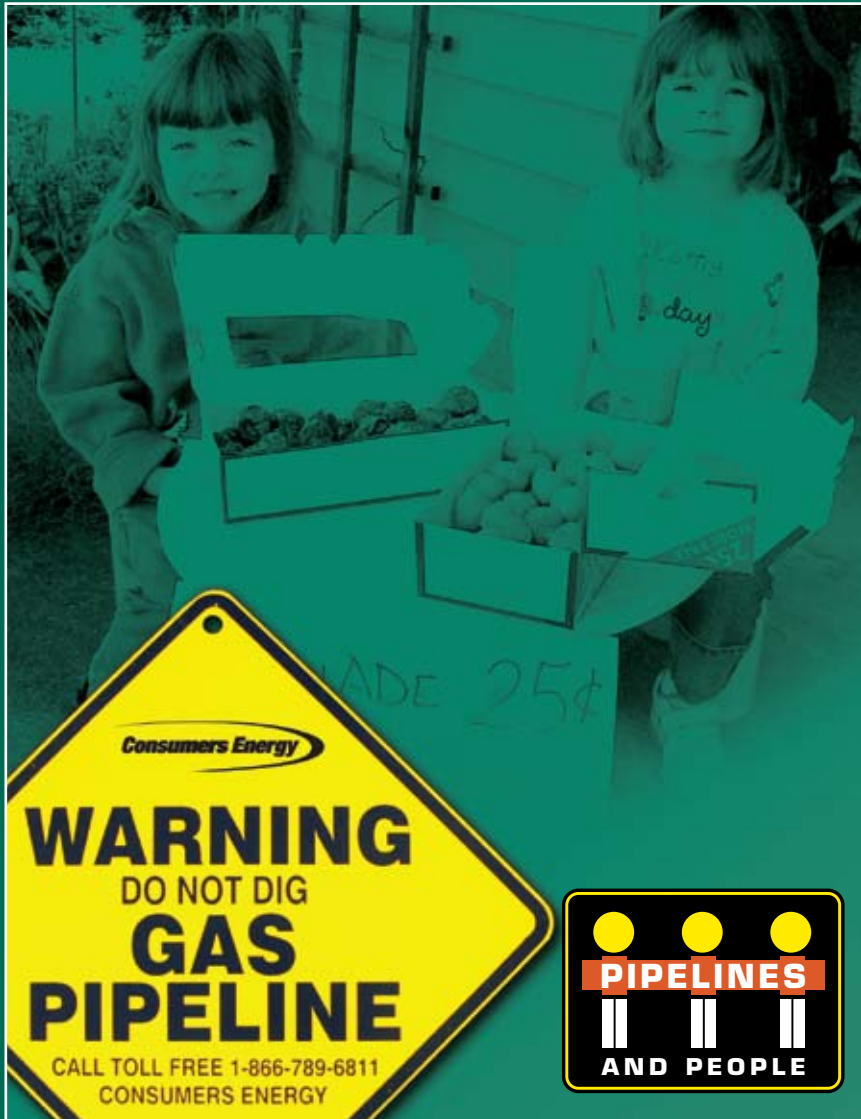


Your Link to Natural Gas Pipeline Safety

NEIGHBORS



SAFETY

Dear Neighbor,

Because you live or work near a Consumers Energy natural gas pipeline, we want to make sure you are aware of our continuing efforts to keep you safe.

As one of Michigan's largest natural gas companies, we operate and maintain more than 28,000 miles of natural gas pipelines that help us bring this important product to more than 1.7 million customers in Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

Pipelines help fuel our economy and way of life. Underground, transmission pipelines carry natural gas into our state from Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, the Gulf of Mexico and Canada. Transmission pipelines ensure a reliable supply of clean-burning natural gas.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, pipelines are the safest, most reliable and cost-effective means of transporting energy products such as natural gas over long distances.

Since these high-pressure pipelines are out of sight, we've posted important warning signs above ground. We also count on the awareness of our neighbors living and working near pipelines to inform us of unusual activities.



