

Gazette

VOLUNTEER!

HELP MAKE GEORGIA A BETTER PLACE TO CALL HOME

“Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve.” Martin Luther King, Jr. shared this thought about community service from the pulpit of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta in 1964. More than 60 years later, many Georgia organizations are hoping citizens will be inspired by these words because their help is needed.

While volunteering used to be a mainstay of U.S. culture, giving back to their community no longer plays as big a role in Americans' lives, indicates research from the University of Georgia. At the same time, the number of available volunteer positions continues to climb.

Georgia has over 16,000 registered nonprofits that rely heavily on volunteers. But that's only a portion of the total number of organizations needing help. Even the Georgia state park system uses over 6,800 volunteers annually to help operate its parks and historic sites.

PLUG IN

National Volunteer Month provides the perfect time to think about how you can use your skills and interests to strengthen your community and enrich lives. For inspiration, see this month's Walton Wise blog to learn about some of the nonprofits where Walton Gas employees are volunteering their time and talents.

No matter your age, interest, available time or abilities, there's a Georgia organization just waiting to connect with you.



FIND YOUR FIT

A satisfying volunteer experience begins with identifying an opportunity that best suits your interests and availability.

- **LOOK local.** Newspapers, online community forums and social media are good starting points for finding local groups needing help. City, county and state entities may also be a resource. The city of Peachtree Corners publishes a list of area volunteer opportunities on its website. The Mayor's Volunteer Program promotes community engagement activities in Atlanta. Volunteer Resources listed on the state government's Georgia Serves web page provides links to service opportunities throughout the state.
- **PICK your passion.** Look for a volunteering opportunity you are genuinely interested in or supports a cause you care about. Love being outdoors? Apply to work in a city or state park. If you're an animal lover, be a dog walker at a shelter.
- **KNOW your limit.** Be honest about how much time you can spend on a volunteer project. Begin with a limited commitment and add more hours if/when you want.
- **DO your research.** Review an organization's website and social media for clues about what their volunteers do. If possible, talk to other volunteers to gauge their satisfaction. Schedule a visit to see for yourself the role unpaid workers play at places you're considering.



Walton Gas employees label canned goods while volunteering at the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia.

Be safe, not sorry

AVOID A GARDENING GOOF THAT CAN AFFECT YOUR ENTIRE NEIGHBORHOOD

Georgia's sunny, warm spring days are just right for those gardening and outdoor improvement projects you thought about during the cold winter. If grabbing a shovel for some quality digging is in your weekend plans, don't forget to contact 811 first. The reliability of your utility services, including natural gas, could depend on it.

811 is the number Georgia do-it-yourselfers, landscapers and contractors call to protect from unintentionally hitting underground utility lines while working on digging projects – large and small.

Notifying Georgia 811 kick-starts a free and simple process to identify the location of underground infrastructure. Knowing the location of underground utility lines reduces the likelihood of damaging one to less than 1%.

Carelessly striking an unidentified pipeline is the most common cause of natural gas emergencies. Of the nearly 1,300 underground line damages reported to Georgia 811 each month, about 40% are to natural gas facilities.

Damage to underground lines can result in service interruptions, costly repair bills and fines. Hitting a line can also cause serious harm to the digger and other individuals.

Read this month's **Walton Wise** blog for answers to your questions about digging safely with the help of Georgia 811.



Celebrate
EARTH MONTH

April is Earth Month, a great reminder that even small changes at home can make a big difference. While big changes can feel overwhelming, small everyday habits often add up in powerful ways. Simple actions, like being mindful of energy use, cooking meals at home and reducing household waste, can all add up over time.

As the weather warms up, it's also a good time to adjust your thermostat and make sure your home is running efficiently. Natural gas helps power everyday moments, from hot showers to family dinners, so using it wisely can keep your home comfortable while staying mindful of energy use.

Earth Month is a chance to focus on caring for our homes and our planet, which can go hand in hand. Small, thoughtful changes today can help create a more sustainable tomorrow.



April is
Safe Digging
Month in
Georgia

DIY DIGGING

Contact Georgia 811 at least three business days before tackling outdoor improvement projects that involve digging, such as:

- Installing a fence
- Planting a tree or shrub
- Installing a mailbox or flagpole
- Installing underground sprinklers
- Installing a pond or water feature



Toll Free 866-936-2427 or
770-267-2505

Front Counter Hours
Weekdays, 8 AM to 5 PM

Call Center Hours
Weekdays, 7 AM to 7 PM

Monroe
842 US Hwy. 78 NW

Snellville
3645 Lenora Church Rd.

Watkinsville
2061-D Hog Mountain Rd.

Jim Bottone
Senior VP, Walton Energy
& External Affairs

Ashlie Franklin
Commercial Accounts
afranklin@waltongas.com

Sara Beddington
Marketing Specialist

Call Atlanta Gas Light
to report gas leaks or
emergencies anytime.

Inside Metro Atlanta
770-907-4231

Outside Metro Atlanta
877-427-4321

waltongas.com