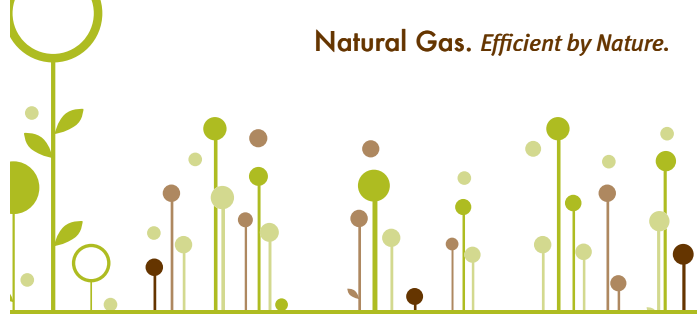


Washington Gas Contact Information

Customer Services (translation services available)	703-750-1000
Customers with Limited Area Telephone Service	202-624-6049
If You Smell Natural Gas	703-750-1400
Automated Services Line (24-hour self-service)	703-750-7944
Outside the Local Calling Area	1-800-752-7520
Telecommunication Relay Service/TTY	711 1-800-735-2258
Call Before You Dig/District One Call	811 202-265-7177
Natural Gas Products	703-237-HOME washingtongasliving.com
Natural Gas Availability and Conversions	converttonaturalgas.com
Gas Theft Hotline	703-750-4570
Speakers Program	202-624-6697
Web Site	washingtongas.com

This handbook is provided to District of Columbia customers in accordance with the rules set forth by the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia. All programs and charges listed in this book are those in effect at the time of printing and are subject to change.

Este manual del cliente es disponible en español si lo solicita. Llámenos al **703-750-1000** para obtener una copia.



Washington, D.C.

Customer Handbook



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Welcome to Washington Gas

Thank you for choosing to use natural gas.

We welcome our new customers and appreciate the continued opportunity to serve those who have been with us over the years. Washington Gas has been a vital part of the vibrant Washington area community and economy for 160 years.

Our primary focus is to provide safe and reliable natural gas service to you at a reasonable cost. We continually monitor and maintain our natural gas pipelines and respond to natural gas emergencies around the clock. We are committed to making continuous improvements and service enhancements for our customers.

Today, we deliver natural gas to more than one million customers across the region.

We are committed to responsible corporate citizenship and understand that civic responsibility benefits all of us. Our employees volunteer thousands of hours on projects year-round, addressing health, education and the environment.

To assist you in understanding our services and policies, we're pleased to provide this customer handbook. It details natural gas safety, energy efficiency, convenient payment programs and much more. You will find a number of ways to reach us in the Customer Services section of this handbook as well as on the back cover. We welcome your comments.

Thank you for the privilege of counting you among our many valued customers.

Sincerely,



Luanne Gutermuth
Division Head, Consumer Services

Giving Customers Choice

There are two key components to your natural gas service: the supply or actual gas product and the distribution or delivery of the gas. Customers can purchase their natural gas supply from one of a number of licensed energy supply companies or from Washington Gas, which is a regulated utility. As a regulated utility, Washington Gas must charge customers what it pays for the natural gas supply they use. Licensed energy supply companies may have greater flexibility in what they charge you. They compete for your business, and some may offer price incentives that could result in cost savings to you.

While customer choice is voluntary, approximately 16,000 District of Columbia customers participate in the program. If you choose an energy supply company other than Washington Gas, you'll sign an agreement with that supplier for the terms of your service. If you wish to continue to buy from Washington Gas, no further action is necessary. **Regardless of which company sells you natural gas, Washington Gas continues to deliver the gas safely and reliably to your home through its distribution system and responds around the clock to natural gas emergencies.**

For more information about our Customer Choice Program, visit our Web site at washingtongas.com, click on *Customer Choice*. You also can call Washington Gas at 703-750-1000, or access the Web site of the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia at dcpsc.org.

Customer Services

Contacting Us by Phone

Call us if you have questions, suggestions or concerns.

- Our main number is **703-750-1000**. Call Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (except major holidays). Commercial customers should call 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday, and during the Saturday hours noted above. Non-English speaking customers can call the same number for translation services available in many languages.
- In a natural gas emergency, call **911** or Washington Gas at **703-750-1400** or **1-800-752-7520** at any time.
- If you live outside the local calling area, please call **1-800-752-7520**.
- For 24-hour automated bill payment and other self service options, call the *Automated Services Line* at **703-750-7944**.
- Hearing-impaired customers may reach us through the District of Columbia Relay Service at 711 or at **1-800-735-2258**.

