



Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Government of Saskatchewan declares April 2012 *Safe Digging Month* across Saskatchewan

With construction season just around the corner, the Government of Saskatchewan is joining forces with Sask 1st Call and the Saskatchewan Common Ground Alliance (SCGA) to educate the public about working safely around underground infrastructure. To increase public awareness, Saskatchewan is once again declaring April as *Safe Digging Month* across the province.

“The message is simple: before you dig, know what’s below,” Corrections, Public Safety and Policing Minister D.F. (Yogi) Huyghebaert said. “Requesting line locates prior to starting an underground construction project is critical to keeping residents of Saskatchewan communities safe. When contact is made with underground infrastructure, you put yourself and those around you in danger. Our Government, Crown utilities and industry partners support *Safe Digging Month* as a way to remind everyone to *Call Before You Dig*. Damage prevention is a shared responsibility and one that’s necessary to ensure our services continue to be delivered safely and reliably.”

April is traditionally the start of the annual digging season in Saskatchewan, whether homeowners are planning outside projects or contractors begin preparing for another construction season. Uncontrolled excavation is the most frequent cause of damage to buried infrastructure and facilities.

“Even one line hit is too many – contractors and homeowners are taking unnecessary risks when they decide to cut corners and not call before they dig,” said Barb Tchozewski, Manager of Sask 1st Call. “Sask 1st Call is here to keep workers, homeowners and communities safe, especially during the busy construction season that is underway.”

By ensuring appropriate line locates occur before digging, homeowners and contractors are preventing unnecessary consequences including costly delays of their project, additional damage costs, the disruption of essential services, property damage, environmental contamination, personal injury and even death.

“Our SCGA members are committed to promoting public and work-site safety on all fronts,” said Lindsey Roy, Team Lead, Lands and ROW, Enbridge Pipelines (SK) Inc., an executive member of the SCGA. “With Saskatchewan’s growing economy, we are seeing a significant increase in construction work across the province. If line locates

aren't done and safe ground disturbance practices aren't followed, that puts yourself – and the public – at risk.”

The Contractor Safety Awareness Association is holding Contractor Safety Breakfasts in 31 locations across Saskatchewan to help promote the "*Call Before You Dig*" message, as well as *Safe Digging Month*. Watch for a media advisory with information about the breakfast in an area near you, from March 27th to April 5th, 2012.

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The **SCGA** is a member-driven, non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring worker and public safety, environmental protection and the integrity of services by promoting effective damage prevention practices in connection with underground infrastructure activities. For more information please go to www.scga.ca

Sask 1st Call is a not-for-profit “**Call Before You Dig**” underground facility location service for contractors and homeowners who are planning to dig or excavate. Within two working days of the request, the member companies of Sask 1st Call will locate the underground facilities at the project site, allowing work to continue without impacting buried infrastructure, or disrupting service to customers. Sask. 1st Call has 37 members (including SaskEnergy/TransGas, SaskPower, SaskTel and pipeline companies) and represents more than 400,000 kilometres of buried infrastructure across Saskatchewan. For more information please go to www.sask1stcall.com