

STATE OF NEW YORK

# Public Service Commission

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## **STRONGER PROTECTIONS FOR UNDERGROUND SERVICES**

### **— Changes Made to One-Call Excavation Notification System —**

Albany, NY—12/15/11—The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) today adopted amendments to its rules and regulations concerning protection of underground facilities. Revisions include permitting the use of an Automated Positive Response (APR) system by the state’s One-Call Notification System to furnish a single point of contact between operators of underground facilities and excavators for the purpose of communicating the status of an excavator’s request for operators to mark the location of their underground facilities at the excavator’s digging site.

“Damage to utility facilities caused during excavation can result in loss of utility service, personal injury and property damage,” said Commission Chairman Garry Brown. “It is critical that all New Yorkers do their part in protecting vital infrastructure by using the state’s One-Call System; and that communications among affected users of the One-Call Notification System be efficient as possible.”

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. The One-Call Notification System can be accessed by dialing 811. Today’s action by the Commission should greatly enhance the effectiveness of the state’s One-Call Notification System.

The following amendments to the state's One-Call Notification System were adopted by the Commission to protect the public's safety and general welfare, and include, among others, the following:

- Implementation and access to an APR system will help facilitate communications between excavators and underground facilities operators. Access to the APR will be available at any times by a toll-free phone call or via the Internet to query the status of an underground facility location mark-out. This action should alleviate wasted time and financial loss by excavators waiting for 'positive responses' from one or more operators as to the location of their underground facilities.
- All regions of New York State are now serviced by the 911 call centers and each call center is equipped to handle appropriate notifications to emergency responders. Therefore, in the event of an emergency, excavators need only call 911, rather than two separate notifications to local police and fire departments.

Today's decision by the Commission, when issued, may be obtained by going to the Commission's Documents section of the [www.dps.ny.gov](http://www.dps.ny.gov) Web site and entering Case 10-M-0466 in the input box labeled "Search for Case/Matter Number." 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).