Please see back cover for additional contact information. Our customer service representatives are available to answer questions about your gas bill or to schedule a service appointment. Please consider the following when you call us:

- In situations that require inside access to your home, such as establishing gas service, Washington Gas schedules service appointments Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- When you have scheduled service with us, please be available at the service location and phone number you have provided. If no one is home when

we arrive, it will be necessary for you to call us and reschedule.

Note: Representatives of Washington Gas and other subsidiaries of our parent company, WGL Holdings, wear or carry identification and will present it upon request. If you have concerns about whether a worker in your area is from Washington Gas or is affiliated with its parent company, call 703-750-4370 or 703-750-4246 or Customer Service at 703-750-1000.

Contacting Us by Mail

Please address all correspondence — change of address cards, comments, compliments or questions — to **Washington Gas, Customer Care, 6801 Industrial Road, Springfield, VA 22151**, unless otherwise instructed. Your letter should include:

- A daytime phone number, including area code, where you can be reached;
- a brief summary of the inquiry or problem;
- your account number and address; and
- copies of gas bills and canceled checks if the question is about billing.

Contacting Us Online

You'll find helpful information and many quick and convenient services at **washingtongas.com**. Click on *Contact Us* for inquiries related to your account and other services. Find information about customer services and policies, natural gas safety, energy efficiency and heating season preparedness. Manage your Washington Gas account by visiting the *Customer Service* section of the site.

Meters and Meter Reading

Meters measure how much natural gas you use.

We test and replace meters according to the requirements of the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia. Washington Gas owns and maintains the gas meter and the piping leading to the meter from the street. It is your responsibility to ensure that we have access to the meter and the area around it.

Your bills are based on monthly meter readings. The date of the next scheduled reading appears on your gas bill, along with the current and past meter reading dates.

Reading Your Own Meter

In some areas, if we are unable to gain access to the meter, we will leave a postage-paid meter reading card. If you receive one of these cards, please record the meter reading on the card and mail it to us the next day. Other options include calling us at **703-750-1000** with your reading or emailing it to us. At the Web site, click on *Customer Service, Manage Your Account, Report Your Meter Read*. If you have a digital meter, simply record the numbers displayed.

To read a meter with dials, please do the following:

- Starting with the left dial on the row of four, locate the dial hand and record the last number it has passed.
- If the hand is between two numbers, record the lower number. If one hand is directly over a number, record that number.
- Continuing to the right, follow the same procedure for the 3 remaining dials.



The complete reading from left to right is 9587.

Remote Meter Reading

Many meters in our service territory are equipped with an automated meter reading device that combines radio and computer technologies to allow us to read your meter from a distance. Certain conditions can block the transmitted signal, and the meter reader may need to be closer to obtain the reading. Also, if your meter is equipped with this automated technology, we occasionally will require access for testing, battery replacement or repair.

Estimated Readings

Your meter has not been read if the word *Estimate* appears after the words *Current Reading* on your gas bill. Sometimes it is necessary for us to estimate readings, especially if we cannot gain access to your meter or when the automated device is not transmitting. Estimated bills are based on historical usage, actual weather and length of the billing period. Any difference between what you have been billed and what you owe is adjusted the next time an actual reading is performed.

Relocating Your Meter or Service Line

If you are remodeling and want your natural gas service line or meter moved, call us at least 8 to 12 weeks before the project starts. This gives us time to schedule a site visit and prepare a written estimate. The relocation fee will depend on the difficulty of the installation.

Note: There is a \$72 fee for providing the estimate to relocate the meter.

Gas Theft

Tampering with a natural gas meter is *illegal* and *dangerous*. The natural gas meter at your home,

whether located inside or outside, belongs to Washington Gas. Call our *Gas Theft Hotline* at **703-750-4570** or the *Corporate Security* office at **703-750-4370** or **703-750-4246** if you see suspicious activity involving a Washington Gas meter. The company may offer a reward for verified reports of illegal piping connections or stolen meters. You may leave a recorded message with your name and other contact information, but you are not required to identify yourself unless you wish to be considered for the reward.

Your Gas Bill

Billing Status

As a District of Columbia customer, you may buy your natural gas from Washington Gas, which is the regulated utility, or from an energy supply company. Washington Gas delivers the gas through its system of pipes to your home no matter which company sells you natural gas.

