



Digging Safely

Colorado law requires utilities and line owners to register their underground facilities in every county and for excavators to contact every potentially affected operator before they start to dig. Excavators include:

- Fence builders, swimming pool contractors and landscapers.
- Homeowners who do this type of work themselves may also be considered excavators.
- Anyone digging in the vicinity of a pipeline should use the free, statewide system 811 to be sure they know where they can safely dig.

The Colorado 8-1-1 system is a nationwide organization that makes locating lines easy. They operate a computerized notification center that establishes an important link between excavators and underground line operators. Here's how this free service works.

- Excavators (including homeowners) should call 8-1-1 or visit colorado811.org at least full three business days before digging starts. (Calls received with less than two business days-notice are considered non-compliant requests under state law.)
- It can take less than five minutes to complete a locate request ticket to have all utilities located with paint and/or flags at the proposed dig site.

Also, when planning your landscaping projects, remember this:

- Avoid planting trees or large shrubs near your gas meter. As the tree grows, it can exert forces on your meter setting which could result in damage to the gas pipeline facilities.
- If a contractor starts digging before you see any paint or flags in your yard, you will know he probably is not complying with the Colorado 8-1-1 law. By stopping the excavation work, you will be protecting your own property by preventing damage to natural gas, electric, water and communication facilities.

For a video demonstration of these tips, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zspyp4Kp3gM>.