



protecting Mississippi's vital flow...one call at a time

# Mississippi Excavation Guide



Know what's below.  
**Call** before you dig.



Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.

## APWA UNIFORM COLOR CODE

for marking underground utility lines



PROPOSED EXCAVATION



ELECTRIC



GAS -OIL-STEAM



COMMUNICATIONS



POTABLE WATER



SEWER



RECLAIMED WATER



TEMPORARY SURVEY  
MARKINGS

Mississippi 811

protecting Mississippi's vital flow...one call at a time





## **Mississippi Excavation Guide**

**Know what's below. Call before you dig.**

### *Preface*

This Guide has been prepared for excavators in Mississippi. It is intended to be a reference tool to help you get the most from Mississippi 811, Inc. (MS811) and its services.

This Guide is provided to you as a public service by MS811 and is dedicated to the safety of our vital underground facilities and excavators in Mississippi. We have highlighted key points and simplified it, so that this Guide can be utilized as a helpful and convenient tool for excavators and facility operators.

Our Guide should not be used as a legal reference document. Persons seeking interpretations of the law should contact their own attorneys. A copy of Mississippi's Dig Law can be found on our website at [www.ms811.org](http://www.ms811.org) and every excavator is responsible for their own interpretation of that law.



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

## **Table of Contents**

|                                                          |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <i>How To Contact MS811</i>                              | 3  |
| <i>Hours Of Operation</i>                                | 4  |
| <i>About MS811</i>                                       |    |
| Who We Are                                               | 6  |
| Our History                                              | 6  |
| Mission Statement                                        | 7  |
| <i>Excavator Responsibilities</i>                        | 8  |
| Brief Summary                                            | 9  |
| <i>Facility Owner /Operator</i>                          |    |
| <i>Responsibilities</i>                                  | 9  |
| <i>Benefits of Being a Member</i>                        | 11 |
| <i>When to Contact MS811</i>                             | 12 |
| <i>What To Expect When Requesting</i><br><i>A Locate</i> | 15 |
| <i>Means for Submitting a Locate Request</i>             | 16 |
| Web Portal Tickets                                       | 16 |
| Call 811                                                 | 16 |
| <i>Updating Tickets</i>                                  | 16 |
| <i>How to Search the Status of a Ticket</i>              | 16 |
| <i>Types of Locate Tickets</i>                           | 16 |
| <i>After Contacting MS811</i>                            | 17 |
| <i>When Disaster Strikes</i>                             | 18 |
| Damage Potential                                         | 18 |
| Damage Prevention                                        | 19 |
| <i>Cross bores</i>                                       | 20 |
| <i>Enforcement</i>                                       | 21 |
| <i>Frequently Asked Questions</i>                        | 22 |



## **How to Contact MS811**

### **Locate request:**

*Toll free: 811 or 800-227-6477*

*Web Portal: [www.ms811.org](http://www.ms811.org)*

To access Web Portal go to [www.ms811.org](http://www.ms811.org) and click on the Submit a Locate button and follow the prompts.

### **Mailing Address:**

Mississippi 811 Inc.  
200 Country Place Parkway  
Pearl, MS 39208

### **Management Staff:**

*President*

Fred Johnson

*Operations/ Director*

Mike Morgan

*Contact Center Manager*

Mia Rhymes

*Virtual Contact Manager*

Chasberdee Sample

*GIS/IT Director*

Amanda Russell

*GIS Manager*

Haley Feather

*IT Manager*

Lisa Stallings

*Member Services Manager*

Joanna Henderson

## **Hours of Operation**

### ***MS811 Contact Center Hours of Operation***

Locate requests can be submitted by phone and are processed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Locates called in between 7:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday thru Friday are processed by MS811. Locates called in on Saturday, Sunday, MS811 observed holidays or between 5:00 pm and 7:00 am on Monday thru Friday are processed by the TN811 contact center.

Normal locate requests can be submitted online 24/7 by using our Web Portal but are only processed between 7:00 am and 4:00 pm Monday thru Friday, excluding MS811 observed holidays.

Emergency locate requests must always be submitted by phone.



## **Legal Holidays**

According to Mississippi's Dig Law, the following legal holidays are not considered as working days ("Working day" shall mean a twenty-four-hour period commencing from the time the locate request is processed or entered into the system by Mississippi 811, Inc., excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays). See the Dig Law for more information.

*New Year's Day*

*Robert E Lee/Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Birthday*

*President's Day/Washington's Birthday*

*Confederate Memorial Day*

*Memorial Day*

*Juneteenth*

*Independence Day*

*Labor Day*

*Columbus Day*

*Veterans Day*

*Thanksgiving Day*

*Christmas Day*

### *MS811 Observed Holidays*

The MS811 office will be closed on the following days. Locate requests called in on these days will be processed by TN811. The day after Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Eve are not legal holidays and are considered as working days according to Mississippi's Dig Law.

