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National Safe Digging Month Kicks Off Following Historic Storms

Atmos Energy Reminds Everyone to Call 811 Before Any Digging Project

April 5, 2021 – Since 2008, April has been designated National Safe Digging Month to encourage safe digging practices for any project. Following historic winter storms, gusty winds, hail, and flooding that may have caused significant tree and landscape damage in some areas, Atmos Energy reminds all residents and business owners to call 811 and have underground utility lines marked before removing deep rooted tree stumps or shrubbery. Call 811 is a free service that is mandated by law. Also following any storm, it is important to clear the area around natural gas meters from trash or debris to help cleanup crews see above ground infrastructure and avoid striking any natural gas facilities.

“Spring provides a time when many people begin outdoor projects, including landscaping, and we want you and your family to take these important safety steps,” said John McDill, Atmos Energy vice president of pipeline safety. “National Safe Digging Month reminds us that calling 811 before any digging project is the safest way to avoid damaging your underground utility lines, which could lead to an inconvenient outage.”

A recent survey revealed that 19.5 million U.S. homeowners plan to dig this year for projects like gardening, installing a mailbox, and building a fence or deck, and 63 percent of those homeowners use the free Call 811 service before starting an excavation project. That leaves a significant opportunity to educate the remaining 37 percent who put themselves and their communities at risk by digging without contacting 811 beforehand to mark the approximate location of underground utilities.

Buried beneath the ground is an extensive network of more than 7 million miles of pipes, wires, and cables needed to transport natural gas, electricity, telecommunications, water, and sewage. When severe weather hits, underground natural gas distribution pipelines and other utility lines can be damaged by uprooted trees and shifted foundations. After the storm, call 811 to have the location of underground utility lines marked, as gas lines could become tangled.

Every day and especially during National Safe Digging Month, Atmos Energy encourages homeowners to take the following steps before any type of digging begins:

- Always call 811 a few days before digging, regardless of the depth or familiarity with a property.
- Plan ahead. Call on Monday or Tuesday for work planned for an upcoming weekend, providing ample time for the approximate location of lines to be marked.
- Confirm that all lines have been marked.
- Consider moving the location of your project if it is near utility line markings.
- If a contractor has been hired, confirm that the contractor has called 811. Do not allow work to begin if the lines aren't marked.
- Visit www.call811.com for complete info.

For additional severe weather safety tips, please visit, <https://www.atmosenergy.com/safety/weather-safety>.



Become a safety ambassador and take the Atmos Energy Call 811 Pledge at <https://www.atmosenergy.com/safety/sign-call-811-pledge>.

About Atmos Energy

Atmos Energy Corporation is the nation's largest fully regulated, natural gas-only distributor of safe, clean, efficient and affordable energy. As part of our vision to be the safest provider of natural gas services, we are modernizing our business and our infrastructure while continuing to invest in safety, innovation, environmental sustainability and our communities. An S&P 500 company headquartered in Dallas, Atmos Energy serves more than 3 million distribution customers in over 1,400 communities across eight states and manages proprietary pipeline and storage assets, including one of the largest intrastate natural gas pipeline systems in Texas.

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