

Remember: Call 811 Before You Dig

Spring is finally here. With the snow melted and the ground ready for planting, eager homeowners are gearing up to start outdoor digging projects.

Before you reach for a shovel, remember to call 811—the national call-before-you-dig number—to ensure your buried utility lines are marked.

Our land is made up of a complex underground infrastructure of pipelines, wires and cables. Striking an underground utility line while digging can harm you or those around you, disrupt service to an entire neighborhood and, potentially, result in fines and repair costs.

A call must be placed to 811 before every digging project, from simple landscaping projects such as planting trees or shrubs to building a deck or installing a mailbox.

Every six minutes an underground utility line is damaged because someone decided to dig without first calling 811. Don't become part of the statistic. Make sure to call 811 before digging or excavating. You also can enter your locate requests online at www.callbeforeyoudig.org.

How it Works

- A free phone call to 811 makes it easy for the local one-call center to notify all appropriate utility companies of your intent to dig.
- Call at least 48 hours prior to digging to ensure enough time for utility lines to be properly marked.
- When you call 811, a representative will ask for the location and description of your digging project.
- Klickitat PUD will send an employee to the proposed dig site to mark the approximate location of your lines.
- Once lines are marked properly, roll up your sleeves and carefully dig around the marked areas.

The representatives for marking electrical lines are Dan Charters, Bernie Predeek and Tim Garrigus. They respond to requests from the notification center and mark the underground power lines, cables or conduits, and lighting cables with red spray paint.

Did you know KPUD provides water and wastewater services to many communities throughout the county?

Water and/or sewer lines are maintained by the PUD in Glenwood, Klickitat, Lyle, Dallesport, Roosevelt, Wishram, and the areas of Ponderosa Park and Rimrock in Goldendale.

If you dig in one of these communities, a member of the PUD water-wastewater crew will respond and mark the appropriate water and sewer lines.

These crew members are Rod Kiser, Tim McMurrin, John Tallman, Brandon Walter and Greg Watson.



Travis Heilman demonstrates how an underground utility line is marked.

Water is marked in blue, and sewer and drain lines are marked in green.

Getting these lines marked prevents digging equipment from hitting or cutting off power, water, phone, cable, sewer or gas lines. Within two feet of the spray-painted marks, take special care and dig by hand. Accidental contact with any of these lines can result in serious injury.

“Any time you disturb the earth, you run the risk of accidentally digging into underground power lines, sewer and water mains, cable TV lines or other services,” says Assistant Engineer Mike Blumenstein. “When you want to get started on a project, it can be a nuisance to wait for two working days while utilities mark their services, but those two days can save your life.”

Each year the PUD receives more than 1,300 location requests countywide. This service is dedicated to protecting citizens and construction personnel who work around utilities, as well as safeguarding the underground infrastructure of your community.

Calling before beginning any excavation prevents damage to underground facilities, service interruptions and bodily injury.

Work safely this season. Know what is below, and call before you dig. ■