



APRIL IS NATIONAL SAFE DIGGING MONTH



Dating back over a decade, April has been recognized across the United States as “National Safe Digging” Month. Each April utility companies join together with the Common Ground Alliance (CGA) with the goal of raising awareness to safely excavate around buried utilities. Perhaps you have seen an area where colored marks have been spray painted on the ground or colored flags placed and wondered of the significance of the markings and colors. Well, wonder no more! Each color is specific to a particular utility service (See color chart below).



Whether you own a professional excavating company or you are a home owner getting ready to undertake a home project that requires digging, you must mark the ground where you plan to dig with white spray paint and then call 811 two business days before you plan to dig and advise them of your digging plans (known as a Locate Request). Once you have contacted 811, they will notify all of the utility companies and advise them of your plans to dig.

Red	Electric
Yellow	Gas, Oil, Steam
Orange	Communications
Blue	Potable Water
Purple	Reclaimed Water
Green	Sewer/Drainage
Pink	Survey Marks
White	Proposed Excavation

Upon receiving the “Locate Request”, utility companies are given two business days to respond and mark buried utilities. After completing the “Locate Request”, utility companies are required to advise 811 that they have completed the locate request and identified any buried service line they have near your dig site. Once you have entered a “Locate Request” you may check the status by visiting the website www.nm811.org. Once your “Locate Request” has been completed, you have 15 business days to complete the work. Once you begin the project, if you realize you won’t be able to complete the digging in the allotted 15 days, that’s no problem! Simply call 811 again two business days before the end of the 15 days and request a locate update. Calling 811 before you dig is free. It’s easy and it’s the law!

You’re almost ready to begin digging...

Now that all of your utility lines have been marked, it is important to understand that any digging that is done within 18 inches of either side of any of the marks must be done by hand (shovel) and still must be done with extreme care. In some instances, certain utilities may be buried only a few inches beneath the surface.

This diagram illustrates the paths underground utilities might take to service your home. Imagine if you were going to install a picket fence around this home next weekend. Where would you place your white spray paint marks? If you planned on starting on Saturday, what day of the week should you contact 811 for the “Locate Request”?



You may not use any mechanical device (backhoe, trencher, auger machines, rototillers, etc.) to dig within 18 inches of either side of the marks left by the utility companies.

HISTORY OF NATIONAL SAFE DIGGING MONTH

National Safe Digging Month was established in 2008 as a strategy to encourage all Common Ground Alliance (C.G.A.) stakeholders to promote the safe digging message in a coordinated manner during a critical month when digging activity begins across the country. The C.G.A. was established in 2000 with the goal of saving lives and reducing damage to America’s subsurface infrastructure by promoting effective damage prevention measures.

For a variety of reasons, humans construct holes, trenches, and other underground

structures. We have long been known to have a nearly instinctive desire to dig holes in the ground, which begins in childhood. Later on in our lives, we dig the ground for food and water. Wood-lined water wells have been discovered in the early Neolithic Linear Pottery culture, such as in Kückhoven (5090 B.C.) and Eythra (5200 B.C.) in Schletz, Austria. The first archaeological excavation occurred in the sixth century B.C., when Nabonidus, King of Babylon, unearthed a thousand-year-old temple floor.

During the early Roman period, Julius

Caesar’s forces took metal objects, and by the medieval period, Europeans were digging up pots that had partially emerged from erosion and weapons that had appeared on farmlands. Although humans are capable of digging with their bare hands, digging using tools is usually more convenient. The shovel is the most fundamental digging tool. In the Neolithic era and earlier, the shoulder blade of a large animal was frequently used as a primitive shovel. Nowadays, shovels are typically made of metal with a wooden handle.

Recipe

DIRECTIONS

Black Bean Chicken with Rice

Ingredients:

4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves (4 ounce each)	2 teaspoons canola oil
3 teaspoons chili powder	1 can (15 ounces) black beans, rinsed and drained
1 teaspoon ground cumin	1 cup frozen corn
1 teaspoon black pepper	2 cups hot cooked brown rice
¼ teaspoon salt	

Directions

In a small bowl, mix seasonings, sprinkle over both sides of chicken. In a large non-stick skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Brown chicken on both sides.

Add black beans, corn and salsa to skillet. Cook, covered for 10 to 15 minutes or until thermometer inserted into chicken reads 165° F. Remove chicken from pan and cut into slices. Serve with bean mixture and brown rice.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

March 28 - April 2 – El Paso - **Dear Evan Hansen** | Plaza Theatre, El Paso | Multiple performance times. The Broadway sensation, winner of six Tony Awards including Best Musical, is a deeply personal and profoundly contemporary musical about life and the way we live it.

April 1 – White Sands - **Trinity Site Open House** | White Sands Missile Range | 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. Only open twice a year, visit the site where the world’s first atomic bomb was tested at White Sands Missile Range in the Tularosa Basin at 5:29 a.m. MST on July 16, 1945.