*New Year's Day*

*Memorial Day*

*Independence Day*

*Labor Day*

*Thanksgiving Day*

*Day after Thanksgiving Day (working day)*

*Christmas Eve (working day)*

*Christmas Day*

## **About MS811**

### *Who We Are*

Mississippi 811, Inc. (MS811) is a non-profit organization providing underground utility notification service under Mississippi Code of 1972, Chapter 13, Sections 77-13-1 through 77-13-23. MS811 is a computerized information center located in Pearl which establishes a statewide communications link between those who dig (excavators) and those who own and operate underground facilities (operators) in Mississippi. The information center is funded by member utility companies operating or maintaining underground facilities throughout the state. Members of MS811 are operators engaged in communications, gas transmission, gas distribution, electric power, products/pipeline, municipal gas/water/sewer, cable TV and other industries.

The law requires excavators, contractors, builders and private citizens who are going to drill, blast, dig and/or bore to notify Mississippi 811 prior to any of these activities in order to prevent damage to underground facilities, injury and death to citizens and/or disruption of vital services. Upon receiving a notification of intent to excavate, MS811 will notify any affected member utility companies who will send an employee or representative to the dig site and mark the underground utilities.

### *Our History*

Mississippi One-Call System, Inc. began in June of 1984 with 43 members. In 1985, our first full year of operation, we received 22,178 incoming calls and processed 62,131 out-going tickets. By end of 2021, our numbers had grown to 480,870 incoming locate requests and 2,354,467 out-going tickets processed. On July 1, 2008, the law was changed to require that all operators who have underground utility lines or underground facilities within the State of Mississippi be a member of Mississippi 811, Inc. In April 2009, our membership voted to change our name from "Mississippi One-Call System, Inc." to "Mississippi 811, Inc."

The future promises continued growth and exciting new challenges and MS811 is poised and ready to meet these challenges.

### *Mission Statement*



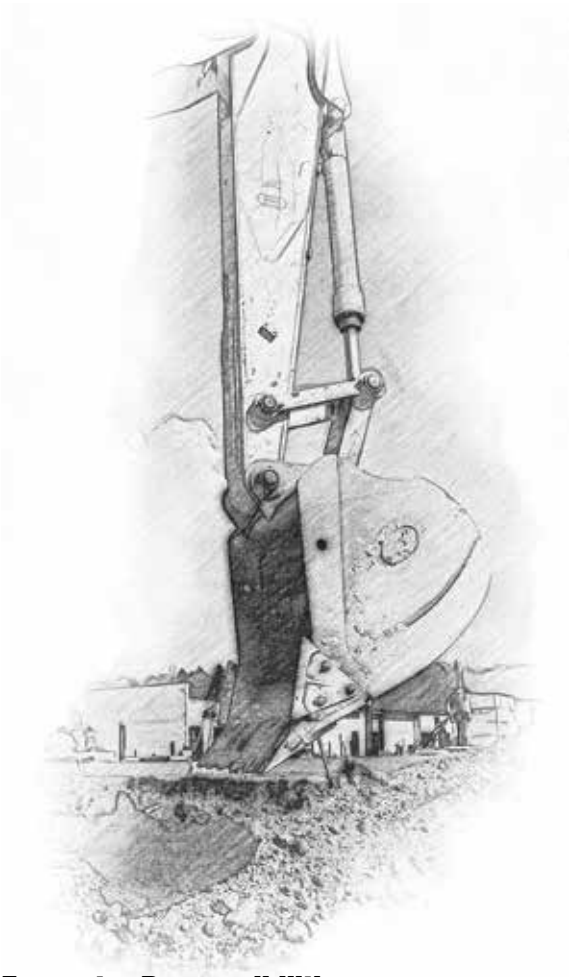


To receive excavation and demolition location information from excavators, contractors, builders and private citizens who are going to dig, drill, blast, bore or excavate in any manner and to disseminate this information to our members in any attempt, through teamwork to:

- Promote a higher level of public safety
- Reduce underground utility damages
- Minimize utility service interruption
- Reduce on the job injuries and worse
- Protect the environment

Any organization is only as good as its people, the effort they put forth and how they interact with one another. At MS811, our professional and highly trained staff works together as a team. We value diversity and demonstrate mutual trust and respect for the dignity of the individual. We believe in innovation, both technically and in the way we do things. We also believe in utilizing our talents to the fullest and in putting forth extra effort to exceed expectations.