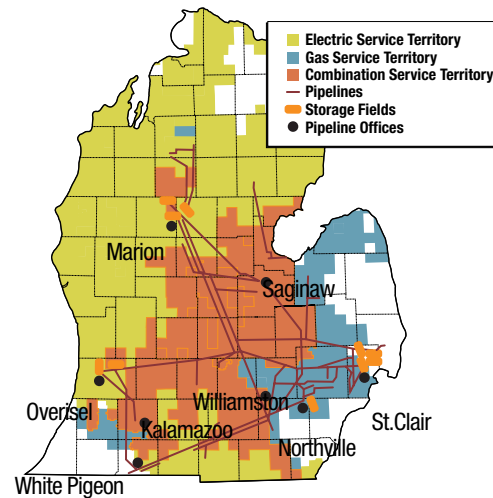
Markers identify nearby pipelines.

Additionally, we work with several state and federal agencies. These efforts promote safe digging and pipeline security practices and help ensure high-quality pipeline monitoring and maintenance in your neighborhood and across the state.

We also provide information and training to police, firefighters and other emergency response officials.

Please take a few minutes to review this information and share it with your family.

Thank you.



Our pledge to you

We are committed to providing safe, reliable natural gas service to our customers while protecting the safety of our neighbors who live or work near our pipelines and facilities.

Pipeline integrity

Our priorities are safety and reliability.

Gas transmission pipeline safety begins at the mill where steel for pipelines is made. All pipe is factory-tested to ensure it meets our safety standards.

Did You Know?

The federal government has defined a high consequence area (HCA) as a place where a rupture or leak on a natural gas transmission pipeline could do the most harm. These include densely populated areas, schools and other high-occupancy buildings, along with parks and campgrounds. As a pipeline operator, we have identified and developed integrity management programs to address these and other areas.

To protect the integrity of our natural gas pipeline system, we inspect and perform maintenance, such as corrosion control and leak surveys, and replace pipeline when necessary.

To help reduce or eliminate corrosion, a cause of pipeline leaks, we follow a comprehensive cathodic protection program that uses low-voltage electrical currents to prevent corrosion. We also use high-tech devices called “smart pigs” that help locate any breaks in the pipe’s protective wrap, dents or small weaknesses along miles of underground pipeline walls.

Our employees monitor the system and direct the flow of gas from the highly automated Gas Control Center in Jackson. Computers scan 10,000 checkpoints at intervals ranging from every 15 seconds to once per day. This system alerts controllers to any abnormal gas pressure, flow, temperature and quality, and allows us to respond quickly to any natural gas emergency.

We also use ground and aerial surveys to check our transmission pipelines. All 2,550 miles of our natural gas transmission pipelines are surveyed or patrolled at least four times each year.

In addition, field employees receive extensive training to maintain the pipelines and respond to any possible problem. In an emergency, response plans are activated that may include assistance from the local fire department and other emergency team members.

Signs of natural gas leaks or emergencies

- “Rotten egg” smell (not all gas is odorized)
- Dead or discolored vegetation in an otherwise green area
- Dirt or dust blowing from a hole in the ground
- Bubbling in wet or flooded areas
- Blowing or hissing sound
- Flames, if a leak has ignited

Many leaks are caused by damage to pipelines. We urge you to treat any sign of a natural gas leak as an emergency that may put your safety at risk.

SAFETY REMINDER

If you see unusual activity near a natural gas pipeline or facility, call your local law enforcement agency.



Did You Know?

Each pipeline system is built according to local, state and federal guidelines, regulations and specifications to match the climate, terrain and product transported in that system.

If you suspect a natural gas leak, follow these steps

Leave the area immediately, and go to a safe location. Then call Consumers Energy toll-free at (866) 789-6811, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We will respond promptly at no charge.

