

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR NATURAL GAS LEAKS

OUTDOORS

- Turn off all power equipment. Remove all ignition sources. Extinguish all smoking materials. Do not use electrical switches. Keep everyone at a safe distance. Do not try to bury the leak.
- Call **911** immediately. Then contact Minnesota Energy Resources at **800-889-4970**. This number is available 24 hours a day.
- Keep bystanders away. Stay upwind from the leak.
- If the gas ignites, let the flames burn unless lives or property are in danger. Putting out the fire without shutting off the source of the leak can make the situation worse.
- If necessary, evacuate nearby buildings. Close windows in nearby buildings to prevent natural gas build-up in those structures.

INDOORS

- Evacuate the building immediately. Protect human life first.
- Do not use doorbells, electrical switches or telephones inside the building. These are potential ignition sources and could cause an explosion.
- Immediately call for emergency response at **800-889-4970**.
- Stand by at a safe distance until emergency help arrives.
- Call the local fire department if necessary.

CALLING INSTRUCTIONS

- Always call **811** before you dig.
- We will visit the site within two full working days to mark Minnesota Energy Resources' underground facilities, including natural gas line locations.

In the event of an emergency, call Minnesota Energy Resources immediately at **800-889-4970**.

PARA TRADUCCIONES

Le proporcionamos esta información como cliente. Si desea recibir una traducción, llame al **800-889-9508**.

About natural gas

Natural gas is a colorless, odorless, non-toxic gas that is used as an energy source. To make it easier to detect leaks, a harmless but pungent-smelling chemical is added to give natural gas a distinct odor.

Prevention is key to community safety

At Minnesota Energy Resources, we work hard to ensure our pipelines and communities stay safe and secure. Our prevention measures include:

- Providing training and educational materials to contractors and related businesses on safe digging practices.

- Regularly inspecting our natural gas system including patrols, leak surveys and corrosion inspection.
- Keeping our workforce properly trained and qualified.
- Designing pipelines to ensure the safe delivery of natural gas.
- Marking and mapping pipeline facilities.
- Pipeline integrity management programs.
- Working with local emergency responders to help prevent and prepare for emergencies.
- Educating the public on how to prevent, recognize and respond to natural gas leaks.

NATURAL GAS SAFETY TIPS FOR CONTRACTORS

Safety at your service



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KEEP YOUR DISTANCE FROM UNDERGROUND GAS LINES. THINK AND ACT BEFORE YOU DIG ... IT'S THE LAW.

*Never make assumptions about what's underground.
Buried utility lines are a serious, potentially
life-threatening hazard. Never take chances.
Call 811 before you dig.*

Hazards of natural gas

When mixed with air, natural gas can ignite. Although some natural gas-air mixtures will not burn, the only safe practice is to assume that leaking natural gas could ignite.

Natural gas is toxic but can cause asphyxiation by displacing oxygen levels in enclosed spaces.

Ignition sources

To burn, natural gas needs an ignition source. Examples of ignition sources include open flames, electrical sparks, mechanical sparks, power equipment and static electricity discharges. If natural gas is leaking, exceptional care must be taken to avoid creating such a source.

Danger underground

Underground facilities include lines that carry natural gas, electricity, water, sewage and telephone signals. Accidental breakage to these lines can interfere with vital community services. Damage to natural gas pipelines can have disastrous consequences including fire and explosion.

Pipeline facilities

Natural gas pipelines may be made of metal or plastics with diameters from 1/2 inch to 30 inches. Pipeline facilities are installed at the depth required by the current codes, but surface grades change with time. The current depth of a pipeline may be quite different than what was required when installed.

As a contractor or excavator, YOU are responsible for:

- Calling to have all underground facilities located and verifying that all facilities have been marked before beginning any digging.
- Verifying that all private facilities are marked by the owner.
- Maintaining appropriate safety clearances during excavations.
- Reporting any possible damage to buried facilities.

The One-Call System

All states have a One-Call System that can put you in touch with resources that can precisely locate all types of underground facilities. One-Call System services are free.

In Minnesota, the service is called Gopher State One Call. You call the system and within two working days, technicians come and mark the site with locations of all underground facilities.

Your legal responsibilities

Minnesota State Statute 216D specifies precautions required of contractors and excavators regarding pipeline facilities. Here are some of the law's key points. Refer to the complete text of the law for the full requirements.

During excavation, you must:

- Plan all work to protect and avoid interference with pipeline facilities in and near the excavation area.
- Provide the local One-Call System no less than 48 hours advance notice before starting any non-emergency excavation or digging. Provide a repeat notice to the One-Call System if previous marks are destroyed or covered by excavation activities, if the excavation does not begin within 14 days of the scheduled start date, or if the excavation is interrupted for 14 days or more.
- Maintain a 24-inch clearance between any underground facility and the cutting edge of any mechanized equipment, considering the known limit of control of the cutting edge or point to avoid damage to the facility.
- In an emergency, take all reasonable precautions to avoid interfering with existing pipeline facilities. As promptly as possible, notify the owners of pipeline facilities that may have been affected by the emergency excavation.

When backfilling, you must:

- Follow procedures specified by the existing pipeline facility owner or in a manner that ensures full protection of the pipeline facility, including support.

- Inspect all exposed pipeline facilities for indications of having been struck, damaged, dislocated or disrupted. If such evidence is found, you must immediately notify the pipeline facility owner. You may not proceed further until the owner has inspected the facility and approved backfilling.



Further requirements and recommendations

Minnesota Energy Resources requires that you:

- Support and protect exposed natural gas pipelines. These lines must not incur damage caused by moving or settling. They must be protected from falling objects.
- Use well-compacted soil during backfilling operations to provide proper support.
- Provide immediate notice if you accidentally gouge, dent, nick or scratch a natural gas pipeline or damage the locating wire. The same is true if you find potential damage from any other cause.

Remember – Damage to any natural gas facility must be inspected by gas company personnel before backfilling.

