



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gov. Evers Proclaims April as Safe Digging Month

PSC recognizes Safe Digging Month, applauds Gov. Evers for signing legislation to improve pipeline safety in Wisconsin

MADISON – Public Service Commission (PSC) Chairperson Summer Strand today thanked Gov. Tony Evers for proclaiming April as Safe Digging Month and for signing legislation that will continue to ensure pipeline safety in Wisconsin.

“No matter the size of a project, a free call to 8-1-1 before digging can keep our communities safe and connected,” said Chairperson Summer Strand. “I want to thank Governor Evers for raising awareness of the Diggers Hotline during Safe Digging Month, which will help prevent dangerous and expensive accidents in Wisconsin.”

The PSC would like to remind residents and contractors to always contact the Diggers Hotline, by phone at 8-1-1, or online at www.DiggersHotline.com, before they dig. The Diggers Hotline is a free, statewide, one-call system that allows the general public and professionals undertaking excavation to inform multiple utility and telecommunications providers of planned excavation. The one-call center alerts the appropriate underground facility owner so they can dispatch locators to mark the approximate location of underground facilities with paint, stakes, or flags. Then, it is safe to dig around the marked locations.

Under state law, individuals are required to notify the Diggers Hotline at least three days before they excavate, grade, trench, dig, drill, auger, tunnel, scrape, and/or plow or drive cable or pipes. Once the locations are marked, an 18-inch buffer zone must be maintained on each side of a marked facility and mechanized equipment cannot be used within the buffer zone.

Violations of state law can be reported to the [Diggers Hotline Enforcement Center](#). If probable cause of a violation is found, a panel of Diggers Hotline stakeholders will decide between education or a referral to the PSC. If the case is referred to the PSC, an investigation will determine if there was a violation of the law and subsequent fines or legal action.

The Governor's Safe Digging Month proclamation is available [here](#).

On March 27, 2024, Gov. Evers signed Senate Bill 812 ([now Act 242](#)) into law which allows Wisconsin to continue its oversight of intrastate natural gas pipelines and operators, as it has since 1951.

“For more than 70 years, the responsibility of overseeing Wisconsin’s Pipeline Safety Program has been vested in the state,” said Chairperson Strand. “Thanks to Governor Evers’ support of this

legislation, that oversight has been preserved and the PSC's Pipeline Safety team will continue their important work protecting the people of Wisconsin through inspection and enforcement.”

This legislation adopts federal maximum penalty amounts for violations of pipeline safety standards and ensures that the Wisconsin Pipeline Safety Program is in compliance with federal safety standards.

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