering with home renovation experts for the “Dig It to Win It” contest on Facebook and Instagram. Participants are encouraged to submit home and yard improvement projects beginning on August 11 until September 10. A winner will be selected from two separate categories for a chance to win an \$811 VISA gift card each.

According to the Common Ground Alliance (CGA), in 2019, approximately 45 percent of all excavator damages in California were a result of failing to mark underground utility lines. Accidental dig-ins are preventable, and the likelihood of hitting a utility line is decreased by 99 percent when individuals contact 811. In the past year alone, SoCalGas recorded nearly 3,000 cases of damage to underground infrastructure.

With underground utility lines laying just inches below the surface under streets, sidewalks and private property, it is crucial for you to know where they are before digging. SoCalGas encourages the public to contact 811 through their [online ticket system](#) or dial 8-1-1 at least two business days before beginning any digging project.

**Follow these steps before starting any project that involves digging:**

- **Mark out** your proposed excavation area in white (paint, chalk, flour or other suitable materials).
- **Contact** Underground Service Alter at 811 to submit a location request online or dial 8-1-1 at least two business days before digging.
- **Wait** until a SoCalGas technician has marked our natural gas lines, indicating pipe material and diameter, or let you know that the area is clear.
- **Remember** that SoCalGas only use yellow paint, flags or stakes to mark the location of natural gas pipes.
- **Use only hand tools** to dig within 24 inches of a marked utility line to carefully expose the exact locations before using any power excavation equipment in the area.
- **Report** all pipe damage, regardless of how small or how big it may be. Remember, no damage is too small to report. Contact us immediately at 1-800-427-2200.
- If you’ve hired a contractor, make sure the contractor contacts 811 to have our natural gas lines marked.

For more information on natural gas safety and 811, visit: <https://www.socalgas.com/stay-safe/safety-and-prevention/digging-and-yard-safety/residential>

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**About SoCalGas**

Headquartered in Los Angeles, [SoCalGas®](#) is the [largest gas distribution utility](#) in the United States. SoCalGas delivers affordable, reliable, clean and increasingly renewable gas service to 21.8 million

customers across [24,000 square miles](#) of Central and Southern California, where more than 90 percent of residents use natural gas for heating, hot water, cooking, drying clothes or other uses. Gas delivered through the company's pipelines also plays a key role in providing electricity to Californians— about [45 percent of electric power generated](#) in the state comes from gas-fired power plants.

SoCalGas' vision is to be the [cleanest gas utility in North America](#), delivering affordable and increasingly renewable energy to its customers. In support of that vision, SoCalGas is committed to replacing 20 percent of its traditional natural gas supply with renewable natural gas (RNG) by 2030. Renewable natural gas is made from waste created by dairy farms, landfills and wastewater treatment plants. SoCalGas is also committed to investing in its gas delivery infrastructure while keeping bills affordable for our customers. From 2014 through 2018, the company invested nearly \$6.5 billion to upgrade and modernize its pipeline system to enhance safety and reliability. SoCalGas is a subsidiary of [Sempra Energy](#) (NYSE: SRE), an energy services holding company based in San Diego. For more information visit [socalgas.com/newsroom](https://www.socalgas.com/newsroom) or connect with SoCalGas on [Twitter](#) (@SoCalGas), [Instagram](#) (@SoCalGas) and [Facebook](#).