



Orange & Rockland

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EVERYTHING  
MATTERS

# Natural Gas Safety In Your Home



What You Need To Know

# It's important for you and your family to know what to do if you smell, see, or hear gas leaking.

## If you suspect a gas leak

- Act quickly. Get everyone out of the house at once. On your way out, don't use anything that could generate a spark, such as a light switch, telephone, cell phone or car ignition.
- Use a nearby phone to call our Gas Emergency Hotline at **1-800-533-LEAK (5325)** or **911**.
- Stay outside until an on-site O&R representative tells you it's safe to go back in.

## Signs of a gas leak

**Smell** – Because natural gas is colorless and odorless, a “rotten egg” odor is added to the pipeline system to make leaks detectable by smell.

**See** – You may see a white cloud, mist, fog, bubbles in standing water, blowing dust, or vegetation that appears to be dead or dying for no reason.

**Hear** – You may hear a roaring, hissing, or whistling sound.

# Gas Safety in the Home

## Appliances

- Don't let children play near gas appliances.
- Don't step, sit, lean, or place any objects on flexible connectors attached to appliances.
- Appliances such as stoves or gas dryers that are attached to a flexible connector should only be moved or replaced by professionals. Old flexible connectors should be replaced, not reused, because they may become brittle over time and develop small cracks, which could leak enough gas to reach a hazardous level.
- Keep cleaning products, gasoline, paints, and other combustible materials away from gas appliances.

## Water heating

- Make sure your water heater is set to a safe temperature for home use. Settings above 120 degrees can be dangerous and potentially inflict 2nd or 3rd degree burns if exposed for more than five minutes. Infants, children and the elderly can be badly burned at shorter exposure times.
- Check the water temperature before placing a child in the bathtub.
- Never leave a child alone or with other young children in the bathtub.

## Gas meters, vents & sewers

- Keep the path and area around the gas meter clear so it can be reached in case of an emergency.
- Don't enclose your gas meter. Carefully remove snow, ice, leaves or other debris away from your gas meter, regulator, vents and exhaust ducts.
- Make sure indoor sewer line caps are intact and securely attached to prevent combustible gases from entering a building through sewer lines.

# Carbon Monoxide Safety

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, poisonous gas that can cause serious illness or death if inhaled in large concentrations for even a short period of time. Every home has fuel-burning appliances that can produce CO if they aren't working properly.

- **Symptoms of CO poisoning include:** headaches, tightness of chest, dizziness, nausea and fatigue.
- **If you suspect CO poisoning,** immediately evacuate the premises and call 911.
- **If the CO alarm sounds, but no one is showing symptoms of CO poisoning,** open windows, turn off all potential CO sources, and leave. Have a qualified technician inspect your appliances, detector and chimneys to make sure they're operating correctly.

## To prevent CO poisoning

- Install CO detectors in your home. If you use a battery-operated or plug-in detector with battery backup, check the batteries every month and replace the batteries once a year.
- Never use a gas range or oven to heat your home.
- Have a qualified technician inspect and clean all heating systems, vents, chimneys and flues annually.
- When switching from oil to natural gas, be sure to have the chimney cleaned and inspected.
- Barbecue grills, portable generators and kerosene or propane auxiliary heaters should be used only outdoors. Don't use them in enclosed spaces.
- Be sure appliances, including portable generators, are properly installed and working to manufacturer's specifications and local building codes.
- Keep your furnace or boiler's air intake supply clear of obstructions. If your equipment is in a separate room, leave the door open to make sure it's louvered or has adequately sized ventilating grills.

## Call Before You Dig

The slightest scratch, scrape, dent or gouge in an underground pipeline can result in a dangerous leak. To protect these pipelines, you must call **811** two to 10 days before you dig or excavate. After you call, utility companies will mark the approximate location of underground facilities at no charge to you.

### Line Markers

Since pipelines are underground, line markers are sometimes used to show their approximate location. These markers display the name and phone number of the pipeline operator, which can be used in case of an emergency.

### Private Property

#### What are your responsibilities?

The property owner is responsible for marking the location, and inspecting and maintaining some underground pipelines, known as customer-owned service lines. For one- to three-family homes, the property owner is responsible beyond the first inside fitting if the meter is indoors, or the foundation wall if the meter is outdoors. For large residential and commercial buildings, the property owner's responsibility begins at the property line.

### Working Together

We monitor and inspect our gas system to ensure public safety. Please take an active role in helping us keep our 1,800 miles of underground pipelines safe. Be alert to suspicious individuals or activities around our pipelines. If you see something suspicious, call the police.

# Helpful Resources

**American Gas Association**  
aga.org



**Northeast Gas Association**  
northeastgas.org

**Consumer Products  
Safety Commission**  
cpsc.gov

**Dig Safely New York**  
digsafelynewyork.com

**Common Ground Alliance**  
commongroundalliance.com

**O&R Gas  
Emergency Hotline**  
1.800.533.LEAK (5325)

**O&R  
Customer Assistance**  
1.877.434.4100  
oru.com/gassafety

Si desea recibir una copia de esta guía en español, llámenos a la telefónica gratuita 1-877-434-4100 de lunes a viernes, de 8:00 a.m. a 7:00 p.m.



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