April 8 – Ruidoso - **4th Annual Easter Egg Hunt**. Cedar Creek – Lincoln National Forest. Hunt starts at 6:00 AM - 11:00 AM MDT. This is the largest Easter Egg hunt in the area for children 12 and under with over 5,000 eggs hidden! Enjoy firetruck rides and visit with the Easter Bunny. Smokey Bear may show up and join in the fun, too! For more information, call Ruidoso Parks and Rec at 575-257-5030

April 8 – Las Cruces - **Paws on Parade** | Young Park, Las Cruces. A fundraiser walk with your four-legged buddy to raise funds for Four Paws and a Wake Up, which donates fully trained service dogs to veterans.

April 12-16 – Las Cruces - **Las Cruces International Film Festival** | Allen Theaters Cineport 10, Las Cruces | Hours vary by the day. Whether it’s narrative features, documentaries, short films, animation, or foreign films you crave, LCIFF has got you covered, giving you an opportunity to celebrate and support film in Southern New Mexico.

April 15 – Carrizozo - **New Mexico World Art Day** with N’Awlins Gumbo Kings in concert under the big tent! Please bring your family, friends and neighbors and tap your feet to the dixieland jazz music and New Orleans Sounds. | 4 - 7 p.m.

April 16 – Ruidoso - **The Jungle Book** | Spencer Theater, Ruidoso | 2 p.m. Water, air, earth, and fire – the four natural elements – intertwine in the State Street Ballet’s dazzling, original adaptation of Rudyard Kipling’s classic tale, incorporating area student dancers.

April 28 – Ruidoso – **Great American Clean-Up**. School House Park, 501 Sudderth Dr. 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Gloves, vests, bags and t-shirts will be provided. Registration begins at 12:00 pm. Clean up is 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm and food and prizes will be given out from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Call Ruidoso Parks and Rec for more information. 575-257-5030.

April 29 – Las Cruces - **¡MIRA! Las Cruces** | Plaza de Las Cruces | 2 – 10 p.m. Visit Las Cruces hosts its inaugural event, taking a look at the vast cultural variety offered by the largest city in Southern New Mexico, featuring food, drink, live music, interactive booths, and a car show.

May 5 – Las Cruces - **New Mexico Tamale Fest** | Plaza de Las Cruces | 5 – 11 p.m. Celebrate Cinco de Mayo with the largest tamale sampling festival in the Land of Enchantment, featuring local food trucks, Mexican beer gardens, live music, games, and a night mercado.

Reminder: We use this section for our local communities. The messages must be non-partisan and non-religious. Non-Profit organization messages will be given preference. Please send the information to osaucedo@zngc.com before the 10th of the month to make the following month edition. Thank you.

“Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.” – Albert Einstein

IMPORTANT CUSTOMER NOTICE

Effective April 1, 2023, Zia Natural Gas Company will no longer be utilizing the Village of Hatch as a payment collection center. Customers will need to work directly with the Zia Natural Gas Company Las Cruces office with any account related questions and to process applications for gas service.

Zia offers the following payment options:

- Cash or check in person at 3700 W Picacho Rd, Las Cruces, NM
- By mail using the return envelope provided with your bill
- Automatic bank draft (contact office for details)
- Online at www.zngc.com using a credit or debit card, checking or savings account, PayPal, PayPal Credit, Venmo, Apple Pay, or Google Pay (convenience fee may apply)
- Western Union – Nearest location at Jim’s Supermarket (convenience fee may apply)

Please contact your local Zia office with any questions:

Zia Natural Gas Company
3700 W Picacho
Las Cruces, NM 88007
(575) 526-4427



New Mexico’s Natural Choice...Zia Natural Gas Company
Proudly celebrating over 30 years of service
and looking forward to many more!

Zia Natural Gas Company area offices:

Lincoln County 100 Short Drive Ruidoso Downs, NM 88346 575-378-4277 1-800-520-4277 (575) 378-4138 Fax Mailing Address PO Box 888 Ruidoso Downs, NM 88346	Hobbs/Jal 510 E. Bender Hobbs, NM 88240 575-392-4277 1-800-470-9900 (575) 392-8504 Fax Mailing Address PO Box 2220 Hobbs, NM 88241	Dona Ana County 3700 W. Picacho Ave. Las Cruces, NM 88007 575-526-4427 1-800-453-5546 (575) 523-4945 Fax Mailing Address 3700 W. Picacho Ave. Las Cruces, NM 88007	Maxwell-Cimarron-Springer 316 Maxwell Ave. Maxwell, NM 87728 575-375-2277 1-800-520-4277 (575) 375-2753 Fax Mailing Address PO Box 357 Maxwell, NM 87728
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