

# Star-Telegram

## **FOCUS/Dec. 15: Before you dig, make one call**

Recent public debate within the Barnett Shale has included discussion not only about gas drilling but also about existing and new gas pipelines. In public and private discussion, I'm typically asked if as a community we should be worried about the safety of pipelines. The reality is that serious pipeline incidents are very rare, and the good news is that most can be prevented.

Nationwide, the leading cause of serious pipeline incidents is outside damage, typically by a contractor, landscaper, farmer or do-it-yourself homeowner who hits the pipeline while digging.

Each of us can help protect the safety of pipelines in our neighborhood by following the Texas One-Call law. Texas law requires professional contractors and homeowners to call their local One-Call Center by dialing 811 at least two working days before installing a fence, planting a tree or digging a foot or deeper for any reason.

One-Call is a free service and coordinates with pipeline companies and other local utilities to mark the location of underground utility lines before you start your project.

Pipelines are public infrastructure that benefits each of us. By taking the time to make a phone call, we can all help ensure safe pipelines in our community.

— Ed Ireland, Barnett Shale Energy Education Council, Fort Worth