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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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New Call Before You Dig law legislative changes effective 10/1/06

DeBary, FL – September 5, 2006 – With one month left until revisions to Chapter 556, Florida Statutes, become effective, Sunshine State One Call urges excavators to review the changes so they're in compliance when the Call Before You Dig law goes into effect October 1, 2006.

Below is a summary of the statutory changes pertaining to excavators:

1. s. 556.105(1)(a) and (c) eliminates the requirement for excavation to begin within five business days after requesting a locate ticket. Excavators can now begin digging any time within the life of the locate ticket after the two full business day period for locate marks expires. Note: Excavators must still call in a new locate ticket if marks are destroyed before the ticket expires.
2. s. 556.105(1)(c) extends the life of a ticket by 10 days, making a ticket valid for 30 calendar days. As with previous legislation, day one begins the first day after the ticket is requested, but cannot end on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday. If the 30th day is on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, the ticket would expire on the next business day.
3. s. 556.105(1)(a) requires an excavator to provide a valid electronic address (email or fax) so the positive response system can use it to notify the excavator when all members have updated the system or when two full business days expire. Members provide a positive response code to the system that tells the excavator whether the site is located and marked, cleared or unmarked and the explanation of why it is unmarked including rescheduling the due date with the excavator.
4. s. 556.105(9)(b) exempts SSOCOF from notifying an excavator through positive response when a valid electronic address is not provided.
5. s. 556.105(9)(c) requires excavators who did not provide a valid electronic address to contact the positive response system to determine the status of the members' efforts to respond to the locate request. Access positive response online at www.callsunshine.com or by calling (800) 852-8057 and entering the locate ticket number and contact phone. If an excavator knows that an existing underground facility of a member is in the area, but there are no locate marks and there is no update in the positive response system, he may need to contact the member directly for clarification.
6. s. 556.105(4) requires excavators to have a valid locate ticket number when requested by a law enforcement officer, government code inspector, or code enforcement officer. It is not necessary to provide a copy of the ticket. Note: excavators authorized to use ITE (Internet Ticket Entry) have online access to their tickets for copying and forwarding to their construction crews or others as needed.
7. s. 556.108 does not allow an exemption from requesting locate tickets for excavations or demolitions on properties that are subdivided or will be subdivided into more than one single family residential property.

8. s. 556.108 provides an additional hand digging exemption for excavators performing excavations of 18 inches or less without mechanized equipment for locating, repairing, connecting, adjusting, or routine maintenance of a private or public underground facility by an excavator, if the excavator is performing such work for the current owner or future owner of the underground facility.

The SSOCOF Board of Directors worked closely with the Underground Utility Contractors of Florida to see these amendments passed during the 2006 Florida Legislative Session and approved by Governor Bush in June 2006.

For a copy of the complete law or a summary of these changes with the full statute language, visit www.callsunshine.com and click on Hot Topics. SSOCOF liaisons can also provide education on the law's revisions. Call (800) CAREFUL or email md@callsunshine.com to request a session. If you have a question, you may direct it to the same email address.

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