



ENERGY CONNECTIONS

MARCH 2014 / SOUTH DAKOTA

How 811 works

Want to avoid spending a day in the dark? It's as simple as 8-1-1.

Call 811 from anywhere in the country a few days prior to digging, and your call will be routed to your local One Call Center. Tell the operator where you're planning to dig, what type of work you will be doing and your affected local utilities companies will be notified about your intent to dig. In South Dakota, the locator has 48 hours to mark the approximate location of your underground lines, pipes and cables, so you'll know what's below - and be able to dig safely.

This includes:

- Planting a tree
- Building a fence
- Burying a pet
- Digging a foundation
- Trenching
- Digging a ditch

For more information, visit onecall.sd.gov.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

The Call

When considering what you'll need to make your project a success, don't forget the most important first step for any outdoor home improvement project: calling 811 before you dig.

As any professional will tell you, smart digging always means calling 811 before every job.

Homeowners often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked, but every digging job requires a call - even "small" projects like planting trees and shrubs. If you are a homeowner hiring an excavator, the excavator is required to request locates.

When you call before you dig, you'll prevent unintended consequences such as injury to you or your family, damage to your property, utility service outages to the entire neighborhood and potential fines and repair costs.

After all, do you really want to be the person who knocks out the neighborhood's cable service during the big game?

Reminder: It's the Law

State law requires you to call to have any underground facilities marked at least 48 hours prior to all digging. By not calling, you can be faced with expensive fines and repair costs. Don't gamble with your safety - know what's below. Always call before you dig.



The Wait



Good job - you've taken the first step toward safe digging and made a call to 811!

But wait, what happens next?

Well, since your call was routed to your state one call center, locate crews from member utility companies have found out exactly where you are planning to dig and are on their way to mark where those hidden underground utility lines are under your lawn!

To assist locaters, you should mark the dig area with white paint or stakes.

Most locate crews will arrive to mark your property within two business days, and will make sure you know exactly where to dig - even though the depths of utility lines may vary and there may be multiple utility lines in the same area.

So kick back and relax, knowing your call made a safe digging project possible.

Now's your chance to take a deep breath before beginning that project. Catch a movie, read a good book, walk the dog, or take a trip to your local home improvement store and get everything you'll need for your project - just don't dig until your yard is marked, of course!



Safe Digging









Well you called before digging, waited for your lines to be marked, and now it's time to roll up your sleeves and get to work!

By now locator crews, possibly from multiple companies, have been to your property and made sure to mark the approximate location of your underground utility lines. Check the area before proceeding with your project. **The One Call service is free.** Some underground lines on private property are privately-owned and may not be marked by a utility. Other underground lines, between a meter and the home or business, may be considered privately-owned. In these cases a charge by the utility may apply to locate and mark those lines.

When digging, make sure to always dig around the marks, not on them. Some utility lines may be buried at a shallow depth, and an unintended shovel thrust can bring you right back to square one - facing potentially dangerous and/or costly consequences.

If you expose gas or electric lines that haven't been marked, or damage a line, stop excavating and call NorthWestern Energy immediately. Damage to a pipe that results in the release of gas, the excavator should call 911 immediately.

Don't forget that with time, erosion or root structure growth may shift the locations of your utility lines, so remember to call again, each time you are planning a digging job. And help spread the word – make sure your friends and neighbors know the importance of calling 811.

Utility line color coding The color of the paint, stake or other marker indicates what's below:	
	Proposed Excavation
	Temporary Survey Markings
	Electric
	Gas / Oil
	Communications / Cable TV
	Water
	Reclaimed Water
	Sewer

It's Pipeline Inspection Season

To ensure the safety and integrity of all our natural gas pipelines, NorthWestern Energy employees and contractors will be in your area throughout the next couple of months performing physical checks of all pipelines and related equipment.

There should be no interruption of service resulting from the inspection, and should we need to access your property, you will be notified. Inspectors wear clothing that clearly identifies them and carry identification that can be presented as requested. Thank you for supporting us as we work to keep our communities safe.



Investing in Reliability and Future Growth

NorthWestern Energy is in the early stages of significant upgrades to its electric infrastructure serving its customers in the Yankton, South Dakota area. The primary goals of the project include improving the reliability of electrical service to area customers as well as providing additional capacity due to electric load growth on the east side of Yankton. The project will take place in phases over the next several years.

Why are we upgrading? The city of Yankton is now served by a single transmission substation located about four miles west of Yankton. A single-event outage or an equipment failure could result in wide-scale power outages and blackouts in the Yankton area. In addition, the existing electric infrastructure is approaching capacity on the east side of the city, which limits NorthWestern's ability to reliably support increased electric load growth. Adding a new transmission substation on the east side of Yankton will improve electric reliability by adding a second electric source to the system. It will also provide additional electrical capacity and necessary infrastructure to serve new industrial growth.

For complete project details, visit NorthWesternEnergy.com and download the project fact sheet.

Contact us...

MONTANA

Customer Contact Center (888) 467-2669
7 a.m. - 6 p.m. M-F
Emergency 24/7 Service
Call Before You Dig 811
Energy Efficiency (800) 823-5995

NEBRASKA

Customer Contact Center (800) 245-6977
7 a.m. - 6 p.m. M-F
Emergency 24/7 Service
Call Before You Dig 811

SOUTH DAKOTA

Customer Contact Center (800) 245-6977
7 a.m. - 6 p.m. M-F
Emergency 24/7 Service
Call Before You Dig 811

PAYMENT

Automated Phone
Payment Option: (800) 218-4959
(via checking, savings, or money market account)
SpeedPay Automated
Phone Payment Option: (877) 361-4927
(via credit card account)

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