



**It's Easier Than Ever to Call Before You Dig
National 811 "Call Before You Dig" Phone Number and Web site are Launched**

(May 2, 2007) Williamsville, NY: Beginning May 1, 2007, a new national 811 "Call Before You Dig" phone number and Web site - www.call811.com - are available to homeowners and contractors nationwide. Calling 811 before beginning an excavation project is required by New York State Law and can prevent accidental damage to underground utility lines.

The new phone number, created to eliminate the confusion of multiple "Call Before You Dig" numbers across the country, connects callers with a "One Call Center" in their area. Local "One Call Center" operators record the location of the excavation and then notify National Fuel of the caller's plans.

National Fuel will then dispatch a professional locator to mark the approximate location of National Fuel's lines for free. Homeowners and contractors should call 811 at least two (2) business days in advance of the start of their project to allow time for the request to be processed. Once your project is underway and in observance of the markings, please remember that you are required to stop using heavy equipment and hand dig within two feet of the markings.

The 811 "Call Before You Dig" initiative is sponsored by the Common Ground Alliance (CGA), the leading association created specifically to work with **all** industry stakeholders in an effort to prevent damage to underground utility infrastructure and ensure public safety and environmental protection. Officially formed in 2000, CGA represents a continuation of the United States Department of Transportation's Common Ground Study – a study that highlighted the need for one organization to continuously update best practices among the growing underground utility industry.

"Now, with the 811 system, it's easier than ever to prevent accidental damage to buried utility lines. All excavation projects require a call – even small projects like planting trees and shrubs, or installing a fence or mailbox," said Julie Coppola Cox, Senior Manager of Corporate Communications, National Fuel. "If you damage an underground utility line while digging, you run the risk of harming yourself or those around you, disrupting service to an entire neighborhood and potentially being held responsible for fines and repair costs."

In 2004, according to industry data, CGA estimates there were approximately 680,000 underground line strikes resulting in damages, including service outages and injury. A national survey conducted for CGA shows that confusion exists among the public as to the necessity of calling before every dig job. In the survey, only 35% of homeowners indicated they—or someone in their house—have called to have their utility lines marked in the past.

National Fuel Gas Company is an integrated energy company with \$3.7 billion in assets comprised of the following five operating segments: Utility, Pipeline and Storage, Exploration and Production, Energy Marketing, and Timber. National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation, the Utility segment, provides natural gas service to more than 500,000 customers in western New York and more than 200,000 customers in northwestern Pennsylvania. Additional information about the Utility and its customer services is available at www.nationalfuelgas.com or by calling 1 (800) 365-3234.

Media Contact: Julie Coppola Cox 716-857-7079