Caution

- **Do not** use any electrical device, such as light switches or telephones, or appliances such as garage door openers. They could cause a spark and ignite the gas
- **Do not** use an open flame, matches or lighters
- **Do not** try to locate the source of the gas leak
- **Do not** try to shut off any natural gas valves or gas appliances
- **Do not** start vehicles
- **Do not** re-enter the building or return to the area until our employee or qualified utility representative says it’s safe to do so
- **Do not** put out the flames if natural gas ignites. Burning gas will not explode

At left: Regular maintenance helps ensure pipeline safety.

Wellhead to burner tip – how natural gas travels

A fossil fuel, natural gas is primarily found in Canada, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and the Gulf of Mexico, with some reserves in Michigan. Trapped between various rock formations, it is captured after drilling underground wells. The commodity then is shipped via a vast network of high-pressure transmission pipelines.

The gas travels an average of 13 miles per hour under normal pumping pressures. It takes about five days to reach Michigan from the south.

Upon arrival, the gas is directed into our distribution system for immediate use by customers for heating, cooking, manufacturing and other activities.

In Michigan, natural gas passes through regulator stations, where the pressure is reduced. A “rotten egg” odor is added as a safety measure, and natural gas then enters smaller distribution pipelines for delivery to more than 1.7 million Consumers Energy customers in more than 215 communities.

In warmer weather, we store natural gas in our 15 underground fields in Michigan. The formations of porous rock safely hold natural gas in storage for use in cold weather.

SAFETY REMINDER

Striking an underground pipeline can lead to serious injury or death. If you hit our pipeline, call (866) 789-6811, even if there is no apparent damage.

Natural gas hazards

- Fire
- Explosion
- Asphyxiation (Natural gas displaces oxygen in confined spaces)

These hazards may be created by uncontrolled escaping gas, caused by:

- Rupturing, nicking or puncturing a pipeline
- Extreme loading of materials over buried facilities (spoil piles, transport of equipment, outriggers)
- Water main breaks that weaken roadways and pavement, damaging gas pipelines
- Heavy ice on outside meters or gas pipelines
- Collapsed buildings that break or damage gas pipelines
- Fire or explosion near or directly involving a pipeline facility
- Under- or overpressure in the gas system
- Equipment failure
- Human error
- Extreme natural events such as floods, tornadoes and earthquakes
- Civil disturbances such as riots



Pipeline markers identify the pipeline route and provide safety information. Large numbers (right) are used for aerial inspections.

Natural gas pipeline markers

The route of an underground pipeline is identified with above-ground pipeline markers. However, the markers do not indicate the pipeline’s exact location, its depth or the direction it follows.

Pipeline markers are located at road, railroad and waterway crossings, and at regular intervals across agricultural areas. They are yellow signs that identify the company, type of pipeline and provide an emergency phone number.

Aerial pipeline markers approximately every four miles enable our pipeline aerial patrols to follow the route and detect soil erosion, heavy equipment working or digging in the area, or other situations requiring immediate action.

How to avoid damaging a pipeline

A major cause of pipeline damage is someone accidentally striking an underground pipeline. This is a serious safety threat and can lead to personal harm, physical damages and financial losses.

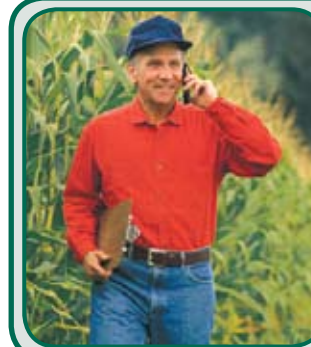
Excavating contractors and homeowners planning to dig should always call 811 at least three working days before starting any digging project.

One easy call gets free staking of underground utility lines and helps reduce the chance of injury and expense. To know what’s below, always call 811 toll-free before you dig. You also may continue to reach MISS DIG at (800) 482-7171 or www.missdig.org.

MISS DIG will contact the utility companies to have underground lines marked with stakes, flags or paint. This service is free. It’s important to call MISS DIG even for routine jobs, such as planting shrubs or trees, replacing a mailbox post, or installing a fence or a deck.