- **Washington Gas Sales Service** customers buy gas from Washington Gas.
- **Washington Gas Delivery Service** customers buy gas from an energy supply company.

Sales Service customers receive one bill from Washington Gas. Delivery Service customers could be billed by either method as noted below and should discuss billing choices with prospective energy supply companies.

- **One bill.** This combines Washington Gas's charges and the energy supply company's charges. The bill may be provided by Washington Gas or by the energy supplier.

- **Two separate bills.** Washington Gas sends the customer a bill for the System Charge, Distribution Charge and applicable taxes. The energy supply company sends the customer a bill for the natural gas supply and any other applicable charges.

Understanding Your Charges

Whether you buy your natural gas from Washington Gas or from an energy supply company, the following services are listed on your bill:

- **CCF of Gas Used** is the unit of measurement on your meter for the amount of natural gas used. One CCF is equal to 100 cubic feet of gas, which equals one therm. The meter reading and an energy content conversion factor determine Total Therms used.
- **Purchased Gas Charge (PGC)** is the cost of the natural gas we purchase, plus the cost of transporting it through the interstate pipeline to the Washington Gas system.
- **Distribution Charge** is the cost of delivering natural gas through our system to your home.
- **Customer Charge** covers some costs of providing your service — depreciation, taxes, maintenance and repair of customer lines, and customer-related expenses such as meter reading and billing.
- **Taxes**, imposed by your local government, are collected by our company and remitted to the appropriate taxing authorities.

Gaslights

All new gaslight installations are metered. This practice has been in place for over a decade. Older gaslights may be unmetered and are billed at a fixed usage, shown on the line Unmetered Gaslight. A typical two-mantle residential gaslight consumes about 219 therms annually. If you turn an unmetered gaslight

on or off, please let us know immediately so we can bill you correctly.

Rate Schedules

The billing items previously described are covered in the rate schedules showing the amount the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia allows us to charge. Residential service is covered under Rate Schedules No. 1 and 1A. For copies of rate schedules and general service provisions, visit washingtongas.com and click on *Tariffs/Rates*, or call us at **703-750-1000**.

Paying Your Gas Bill

Payment Options

Please check your bill to make sure that the name and address on your account are correct. This helps us provide you more efficient service should there be any questions or concerns regarding your account. Please call **703-750-1000** with any changes.

By Mail: Return your remittance stub with your **check** or **money order**—never cash. Write your 10-digit account number on your check or money order for proper credit of your payment. Do not include any correspondence with your payment or write on or make requests on the stub.

When you pay your Washington Gas bill by check, you authorize Washington Gas to clear it electronically. Your check will not be returned to you. Your bank statement serves as proof of payment.

For questions about the electronic conversion of your check or to opt out of the electronic conversion and receive your paper check, have your 10-digit account number available and call 1-888-491-8107 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday.

If you send your payment in an envelope other than the one we provide, address it to **Washington Gas, P.O. Box 9001036, Louisville, KY 40290-1036**. Sending the payment to any other address will delay processing.

By Phone: Use our *Automated Services Line, 703-750-7944*, to pay your bill with your personal checking account, credit or debit card. When paying by check, you'll need the bank's routing number and your checking account number, which are listed at the bottom of the check. The routing number consists of the first 9 digits, and your checking account number is the second set of digits. Please do not use the last set of digits in the row — this is your check number.

Online: Log onto **washingtongas.com** to view or pay your current gas bill quickly and securely. Use your personal checking account, credit or debit card to pay your bill. Go online to most area banks' Web sites to view and pay your Washington Gas bill.

Go to **washingtongas.com/eBill** for billing and payment information. You also can view and pay your bill at **mycheckfree.com** or **washingtongas.com**.

If you pay your gas bill through an online banking service, be sure the account number you enter matches the 10-digit account number printed on your Washington Gas bill.

Note: Credit and debit card payments are processed by an electronic payment processor, not Washington Gas. The processor currently charges a transaction fee of \$4.55 for this service. The fee may change without notice.

In Person: Washington Gas Main Office: Pay by check, money order or cash at 101 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20080, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Washington Gas Anacostia/Congress Heights Office: Pay by check or money order only at 3101 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20032, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Drop Boxes: In Maryland, use the 24-hour drop box available in the parking lot of our Forestville office at 4000 Forestville Road. **In Virginia**, a 24-hour drop box is located in the parking lot of our Springfield location at 6801 Industrial Road. **In the District of Columbia**, customers will find drop boxes at our main office and Anacostia locations. *Washington Gas accepts only checks and money orders at drop boxes.*

Western Union: You may pay your gas bill through the Quick Collect service at locations nationwide. Call Western Union at **1-800-325-6000** for the location nearest you and for applicable Western Union service fees.

