

CHECKLIST · FREE RESOURCE LIBRARY · DIRT WORK BID SCHOOL

# 811 and Utility Locate Checklist

What the one call law actually requires, what the paint colours mean, what the marks do and do not promise you, and the record to keep so a damage claim is somebody else's problem.

**Who it is for.** Every excavator. The legal duty is on the person digging, and it does not transfer to the customer who told you it was fine.

## The duty is yours

The one call law puts the obligation on the excavator. Not the homeowner, not the general contractor, not the guy who said there was nothing there. If you are moving earth, you notify, and you keep the record that proves you did.

Every state runs its own notification centre and its own statute, all reachable by dialling 811. The notice period, the ticket life and the marking tolerance are set by your state law, so the numbers below are Missouri's. Look yours up once and write it on this sheet.

## APWA uniform colour code

The colours are national. Learn them, because a locator who is having a bad day will still use the right can of paint.

| COLOUR | WHAT IT MARKS                                                                 |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| White  | Proposed excavation. This is the colour you use to pre-mark your own dig area |
| Pink   | Temporary survey markings                                                     |
| Red    | Electric power lines, cables, conduit and lighting cables                     |
| Yellow | Gas, oil, steam, petroleum or gaseous materials                               |
| Orange | Communication, alarm or signal lines, cables or conduit                       |
| Blue   | Potable water                                                                 |
| Purple | Reclaimed water, irrigation and slurry lines                                  |
| Green  | Sewers and drain lines                                                        |

Source: the APWA uniform colour code as published by Missouri 811 and the Common Ground Alliance.

## The Missouri numbers, with the citation

Two of these do not agree, and you should know why before somebody uses it against you.

| ITEM                        | WHAT IT IS                                                                                                                         | WHERE IT COMES FROM                 |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Statutory notice window     | At least two working days, but not more than ten working days, before the expected date of commencing excavation                   | RSMo 319.026                        |
| What Missouri 811 instructs | Request locates at least three full working days prior to excavation. State and federal holidays do not count as working days      | Missouri 811, excavator information |
| Ticket life                 | Marks are valid for 21 consecutive calendar days, then you need a re-mark                                                          | Missouri 811, excavator information |
| What a mark promises        | Approximate location means a strip of land not wider than the width of the underground facility plus two feet on either side of it | RSMo 319.015                        |
| Emergency                   | There is a separate emergency notification path. It is for an actual emergency, not for a job you started late                     | RSMo Chapter 319                    |

The statute sets the legal minimum and the notification centre gives the practical instruction that keeps your ticket from expiring on you. Follow the longer one and you satisfy both.

## Before you call

- ☐ Know the exact dig area, by address and by a description somebody who has never been there can follow
- ☐ Pre-mark the dig area in white paint, flags or stakes
- ☐ Know the start date, the duration and the type of work
- ☐ Know whether you will be using mechanised equipment, and how deep
- ☐ Have the site contact and a phone number that will be answered
- ☐ Know whether any of the work is in a road right of way

## When you call or file online

- ☐ Ticket number written down and photographed
- ☐ Ticket dates recorded: filed, legal start, and expiry
- ☐ The dig area description on the ticket read back and confirmed to be right
- ☐ Ticket emailed to whoever is running the job, not just kept on your phone
- ☐ Ticket filed in the job folder with the bid sheet

## Before the first bucket

- ☐ Positive response from every member utility received, or the wait period expired
- ☐ Marks physically present on the ground and photographed with a tape or a boot in the frame to show size
- ☐ Marks compared against the plan, and every disagreement written down and reported
- ☐ Any facility you expected and cannot see, chased before you dig, not after
- ☐ Private lines identified separately: yard lights, irrigation, propane, private water, septic laterals, well lines, invisible fence. One call does not mark these
- ☐ Private locate arranged and priced if private lines exist
- ☐ Everybody on the crew shown the marks, not told about them

## While you dig

- ☐ Hand dig or use vacuum excavation inside the tolerance zone either side of every mark
- ☐ Marks re-established before they wear off, and before the ticket expires
- ☐ Re-mark requested in time, with a new ticket number recorded
- ☐ Exposed facilities supported and protected, and photographed once exposed
- ☐ Depth of every facility you expose recorded, because record drawings are frequently wrong
- ☐ Spoil kept off the marks

## If you hit something

- ☐ Stop work and get people clear
- ☐ If it is gas or a pipeline, call 911 first, then the facility owner. Both calls, not one
- ☐ Notify the facility owner for any damage, dislocation or disturbance, including a nick you think is nothing
- ☐ Notify the notification centre as required by statute
- ☐ Photograph everything before anything is repaired: the mark, the facility, the depth, the machine position
- ☐ Record the ticket number, the time, the crew present and the equipment in use
- ☐ Do not attempt the repair yourself unless you are the facility owner

### What the marks do not tell you

A mark is a horizontal approximation and it says nothing about depth. Anybody who tells you a line is at thirty-six inches because that is the standard is telling you what was specified, not what is there.

Marks cover member utilities only. A line on private property that belongs to the property owner is usually not a member facility, and nobody is coming to mark it. That is your risk, and it is a line item on your bid.

## Where this comes from

Every code, standard and statute this sheet leans on. Check them.

### **Call 811, the national call-before-you-dig service**

<https://call811.com/>

Routes to the one call notification centre for your state.

### **Missouri 811, excavator information**

<https://missouri-811.org/excavators/>

The state notification centre. Carries the colour code and the ticket life.

### **Missouri Revised Statutes Chapter 319, Safety at underground facilities**

<https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneChapter.aspx?chapter=319>

Sections 319.010 to 319.050. The Missouri one call law.

### **RSMo 319.026, Notice of excavator**

<https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneSection.aspx?section=319.026>

The statutory notice window and the damage reporting duty.

### **RSMo 319.015, Definitions**

<https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneSection.aspx?section=319.015>

Defines approximate location, which is what the marks actually mean.

### **Common Ground Alliance**

<https://commongroundalliance.com/>

Publishes the Best Practices guide and the DIRT damage report that the one call system is built on.

### **29 CFR 1926.651, Specific excavation requirements**

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-29/subtitle-B/chapter-XVII/part-1926/subpart-P/section-1926.651>

OSHA construction standards, Subpart P. Current text on the electronic Code of Federal Regulations.

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Ladders into module 01, Read the Site Before You Price It.

Checkered Flag Excavation, Inc. De Soto and Festus, Missouri. Founded 2000. Free to print, copy and hand to anybody.

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<https://dirtworkbusiness.com/library/utility-locate-checklist>