

Call Before You Dig

Being an armadillo and all, Marvin naturally likes to dig. But even armadillos should call to find out where underground lines are before poking holes in their yards.

Did you know that it's against the law to dig deeper than 16 inches without notifying the proper authorities? The law is called the Texas One Call Law, and there are plenty of good reasons for it. For instance, any number of lines or pipes could be buried just about anywhere around a house or building. Accidentally damaging or cutting an electric line or a gas pipe could be life-threatening and extremely dangerous, not just to the person doing the digging, but also to the workers who must make the repairs and others who may be nearby. Cutting a water, gas or electric line can also cause a lot of trouble for your neighbors and anyone else who uses the same line or service.

The Texas One Call number is 1-800-545-6005, or, if you have trouble remembering their phone number you can call Dig Tess (Texas Excavation Safety System), a nonprofit organization, at 1-800-344-8377 (or 1-800-DIG-TESS). You must call one of these numbers at least two days before you dig. Once you have made the call, the local utility companies will be contacted and will send someone to the site to mark the location of their lines and equipment.

For more information, direct your parents to www.onecalltexas.com. Don't just dig anywhere you want without finding out whether or not it's a safe place to dig. In other words, act responsibly, not like our crazy armadillo friend. Dig it?

Cartoonist Keith Graves is a popular artist and author of children's books. Among his greatest hits are *Frank Was a Monster Who Wanted to Dance*, *Uncle Blubbafink's Seriously Ridiculous Stories* and *Loretta: Ace Pinky Scout*. He lives in Austin with his wife, Nancy, and the twins, Max and Emma.