Dishonored Payments and Late Payment Charges

We charge a fee for a dishonored payment and require cash, certified check or money order for the amount of the dishonored payment and fee.

Payments are due on or before the due date shown on your bill. If we do not receive your payment by the due date, a late charge is assessed at the rate of 1 percent. The remaining unpaid balance per billing month thereafter, will be assessed at the rate of 1.5 percent.

If you buy gas from an energy supply company, at publication of this document, the District of Columbia Public Service Commission's Interim Natural Gas Consumer Protection Standards require that payments on your account be applied in the following order:

- First, any past due amount owed to Washington Gas for utility related charges;

- second, to any past due amount owed to an energy supply company that is not Washington Gas;
- third, to Washington Gas for any current utility charges;
- fourth, to any current charges owed to an energy supply company that is not Washington Gas.

Payment Plans

The **Budget Plan** spreads the cost of winter heating over the entire year. We calculate your average monthly payment based on historical natural gas usage, adjusted for normal weather, and projected gas costs. Periodically, we review your account to determine that our monthly estimate is on target. Each month, your bill will show actual gas usage and bill amounts, along with budget installments, so you can review the information.

If actual gas costs, weather and/or usage differ significantly from our original estimate, an adjustment in your monthly budget payment may be necessary to prevent significant charges or credits at the end of your budget year. Please contact Washington Gas to request an adjustment to your installment. Once you notify us, you will receive a message on your bill if your monthly budget payment amount has changed.

Your 12th monthly bill will reflect the last budget installment of your budget cycle – adjusted for the difference between actual and budgeted gas usage. Overpayments are credited to your account unless a refund is requested. If you use more gas than you pay for, you owe the company the difference.

The Budget Plan is designed as a 12-month program, and we encourage you to stay on it year-round to realize the potential benefits. Remember that continued participation in the plan depends upon your ability to make the monthly budget payment. A late payment

or failure to pay typically results in removal from the plan, and the full amount of the account balance becomes due. For more information, or to enroll, click on *Customer Service*, then *Budget Plan* at our Web site, or call the *Automated Services Line* at **703-750-7944**. Please have your Washington Gas account number available.

Please call us if you choose to purchase natural gas from an energy supply company and want to participate in the Budget Plan.

The **Automated Payment Plan** allows your payment to be deducted automatically from your checking account and electronically transferred to us on the day your bill is due. At the Web site, click on *Customer Service*, then *Automatic Payment Plan* for program information.

The **Payment Extension Plan** can extend the due date for customers – usually individuals whose main source of income is a monthly government or pension check – who purchase gas from Washington Gas and receive their bills after the 10th of the month. With this plan, the due date (last day to pay without a penalty) of your current monthly gas bill is extended to the 5th of the next month, making it easier for you to apply a portion of your assistance payment to your gas bill. There is no late charge if the payment for your gas bill is received by the extended due date. For details, call us.

Remember that it is the customer's responsibility to notify Washington Gas as soon as possible if he or she is unable to pay for service in accordance with the requirement of the company's billing practices.

For more information about payment plans, click on *Customer Service*, *Manage Your Account* and *Customer Publications* at our Web site. Download the Payment Plans brochure, or call us.

Service Initiation and Termination

Applying for Service

Contact us by phone, postal mail or email to begin natural gas service. See the sections below for more details on initiating and terminating service.

Protecting Customers' Information

Washington Gas protects customers' account information. It is shared only with the person whose name appears on the account, and only that person can authorize that a second name be added. Call the company if you wish to revise your account information.

Security Deposit

A security deposit may be required to open or maintain an account, and payment terms may be available. All deposits earn simple interest at a rate established by the District of Columbia Public Service Commission. After 12 months, Washington Gas refunds the deposit, plus interest, or credits the customer's account, if:

- 1) The customer has paid all bills for a consecutive 12 month period without having had any bill which was unpaid within 80 days of bill due date; and
- 2) is not delinquent at the end of the 12-month period; and
- 3) has not had service terminated for nonpayment.

Note: Deposits cannot be used to pay a current or a delinquent bill.

Moving

- To initiate or discontinue service, please notify us at least 3 business days prior to the time you request service. There is a fee to initiate service. Access to

your home could be required to initiate or terminate service.

