

Natural Gas Safety Public Awareness



**Norwich
Public Utilities**

norwichpublicutilities.com

A clean, versatile and dependable fuel source is at your service.

There are many benefits that come from choosing natural gas for your home's fuel source. It's clean, versatile, and always available. And, unlike home heating oil or propane, you only pay for what you use -- when you use it.

In the United States, more homes heat with natural gas than all other fuels combined. Approximately 63 million homes, or 61% of existing homes and almost 70% of new single family homes use natural gas. By comparison, only 2% of new homes use heating oil.

Residential use of natural gas is expected to grow considerably as homeowners realize the value of this domestic fuel source. With approximately 200,000 U.S. households switching to natural gas for heating every year, natural gas consumption is expected to rise 20% by 2030.

When installed correctly, natural gas is a safe and efficient fuel for heating your home, cooking your food, warming your water and more.

Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) considers safety to be of the utmost importance. We have prepared this guide to educate natural gas users on ways to prevent common mistakes associated with natural gas and natural gas appliances.

NPU is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to answer any question you have regarding your natural gas service and to respond to any emergency. Call 860.887.2555 and speak to a representative at our Customer Service Center located on North Main Street in Norwich.

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If you smell gas or detect a gas leak

In its original state, natural gas is an odorless and colorless gas. To help identify natural gas, an odorant called mercaptan is added to give natural gas a rotten egg or sulfur-like odor.

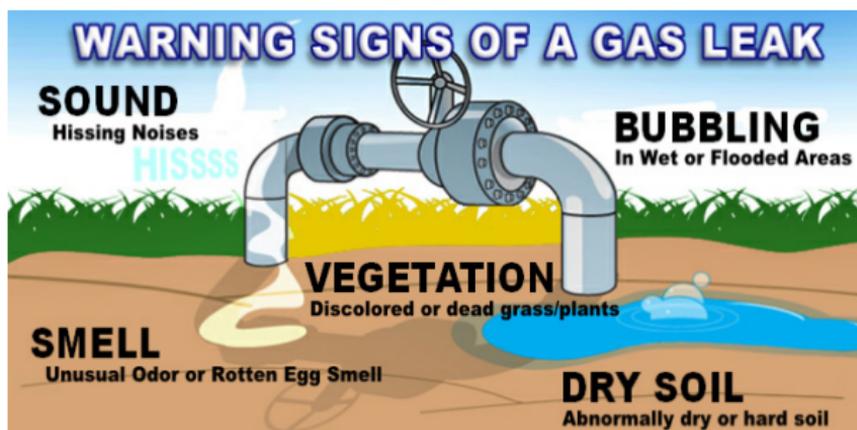
If you smell gas, immediately leave the building and phone 9-1-1 or 860.887.7207 from another location and follow these critical steps:

- Avoid using any electric appliances
- Do not turn on or off any light switches, garage door openers, or telephones (including cell phones)
- Do not re-enter the building until NPU or fire department personnel have ensured the building is safe.

Because natural gas is colorless, it is not easy to detect leaks by sight; odor is generally the best way to detect a leak. However there may be other clues:

- Leaking gas may make a hissing, whistling or roaring sound near the gas line.
- It may also cause dead or drying vegetation (in an otherwise moist area) over or near pipeline areas.

Never hesitate to call NPU at 860.887.7207 or dial 911 if you suspect a natural gas leak. Technicians are available 24-hours a day, seven days a week to respond to any utility emergency call.



Snow and ice build up on meters

The added weight from snow and ice on top of natural gas meters can cause substantial damage. Additionally, moisture accumulations in equipment and snow/ice blocking regulators or relief valve vents can prevent them from functioning properly. Exhaust and combustion air vents for gas appliances must be clear of snow and ice to prevent carbon monoxide accumulation in buildings or operational problems for the combustion equipment.

Snow and ice can damage gas meters and pipes. Use a broom to keep gas service equipment clear during the winter. Chimneys and vents that exit the sides of the house must be cleared following a major snow or ice storm to enable proper venting and prevent carbon monoxide accumulation.



Remember:

- Do not use a shovel to remove snow from meter, as it may cause damage.
- Never shovel snow up against the gas meter or vent pipe.
- Remove icicles from overhead eaves and gutters to prevent dripping water from splashing and freezing on the meter or vent pipe.
- Do not kick the gas meter to break or clear ice.
- If you cannot safely remove the snow or ice yourself, contact a qualified roofing vendor.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) Awareness

Colorless, odorless, and tasteless, carbon monoxide (CO) leaks cannot be readily detected by the general public.



