

Energy issues

energy + time

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An Important Note About Natural Gas Safety

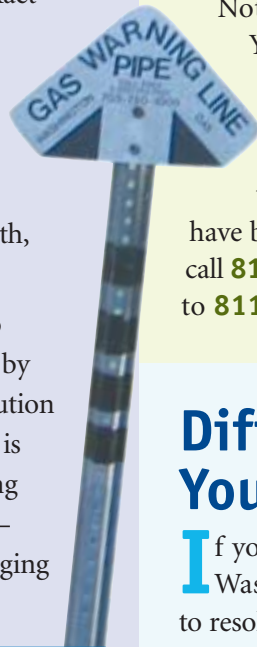
Washington Gas delivers natural gas to more than one million customers in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. Your safety is our first priority. We monitor and inspect our pipeline system regularly and respond around the clock to natural gas emergencies. We continually provide information through bill inserts, the media, various community efforts, and at www.washingtongas.com to keep you informed about gas safety and steps to take in an emergency. Click on the [Safety Information](#) link at our home page. ☎

Pipeline Safety

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 thousands of miles of distribution pipelines.

Transmission pipelines carry 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 to call *before* digging or excavating. Less than half of Washington Gas's transmission pipe is in high consequence areas, where gas leaks could have significant impact on 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. This is why it is vitally important to have *all* utility lines — including natural gas transmission and distribution pipelines — located and marked before beginning any kind of digging or excavation project. See *Call 811 Before You Dig*. ☎



Call 811 Before You Dig

Damage to any kind of utility line, including a natural gas pipeline, can result in property damage, serious injury or worse. You can prevent damage to pipelines by dialing **811** to have underground utilities located and marked *before* beginning any kind of digging or excavation — regardless of whether a pipeline marker already exists at the site.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Notifying **811** is required by law, and the service is free. Your call begins the process of having the lines located and marked with bright safety paint and/or flags.

Call **811** at least two full business days — excluding weekends and holidays — before you are scheduled to begin work. Don't dig until you are sure the lines have been marked or cleared as "no conflict." If in doubt, call **811** to check. (If for any reason you cannot connect to **811**, call **1-800-257-7777** in Maryland.) ☎

Difficulty Paying Your Bill

If you are having trouble paying your gas bill, call Washington Gas at **703-750-1000** as soon as possible to resolve your concern. Once your account is terminated for nonpayment, a security deposit, the outstanding balance and a reconnection fee may be required prior to service restoration. To determine available funding and eligibility for assistance programs, call the **Maryland Department of Human Resources** instate, toll free at **1-800-352-1446**. Otherwise, call the **Office of Home Energy Programs** at **410-767-7218**, or visit www.dhr.state.md.us/meap. ☎

Washington Area Fuel Fund (WAFF)

Energy assistance from WAFF is available for any type of heating fuel from January through May annually for those who qualify. For help, call **1-888-318-WAFF (318-9233)**. Tax-deductible contributions can be made at www.washingtongas.com, waff.salarmydc.org, or mailed to **P.O. Box 1999, Washington, DC 20013**. ☎

What To Do If You 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 pipelines is not odorized, and visible signs of a possible leak are provided below.

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 dial **911**. If the odor is very strong, or you hear a blowing or hissing noise, vacate the building or area immediately. 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, **703-750-1400**, 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 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.

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. ☎

Ask for ID

Washington Gas representatives wear company ID and will present it upon request. Call us at **703-750-4370** or **703-750-4246** if you have security-related questions. ☎

Meter Tampering

Moving or 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 offers rewards for verified reports of illegal piping connections or stolen meters.

If you are remodeling and want your meter or natural gas service line moved, call us at **703-750-1000** at least 8 to 12 weeks before the project begins. 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. ☎



Dedicated to Strengthening Our Community

Year round, Washington Gas employees dedicate hundreds of hours of their personal time to health, education and environmental causes. From providing a much needed face lift to a Boys & Girls Club in D.C., to cleaning the shoreline at a Maryland waterfront park and repairing the home of a less fortunate Virginia resident, we are dedicated to strengthening our community. Some of the many special organizations supported by Washington Gas include The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, March of Dimes, Junior Achievement, Washington Area Fuel Fund together with The Salvation Army, and the Girl Scouts of America. Click on the **Community Support** link under **Customer News** at our **www.washingtongas.com** home page. ☎

Frederick County, Maryland, customers:

Continue to call your local Frederick office at **301-662-2151** for information about natural gas leaks, emergencies, other safety concerns, energy assistance, and customer service. ☎