- If you have gas appliances with electronic ignition, your electric service must be on before we turn gas on to your appliances. If you have a gas water heater, your water must be on before we can light that appliance.
- For convenience, customers may go to our Web site to submit a secure online form to start or stop natural gas service at least three business days prior to the date of request. Click on *Start/Stop Service* on our home page. A customer service representative will contact you if there are any questions, or if we require access to your meter for a final reading. If you don't have online access, please call us. Failure to notify Washington Gas will prevent us from closing your account, and you will be responsible for all subsequent charges until your account has been settled.
- If the new occupant placed an order to leave the gas service on, you may read the meter and phone in your reading to us.

Note: If you move during the winter and the gas service is turned off, the water pipes could freeze.

Automatic Name Change Program

This program features a written agreement between Washington Gas and property managers and/or landlords that transfers a tenant's gas service to the landlord when a tenant informs Washington Gas that he or she is moving. Then, 48 hours before a new tenant is scheduled to occupy a unit, the tenant completes a "moving in" form, and there is no disruption in gas service. Click on *Customer Services*, then *Property Managers* at the Web site to request your enrollment packet, or call us.

Emergency Turn-Off

In an emergency, we may turn off your natural gas service without notice. We also do this if the gas meter has been tampered with or if there has been a violation of federal, state or local safety codes. We restore service as soon as possible, but if safety violations exist, your gas equipment must be repaired before service is restored.

Disconnection

If you have trouble paying a bill or a security deposit, or if there is some other problem, please notify us. We make every effort to work out a solution before we terminate natural gas service.

Note: If you have received a disconnection notice and your gas is still on, please call Customer Service at 703-750-1000, or see a representative at a Washington Gas payment office to pay the agreed amount and avoid disconnection.

Other than for emergencies and meter tampering as noted above, Washington Gas may disconnect a customer's natural gas service for failing to do any of the following after the appropriate notice has been given: comply with the company's requirement for service applications; pay a required deposit; pay a bill for gas service; and/or provide reasonable access to customer premises.

Before the company disconnects a customer's service for a reason other than an emergency or meter tampering, it will send the customer a written notice of termination on the bill at least 15 days before the date that termination is scheduled to occur. The cause for disconnection must be corrected, and any past due amount must be paid on or before the termination date stated on the bill notice to avoid disconnection.

The due date for the remaining current balance also is specified.

If gas service is disconnected, it can be restored when violations are corrected and outstanding bills are paid. A reconnection fee is charged, and a deposit will be required prior to reconnection if your gas has been turned off for non-payment. Payment to restore service can be made in one of the following ways:

- Through our *Automated Services Line* at **703-750-7944**, or online at washingtongas.com, using your checking account, credit or debit card.
(Be sure to call **703-750-1000** to provide the customer service representative your confirmation number.);
- In person at one of our walk-in offices for the exact amount due; or
- by mail.

Remember that you will need to contact Washington Gas at **703-750-1000** to set up an order to reconnect your service once your payment has been made. If you choose to pay by mail, the gas is not turned on until we have received the payment and it has been posted to the account.

Note: Credit and debit card payments are processed by an electronic payment processor, not Washington Gas. The processor currently charges a transaction fee of \$4.55 for this service. The fee may change without notice.

Dispute Procedures

To dispute service turn-off or your bill amount, please contact a customer service representative at **703-750-1000** or **1-800-752-7520** to review your case.

If you disagree with our findings, you can receive further assistance from the Public Service Commission

of the District of Columbia. To reach the Commission, call 202-626-5100 and ask for the Office of Consumer Services. The address is 1333 H Street, N.W., 2nd Fl. West, Washington, DC 20005. Visit the Web site at dcpsc.org. You can contact the District of Columbia Office of the People's Counsel at 202-727-3071, or at 1133 15th Street, N.W., Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005.

Visit the Web site at opc-dc.gov.

You may obtain a copy of the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia's Consumer Bill of Rights from the Commission at dcpsc.org.

Avoiding Turn-Offs for the Ailing, Disabled and Elderly

If a member of your household is seriously ill, disabled, elderly, relies on life support equipment, or has any existing condition for which a termination service would be a threat to life, health or safety, we take special steps to avoid turning off your natural gas service.

Please inform us of these circumstances, in advance, in the event that a turn-off is warranted. We require a written statement from a doctor or an official source to prevent the turn-off. In addition, the customer must make satisfactory arrangements to pay the unpaid bills.