## **Excavator Responsibilities**

Provide no less than three (3) and no more than ten (10) working days advance notice of the excavation work to MS811.

Provide accurate and specific information concerning the site and the extent or scope of the work.

When an excavator, upon arriving at an excavation site, sees evidence of unmarked underground facilities or encounters an unmarked underground facility after excavation has

commenced where notice of intent has been made in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, that excavator must immediately contact MS811. All operator(s) thus notified must contact the excavator within two (2) hours and inform the excavator of any of their known underground facilities, active or abandoned, at the site of the excavation.

Plan and conduct the excavation to avoid or minimize interference with or damage to underground facilities in or near the excavation area; maintain a clearance between any underground utility line or underground facility and the cutting edge or point of any mechanical excavating equipment, taking into account the known limit of control of such cutting edge or point, as may be reasonably necessary to avoid damage to such facility; and provide such support for underground utility lines or underground facilities in and near the excavation area, including during any backfilling operations, as may be reasonably necessary for the protection of such facilities.

### ***Excavators – Brief Summary***

Contact MS811 before you dig, it's a free service.

After waiting the required three (3) working days or receiving notice that all identified facility owners or operators have responded to the locate request and all have indicated that their facilities are either not in conflict or have been marked as indicated through the use of the Positive Response Information System (PRIS), respect the marks, flags, etc. and dig with care.

If all utilities listed on the locate request are either not in conflict or have been marked as indicated through the use of the PRIS, then the person planning to perform excavation or blasting shall be authorized to commence work, subject to the other requirements of this section, without waiting the full three (3) working days.

## **Facility Owner/Operator Responsibilities**

Register the location of underground facilities with the MS811 notification center.

Maintain their database with MS811 to reflect changes in locations, additions or deletions of facilities.

Mark the approximate location of their underground facilities within three (3) working days from the time of notice.



Positive response information system or “PRIS” means an automated information system operated and maintained by Mississippi 811, Inc., that allows excavators, locators, facility owners or operators, and other affected parties to enter and/or determine the status of a locate request.

Every person owning or operating underground utility lines or underground facilities shall, upon receiving advance notice of the commencement of excavation, in accordance with Section 77-13-5, make an investigation, and shall report through the use of the PRIS the status of the work performed, within three (3) working days from the time notice is provided in accordance with this chapter to Mississippi 811, Inc., to determine the approximate location of its underground utility lines or underground facilities in the area of the proposed excavation, and shall either: (a) mark the approximate location of underground utility lines and underground facilities in or near the area of the excavation,

so as to enable the person engaged in excavation work to locate the lines and facilities in advance of and during the excavation work and notify the excavator through the PRIS that the facilities have been marked; (b) advise through the PRIS that it has no underground utility lines or underground facilities in the excavation area; or (c) advise through the PRIS that it can locate its underground utility lines or underground facilities in the excavation area only by excavation. If an operator can locate its underground utility lines or underground facilities in the excavation area only by excavation and has given proper notice of such, that operator shall be allowed a reasonable amount of additional time, not to exceed four (4) working days from the day the original notice was provided in accordance with this chapter, to mark the approximate location of the underground utility lines or underground facilities.

The facility owner or operator must advise the excavator in writing, by telephone or electronic means that it can locate its underground utility lines or underground facilities in the excavation area only by excavation. Once the excavator is given proper notice, that operator shall be allowed a reasonable amount of time, not to exceed four (4) working days from the day the original notice was provided in accordance with the law.

In lieu of such marking, the operator may request to be present at the site upon commencement of the excavation.

Locate facilities according to APWA color codes unless otherwise provided by specific administrative rule or regulation promulgated pursuant to chapter 77-13-9 (4) of Dig Law.

All utility facilities installed by owners or operators of utilities on or after January 1, 2010, shall be installed in such manner that the utility facility may be located by using a generally accepted electronic locating method.

## **Benefits of Being a Member**

Being a member of MS811 puts you in compliance with the Mississippi law 77-13-17(2). Operators who have underground utility lines or underground facilities within the State of Mississippi shall be a member of Mississippi 811, Inc.

By becoming a member of MS811, our state moves closer to compliance to our new federal law, but even more

importantly you are partnering with other utilities and excavators in your area to protect your communities from the frustrations of disrupted services, safety hazards and health risks.

At the end of 2022, MS811 has more than 1050 underground utilities as members, yet there are still underground systems that are not members and are subject to unnecessary damage and disruption of vital services to their customers.

The annual cost for the majority of those who aren't members is minimal when compared to the average cost to repair a damaged six (6) inch main. This, of course, does not take into consideration the inconvenience to the customer or safety or health risks incurred.

