



# Natural Gas Safety Guide

**We're responsible for** the underground system from the gas main up to and including your meter. This includes more than 450,000 inspections annually on the 28,000 miles of natural gas pipelines serving 1.8 million customers.

**Property owners are responsible for** the maintenance of the gas lines from the meter to all appliances. Examples include: gas service lines to yard lights, grills, pool and spa heaters, garages, and workshops. Make sure you know their exact location and that routine maintenance is performed by a certified professional to check for leaks or corrosion. If an unsafe condition is found, we must shut off service until it's fixed.

# Top Safety Tips

- Signs show the presence of buried pipelines but don't reflect the exact location. Call **8-1-1** before you dig.
- Keep the meter clear of debris, plants, insect nests. Ensure animal enclosures do not include the meter. Contact us to coordinate access to meters located in locked enclosures.
- Don't hang items from pipes or meters.
- Always follow appliance manufacturer instructions. Have a professional inspect the appliance, connectors, and grounding of corrugated stainless-steel tubing.
- After a flood or disaster, check for odorized gas before entering the area. Replace appliances that were submerged in water.



## Natural Gas Leaks

Natural gas leaks can cause fire, explosions and/or loss of breathable air in confined spaces. Leaks happen when pipes are damaged by:

- Digging that nicks, punctures, or ruptures a pipe.
- Heavy equipment, building or landscaping materials placed on buried pipe.
- Excess snow and ice on meters, pipes, and vents. Be careful when removing snow and ice!
- Natural disasters such as floods, tornadoes or earthquakes.
- Nearby water main breaks, buildings collapsing, fires or explosions.
- Equipment failure or corrosion.

# How to Identify and Respond to Leaks

A “rotten egg” odor is added to natural gas before delivery so leaks can be detected quickly without special equipment.

## 1. Recognize

- “Rotten egg” sulfur smell.
- Blowing or hissing sound.
- Dead or discolored vegetation in a green area.
- Dirt or dust blowing from a hole in the ground.
- Bubbling in wet or flooded areas.
- Flames, if a leak has ignited.

## 2. React

Immediately leave the area to where you can no longer smell gas. To leave safely:

- Don't try to find or stop the source of a leak.
- Don't shut off any natural gas valves or appliances.
- Don't use any electric device, such as light switches, telephones, cell phones and garage door openers. A static electric spark could ignite gas in the air.
- Don't start vehicles or restart stalled equipment.
- Don't use an open flame, matches or lighters.
- Don't return to the building or the area until our employee says it's safe.

## 3. Report

- Call 9-1-1 and then us at 800-477-5050. We respond 24 hours a day, seven days a week, free of charge.  
Telecommunications Relay Services Call: 7-1-1

## Outdoor Project?

For your safety, before disrupting soil or placing weight on lines:

**Visit [missdig811.org](https://missdig811.org) or call 8-1-1.**

It takes at least 3 business days to have utilities marked.

**Confirm all utilities are marked.**

Validate the ticket is complete before you work in the area.

**Within 18-24 inches of marks:**

Avoid digging on all sides of the marks. If you must dig near marks, hand dig to expose the pipe.

**Can't find the pipe?** Stop the work and contact MISS DIG 811 again.

**Within 4 feet of marks:** Do not build structures, place heavy materials or equipment.

**If you hit or nick a line:** Even if you don't think there is damage, stop and call us immediately at 800-477-5050.



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



If you see someone digging without markings, call MISS DIG 8-1-1.

## Prevent CO Poisoning

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an odorless, deadly gas that can be produced by faulty or inadequately vented fuel burning appliances.

- Regularly check that chimneys and appliance vents are not blocked.
- Install a CO detector on every floor and check batteries regularly.
- **Never use a generator inside.** This includes garages or enclosed patios and keep them away from doors, windows or fresh air intakes.
- Have your generator inspected regularly to prevent fire, electrocution and CO poisoning.

CO poisoning symptoms may include feeling light-headed, headache, or nausea. If you think you have been exposed, leave the area immediately and call 9-1-1.

For more information, visit: [ConsumersEnergy.com/Safety](https://ConsumersEnergy.com/Safety)