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APRIL 2010 IS SAFE DIGGING MONTH

The Association of Oil Pipe Lines (AOPL) supports April as "National Safe Digging Month".

Safe Digging Month is dedicated to increasing awareness of safe digging practices across the country and to celebrate the three-year anniversary of 811, the national Call Before You Dig number. The Common Ground Alliance (CGA) (www.commongroundalliance.com), of which AOPL is a member, made the Safe Digging Month designation. Throughout the busy digging month of April, CGA and its members are encouraging homeowners and contractors to call 811 before they dig to prevent injuries, property damage and inconvenient outages.

"Digging-related accidents are a leading cause of significant pipeline incidents", said Andy Black, AOPL President and CEO. "Excavators, utility companies, governments, and the public should respect underground infrastructure by 'calling before you dig'. AOPL is proud to work with Common Ground Alliance, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and our other CGA partners on this important endeavor. Damage prevention is a goal we all share."

"It's simple. Before you dig, call 811 – from anywhere in the country." Black said. "Tell us about where you intend to dig. Information will be routed to underground utility operators, including pipelines, phone and cable companies, and water and sewer line operators. If the digging location is near an underground line, someone will mark the asset and help you understand how to dig safely."

To protect communities, sensitive environmental areas, as well as the pipeline itself, the pipeline industry and other operators of underground facilities joined together in creating notification centers that are used by anyone preparing to conduct excavation close to those underground facilities. These centers – called One-Call Centers – serve as the clearinghouse for excavation activities that are planned close to pipelines and other underground utilities. The depth of utility lines may vary and multiple utility lines may exist in one area. Simple digging jobs can damage utility lines and can disrupt vital services to an entire neighborhood, harm those who dig, and result in expensive fines and repair costs. One-Call Centers help protect 911 emergency telephone service, underground power lines, water and sewer pipes, and energy pipelines. Interested parties should use State One-Call Centers or 811, the nationwide Call Before You Dig number, to give notice to operators of underground utilities. Under One-Call regulations, excavators must wait for a specified amount of time (generally 48 hours) before beginning any excavation project so utility operators can mark and protect underground infrastructure from digging and other excavation projects.

AOPL represents the interests of owners and operators of America's liquid pipelines. Liquid pipelines bring important petroleum products to our communities, including all grades of gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, home heating oil, kerosene, propane, and biofuels. AOPL members also transport carbon dioxide to oil and natural gas fields, where it can be used efficiently to enhance production. Established in 1947, AOPL is a nonprofit organization whose membership is comprised of owners and operators of liquid pipelines. AOPL members carry nearly 85 per cent of the crude oil and refined petroleum products moved by pipelines in the United States.

For more information on AOPL, visit www.aopl.org. For more information on 811, visit <http://www.call811.com>.

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