



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **ICC: Help Flatten the Curve, Call 811 before Digging**

### **April is Safe Digging Month**

Chicago, IL – April is National Safe Digging Month. With so many Illinoisans home due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and the weather getting warmer, the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is urging residents and excavators to help flatten the curve by postponing non-essential outdoor digging projects until Governor Pritzker’s ‘Shelter in Place’ order is lifted. If a project is deemed necessary, please use extreme caution and remember to call 811 before you start digging.

“Any time you start an excavation or digging project without first having called 811 you risk hitting buried gas, electric, communications, water or sewer lines which can cause physical injuries, property damage and service disruptions. This spring, our first responders and medical professionals are already overburdened with the COVID-19 pandemic. For your safety and to help flatten the curve of COVID-19 cases, the ICC is urging homeowners and professional excavators to consider postponing projects if they are non-essential. If you must proceed, please continue to practice physical distancing, be extra cautious, and call 811 before you dig,” said ICC Chair Carrie Zalewski.

A request to locate underground utility lines can be made by dialing the convenient three-digit phone number “811” or online using the links below. Requests are managed by JULIE, Inc. (Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators) across most of Illinois, or 811 Chicago within the city limits of Chicago. The cost of the call and the locating services are free. Despite the ‘Shelter in Place’ order, both JULIE and 811 Chicago are continuing to operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. However, wait times could be extended due to staff across the state being impacted by COVID-19.

Illinois law requires homeowners and professional excavators to call 811 at least 48 hours (or two business days) before starting an outdoor digging project. Installing a mailbox, building a deck, and planting a tree or garden are examples of activities that require locating the underground lines they own with color-coded markings. The digging project must begin within 14 calendar days from the call and locate requests have a 28-day life. Violators may face penalties as part of the ICC’s [One-Call enforcement](#) efforts.

To make locate requests online, or for more information about “Call 811” please visit:

[JULIE’s website](#) (for project within most of Illinois)

[811 Chicago’s website](#) (for projects within Chicago city limits)

***About the Illinois Commerce Commission***

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a quasi-judicial body made up of five Commissioners. Through its Public Utility Program, the Commission oversees the provision of adequate, reliable, efficient and safe utility services at the least possible cost to Illinois citizens served by electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and sewer public utility companies. Through its Transportation Regulatory Program, the Commission oversees public safety and consumer protection programs with regard to intrastate commercial motor carriers of general freight, household goods movers, relocation towers, safety towers, personal property warehouses and repossession agencies. The Commission's Rail Safety Program also inspects and regulates the general safety of railroad tracks, facilities and equipment in the state.

To learn more about the Commission, its offices and bureaus, click [here](#). If you are a consumer who needs help resolving a utility dispute call 800-524-0795 or file an online complaint [here](#). For a complaint related to transportation, call 217-782-6448.

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