MS811 is your first line of defense against utility damage. Damages can be costly and dangerous. By reducing the number of damages to your facilities, your annual repair costs are lower, and you have fewer disruptions of service to your customers. In addition, you project the idea that you are protecting the public investment in that infrastructure.

## **When to Contact MS811**

At least three (3) working days prior to any planned excavation.

Dig Law states: The term "excavate" shall mean any operation in which earth, rock or other material or mass of material on or below the ground is moved or otherwise displaced by any means,

With these exceptions:

- (i) the tilling of the soil less than twenty-four (24) inches in depth for agricultural purposes; or
- (ii) an operation in which earth, rock or other material or mass of material on or below the ground is moved or otherwise displaced to a depth of less than twelve (12) inches on private property by the property owner without the use of mechanical excavating equipment.
- (iii) an operation in which earth, rock or other material or mass of material on or below the ground is moved or

otherwise displaced without the use of mechanical excavating equipment to a depth of less than twelve (12) inches on private property by an excavator who is not the property owner, except when such excavation is in a clearly marked underground facility right-of-way; or

(iv) routine railroad maintenance activities conducted within the track structure, drainage ditches, or within the railroad right-of-way a distance not to exceed thirty (30) feet from the outside rail of the outermost track or tracks, provided this work is performed by railroad employees or railroad contractors and is carried out with reasonable care so as to protect any underground facilities properly installed in the railroad right-of-way by agreement with the railroad; or

(v) routine activities of a cemetery, provided that for any cemetery that begins or expands after July 1, 2015, such activities occur only after initial notice is provided to Mississippi 811, Inc., and all affected operators have advised that there are no underground facilities within the boundaries of the subject cemetery; or

(vi) routine maintenance activities carried out by or for those responsible for publicly maintained roadways and rights-of-way, provided that the activities occur entirely within the public right-of-way and do not penetrate the



earth to a depth of more than twelve (12) inches and are carried out with reasonable care so as to protect any underground facilities placed in the right-of-way. Routine maintenance activities shall be more specifically described in the rules and regulations adopted by the board; or

(vii) the driving of wooden stakes by use of hand tools which do not penetrate the earth to a depth of not more than six (6) inches.

The term “excavate” shall include, but not be limited to, the operations of demolition, blasting, grading, land leveling, trenching, digging, ditching, drilling, augering, tunneling, scraping, cable or pipe plowing, driving, jacking, wrecking, razing, rending, moving or removing any structure or other material or mass of material on or below the ground.

If the excavation results in any damage to a facility (cut, damaged or nicked) the excavator must immediately notify the contact center and the facility owner of the damaged line location and nature of the damage.

Also, call 911 for emergency damages resulting in the release of any hazardous materials. Dig Law states: Each person responsible for any excavation that results in damage to an underground pipeline or underground facility permitting the escape of any hazardous, flammable, toxic or corrosive gas or liquid that may endanger life or cause serious bodily harm or damage to property shall, immediately upon discovery of such damage, call 911 and then notify or call MS811 and the operator and take all other action as may reasonably be necessary to protect persons and property and to minimize the hazards, until arrival of the operator’s personnel and the police or fire departments.

If excavation will be done for demolition, to install a basketball goal, in ground or above ground swimming pool, flag or sign pole, campaign signs, tent stakes, etc. you will need to notify the contact center for a locate request no less than three (3) and no more than ten (10) working days prior to excavation. The list is extensive and not limited to the excavation types listed.

For delayed or lengthy projects, you will need to establish and maintain communication with the contact center to update the request three (3) working days prior to the expiration of the locate request, until excavation has been completed.





## **What to Expect When Requesting a Locate**

If you choose to call, the number is 811 or 800-227-6477. After an initial answering message, a customer service representative (CSR) will ask for the location where the excavation will take place. Being prepared for the call and having the proper information available, will help keep the call brief. When the call is completed and all information verified, the system will assign a 14-digit confirmation number. Keep this number handy until the excavation is completed.

Many excavators are now choosing to go to the MS811 website ([www.ms811.org](http://www.ms811.org)) to submit a portal ticket, taking advantage of the opportunity to submit a locate request at their most convenient time.

Either way, MS811 will notify all members with underground facilities registered within the area of proposed excavation.

## **Means for Submitting a Locate Request**

**Web Portal tickets:** To submit a locate request electronically, go to the Mississippi 811 website at [www.ms811.org](http://www.ms811.org) and click on the “Submit a Locate” button. Contractors will be able to choose the Contractor button with proper credentials and homeowners or individuals can choose the Homeowner button without the need for sign-in credentials.