Third-Party Notification

The **Third-Party Notification Program** can help you avoid a disconnection if you are out of town for long periods, ill or have difficulty handling your affairs. Washington Gas can send a copy of your disconnection notice to a third party of your choice. The third party is not responsible for payment but will be notified about the impending service disruption in time to help. Call us at **703-750-1000** for details.

Disconnection During Winter

In accordance with the regulations of the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia, termination of natural gas service is postponed if the temperature for the next 24 hours is expected to be 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below.

Safety

If you suspect a natural gas leak or other gas emergency and are unsure of its severity or what to do, evacuate the area immediately and call 911 from a safe location.

If You Smell Natural Gas

Natural gas is non-toxic, colorless, odorless and combustible. For your safety, we add an unpleasant odorant called mercaptan so you will be able to detect escaping natural gas. Call us to receive our Natural Gas Safety brochure with a scratch-and-sniff sample of mercaptan. Gas traveling through a small portion of our transmission pipeline is not odorized, visible signs of a possible leak are provided below.

- If you smell natural gas, do not attempt to locate the source of the odor. Call our *Emergency Leak* Line at **703-750-1400** or **1-800-752-7520** outside the local calling area.
- If the odor is very strong or you hear a blowing or hissing noise, vacate the building immediately, leaving doors unlocked as you go. Do nothing that could create an ignition source — do not light a match or use any type of phone or battery-powered equipment. Do not turn electrical equipment or light switches on or off. Do not start your car or any type of motorized equipment. Call **911** and the appropriate Washington Gas emergency numbers as

instructed above only after you have reached a safe distance away from the building or area. Follow the same precautions if you are outside and smell gas, hear hissing or blowing noises, see dirt being thrown into the air; fire coming from the ground or appearing to burn aboveground; water bubbling or being blown into the air at a pond, creek or river; or if you see a dry spot in a moist field or dead or dying vegetation on or near a pipeline right-of-way.

We distribute natural gas through a network of underground pipes and service lines. If a leak should occur, it is possible for gas to migrate into buildings, including those without natural gas service.

Note: When calling us from another location to report a natural gas leak or other gas emergency at your home, please give the customer service representative the address or phone number where you can be reached, so we can gain unimpeded access to the house or other building if necessary.

Responding to Your Call

When notified of a natural gas leak, Washington Gas dispatches trained technicians to the scene 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If a leak poses an immediate threat, the technician will take quick action to make the area safe. If a natural gas leak does not pose an immediate threat, other corrective action will be scheduled for a later date. This prioritization process helps the company ensure the safety of all its customers while allocating resources more efficiently, coordinating necessary work with customers' schedules, and minimizing traffic disruptions.

Excess Flow Valves

An excess flow valve (EFV) may reduce the consequences of a gas leak in the event of a break in the

outside service line. EFVs are designed to shut down the natural gas flow to your home and reduce the likelihood of unrestricted gas flow from the broken line. Since January 1999, in response to government regulation, Washington Gas has installed EFVs at no additional charge on all new elevated pressure natural gas service lines that serve a single residence and in cases where elevated pressure service lines serving a single residence must be replaced. We can install an EFV on your existing natural gas service line if it serves a single residence. The cost will depend on location, time, labor and site restoration requirements necessary to install the EFV. Please call us for additional information.

Emergency Preparedness

Washington Gas does not recommend that customers shut off natural gas service to their homes or businesses as a preventive or preparatory action in the event of an emergency. Washington Gas's natural gas distribution system is divided into sections that, in such an event, can be isolated from the rest of the system and shut down for repairs or as a safety precaution. If for any reason customers do shut off gas service to their homes or businesses, they should call us at **703-750-1000** to restore service.

Customers should not attempt to restore natural gas service themselves. Customers who want to learn how to shut off natural gas service to their homes or businesses should contact a licensed natural gas contractor.

Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, toxic gas, created when fossil fuels are not burned completely. CO-related incidents can involve car exhaust,

blocked furnace/boiler vents and chimneys, and improperly adjusted or inadequately maintained appliances.

Warning signs of CO in your home can include stuffy, stale air; lingering pungent odor; condensation on windows; back drafts from a fireplace, furnace or water-heating chimney; soot; yellow burner flames (except from natural gas fireplaces and logs); burner flames or pilot lights that flutter or keep going out. If you detect these warning signs, turn off the equipment, air out the building and call a licensed natural gas contractor to have the equipment inspected.

