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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Homeowners Should Still Call 811 While Sheltering in Place *Protect Yourself and Stay Safe While Digging*

Baton Rouge, LA – March 23, 2020– In response to Governor John Bel Edwards’ executive order limiting public exposure to COVID-19, more and more homeowners will be staying home in the next few weeks. During this time, those homeowners will find more time to tackle DIY projects in their yards and on their property that could include digging for gardens, flower beds, transplanting shrubs and trees, and many other tasks. The office of Louisiana 811 wants the public to know that during this time, when digging is planned, it’s still important to “Call Before You Dig.”

Most people are surprised to learn that there are more than 100 billion feet of underground utilities in the U.S. This equates to more than one football field’s length of buried utilities for every man, woman and child in the country, according to Louisiana 811, an organization dedicated to protecting the safety of people who dig near underground utility lines.

During this unusual time, with caution being very high concerning COVID-19 exposure, some utility industry partners may experience interruptions in resource availability. Those interruptions may result in delays in providing field responses to 811 calls. But it is still vitally important that homeowners call 811 **before they dig. And then wait until the site is marked.**

Contacting 811

When you contact 811, information will be collected about your digging plans, and local pipeline and utility companies will be notified about your project.

Representatives will be sent to mark the approximate location of underground utilities using color-coded paint, flags or stakes. If the utility is a metered service, member companies typically mark up to the meter on your property.

The advance notice required to have underground utilities marked varies by state. Louisiana requires at least a two-business day notice. Advanced notice allows utility and facility owners enough time to plan their marking process.

Protect your safety, the safety of the community and the environment by digging with care. For more information, visit louisiana811.com.

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