



## News Release

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**BLACK HILLS ENERGY ADVISES:  
CALL 811 BEFORE YOU DIG—IT’S THE LAW!**

*Calling 811 before you dig helps ensure and maintain safe, reliable natural gas service*

WEST DES MOINES, Iowa, April 9, 2010 – Black Hills Energy serves its Iowa customers through a network of more than 5,200 miles of natural gas pipes. The system is underground and out of sight, but just because the distribution system isn’t visible doesn’t mean it’s not there. As the weather warms and the gardening and construction season begins, Black Hills Energy reminds all customers and contractors to call 811 for a utility line locate before digging.

“The safety of our customers and employees is the top priority for Black Hills Energy,” said Tracy Peterson, Black Hills Energy vice president of Iowa natural gas operations, “and we’ve invested \$36 million in the Iowa natural gas distribution system since 2005 to assure your service is not only safe, but also reliable. To avoid costly damage and for safety’s sake, a call to Iowa One Call at 811 is a must. It helps everyone avoid the possibility of serious injury; disruption of service to a home, building or entire community; and the considerable expense of repairing underground utilities.

“Operating our natural gas distribution system requires ongoing capital investment,” continued Peterson. “We must replace pipe and other equipment that has reached the end of its useful life, make system upgrades and implement new technology. This translates into the safe, reliable operation of the natural gas distribution system that serves our customers, their families and businesses.” To protect system investments and help the company ensure and maintain the safe, reliable service that customers depend on, Black Hills Energy reminds everyone to do their part by calling 811 before they dig.

Iowa One Call is the state’s utility line locating service, provided free of charge by Black Hills Energy and other participating utilities. The number to call is 811. State law

requires that everyone who plans to excavate or disturb the surface of the ground must first contact Iowa One Call at least two business days in advance to have all underground utilities located. This legislation includes – but is not limited to – contractors, homeowners and personal property owners, and includes commercial projects and also home projects such as planting a garden or tree or putting in a fence.

Once Iowa One Call receives a request, it notifies all affected utilities. Utility workers are then sent to mark the location of any underground lines and facilities, including for water, sewer, storm sewer, natural gas, electric and cable TV. The approximate location of each line within a digging site is color coded with spray paint or flags by a professional locator.

Besides having to pay for costly repairs if underground facilities are damaged, an individual or company that doesn't call for locates and strikes a line could face heavy fines. That amount can increase each day the service interruption persists. "April has been designated as National Safe Digging Month, so this is the perfect time to remind people to be safe and ensure the safety of everyone around you by calling 811 before you dig," Peterson said. "It's free, it's easy and it's the law."

Black Hills Energy serves 149,700 natural gas customers in 130 Iowa communities, and is a proud recipient of the U.S. EPA 2010 ENERGY STAR® Leadership in Housing Award. Black Hills Energy is part of Black Hills Corp. (NYSE: BKH) — a diversified energy company with a tradition of exemplary service and a vision to be the energy partner of choice — based in Rapid City, S.D., with corporate offices in Denver and Omaha, Neb. The company serves 763,300 natural gas and electric utility customers in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming. The company's non-regulated businesses generate wholesale electricity, produce natural gas, oil and coal, and market energy. Black Hills employees partner to produce results that improve life with energy. More information is available at [www.blackhillscorp.com](http://www.blackhillscorp.com).

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