**Call 811:** For routine locate requests, call 811 Monday - Friday, 7:00 am - 5:00 pm except Observed holidays.

Emergency locate requests between 5:00 pm and 7:00 am are handled by the TN811 Contact Center.

### **Updating tickets**

Updating tickets can be done through the Web Portal or by notifying the contact center at 811.

### **How to search the status of a ticket**

Go to the MS811 website at [www.ms811.org](http://www.ms811.org) and click on the “Check Locate Status” button. Enter your ticket number and click “Search.”

### **Types of Locate Tickets**

**Compliant (Normal)** - is a ticket that the excavator has given the allotted three (3) working days’ notice required by the Dig Law.

**Non-compliant (Short Notice)** - is merely a request made by the excavator to have the underground utilities marked before the allotted three (3) working days’ notice required by the Dig Law.

**Emergency** – The Dig Law defines an emergency as one involving danger to life, health or property or a customer service outage. There is no set time frame for markings to be done on emergency tickets. Each person responsible for any excavation that results in damage to an underground pipeline or underground facility permitting the escape of any hazardous, flammable, toxic or corrosive gas or liquid that may endanger life or cause serious bodily harm or damage to property shall, immediately upon discovery of such damage, call 911 and then notify or call Mississippi 811 and the operator and take all other action as may reasonably be necessary to protect persons and property

and to minimize the hazards, until arrival of the operator's personnel and the police or fire departments.

**No response** - this ticket type is a locate request where lines have not been marked. The member utility company(s) must inform the excavator of any of their known underground facilities, active or abandoned within two (2) hours.

**Design Information Request** - Upon receiving a design information request, the utility owner or operator shall within seven (7) working days from the time notice is provided in accordance with this chapter to Mississippi 811, Inc., respond by one (1) of the following methods: (a) marking the approximate location of its underground utility lines and underground facilities in the area in accordance with subsection (1) of this section; (b) providing to the person making the design information request the best available description of its underground utility lines and underground facilities in the area which may include drawings or other records maintained by the utility owner or operator; or (c) allowing the person making the design information request or any other authorized person to inspect or copy the drawings or other records for all underground utility lines and utility facilities in the area.

### **After Contacting MS811**

Allow the facility owners/operators three (3) working days to complete the markings and respond to the Positive Response Information System (PRIS).

Upon arriving at an excavation site, if the excavator sees evidence of unmarked utilities, he/she should first check the Locate Status in PRIS to determine if the utility has responded "No Conflict". If there has been no response from the utility owner/operator, after waiting the allotted time required by law, the excavator should immediately contact MS 811 and the affected utility, then allow two (2) hours in which to respond to this request.

The marking provided by operators shall only be valid for a period of 14 calendar days commencing from the time the locate request is processed or entered into the system by MS811. The person responsible for the excavation project shall renew the notification with MS811 at least three (3) and not more than four (4) working days prior to this expiration date and shall continue to renew such notification in the same manner throughout the duration of the excavation. Such renewal notice shall be valid for a period

of 14 calendar days from the date and time the renewal locate request is processed or entered into the system by Mississippi 811.

Notify MS811 and facility operator(s) immediately upon discovery of excavation resulting in damage of said underground utility.



## **When Disaster Strikes**

### *Damage potential*

Survival of a major storm involves more than the day after. For the residents of a city or town, recovery may be months away. The first step of their long and difficult survival journey is the removal of the debris left by the storm.

To expedite the removal process, storm debris is often piled at the front of the property near the street or road. What is also along the streets and sidewalks is the infrastructure that can survive the storm, the underground utility services.

While municipalities and utility companies are working to restore services that may have been damaged or destroyed, further damage can easily occur when heavy equipment is used to lift or push the debris piles.

Utility services can often survive a storm, especially those underground such as water, sewer, and natural gas. While these services may have been taken for granted yesterday,

today they offer hope that recovery is not far away. During the clean-up process, you can keep hope alive by avoiding damages that may endanger you and further complicate the lives of those who call this home.



### ***Damage Prevention***

To avoid damage to existing utility lines, pipes, and cables; keep vital services flowing to the public and provide a safer workplace for you and your crews.

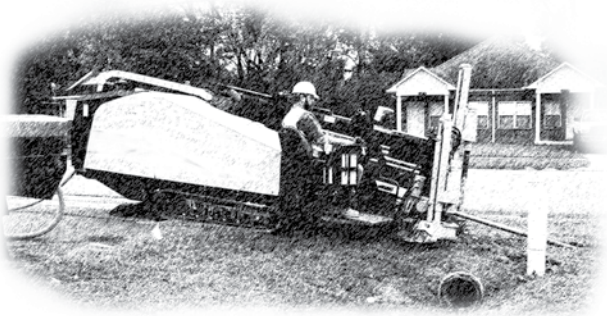
Do not pile debris near buried utility lines, gas and water meters, fire hydrants, or telephone and cable TV pedestals. Other workers may contribute to the pile unaware of the facilities and soon debris will completely cover them and any above ground warning markers.

