



# What to do if there's a natural gas emergency

**If you smell natural gas**  
(a rotten egg odor):

- 1. Go to a safe place**
- 2. Call 9-1-1**
- 3. Call Consumers Energy  
800-477-5050 (24/7)**

**Consumers Energy**

*Count on Us®*

## For Your Safety:

Natural gas is naturally colorless, tasteless and odorless. A “rotten egg” odor is added before delivery to homes and businesses so gas leaks can be detected quickly, without special equipment.

## What to Know

Signs of a natural gas leak may include:

- Rotten egg smell
- Blowing or hissing sound
- 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
- Flames, if a leak has ignited



## What to Do

**Leave the area immediately, without using anything that could ignite the natural gas.**

- Do not use any electrical device, such as light switches, telephones/cell phones, garage door openers
- 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 says it's safe to do so

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## Natural Gas Pipeline Safety and Reliability

We operate and maintain more than 28,000 miles of natural gas pipelines that safely and reliably provide energy to more than 1.8 million customers.

To protect the integrity of our natural gas pipeline system, and for your safety, our employees perform more than 450,000 safety inspections each year.

Pipeline markers are used to indicate the presence of buried pipelines in the area. Markers are not intended to show the exact location of the pipelines. Do not remove pipeline markers, and let us know if any are damaged.

## Natural Gas Hazards

Natural gas leaks could cause fire and/or explosions. Natural gas displaces oxygen in confined spaces, resulting in no air to breathe.

**Gas leaks can be caused by:**

- Excavating, such as using a backhoe or hand digging a line, that result in the rupture, nicking or puncturing of a pipeline. Never add or remove soil over a pipeline when not excavating.
- Excess accumulation of snow and ice on meters, gas pipes, and gas appliance exhaust and combustion air vents. Exercise care when removing snow and ice.
- Natural disasters such as floods, tornadoes or earthquakes.
- Hanging items on meters, such as garden hoses, or attaching a dog chain or leash. Do not remove or detach meters from the wall.



# 5 Steps to Safe Digging



- 1. Call 8-1-1 or visit [elocate.missdig811.org](http://elocate.missdig811.org)** at least three working days before digging to request underground utility lines be marked. The call and service are free.
- 2. Wait for utilities to be marked.**  
Natural gas lines are marked with yellow stakes, flags or paint.
- 3. Avoid digging near marks.** Before using power equipment within 4 feet of marked lines, hand dig to expose the pipe. If you have difficulty finding the pipe within 18 inches of marks, contact **MISS DIG 811**.
- 4. Respect the marks.** Be aware of all underground utility marks and other gas facilities such as valve boxes and regulator boxes. Do not place construction materials or equipment downriggers over marks.
- 5. Call if you make contact with underground lines.**  
If you hit or nick a pipeline while digging, stop and call Consumers Energy immediately.

**CONTACT 8-1-1** even for routine jobs, such as planting shrubs and trees, replacing a mailbox post or installing a fence, deck or a basketball pole.

#### Learn more at:

[ConsumersEnergy.com/digsafe](http://ConsumersEnergy.com/digsafe)  
or [missdig811.org](http://missdig811.org)

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#### Did You Know?

If you see an excavation site or someone digging with no utility markings and believe utility lines exist in the area, call **MISS DIG at 8-1-1** to place a No Marks Ticket.

If you are a Consumers Energy customer, you can call **9-1-1 and 800-477-5050** for help with a natural gas emergency.