Symptoms of CO poisoning can include dizziness, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, headaches, ringing in the ears, blurred vision, stinging eyes and fainting. If you suspect CO poisoning, leave the building immediately to seek fresh air and call **911** from a safe location.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends that you place CO detectors outside bedrooms in each separate sleeping area. It recommends installing smoke alarms on each level of your house and inside every bedroom. For both types of devices, check batteries monthly and change them at least twice annually.

Using Gas Appliances Safely

Many gas appliances have open burners. Older models also have pilot lights that burn continuously. It is very important to keep the area around your appliances clear of flammable objects, particularly paints, adhesives, cleaning solvents, oily rags and gasoline containers.

Any gas appliance located in a residential garage must be installed according to code, so that all burners and burner ignition devices are at least 18 inches above the floor.

Warning signs to check for in a gas appliance, which may indicate that carbon monoxide is being produced, include a predominantly yellow flame, soot or a lingering pungent odor.

Keep your gas appliance owner's manuals handy and refer to them regularly. Some tips on the safe and efficient use of appliances are provided below.

- Have a licensed natural gas contractor perform an annual pre-winter inspection of your natural gas **heating equipment**—including furnaces, boilers and/or unvented space heaters. If you see or suspect something is wrong with your heating system, turn it off immediately and call a repair service.
- Clean or replace furnace filters every month during the heating season and every three months during the rest of the year to ensure that your heating unit is operating properly and efficiently.
- Range-top burners or ovens should never be used for home-heating purposes. Continuous burning can lead to the production of carbon monoxide and create fire hazards.
- Dryer exhaust piping should be kept free of lint buildup. Heavy lint buildup in the dryer exhaust can cause a fire.
- Lowering the temperature of your water heater can prevent scalding accidents. Do not set the thermostat dial on your water heater higher than 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Your dial may read Warm-Normal-Hot or Low-Medium-High instead of showing numbers. The Warm or Low setting should be 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Don't use or store flammable products such as gasoline, solvents or adhesives in the same room or area in which your water heater is installed.

- If you have an automatic dishwasher and the manufacturer recommends a Normal temperature setting for your hot water heater, ask your plumber about anti-scald devices for your shower and sink taps.
- When installing gas logs or inserts in a conventional wood-burning fireplace, special attention must be given to the manufacturer's specification for venting. Many log sets need a fully open chimney damper when burning, and some require direct venting to the outside.
- Gas grills must be lighted with the top open. A natural gas grill intended for outdoor use should never be used indoors.

For more information on the safe use of natural gas appliances and systems, click on *Energy Information* at the Web site. Scroll down to the *Safety* section. For free copies of brochures, call **202-624-6092**. Property owners and managers are welcome to call for multiple copies for their tenants at no charge.

Making Appliances Safe

We respond immediately and without charge to any natural gas emergency, such as escaping gas or a malfunctioning appliance. As a result, we may be required to turn off gas service to your home or appliance. If your appliance requires repair or replacement, you will be advised to call a licensed natural gas contractor. As with any major service or repair, you may wish to shop around to get the services and terms that are best for you.

Pipelines and Damage Prevention

The Washington Gas system is part of a vast nationwide network of mostly underground pipelines that deliver natural gas. The company operates approximately 200 miles of **transmission** pipelines and thou-

sands of miles of **distribution** pipelines. Transmission pipe carries natural gas at high pressures from gate stations, where gas enters the system, to regulator stations, where pressure is reduced for distribution to customers. Pipeline markers indicate the presence, but not the exact location or depth, of **transmission** pipelines in underground rights-of-way. Markers identify the fuel, operator, and phone numbers you must call **before** digging or excavating. Less than half of Washington Gas's transmission pipe is in high consequence areas, where gas leaks could have greater consequences to health, safety and the environment.

Distribution pipelines deliver natural gas directly to customers and can cause serious injury if damaged by digging or excavating. The majority of buried distribution pipelines are **not** marked aboveground so it is critical to call **811** to have the lines located before you begin any digging or excavating. See below.

Call 811 Before You Dig

811 is the national **Call Before You Dig** telephone number that initiates the process of marking the underground utility lines in your yard or on your job. Your call to 811 will be routed to your local One Call Center — in the District of Columbia, Maryland or Virginia. Local One Call Center personnel then notify area utilities, such as Washington Gas, to mark the approximate locations of buried utility lines with high-visibility safety paint and/or flags. The service is **free**.

