

Gus the Gopher & Rosie the Skunk Present

Natural Gas SAFETY GUIDE

Please take a moment to learn what to do if you suspect a natural gas leak, the importance of calling 811 before you dig, and other helpful natural gas safety information.

Atmos Energy is dedicated to your safety. We train our employees to use the best methods to prevent, detect, and stop natural gas pipeline leaks. We work closely with fire departments, other emergency responders, and public officials for the safe operation of our system. We also make detailed plans to protect the public and the environment in case of an emergency.

PARTNERING WITH YOU AND OUR COMMUNITIES

Atmos Energy is committed to being the safest natural gas provider in the nation. It's a commitment that we have made to our employees, customers, and communities. We have rigorous monitoring, repair, and maintenance processes for the safe operation of our pipelines.

Pipelines carry natural gas around the clock to more than 79 million homes and businesses in the United States. Because they are underground, you seldom notice these energy superhighways. In fact, pipelines are one of the safest forms of transportation. They are involved in far fewer serious incidents than trucks, railroads, ships, or airplanes.

We have robust safety outreach efforts through our public awareness campaigns, community involvement, and continued relationships with regulators, city leaders, and first responders. Our employees are trained to keep safety as our highest priority in every customer encounter whether it is face-to-face or through our contact centers. It's how we invest in homes, lives, and generations.

To protect you and others, we want you to know what to do if you ever smell natural gas and how to prevent incidents involving natural gas pipelines.

SMELL GAS? ACT FAST!

Natural gas in its original form has no smell or color. That's why we add a "rotten egg" or skunk-like odor, that gas is known for, to make you aware if gas is leaking.

IF YOU EVER SMELL NATURAL GAS, LEAVE THE AREA IMMEDIATELY AND TELL OTHERS TO LEAVE, TOO.

- **LEAVE** the area immediately.
- **CALL** 911 and Atmos Energy at our toll-free emergency number 866.322.8667 from a safe distance.
- **DO NOT** turn on or off any electric switch; this could cause a spark, igniting the gas.
- **DO NOT** use a cell phone, telephone, garage door opener, doorbell or even a flashlight.
- **DO NOT** smoke, use a lighter, or strike a match.
- **DO NOT** start or stop a nearby vehicle or machinery.
- **DO NOT** try to shut off a natural gas valve.

Once you are safely out of the area, call **911** and Atmos Energy's 24-hour toll-free emergency number **866.322.8667**. Atmos Energy will send a trained technician immediately to investigate at no cost. Do not assume someone else will report the leak.

RECOGNIZING A GAS LEAK

You can detect leaking natural gas in a number of ways.



SMELL the distinctive "rotten egg" or skunk-like odor that makes natural gas detectable.



LISTEN for a hissing or whistling sound near a gas appliance or a roaring sound near a pipeline.



LOOK for blowing dust, bubbling water, or dead vegetation near a gas line.

USING ALL YOUR SENSES

Federal and state regulations require utilities to odorize natural gas so that "the gas is readily detectable by a person with a normal sense of smell." Our technicians routinely monitor the odorant concentration with instruments throughout our pipeline system.

The sense of smell for most people is a highly reliable indicator of a natural gas release. However, continued exposure to the odorant can desensitize the sense of smell. Additionally, the smell of natural gas can be masked by other odors in the area. In certain rare situations, the odor intensity can be diminished by physical and/or chemical processes, such as when gas passes through certain soil conditions. This is sometimes referred to as "odor fade."

If you suffer from loss of smell, olfactory fatigue or recurrent ailments, such as colds, sinus conditions or allergies, you might have a diminished capability to detect a natural gas leak. The Center for Disease Control has identified the loss of smell as a potential symptom of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19. Using tobacco, alcohol, medications, or narcotics can lessen your ability to smell odorized gas.

If you ever smell leaking natural gas, do not wait! Leave the area immediately! From a safe distance, call **911** and Atmos Energy's 24-hour toll-free emergency number **866.322.8667**. Do not rely on your sense of smell alone to detect the presence of natural gas: use all your senses — smell, listen, or look—to check for telltale signs of a leak. In addition, residential methane detectors are available and can provide an additional ability to detect the presence of gas. These detectors must be selected and installed according to the manufacturer's instructions as well as other applicable laws, regulations, and standards, such as NFPA 715.

Learn more at www.gti.energy.

CUSTOMER-OWNED GAS LINE AND APPLIANCE MAINTENANCE

For your safety, operate and maintain your natural gas appliances in accordance with manufacturers' instructions. Routine safety inspection and maintenance of your natural gas appliances are your responsibility.

In most states, except Kansas, you are responsible for any natural gas piping on your property from our gas meter to your house or business. Atmos Energy does not maintain the natural gas lines on your property beyond our meter. This is the same as other utilities such as your electrical wiring and water pipes.

