



HAND DIGGING BEST PRACTICES

When your project requires you to dig within 2 feet of utility lines, mechanized equipment is not allowed. Hand dig to protect the underground utility line from damage.

The following hand digging best practices can help to reduce damages:

- Use round or blunt edge shovels
- Begin digging to the side of the marked utility line and extend the hole towards the utility mark
- Once the utility line is visible, keep the face of the shovel parallel with the utility line and use all precautions to remove the soil from around the utility line
- Fully expose the utility line where you are going to be crossing it
- Protect the exposed utility line from damage

Quick Tips

- Contact us on Monday or Tuesday if you plan to dig on Saturday or Sunday. This will allow the utility companies time to mark their utility lines.
- Do not remove the marking flags if you see them in your yard.
- If you suspect you smell natural gas, leave the area, **call 911** and contact your gas company immediately.

**Virginia 811 Provides Emergency
Service 365 Days a Year
24 Hours a Day**

If you see markings on
or close to your property
and wish to get more information
about a planned excavation:

Visit www.VA811.com

Click on "Check Status"

Click on "What Markings Mean?"

Click on "Ticket Search"

What are the different markings?



Electric Power Lines, Cables,
Conduit and Lighting Cables



Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum or
Gaseous Materials



Communications, Alarm/Signal
Lines, Cables or Conduit



Potable Water



Sewer and Drain Lines



Reclaimed Water, Irrigation
and Slurry Lines



Proposed Excavation Route
or Boundary

For **ALL** Excavation Work **ANYWHERE** in Virginia
go to VA811.com or call **811** or **1.800.552.7001**.



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Before You Dig



Know What's Below



KEEP VIRGINIA SAFE

It's fast, easy and it's FREE!

No matter how big or small your digging project is, contacting **Virginia 811** to request utility line markings before you dig helps avoid physical injury, property damage, costly repairs, and service interruptions.

What is Virginia 811?

Virginia **811** is the not-for-profit organization created by Virginia's utilities to protect their underground facilities. Our service is **FREE!** We ask everyone to do their part to protect underground utility lines that provide you and your community with essential utility services.

How do I contact Virginia 811 if I'm planning a digging project?

If you're planning a digging project for a single address, go to: [VA811.com/Single-Address-Tickets/](https://va811.com/Single-Address-Tickets/) to put in a dig request. A Single Address Ticket (SAT) is a request by a homeowner or contractor to have utility lines marked at a single address. You can also call **811** or **1.800.552.7001**.

What information do I need to provide when I contact Virginia 811?

- Your name, address, telephone number and email (if available)
- Specific location of the work
- Alternate telephone number for you (if available)
- Type of work being performed

If I hire a contractor to dig on my property, should I contact Virginia 811 for them?

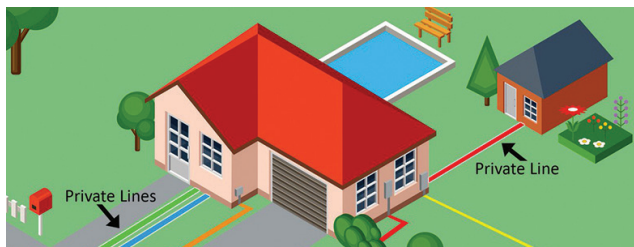
Under Virginia Law, the person actually performing the digging must contact Virginia 811.

How long does it take for the utility lines to be marked?

The utility companies have 48 hours beginning at 7:00 a.m. the next working day (working days exclude Saturdays, Sundays, and legal state and national holidays) to mark all underground utility lines which may be in your project area. The color code chart on the back of this brochure will help you determine what type of utility lines are in your project area.

Public vs. Private - What's the difference?

Some underground utilities on your property **will not be marked** by Virginia **811** members because they are not owned by our members. These can include underground lines to septic tanks, electric lines to sheds or landscape lighting, lawn sprinkler systems and more.



Here's one general rule: If the utility runs from the street to the meter, it will be marked up to the meter. If the utility is installed from the meter to another location on your property, it will not be marked.

Examples of Private Lines

- Electric lines to out buildings (detached garages or sheds)
- Sprinkler systems
- Lines related to satellite or dish television
- Landscape lighting
- Invisible pet fences
- Septic tanks and lines associated with them
- Propane tanks and lines associated with them



Who is responsible for protecting the marks once they have been placed on the ground?

It is the responsibility of the person digging to protect the marks from the time the project begins until the marks are no longer needed to safely dig around the utility lines.

What if I have to dig near the utility marks?

There is a tolerance zone when digging near underground utility lines. The tolerance zone is 2 feet (plus the width of the utility line, if known) on either side of the marked underground utility line. No mechanized equipment of any kind may be used in the tolerance zone. Hand digging is necessary to protect the underground utility line(s) from damage. See the **Hand Digging Best Practices** on the back of this brochure.

What should I do if the marks are destroyed?

Contact **Virginia 811** and request a re-mark. The utility companies will re-mark the lines.

Please do your part to protect underground utility lines that provide your community and you with essential utility services.

Contact Virginia 811 before you dig.

