

STATE OF NEW YORK

# Public Service Commission

Garry A. Brown, Chairman

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11080/10-M-0466

## **PSC PROPOSES REVISIONS TO “DIG SAFELY” RULES**

### **— Seamless Compliance Procedures Eyed For Marking Underground Facilities —**

Albany, NY—09/15/11—The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) today voted to issue a notice seeking comments on proposed regulations governing the protection of underground facilities, oftentimes referred to as the Commission’s “Dig Safely Regulations.”

“Based on the experience gained over the past several years and the feedback gathered from stakeholders participating in the state’s one-call notification system, I would anticipate universal acceptance of the proposed revisions to our Dig Safely rules in order to provide a more seamless and timely process for identification of utilities’ facilities prior to excavation activity,” said Commission Chairman Garry Brown.

The Commission noted that staff of the Department of Public Service has expended considerable efforts in enforcing the Dig Safely regulations and compiling information from a variety of sources—including investigations, industry meetings and safety organizations—to improve the process for identifying utilities’ underground facilities prior to excavation work.

The Commission’s rulemaking proposal includes implementation of an Automated Positive Response (APR) system to help facilitate notice to an excavator that marking of utilities’ underground facilities is complete; notification to local emergency responders via a call to 911 rather than separate calls to local police and fire departments; and a color code for designating radioactive materials, reclaimed water, irrigation and slurry lines which will comport with the American Public Works Association’s recommended uniform color coding of the various

underground utilities' facilities and the Common Ground Alliance's best practices used by facility locators to mark the various utilities' underground facilities.

### **Background**

New York State established the one-call notification system as a fast, easy and comprehensive way to ensure underground facilities are properly marked before a digging or excavation project begins. Dig Safely New York and DigNet of New York City and Long Island are New York's nonprofit, one-call notification systems that help the general public and professional excavators obtain information on the location of underground facilities by simply dialing 811. New York State law requires excavators and contractors to contact the one-call notification systems prior to any excavation or digging project.

The Commission will issue a Notice of Proposed Ruling making reflecting today's action. That Notice, when available, may be obtained from the Commission's [www.dps.state.ny.us](http://www.dps.state.ny.us) Web site by accessing the Commission's Search section of the homepage and referencing Case 10-M-0466. Many libraries offer free Internet access. Commission orders may also be obtained from the Commission's Files Office, 14<sup>th</sup> floor, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223 (518-474-2500).