



To Whom It May Concern:

From time to time, we receive questions about utility markings. This letter serves to address the most common questions we and the Arizona Locate Resolution Partnership (AZLRP) receive.

The markings you see painted on the ground are required by [law](#). They play an important role in protecting excavators from life-threatening injuries and preventing damage to the vital utilities we all rely on every day. Still, every effort is made to keep the markings to a minimum in neighborhoods and on paved surfaces.

Damage to underground facilities can cause far-reaching consequences, from serious injury and environmental damage to the loss of vital services we depend upon including electricity, gas, telephones and mobile devices, water and sewer services. Preventing damage to these facilities is a responsibility we all share, and is accomplished through various damage prevention measures. More importantly, preventing accidental strikes to underground utilities protects anyone who digs from serious or even fatal injuries, and reduces the risk of catastrophic events that threaten entire neighborhoods, such as gas line explosions and electrical fires.

At the heart of any damage prevention program is the exchange of accurate and consistent information between those who are excavating and the operators of underground facilities. Locating and marking the location of underground facilities using paint is one way that facility operators show the approximate location of their facilities before any type of digging begins. This information helps the excavators to dig safely around underground facilities and avoid hitting facilities and disrupting services.

Communication begins when any excavator contacts Arizona 811 (formerly Arizona Blue Stake), the one-call notification center. Arizona 811 creates a ticket that is distributed to facility owners and operators informing them of proposed

	Proposed excavation
	Temporary survey
	Electric power
	Gas, oil, product lines
	Communications, cable TV
	Water, slurry
	Reclaimed water
	Sanitary sewer system

excavation. Locators from each utility respond to each request within two full working days. If the area described on the ticket is within an area where an underground facility exists, the underground facility owners/operators are [required by Arizona Revised Statute, Title 40](#), to mark their facilities within the prescribed boundaries of the area requested with a color designated by the American Public Works Association (pictured at left).

Locators make every effort to ensure marks used to identify underground facilities are not excessive or oversized. Most often, they use a water-based paint that will clearly identify the underground utility, but fade over time. Locators are also trained to minimize impact to neighborhoods, front yards and landscaping by applying only enough paint to communicate the location of the facilities. Finally, Arizona 811 educates excavators around the state to use white

paint to clearly designate their excavation site to further reduce the perceived impact of marking paint as “graffiti.”

It’s critical to remember the key role these marks play in protecting life and property. While every effort is made to reduce the impact, the marks must remain visible and valid during the course of the excavation. If you have additional questions or comments, please call 811 or email [Customer.Support@arizona811.com](mailto:Customer.Support@arizona811.com).

Sincerely,  
Leo Quesada, Chairman  
Arizona Locate Resolution Partnership