Get It Online >>> Visit www.consumersenergy.com/pipelinesafety to access this brochure and other important natural gas pipeline safety information online.



Farm safety

If your agricultural or farming activities include deep plowing, fence post installation, trenching, leveling, subsoiling, installing drain tile or other excavation work, it’s vital to call 811 three working days before starting any digging. A representative will mark underground lines at no cost.

Agricultural and farm workers also should be aware of nearby pipelines and call 811 before deep plowing, trenching, leveling and other excavation work.

Consumers Energy pipeline corridors

Consumers Energy pipeline corridors are located on both company-owned land and rights of way (easements) obtained from other landowners. Pipeline corridors must be kept free of trees, buildings or other structures to help ensure we deliver reliable energy to Michigan homes and businesses. These and other obstacles may cause safety hazards and impede the path of emergency and repair vehicles.

For public safety, the following general guidelines should be observed on all pipeline corridors:

- **No** structures, such as buildings, sheds and swimming pools, should be located in the corridor
- **No** underground facilities, such as drain tiles, culverts, electric cables, septic systems, water wells, water or sewer lines, or similar facilities should be constructed in the corridor
- **No** soil is to be added or removed over the pipeline
- **No** roads should be constructed over or across the pipeline
- **No** trees or shrubs should be planted in the corridor
- **No** blasting should be conducted in the corridor

Land owned by Consumers Energy is private property and not open for public use without



Obstruction-free corridors help us to safely deliver natural gas to our customers.

permission. The company may allow adjoining landowners and others to use its property. A lease, license, permit or easement from Consumers Energy is required before such a use is allowed. For information on obtaining a lease, license, permit or easement to use company-owned land, call the Consumers Energy operations planning center toll-free at (888) 253-4782.

Landowners where our easement rights are located may use pipeline easement areas in any manner that does not interfere with the safe operation and maintenance of the pipeline. Call one of the following numbers collect to determine whether the company would consider a particular use of a pipeline easement area to be an interference with its easement rights:

- Kalamazoo (269) 337-2352
- Marion (231) 743-2342
- Northville (248) 735-4204
- Overisel (269) 751-3000
- Saginaw (989) 791-2740
- St. Clair (586) 716-3335
- Williamston (517) 521-5700

Important facts about natural gas safety

Natural gas is colorless, tasteless, odorless and nontoxic. To make it easier to recognize natural gas, a “rotten egg” odor is added before it reaches your home. The natural gas in most of Consumers Energy’s large transmission pipelines does not contain an odorant.

Natural gas cannot burn by itself. To burn, natural gas must be mixed with air. It also must have an ignition source such as a pilot light, a lighted match, or an electric arc from a light switch, motor, doorbell or telephone.

Burning natural gas will not explode. If natural gas does ignite, let it burn. Do not attempt to put out the flame.

Natural gas is not LPG. Liquefied petroleum gases, such as propane, are different than natural gas. They are heavier than air and collect in low places. Natural gas is almost 40 percent lighter than air.

For more information

Natural gas pipelines:
For more information, call Consumers Energy toll-free at (800) 477-5050.



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

Call before you dig: One easy call gets free staking of underground utility lines and helps

reduce the chance of injury and expense. To know what's below, always call 811 toll-free before you dig. You also may continue to reach MISS DIG at (800) 482-7171.

Pipeline operators in your area:
To find out who operates pipelines in your area, view the National Pipeline Mapping System Web site at www.npms.rspa.dot.gov.



Useful Web sites

American Gas Association
www.aga.org

Call 811 is the source of information about safe digging
www.call811.com

Common Ground Alliance – Damage prevention is a shared responsibility
www.commongroundalliance.com

MISS DIG, Michigan's one-call utility notification organization
www.missdig.org

National Pipeline Mapping System
www.npms.rspa.dot.gov

Consumers Energy

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