



## NEWS RELEASE

### **April is National Safe Digging Month, SoCalGas Says ‘Know What’s Below,’ Call 811 Before You Dig**

LOS ANGELES, April 1, 2014 – April is National Safe Digging Month and [Southern California Gas Co.](#) (SoCalGas) is reminding residents and businesses to call 811 to have utility-owned lines marked before digging in the garden or at construction sites. Calling 811 or [Underground Service Alert](#) will help avoid possible injury or damage to hidden gas lines or service interruption.

A utility line is damaged by digging once every three minutes nationwide, and many of these incidents are caused by failure of the professional excavator or homeowner to call 811 before beginning their digging project. Even if relatively minor projects are involved, such as putting up a new wall or fence, building a deck, planting or removing large trees or any other renovations, the digging necessary for these projects can result in hitting gas lines if they aren’t located prior to the work.

“Since gas lines that serve homes and businesses are located underground and out of sight, residents and business owners won’t know where they are located. We urge everyone – whether digging at their businesses or homes -- to make the quick 811 phone call to Underground Service Alert to have utility-owned lines marked for free,” said Rick Morrow, senior vice president of gas operations and system integrity for SoCalGas.

Last year, there were more than 2,400 “dig-ins” to SoCalGas pipelines which the utility hopes will decrease this year through increased public awareness.

Before digging in their yard, place of business or the street, residents and business owners should mark the proposed excavation area, and call 811 to reach Underground Service Alert at least two business days before the project is to begin. Underground Service Alert is free and they will contact SoCalGas and other area utilities. Each utility will then locate and mark the underground lines, pipes and cables they own.

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SoCalGas-owned pipelines typically extend from the gas main, in front or behind the home or business, to the gas meter. Customer-owned gas pipes are the lines that run from the gas meter to the building or area where gas-fueled equipment or appliances are located, such as barbecues, fire pits or spa equipment. SoCalGas does not mark these customer-owned lines. To have customer-owned lines located and marked before a project, SoCalGas advises its customers to call pipe and leak locating service companies or licensed plumbing contractors who provide these services.

Once all lines are marked, excavators should carefully use only hand-digging tools within two feet on each side of marked gas lines.

No damage to gas lines is too small to report. Even a slight gouge, scrape or dent to a pipeline or coating may cause a dangerous break or leak in the future. If a customer causes what seems to be only minor damage to a pipeline or a component attached to a pipeline, they should call SoCalGas immediately at 1-800-427-2200.

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### **About Southern California Gas Co.**

[Southern California Gas Co.](#) (SoCalGas) has been delivering clean, safe and reliable natural gas to its customers for more than 140 years. It is the nation's largest natural gas distribution utility, providing service to 20.9 million consumers connected through nearly 5.8 million meters in more than 500 communities. The company's service territory encompasses approximately 20,000 square miles throughout central and Southern California, from Visalia to the Mexican border. SoCalGas is a regulated subsidiary of [Sempra Energy](#) (NYSE: SRE).

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