



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Dig it?? Absolutely! But Remember to Contact Virginia 811 BEFORE You Dig!**

August 11<sup>th</sup> (8/11) serves as a great reminder for Virginia residents to always contact Virginia 811 before digging

[August 2, 2021] There is a special day on the calendar aimed at reminding Virginia residents to contact 811 before planning any kind of work that involves digging into the ground. In fact, 811 day, or August 11<sup>th</sup>, has been designated as an important annual date by the Virginia General Assembly.

Many home projects involve digging, such as planting a tree, building a fence, or installing a sprinkler system. But even shallow digging has the potential to harm underground utilities. This can result in service disruption, property damage, and even serious personal injury.

That's why Virginia 811 advises all homeowners and professional excavators to "Dig with C.A.R.E." and follow this simple set of steps designed to keep you safe:

**Contact 811**

**Allow time for marking (3 working days)**

**Respect and protect the marks**

**Excavate carefully**

Contacting Virginia 811 is free and enables you to connect with all the utility providers for your property with a click of a button. If you're digging at one address, simply log onto [www.va811.com](http://www.va811.com) and click on the "Dig Request" button to fill out a simple form. This will allow utility locators to come out to your residence and mark the utilities around your home. By law, those locators have 48 hours starting at 7 a.m. on the next working day after you submit your request to come out and mark the locations of the utilities. This is essentially 3 working days. These marks give you a guide for where you can dig safely.

“Every digging project, no matter how large or small, warrants contacting 811 before breaking ground, whether using a shovel or any other equipment,” says Scott Crawford, President and CEO of Virginia 811. “Whether it’s installing a fence, building a deck, planting a tree, removing a stump, or performing any other work involving digging – we want to remind homeowners and professional contractors alike on this 811 Day, and all year round, to always use our free service before digging to reduce the risk of striking an underground utility line.”

The General Assembly passed the Virginia Underground Utility Damage Prevention Act in 1979 to encourage best practices when it comes to excavating safely. Initially nicknamed the “Miss Utility Law,” this legislation requires 48 hours’ notice before undertaking any kind of digging project. Excavation damage can affect any type of underground utility, including electrical, gas, telecom, and plumbing. Failure to contact Virginia 811 in advance of a project could make the property owner liable for the cost of repairs in the event damage occurs.

Summer is a great time for all those home improvement projects on your list. Contacting Virginia 811 and remembering to Dig with C.A.R.E. helps to ensure your construction process is safe. More information on the process can be found at <https://va811.com/homeowners/>

Virginia 811 is celebrating the day with several fun activities, and we encourage participation for some great prizes!

First, a special **video challenge** was launched on July 30th. The challenge is asking people to upload a video focused on safe digging with the hashtag #VA811Challenge. 1<sup>st</sup> place prize is a \$811 check with other great second and third place prizes awarded.

In addition, a special **Virtual 5k or 8.11 mile run, or walk** will kick off on August 11<sup>th</sup> and will run until September 8<sup>th</sup>. It’s free to register and participants can win several prizes by simply posting a photo on Facebook or Instagram with the hashtag #iRun4Virginia811. Each participant can get a special limited-edition T-shirt when they register with proceeds going to Construction Angels Virginia, a worthy organization that helps families who have lost loved ones due to accidents at construction sites.

More information on both contests can be found [here](#)

For details on any of the 811 Day activities, or to schedule an interview, please reach out to Natalie Soucie, Head of Marketing & Communications for Virginia 811 at [nsoucie@va811.com](mailto:nsoucie@va811.com) or call (540) 529-2785.

### *About VA811*

Virginia Utility Protection Service, commonly called Virginia 811, is the not-for-profit organization created by Virginia's utilities to protect their underground facilities. Find more information and safe digging practices at [www.va811.com](http://www.va811.com)