Before you begin to remove debris from a location, contact Mississippi 811. The utility owners will then have an opportunity to protect you, their facilities, and the public.

In the process of removing debris, take care when working within a few feet of the ground and do not push or remove smaller piles without first checking to verify there are no above ground facilities hidden by the material. Power transformers and meters are not very tall and debris can easily entangle and damage them when lifted or moved.

The depth of buried utility lines varies. Dropping grappling claws into the ground or pushing material with a blade or bucket can easily damage lines and put you in danger.

Contact MS811 before you remove a concrete slab. Utility services to the residence or business may still be connected and lifting the slab may damage the distribution lines.



## **Cross bores**

Trenchless installation techniques are widely used. These methods provide minimal disruption to the surface, minimal disruption to traffic and often potential economic efficiencies. However, use of plowing, percussive moles and horizontal directional drills do not provide visual confirmation of the location of the new utility.

Cross bores, the unintended intersections of utilities, are a threat to the safety of industry workers and the general public. In the case of gas lines intersecting sanitary or storm sewers, explosions, injury and death have resulted. Energized utilities, such as natural gas and electric distribution lines, have potential immediate and long-term danger. Communications lines are essential for contacting emergency services.

To learn more about preventing cross bores and the dangers associated with them, please go to [www.crossboresafety.org](http://www.crossboresafety.org).

### ***Risk of not contacting MS811***

Destruction or damage to underground facilities.

Possible death or injury to persons.

Property damage to public and private property.

Loss or interruption of essential utility services to the general public.

Costly repairs of underground facilities.

## Enforcement

### *77-13-27: Enforcement of Mississippi's dig law [Effective January 1, 2017]*

Any person, whether excavator or operator, who violates this chapter, or the rules or regulations promulgated under this chapter, shall be subject to penalties ranging from training to civil penalties up to \$2,500 per incident. Notwithstanding, if the violation(s) are deemed to be gross negligence as determined by the executive committee, the violator shall be required to complete a course of training and pay a civil penalty in an amount set by the executive committee, not to exceed \$5,000 per incident.

Violations do not roll off the violator's record for 5 years.

The enforcement process is complaint driven. The approved process for filing a complaint against an alleged violator is to file an Alleged Violation Report (AVR). Go to [www.msdamageprevention.com](http://www.msdamageprevention.com) and click on "AVR." It will take you to a disclaimer. Click on "I agree" and it will take you to the AVR form. Fill out the form completely including proper documentation and click "Submit" at the bottom of the form.

An investigation will be made in accordance with the rules of the enforcement board. The executive committee will make a determination based on the findings of the investigation and a citation outlining the penalty will be mailed if appropriate.

Go to [www.msdamageprevention.com](http://www.msdamageprevention.com) to learn more about the law and the rules governing the enforcement program.



# FAQ

## **Frequently asked questions (FAQ)**

*Q. What if I am hand digging, do I have to notify the contact center?*

A. A locate is not needed if digging twelve (12) inches or less on private property by property owner without use of mechanical equipment, twenty-four (24) inches or less for agricultural purposes of tilling and routine maintenance as defined in the law.

*Q. I'm not going to dig very deep, should I contact MS811?*

A. This is a free service. The information you receive will benefit you in completing your project. Don't assume the liability for damaging an unmarked underground line or risk the possibility of causing death or injury because you didn't notify MS811.

*Q. Who is required to give notice to MS811?*

A. MS Dig Law, section 77-13-5 (1) says: In addition to complying with all other applicable regulations and requirements of federal, state, county and municipal authorities, no person shall engage in excavation of any kind, before meeting the notification requirements of this chapter. The only exception is stated in section 77-13-5 (3): Compliance with the notice requirements of this section shall not be required of: (a) persons plowing less than twenty-four (24) inches in depth for agricultural purposes; (b) persons who are moving or otherwise displacing, by hand, earth, rock or other material or mass of material on or below the ground at a depth of less than twelve (12) inches on property they own; and (c) persons, other than the property owner, who are moving or otherwise displacing, by hand, earth, rock or



other material or mass of material on or below the ground at a depth of less than twelve (12) inches, except when such excavation is in a clearly marked underground facility right-of-way. Why risk the possibility of damage to property, injury, and death?

