

Prevention – the best defense against leaks

Emergency officials and first responders do their part daily to prevent natural gas leaks by keeping the following safety tips in mind:

- Understand that natural gas is lighter than air and displaces oxygen. Although natural gas is non-toxic, in extreme cases of oxygen displacement, it may lead to asphyxiation. Natural gas has a risk of ignition near a spark or open flame.
- Know where the pipelines are in your jurisdiction. If you notice any missing or damaged pipeline markers, contact Nicor Gas at **800.747.1470**, so they can be replaced.

- Illinois law requires all underground utilities to be marked before any type of digging or excavation. Be on the lookout for any suspicious activity or unauthorized digging. If the excavator has not notified the state of their intent to dig, they must stop all activity immediately. The excavator is required to present a valid dig ticket number when requested by the first responders. Also, no one, including homeowners, should be digging, ditching, drilling, leveling or plowing without having contacted our state's One-Call number (**811**) first to locate underground utilities.



- Remember, pipeline markers, like the sample pictured, indicate only the general area of the pipeline and not the exact location or depth. Pipeline markers may not be present in all areas.
- Information about transmission pipelines operating in your community is available through the National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS) and is online at: npms.phmsa.dot.gov.



nicorgas.com



© 2013 Southern Company. All rights reserved. NG-18218



Help keep residents safe during a natural gas emergency

Every day, natural gas is safely and efficiently delivered to millions of businesses and homes in the United States through more than 2 million miles of underground pipeline.

Nicor Gas operates, secures and maintains the pipeline in our service territory. With safety being our highest priority, we adhere to federal, state and local pipeline safety regulations by performing extensive quality control checks, educate the public on natural gas pipeline leak recognition and damage prevention and work closely with emergency and public officials to develop emergency response plans.

How to recognize a pipeline leak

- **LOOK** for blowing dirt, discolored vegetation or continued bubbling in standing water.
- **LISTEN** for a hissing or roaring noise of natural gas escaping.
- **SMELL** for the distinctive, rotten-egg odor associated with natural gas. Natural gas is colorless and odorless, so we add a chemical odorant called mercaptan for easy detection. This odorant has a distinctive “rotten-egg” type odor. You should act any time you detect even a small amount of this odor in the air.

Note: Do not solely rely on sense of smell. Be aware that some individuals may not be able to detect the odorant because they have a diminished sense of smell, olfactory fatigue or because the odor is being masked by other odors in the area. Certain conditions may cause the odorant to diminish so that it is not detectable. Some gas lines, due to their unique function, may not have odor at all.

How we respond

Once we are notified of the emergency, we will immediately dispatch trained personnel to the site, keeping you informed of our progress. We will take all necessary actions to correct the problem. We will work together to ensure our community is safe.

Learn more

For more information about natural gas and emergency response procedures and training, contact us at: **800.747.1470**.

To learn about our emergency response plan which recognizes and mitigates threats and also sustains the integrity of the pipelines. Visit nicorgas.com/integritymanagementplan.



Help keep everyone safe during a natural gas emergency

Even though natural gas pipeline incidents are uncommon, it is still important to be prepared by knowing the signs of a potential problem.

Here are a few suggestions to ensure your safety and the safety of those in the area if a natural gas leak is suspected or detected:

- **DO NOT** attempt to stop the flow of natural gas, operate any pipeline valves or repair the leak yourself.
- **AVOID** using any sources of ignition, such as cell phones, cigarettes, matches, flashlights, electronic devices, and motorized vehicles until you are a safe distance away from the potential leak, as natural gas can ignite from a spark, causing a fire or explosion.
- **CALL** Nicor Gas immediately at our 24-hour emergency response line at **800.747.1470** with the location and type of emergency.
- **SECURE** the area by establishing a safety zone around the incident and control access. You may need to reroute traffic and evacuate area homes and businesses.