



Montana Public Service Commission

Post Office Box 202601

Helena, MT 59620-2601

406.444.6199

<http://psc.mt.gov>

April 6, 2009 – *For Immediate Release*

For more information contact:

Chair Greg Jergeson, 406.444.6166

Public Information Specialist Sarah Carlson, 406.444.6171

PSC Chair Urges Montanans to Call 811 before You Dig

Milder temperatures are on the way and many Montanans are getting ready to tackle outdoor projects that may involve digging. The Montana Public Service Commission (PSC) urges everyone to stay safe by calling 811 prior to performing a task that involves moving dirt.

"Everyone should find out where lines are located by calling 811 before they even put their shovel in the soil," observed PSC Chair Greg Jergeson. "The call is free and having the underground utility lines marked with paint or stakes is free too."

Improper digging is one of the leading causes of injuries and deaths related to pipelines in the United States. Some lines are only a few inches below the surface, making them easy to strike even during shallow digging projects. Other consequences of damaged utility lines can include service disruptions for the area and financial penalties for the digger.

April 2009 has been designated "National Safe Digging Month," dedicated to increasing awareness of safe digging practices across the country and celebrating the two-year anniversary of 811, the national call-before-you-dig number. The Federal Communications Commission designated 811 as the national call-in number for homeowners and professional excavators to call before digging. Calls to this number are directed to a local center and the affected utilities, which will then come out and mark underground lines for free, usually within 2-3 business days. Additional information can be found at www.call811.com.

-- ### --