Remember to call **811** at least **two full business days** —excluding weekends and holidays — before you are scheduled to begin any type of excavation, large or small. Please do not begin digging until the lines have been marked or cleared as “no conflict.” If in doubt, check with your One Call Center to be sure there are no underground utilities where you plan to dig. (If for

any reason you cannot connect to **811**, call **1-800-257-7777** or **202-265-7177**)

Gas Pipe Maintenance

Washington Gas owns and maintains all natural gas pipe up to and including the gas meter. We strive to provide safe, reliable service while making sure the gas pipe owned by the company is properly maintained. It is your responsibility to monitor and maintain the natural gas lines on your side of the meter — whether or not they are visible. Therefore, have your gas lines checked periodically to prohibit corrosion or leaks, and have them repaired by a licensed natural gas contractor if any unsafe condition is detected.

Federal and District of Columbia regulations and Washington Gas policy prohibit building an enclosed structure over a natural gas line. If you know or believe you have an enclosed structure over your gas line, please call **703-750-1000** to arrange for a safety inspection.

Energy Assistance

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Washington Gas has supported the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for many years. Through this program, the federal government distributes funds to the District of Columbia and the states which, in turn, give grants to qualified applicants to help them pay their energy bills. For more information, please call the District Department of the Environment at 202-673-6750, or visit the Web site at ddoe.dc.gov and click on *Energy Assistance*.

Residential Essential Service (RES)

With this program, administered by the District of Columbia Government, low-income households may qualify for a discount on a portion of the natural gas they use each month during the heating season. For more information, please call the District Department of the Environment at 202-673-6750, or visit the Web site at ddoe.dc.gov and click on *Energy Assistance*.

Weatherization Assistance Program

This program provides for the repair and replacement of home heating and cooling systems and the installation of energy-saving measures in the home. For more information, call the District of Columbia Energy Office Hotline at 202-673-6750.

Washington Area Fuel Fund (WAFF)

Founded by Washington Gas and administered by The Salvation Army, the **Washington Area Fuel Fund (WAFF)** helps families who do not qualify for, or who have exhausted, government energy assistance. WAFF pays for all types of fuel to heat homes during the winter. Washington Gas pays the administrative costs of the fund so 100% of WAFF contributions go to those who need assistance.

WAFF assistance is available January 1 - May 31. Contact The Salvation Army at **1-888-318-WAFF (318-9233)** to receive details on the location and phone number for the office in your locality.

You can contribute to WAFF in the following ways:

- **Make a fixed monthly contribution using a pledge form.** The contribution will be included automatically in your monthly gas bill, and you can cancel it at any time. Call us to obtain a pledge form.

(If you have pledged a fixed amount, please do not check the Washington Area Fuel Fund box on your gas bill.)

- **Add a donation to your gas bill payment whenever you choose.** Simply check the box located on your gas bill stub, write in your donation amount and add that amount to your gas payment. It's a one-time contribution until you decide to donate again.
- **Contribute online at waff.salarmydc.org, or when paying your gas bill online or by phone.** Log onto washingtongas.com, or call our *Automated Services Line* at **703-750-7944**.
- **Mail a contribution.** Make your check payable to WAFF and send it to P.O. Box 1999, Washington, DC 20013.

Community Services

Consumer Advisory Panel

The Consumer Advisory Panel (CAP) is a committee consisting of Washington Gas customers. The members of the committee bring community and customer concerns to us and make suggestions as to how we may serve you better. We also share information with the CAP about programs, new products and services, and new developments in the energy industry. The committee consists of one member representing each of the District's eight wards, plus two at-large members. If you would like to contact the member representing your ward, you can write to:

The Consumer Advisory Panel
Public Affairs
Washington Gas
101 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20080

Speakers Program

Speakers are available at no charge for any community group that would like to know more about our company and the services we provide. Topics include billing, the Customer Choice Program, meter reading, the benefits of using natural gas, energy efficiency or other subjects that you may request. For information or to schedule a speaker, call **202-624-6697**.

We will send you information on energy topics if you call us at **703-750-1000** or **202-624-6049** with your request.

Natural Gas Product Information

Buyer's Guides

Although Washington Gas does not sell natural gas products, you can call **703-237-HOME (237-4663)** or **1-800-980-8881** to request information. Washington Gas publishes buyer's guides to provide information about the selection, purchase and installation of heating, water heating and other natural gas products for your home. Visit **washingtongasliving.com** to request or download our free *Natural Gas Products for Your Home* buyer's guide. Washington Gas highly recommends that all installations be performed by a licensed trade professional and that you check references.