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**GOLD SHOVEL STANDARD SALUTES  
TENTH ANNUAL NATIONAL SAFE DIGGING MONTH**  
*National Monthly Observance Drives Continued Excavation Safety*

Santa Ana, CA, March 31, 2017 – Gold Shovel Standard (GSS) today salutes the start of the 10<sup>th</sup> annual National Safe Digging Month, starting April 1<sup>st</sup>. The first National Safe Digging Month was declared in 2008 to promote safe digging during one strategic month when excavation activity begins in earnest nationwide. GSS is a nonprofit organization committed to public safety and increased transparency regarding issues of training and safety on behalf of industry, locators, contractors and excavators.

Every six minutes an underground utility line is damaged in the US because someone decided to dig without first calling 811. When calling 811, homeowners and contractors are connected to a local call center, which notifies the appropriate utility companies of their intent to dig. Professional locators are then sent to the requested digging site to mark the approximate locations of underground lines with flags, paint or both.

“Damage to gas, electric, telecom or water and wastewater lines can pose a significant public health risk,” said Dave Mauerman, an administrator at Gold Shovel Standard. “GSS applauds any effort that brings safety issues into the public discussion, and raises awareness of best practices around the excavation of buried assets.”

Gold Shovel Standard has already become a permanent fixture in much of North America as industry has rapidly embraced this ambitious program. The rate of adoption has dramatically increased since its implementation, and numbers of new members and participants are expanding at a healthy rate. Notably, GSS has been embraced by some of the largest telecom companies, gas and electric utilities, pipeline operators and a variety of municipalities.

**About Gold Shovel Standard**

Gold Shovel Standard (GSS) is a nonprofit organization that fills an industry gap by providing third-party confirmation of baseline Safety Management Systems for the protection of buried assets, and fair and transparent metrics for damage prevention. GSS-certified entities have invested in safety training to reduce damages and minimize the risks associated with excavating on or around buried assets. The Web site is [www.GoldShovelStandard.org](http://www.GoldShovelStandard.org)

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