



Washington
Gas

for our
Maryland
customers

energyessentials

WINTER2008



Natural Gas. *Efficient by Nature.*

Give the gift of warmth this winter: As little as \$1 will make a big difference for a family in need

Winter can be especially challenging for many families in the Washington metropolitan area. Rising prices and colder-than-normal temperatures could leave many families unable to heat their homes. To help meet this critical need, Washington Gas and The Salvation Army created the Washington Area Fuel Fund (WAFF). For more than 25 years, WAFF has paid for all types of fuel to heat the homes of families in need.

For those who would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to WAFF, there are several convenient ways to give:

- Log on to waff.salarmydc.org.
- Add donation to Washington Gas bill payment.
- Mail one-time contribution to: P.O. Box 1999, Washington, D.C. 20013.
- Make contribution when paying your gas bill online at washingtongas.com or by phone at **703.750.7944**.
- Make monthly pledge for contribution on gas bill.

Because Washington Gas pays WAFF's administrative expenses and The Salvation Army administers the fund, every dollar of your tax deductible contribution goes directly to supply heat for families. When all other government assistance has run out, or simply isn't available, WAFF is the last safety net. It relies heavily on the contributions of neighbors like you. ☺



Energy Assistance

MARYLAND ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (MEAP): Federal funds are distributed to Maryland to assist eligible customers in paying winter heating bills.

UTILITY SERVICE PROTECTION PROGRAM (USPP): Residents eligible for MEAP are eligible for USPP and can receive a natural gas bill for the same amount each month. Payment plans depend on natural gas usage from the previous year and the outstanding balance owed on a customer's gas bill. Customers must complete applications for MEAP in their county.

RESIDENTIAL ESSENTIAL SERVICE PILOT PROGRAM: Qualified Washington Gas customers receive a discount on a portion of the natural gas they use during the heating season.

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE: Energy-saving measures are provided at no cost to eligible families.

For more information on these programs, contact the [Maryland Department of Human Resources](http://dhr.state.md.us/meap) at **1-800-352-1446**, your local social services office, or visit dhr.state.md.us/meap.

LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UPDATE

The federal government announced in November that it has released \$5.1 billion to states to supplement their Low Income Home Energy Assistance Programs (LIHEAP). Maryland will receive \$109 million. For more information, contact the Department of Social Services in your county. ☺

washingtongas.com

What should I do if I smell natural gas?

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. Never attempt to locate the source of the odor.

RECOGNIZE:

Natural gas is non-toxic, colorless, odorless and combustible. For detection and safety, Washington Gas adds an unpleasant odorant called mercaptan to the majority of natural gas traveling through its pipelines. Call **202.624.6092** for a scratch and sniff sample brochure. Large groups may request multiple copies. Gas traveling through a small portion of our transmission pipeline is not odorized, and visible signs of a possible leak are provided below also.

REACT:

If you smell natural gas, call the **Washington Gas Emergency Leak Line** at **703-750-1400** or **1-800-752-7520** outside the local calling area, or just dial **911**.

If the odor is very strong or you hear a blowing or hissing noise, vacate the building or area immediately. An unusual noise from our appliance or a hissing sounds for piping or connections may also indicate a gas leak. Warn others as you exit if possible. Warn others as you exit if possible. Leave doors unlocked as you go.

Abandon motorized equipment. 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 a car or any type of motorized equipment. Call **911** and the Washington Gas emergency number **ONLY AFTER** you are a safe distance away from the building or area. Follow the same precautions if you are outside and smell gas; hear hissing, blowing, or roaring noises; see dirt being thrown into the air, fire coming from the ground or appearing to burn above ground; 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.

Natural gas is distributed 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.

RESPOND: Washington Gas responds around the clock to natural gas leaks and other emergencies. If a leak poses an immediate threat, the company takes quick action to make the area safe. Corrective action is scheduled for a later date if there is no immediate threat.

*Note: Government 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. ☎*

Join the Washington Gas Budget Plan

Customers who qualify can take advantage of the opportunity to spread the cost of winter heating over the entire year and lessen the impact of typically higher winter energy bills. Washington Gas calculates your average monthly payment based on historical natural gas usage, adjusted for normal weather, and projected gas costs. Periodically, the company reviews your account to determine that the 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. At the end of your budget year, your twelfth monthly bill will reflect the last 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. For more information, visit washingtongas.com. Call **703-750-7944** to enroll. ☎



Anacostia Watershed Tree Planting

Washington Gas employee volunteers planted 40 trees along a stream bank in the Greater Hyattsville, Md. area this fall.

This project was done in conjunction with the Anacostia Watershed Society during their fall tree planting initiatives. Planting trees help to protect the river by cooling the water, preventing soil erosion, and helping rainwater seep into the ground.

Since 1989, the Anacostia Watershed Society has planted more than 10,600 trees in D.C. and MD throughout the tributaries of the Anacostia River. ☎