



National Fuel and Common Ground Alliance Remind Residents to Call Before Digging

(Aug. 10, 2010) Williamsville, N.Y.: With Aug. 11 almost here, National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation (the Utility) and Common Ground Alliance (CGA) hope this date (8/11) reminds residents to call 8-1-1, the national “Call Before You Dig” phone number, or visit www.call811.com, prior to planning excavation projects. Calling 8-1-1 prior to digging is required by New York and Pennsylvania State Law, and can prevent accidental damage to underground utility lines.

“All excavation projects require a call—even small or shallow digging projects like planting trees and shrubs, or installing a fence or mailbox,” said Donna L. DeCarolis, spokesperson for National Fuel. “If you damage an underground utility line while digging, you run the risk of harming yourself or those around you, disrupting service to an entire neighborhood and potentially being held responsible for fines and repair costs.”

The national 8-1-1-phone number connects callers with a “One Call Center” in their respective areas. Local “One Call Center” operators record the locations of excavation projects and notify National Fuel. The Utility then dispatches professional locators to mark the approximate locations of its lines at **no cost to homeowners**. In New York, residents and contractors should call 8-1-1 at least two, but no more than 10, business days before starting projects to allow time for requests to be processed. In Pennsylvania, they should call at least three, but no more than 10, business days before starting projects. This does not include the date of the call. Once projects are underway, and in observance of the markings, New York State Law requires diggers to stop using heavy equipment and hand dig within 2 feet of either side of the markings. In Pennsylvania, diggers are required to stop using heavy equipment and hand dig within 18 inches of either side of the markings.

The 8-1-1 “Call Before You Dig” initiative is sponsored by CGA, the leading association created specifically to work with **all** industry stakeholders in an effort to prevent damage to underground utility infrastructure and ensure public safety and environmental protection. CGA, formed in 2000, represents a continuation of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Common Ground Study, which highlighted the need for one organization to continuously update best practices among the growing underground utility industry.

National Fuel Gas Company is an integrated energy company with \$4.9 billion in assets comprised of the following four operating segments: Exploration and Production, Pipeline and Storage, Utility and Energy Marketing. National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation, the Utility segment, provides natural gas service to more than 500,000 customers in Western New York and more than 200,000 customers in northwestern Pennsylvania. Additional information about the Utility and its customer services is available at www.nationalfuelgas.com or by calling 1-800-365-3234.