Carbon monoxide is a silent killer. Always be sure that fuel-burning appliances are installed, maintained, and used properly. This includes having an annual inspection of your heating and venting equipment by a qualified technician prior to the heating season, and the use of a carbon monoxide detector that meets current standards. It is important to be aware of the symptoms of CO poisoning. Symptoms can occur both immediately or more gradually after long-term exposure. Common symptoms include:

- * Dizziness
- * Confusion
- * Nausea
- * Shortness of Breath
- * Fainting
- * Headaches

If you have these symptoms after being in an



enclosed area, get fresh air immediately and go to a hospital emergency department. Be sure to tell your doctor that you may

have carbon monoxide poisoning. Call a qualified technician to check your fuel-burning appliances.

Carbon monoxide detectors are available at most hardware or department stores. Always follow manufacturer's instructions for proper placement and installation.

Gas Appliance Safety

- Never use a gas oven or cooktop to heat your home. Not only is it a fire hazard, but it can also put you and your family at risk for carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Always have your gas appliances, including gas heaters and venting systems, professionally installed and inspected according to local building codes.
- Do not re-install used gas space heaters.
- If your pilot light is out, read the manufacturer's instructions for resetting it and follow them exactly. If you are unsure what to do, call a qualified service technician.
- A yellow flame indicates a problem with your appliance. Call a qualified service technician to service the appliance.



Hot Water Scalding Hazard

Tap water scald burns are usually more severe than burns from hot liquid spills, according to the National **SAFE** Kids Campaign.

Make sure your water heater is set to a safe temperature -- use the recommendations found in the owners manual or set to a maximum of 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Always check the water temperature before placing a child in a bathtub; never leave a child alone or with other children in a bathtub.

| Temperature | Time to produce serious burn |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| 120°F | More than 5 minutes |
| 125°F | 1-1/2 to 2 minutes |
| 130°F | About 30 seconds |
| 135°F | About 10 seconds |
| 140°F | About 5 seconds |
| 145°F | Less than 5 seconds |
| 150°F | About 1-1/2 seconds |
| 155°F | About 1 second |

Properly Storing Flammable Products

It is extremely dangerous to store flammable material, especially gasoline, near any natural gas or electrical appliance.

Gasoline and other flammable liquids, combustionable materials, or items containing these products (such as lawn equipment) should never be stored indoors near any natural gas or electric appliance that can be a source of ignition, including your furnace, boiler, and water heater.



Corrugated Stainless Steel Tubing (CSST)



If your home or business was built after 1990, or if you had work done to your natural gas system it's likely that corrugated stainless steel tubing

(CSST) was installed. CSST is a flexible stainless steel pipe that usually has a yellow or black plastic outside coating. CSST does not connect to appliances; instead it runs through a home or business under floors, along sidewalls, or in the attic.

If lightning strikes a structure containing CSST, there is a risk that the CSST can act as a conductor for the electricity generated by the strike. To prevent injury or damage to your property, a CSST piping system must be bonded to the electrical service grounding electrode system at the point where the gas service enters the building. The bonding jumper shall not be smaller than 6 American Wire Gauge (AWG) copper wire or equivalent.

If you are unsure whether your home or business contains CSST, contact a qualified plumber to perform an assessment of your building.

Check Your Appliance Connections

Damaged and improperly maintained interior gas piping and connectors can present hidden dangers and safety hazards. In certain situations, pipes may crack or separate at the fittings, causing harmful fumes to enter the home.



Gas connectors should be inspected regularly and replaced as needed. Certain types of flexible connectors manufactured between 1970 and 1980 may fail over time and need to be replaced.

- **Only a qualified professional should check your gas appliance connectors and make replacements. Do not try this yourself, as a brittle connector can fail with minimal movement.**
- **After disconnecting gas appliances, the gas connectors should always be removed and the fuel line should be plugged and capped.**
- **Gas pipes should be properly maintained and never used for a clothes line or other unintended uses.**

If you observe one or more of the following, you may want to consider contacting a licensed heating contractor:

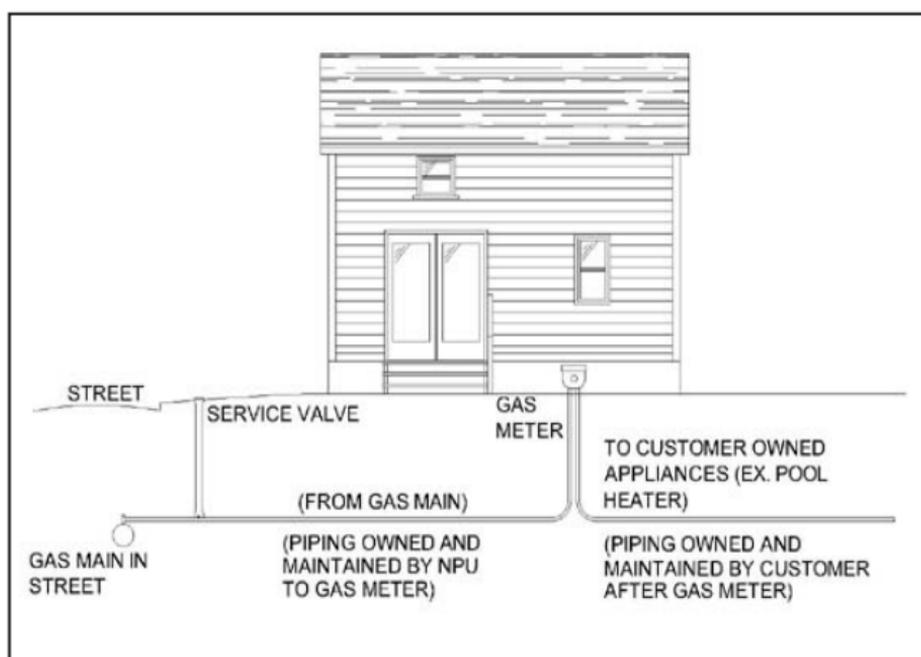
- The vent on your furnace, boiler or water heater is plastic and was installed prior to 1987.
- If the plastic vent pipe shows one of the following names: Ultravent, Plex-Vent, or Sel-Vent.
- If the plastic vent pipe says “HTPV” or “High Temperature Plastic Vent Pipe.”

Underground Natural Gas Piping

Some of the underground natural gas piping on your property may belong to you. Customer-owned underground piping is defined by any buried gas lines that extend away from your gas meter (see illustration below). Typically, customer-owned gas piping is used to supply heat and hot water to another building like a detached garage, but it can also be used to heat swimming pools and for cooking on a gas grill.

If you have this type of gas line on your property, it is your responsibility to initiate any inspection and necessary repair or replacement of customer piping through a qualified professional, such as a licensed heating/cooling contractor or plumber. Buried piping should be inspected periodically for leaks and for corrosion if the piping is metallic. If a gas leak is detected, it might be necessary to interrupt your gas service temporarily until repairs are made.

If you suspect a problem with any natural gas lines, please call NPU's Gas Emergency Line at **860-887-7207**.



Call Before You Dig

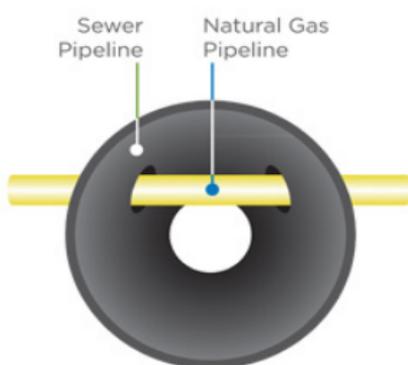
If you are planning a job that requires digging, even if you plan to hire a professional, a call to 811 is required before you begin working. 8-1-1 is a free call that connects you to a local call center, which will then alert appropriate underground utility owners, including NPU. Each utility will then send technicians to your property to mark the location of their underground utility lines (allow for two business days).



Unintentionally striking a utility line can result in inconvenient outages, costly repairs, and most importantly, harm to you or your neighbors. Every digging project, no matter how large or small, requires a call to 8-1-1. Installing a mailbox, building a deck or planting a tree or garden are all examples of digging projects that should only begin after calling 8-1-1 and getting underground utilities marked by qualified utility technicians.

Cross Bore Danger

Norwich Public Utilities wants to make you aware of a potential safety issue that could arise if you attempt to clear a blocked sewer line beyond the walls of a building.



A blocked sewer line may be the result of a utility line (gas, electric, etc.) having been accidentally “cross-bored” through a sewer line. If the blockage involves a natural gas line and the gas line is damaged, natural gas can leak into the sewer service line, sewer mains, and nearby buildings posing an immediate safety risk to people and property.

Before anyone clears a blockage in a sewer line, either by chemical or mechanical means, it is important to call NPU at 860.887.2555.

For natural gas emergencies, call
the Norwich Public Utilities
Natural Gas Emergency Line at

860-887-7207

or call

9-1-1



**Norwich
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