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*Our hearts go out to our neighbors and friends  
affected by Hurricane Michael.*

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## Extraordinary circumstances: What's an excavator to do?

Sunshine 811 members declare extraordinary circumstances when operating conditions make it impractical to comply with the legal responsibility to locate and mark within the legal time frame.

Before Hurricane Michael roared ashore, many Sunshine 811 members began declaring extraordinary circumstances in preparation for catastrophic damage.

Excavators throughout the Panhandle and other areas are now left wondering how they are supposed to handle these situations and if there is a time limit.

### **How will you know a member has declared?**

Callers will be advised of any members declaring extraordinary circumstances before your locate request call ends. ITE users will get a positive response code of 3T. Anyone can see which members are declaring extraordinary circumstances at any time by visiting the [Declarations List](#).

### **Follow normal procedures as outlined in Chapter 556, F.S.**

Excavators should continue to follow normal procedures by waiting and checking positive response. Even though the 3T positive response code may appear for members, some may continue to locate, mark and update their responses while extraordinary circumstances exist. It's not an excuse to not wait.

### **What if the members do not update the 3T response?**

You will treat it the same as a non-response. In that case, the statute outlines the following:

1. Contact the member directly using the information on your ticket. If you find any of the contact information to be incorrect, please complete the form at this [blog post](#).
2. s.556.105(6)(a) ...the excavator may proceed with the excavation, if the excavator does so with reasonable care and if detection equipment or other acceptable means to locate underground facilities are used.

### **Hire a private locate company**

For additional safety, you may consider hiring a private locate company to locate and mark your job site. There are a number of companies that do private locating that are also Sunshine 811 associate members. Their contact information is below at the Private Locators link.

### **How long can extraordinary circumstances last?**

There is no time limit on extraordinary circumstances. Following numbers one and two above is always the standard procedure. With that said, Hurricane Michael was devastating in some areas. Our members are working hard to get facilities back online. We'll all need to practice a little patience.

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