*Q. If I choose to call, what happens then?*

A. The Customer Service Representative (CSR) will ask for information about the location and type of work to be done. The specific location information will be compared to service area information provided by member utilities. If a conflict occurs, the member utility will receive a notice of your intent to dig. The CSR will provide a reference number and a list of the member utilities that MS811 will notify.

*Q. What is the ticket number for?*

A. Verification that you contacted MS811 in compliance with MS Dig Law and it is good for fourteen (14) calendar days.

*Q. Why is the ticket number so long?*

A. The ticket number consists of the date, time and the number of tickets taken for that day.

*Q. Why does it matter how long it will take to do the excavating?*

A. The confirmation number that we provide at the end of the call is only good for fourteen (14) calendar days from the date and time the locate request ticket is processed or entered into the system by MS811. If the work exceeds that timeframe you will need to call back to have the number updated at least three (3) and not more than four (4) working days prior to the expiration date. During this time frame your markings may be destroyed due to mowing of yard, children pulling up flags and rain, which may lead to you needing another request put in for remarking.

*Q. Who is not compliant with the Mississippi Dig Law which requires that all utility owner/operators be a member of MS811?*

A. We do not have a list of non-compliant companies.

*Q. Why do you need my email address?*

A. A valid email address allows Mississippi 811 to properly update the status of the ticket, no later than three (3) working days from the locate request.

*Q. Do I have to notify anyone else?*

A. You should notify any companies, that you are aware of, who are not compliant with the Dig Law. Please encourage your local facility owners to become a member of MS811 and become compliant with the MS Dig Law.

*Q. Why can't you find the property with the address given?*

A. We do not have all address ranges on our map and in order to notify the correct member companies, we will need accurate driving directions to the excavation site. You can also provide GPS reading for the excavation site to help pinpoint the location; however, please be aware that the reading is only as good as the device used and may not be accurate.

*Q. Why do you need my mailing address?*

A. It is required by the MS Dig Law to give a complete mailing address.

*Q. What is the time limit on an Emergency or Short Notice?*

A. In regard to an emergency locate request, the MS Dig Law states: The advance notice provisions of this chapter shall not apply to any person making an excavation at times of emergency involving danger to life, health, or property or a customer service outage. However, every person who shall engage in such emergency excavation shall take all necessary and reasonable precautions to avoid or minimize interference with or damage to existing underground utility lines and underground facilities in and near the excavation area, and shall notify as promptly as reasonably possible the operators of underground utility lines or underground facilities in and near the emergency excavation area specifically designating whether such excavation is an emergency excavation as defined herein. In the event of damage to or dislocation of any underground utility lines or underground facilities caused by any such emergency excavation work, the person responsible for the excavation shall immediately notify the operator of the damaged or dislocated underground facilities of the damage or dislocation.

The law does not address a different response time in an emergency for the operators to come mark their lines, so the standard three (3) working days' notice still applies. Common sense dictates that the sooner an operator is notified, the sooner he will be able to respond. It is certainly in

the best interest of the operator and the excavator for the lines to be marked before further damage, injury or even death occurs from striking an unmarked line.

A Short Notice request is not addressed in the MS Dig Law. This is merely a request submitted on behalf of the excavator requesting an expedited locate. Most operators will try to honor such a request if their backlog of pending locate requests will allow them to do so. By law, they still have three (3) working days to locate their lines. In regard to both Emergency and Short Notice requests, effective July 1, 2015, the Dig Law says: If an operator can locate its underground utility lines or underground facilities in the excavation area only by excavation and has given proper notice of such, that operator shall be allowed a reasonable amount of additional time, not to exceed four (4) working days from the day the original notice was provided in accordance with this chapter, to mark the approximate location of the underground utility lines or underground facilities.

*Q. Why can't you place more than one (1) mile on each ticket?*

A. Our Board approved policy limits our locate requests to one (1) mile per ticket.

*Q. What is the charge for submitting a locate request?*

A. Submitting a locate request to MS811 is a free service.

*Q. What color code represents each utility?*

A. Refer to inside front cover for APWA Color Code.

*Q. Will I be notified when lines are marked?*

A. If the excavator provides a valid and correct email address when submitting a locate request, they will receive a status report as soon as all utilities have responded to the Positive Response Information System or at the end of the required three (3) working days, whichever occurs first. The excavator can go to our website ([www.ms811.org](http://www.ms811.org)) and click on "Check Locate Status" at any time. You will need to have your ticket number to access the information.