Your buried gas piping should be inspected periodically for leaks. If buried piping is not maintained, it may be subject to the potential hazards of corrosion and leakage. A licensed plumber or qualified contractor can locate, inspect, and repair buried piping on your property. If corrosion or a dangerous condition is discovered, the piping should be repaired as soon as possible.



CALLING 811 BEFORE YOU DIG

State law requires calling 811 to have any buried utility lines located and marked before digging. Because natural gas and other underground utility lines are widespread, striking one can disrupt neighborhood utility services, result in large repair costs and fines, and cause injuries or loss of life.

Many home-improvement projects require calling 811, such as:

- Excavating for a driveway
- Installing a sprinkler system
- Digging holes for fence posts or a mailbox
- Anchoring supports for decks and swings
- Installing a retainer wall
- Contouring and landscaping
- Planting trees
- Removing tree roots
- Driving landscaping stakes

Most states require calling 811 at least three working days before digging is to begin, excluding weekends and legal holidays. However, some states require calling 72 hours or more in advance. The 811 center's customer representative can provide specifics.

With one call to 811, underground utility lines will be located and marked at no charge to you. Natural gas lines will be marked with yellow flags, stakes, or spray paint, and other utility lines will be marked with different standard colors.

The 811 service does not locate customer-owned lines on a property or inside a building, except in Kansas. You must hire a licensed plumber or contractor to mark those lines.

DIGGING WITH CARE

Once you call 811 and utility lines have been professionally located and marked, respect the markings when excavating near buried utility lines. Never use power tools around natural gas piping. Dig only by hand.

If you disturb a pipeline while digging, even if it seems to be only minor damage, the law requires you to notify the pipeline operator immediately by calling 811.

Furthermore, if you suspect a gas leak, you must notify local emergency responders by calling 911. Any gouge, scrape, dent, or crease in a pipe or its coating can cause a leak. It is imperative



For additional natural gas safety information, visit www.atmosenergy.com/gassafety

CUSTOMER SUPPORT
888.286.6700

EMERGENCY SERVICE
866.322.8667

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that the pipeline operator inspect and repair any damage to the line before work continues.

LIVING NEAR A PIPELINE

The route of a pipeline, called right-of-way, is usually marked with warning signs. Warning markers show the product in the pipeline, the operator's name, and its emergency telephone number. However, warning markers do not indicate a pipeline's exact location or depth. The markers for natural gas pipelines are bright yellow.

For public safety, a pipeline's right-of-way must remain clear of all obstacles. The pipeline operator must be able to inspect the route visually for leaks and quickly make repairs if needed. Never put on a right-of-way any obstruction, such as a building, garden or storage shed, playground set, aboveground swimming pool, vehicle or machinery, trees or bushes, or brush and debris.

Before working near a pipeline right-of-way, always call 811 to notify the pipeline operator. Take special caution if drilling wells or boreholes, pile driving, blasting, storing flammable materials, burning waste or brush, cutting trees, or pulling heavy loads near a pipeline right-of-way.

You can see a map of the approximate location of transmission pipelines in your area and find the name of a pipeline's operator on the National Pipeline Mapping System at <https://www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov>.



RECOGNIZING NATURAL GAS HAZARDS

Because natural gas is lighter than air, gas leaking outside usually vents into the atmosphere and dissipates rapidly. Nevertheless, uncontrolled leaking natural gas can pose these potential hazards:

- Escaping natural gas is highly flammable; it can easily ignite and burn.
- Natural gas can migrate into voids underground and openings, such as sewer lines.
- Natural gas that has accumulated in an area can explode if a spark or other source of ignition occurs.
- Leaking natural gas can cause an explosion.
- Natural gas can displace oxygen in a confined space and can cause asphyxiation.
- Natural gas in many large transmission pipelines is not odorized and has no smell or color.

EXCESS FLOW VALVE CUSTOMER NOTIFICATION

An excess flow valve (EFV) is a safety device installed by Atmos Energy inside a service line that is designed to shut off, or significantly reduce, the flow of natural gas if a service line downstream of the EFV is broken or severed. For more information about EFV compatibility with your service line or the cost for installing, maintaining, or replacing an EFV, call us or visit www.atmosenergy.com/EFV.

UNCLOGGING SEWER LINES SAFELY

Atmos Energy and other utilities have discovered some locations where the utility line was accidentally installed through a sewer line. When this occurs, we call it a cross bore. A cross bore poses no safety risk as long as it is undamaged. If a natural gas line is cut or nicked while unclogging a sewer line, it can create a serious hazard. If you have an outside sewer line clog that could be the result of a cross bore, please call us before taking any action.