



Sunshine State One-Call of Florida, Inc.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Call Before You Dig just got easier with new number, 811

DeBary, FL – April 25, 2007 – Sunshine State One Call of Florida, Inc. (SSOCOF) announces the availability of 811, the new "Call Before You Dig" number that excavators are required to call two full business days before digging so that underground utilities can be located and marked, free of charge.

Knowing where underground lines are buried before each digging project helps prevent injury, expense and penalties. In 2004, according to industry data, the Common Ground Alliance (CGA) estimates there were approximately 680,000 underground line strikes resulting in damages, including service outages and injuries. Many of these accidents might have easily been avoided by calling ahead to have lines marked before digging.

A national 811 awareness campaign launched May 1, 2007 in Washington D.C. to increase awareness of 811, demonstrate its relevance and promote a change to call before digging. Created by the CGA and issued by the Federal Communications Commission, 811 will also eliminate confusion over multiple "Call Before You Dig" numbers across the country – especially helpful for those areas within Florida that typically draw contractors from other states to conduct hurricane repairs and clean up.

When dialing 811, Florida callers are connected to SSOCOF. SSOCOF notifies the appropriate local utilities with buried lines near your site and those utilities send crews to mark the approximate location of underground lines for free.

In Florida, the law requiring excavators to call 811 before digging is the *Underground Facility Damage Prevention and Safety Act*, Chapter 556, Florida Statutes. Failure to call can result in fines from \$250 to \$5,000.

Sunshine State One Call of Florida is a private, not-for-profit, corporation created by Florida legislature in 1993. Its purpose is to educate excavators and homeowners on the requirement to call before digging and provide a free system for excavators to notify owners of pending excavation near underground utilities.

A call to (800) 432-4770 will continue connecting you to SSOCOF for locate tickets. Please see the next issue of *Florida Plumbing Perspective* for more information about calling before digging or visit www.callsunshine.com.

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