*Q. Why can't I notify MS811 for my contractor?*

A. The Dig Law requires the one who's doing the digging to request the locate.

*Q. Why do utility companies only mark up to their meter?*

A. Most of the utility lines on private property are owned by the property owner and the property owner will need to locate and mark those lines themselves, but in most cases, the utility company will only mark from the street to the meter or if there is no meter to the property line.

*Q. Why can't the locators just meet the excavator on site to show where to mark?*

A. In order to complete your ticket you will need to provide accurate directions as to where your excavation will take place on the site. MS811 can add a note on the ticket for them to contact you, before locating, for an on-site meeting.

*Q. How many days does the Dig Law require for locators to mark a site?*

A. Three (3) working days not including weekends and holidays. If the operator is required to excavate to find their lines, and has given proper notice of such, that operator shall be allowed a reasonable amount of additional time, not to exceed four (4) days from the day the original notice was provided.

*Q. What if the lines have not been marked in the three (3) working days?*

A. The Dig Law states you will need to call back to let us know the lines are not marked and wait two (2) hours for the companies to respond. Non-locatable facility owners are allotted additional time provided they have given the proper notice, not to exceed four (4) working days from the date of the original notice.

*Q. Will I be able to dig once I've waited the three (3) working days and the two (2) hours?*

A. Yes, according to law; however, give us a call back and MS811 will call the companies directly to find out what has happened. Please be certain that you have also allotted additional time for non-locatable lines to be marked. See section 77-13-5 of MS dig law.

*Q. What can be done when utility owners won't locate their utilities?*

A. The initial request is sent to the utility owners, and they are given three (3) working days to respond. After that, the

law requires you to call MS811 back, if not marked, to have a No Response ticket submitted. You are required, by law, to allow two (2) hours for the utilities to respond. If a third request needs to be sent, the CSR will resubmit the ticket and give the utility companies a call. If this is a consistently reoccurring problem, you should file an Alleged Violation Report (AVR). To file an AVR, you can go to the Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Board website at [www.msdamageprevention.com](http://www.msdamageprevention.com) and click on the AVR button. You can also contact your regional MS811 Damage Prevention Coordinator to have him go speak to the utility company directly.

*Q. Will I be responsible if lines are cut that were not marked?*

A. MS law requires every person owning or operating underground utility lines or underground facilities shall, upon receiving advance notice of the commencement of excavation, in accordance with Section 77-13-7, make an investigation, and may report, through the use of the Positive Response Information System (PRIS) the status of the work performed, within three (3) working days from the time notice is provided in accordance with this chapter to the Mississippi 811, Inc. Although unmarked lines carry a liability: you will have to speak to the utility company directly, as MS811 does not determine liability.

*Q. Why do we have to pay for tickets we call in?*

A. An excavator is not billed for a locate request. Facility owners that are members of MS811 are responsible for paying for the locate request they receive. If you are the excavator and own and operate underground utility lines in the area of excavation, you can request to have the locate suppressed. You will need to contact MS811 to sign a suppression agreement. However, please note that if you contract your work out to multiple sub-contractors those crews may not know of existing projects and your lines may be cut.

*Q. What can be done when excavators call in updates on jobs that have been completed?*

A. Call us and we will help you contact your area MS811 Damage Prevention Coordinator to have him set up a meeting or speak with the contractor. In many cases, the work is sub-contracted, and the contractor will have to be made aware of this situation to get it properly handled.

*Q. Should MS811 be called when an industrial or residential building is on fire?*

A. Not unless excavation is involved. Call 911 and contact the utility companies, directly, to have their services discontinued to prevent any hazards to persons or utilities. In the event of an emergency, MS811 may be able to assist in identifying any underground utility that is involved.



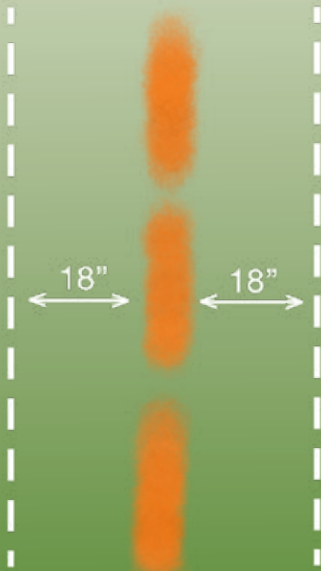
**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**



Know what's **below.**  
**Call** before you dig.

## Tolerance Zone

An excavation within the location tolerance zone should be performed with hand tools until the marked facility is exposed. The tolerance zone is an area 18 inches either side of the width of the buried facility.



**Don't let this happen to you!  
Call before you dig.**



**[www.ms811.org](http://www.ms811.org)**

Mississippi 811  
200 Country Place Parkway  
Pearl, MS 39208  
Administration Phone 601-362-4322