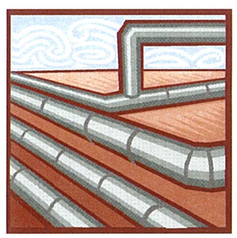
PUBLIC AWARENESS

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE ABOUT GAS PIPELINE SAFETY

Pipeline Purpose and Reliability

The U. S. relies on natural gas for nearly ¼ of its energy. Natural gas is clean, convenient, and efficient, which makes it the country's most popular home heating fuel. Each day, underground pipelines carry natural gas safely and efficiently to millions of homes and businesses across the U.S. Natural gas is used to heat homes, businesses, water, cook meals, for many industrial processes, and as fuels for vehicles and electric power generation. In our community, underground pipelines provide natural gas service to residents of Humboldt. The Humboldt Municipal Gas Utility operates a safe and efficient pipeline distribution network of mains, services, and meters. Natural gas is purchased from CenterPoint Energy at the city's gate station. It is then distributed through main and service lines to your gas meter and into your home or business.



The pipeline transportation system in the U.S. is one of the safest and most efficient means of transporting energy products. The National Transportation Safety board has found that pipelines provide the highest level of public safety as compared to other transportation modes. Pipelines have fewer accidents causing personal injury than any other form of transportation, such as trucks, railroads, ships, and airplanes. In addition, pipeline operators are extensively regulated by Federal and State regulations with regard to design, construction, operation, and maintenance.

Safety is the number-one priority of the natural gas industry. At HMGU, our main goal is to deliver natural gas reliably and safely to you, our customer. In doing so, we want you to know what to do if you ever smell gas or if a natural gas pipeline emergency occurs where you live or work.

IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, CALL 1-800-245-6977 AND 911

Hazard Awareness and Prevention Measures

Like all forms of energy, natural gas must be handled properly. A gas leak caused by damage to a pipeline may pose a hazard and has the potential to ignite. The HMGU works diligently to ensure pipeline safety through a variety of measures including:

- Coordination with SD One Call. Call the toll-free number 811 or 1-800-781-7474.
- Inspection programs and workforce qualifications.
- Design and construction practices.
- SD Public Utility Commission oversite.

The HMGU maintains an on-going relationship with local emergency response officials, in order to prepare for and respond to any pipeline emergency. In an emergency call 911.

Facts and potential hazards of natural gas:

- Pipelines carry gaseous material under high pressure.
- Natural gas is colorless and lighter than air.
- Natural gas is flammable.
- Any pipeline leak can be potentially hazardous.

Leak Recognition and Response

A gas leak is usually recognized by smell, sight, or sound:

SIGHT. Look for dirt being blown into the air, mist, fog, bubbling in standing water, fire coming from the ground, or dead or dying vegetation.

SOUND. Listen for any unusual noise like a roaring, blowing, hissing, or whistling.

SMELL. Notice any unusual odor. Natural gas is odorless. An odorant is added to natural gas to give it a noticeable odor.

What you should do if you suspect a leak:

MOVE to a safe location immediately.

CALL the HMGU personnel immediately at 363-3016 or 363-3789, or contact Northwestern Energy at 1-800-245-6977. In the event of a fire or explosion, call 911. Do not assume someone else will report the condition. Give them your name, phone number, and a description of the leak and its location.

DO NOT use telephones, strike a match, operate engines and motors, switch lights or appliances on or off, or even turn on a flashlight in the area you smell gas. These items can produce sparks that might ignite the gas and cause a fire or explosion.

Damage Prevention

The greatest risk to underground natural pipelines is the accidental damage during excavation. Even minor damage such as a dent, scrap, crease, or gouge to a pipeline may cause a leak or failure. **Call before you dig!** It's the law.

Notify South Dakota One Call at 1-800-781-7474 or dial 811. It's a free call. The SD One Call will let us know who you are and where you intend to dig. The law requires that all persons planning excavations to give two days notice of their intent to excavate any area, including public and private property, where underground utilities may exist.

We ask for your cooperation and participation in this program to help prevent damage to underground utilities and to promote public safety.

811
Know what's **below.**
Call before you dig.

REMEMBER TO "DIG SAFELY":

- Call SD One Call at 1-800-781-7474 or dial 811 before digging.
- Wait for the site to be marked.
- Respect the marks.
- Dig with care.

COLOR CODE
FOR MARKING
UNDERGROUND UTILITY LINES

- ELECTRIC
- GAS-OIL-STEAM
- COMMUNICATION CATV
- POTABLE WATER
- IRRIGATION, RECLAIMED WATER, SLURRY LINES
- SEWER
- TEMPORARY SURVEY MARKINGS
- PROPOSED EXCAVATION

Emergency Preparedness & Priority to Protect Life

The HMGU is committed to public safety and environmental protection. If you are a public or emergency official, you know to take whatever steps you deem necessary to safeguard the public in the event of a pipeline emergency. The following suggestions are offered as a guide:

- Secure the area around the leak to a safe distance. This could include evacuations of nearby homes and businesses as well as barricades to control site access.
- If the pipeline leak is not burning, take steps to prevent ignition. Prohibit smoking, re-route traffic and shut off electricity.
- If the pipeline leak is burning, try to prevent the spread of fire but do not attempt to extinguish it. Gas vapors could explode when reignited by secondary fires.

Emergency Response Plans

The HMGU works together with emergency responders, and state and local agencies to prevent and prepare for emergencies. We maintain up-to-date operations and maintenance procedures as well as emergency response procedures which are made available to local and state authorities.

Security

The HMGU gate station is fenced and remains locked at all times. HMGU also performs routine patrols of pipeline right-of-ways to maintain safe operations of the pipeline.

Facility Purpose

The HMGU gate station provides a natural gas point-of-entry from our transmission pipeline suppliers. An odorant is added to the natural gas for safety and leak detection. This station also monitors the amount of incoming natural gas as well as customers. Please report any suspicious activities to HMGU personnel at 363-3016 or 363-3789, or Northwestern Energy at 1-800-245-6977 immediately.

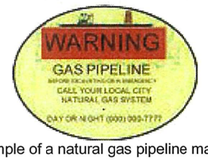
Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas that can accumulate within buildings from vehicles left running or blocked vent lines from heating or cooking appliances such as furnaces and barbecue grills. If you need to warm up a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting the ignition. Do not run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open. Have fuel burning household heating equipment (fireplaces, furnaces, water heaters, wood stoves, and space or portable heaters) checked every year before cold weather sets in. All chimneys and chimney connectors should be evaluated for proper installation, cracks, blockages or leaks.

Pipeline Location Information

Pipeline markers – natural gas pipelines will sometimes be marked with signs. Since pipelines are buried undergournd, the markers are used to indicate the pipeline's approximate location. The signs generally will be located at major roadway and railroad crossings and at intervals along major roadways. Information on the sign includes the telephone number for reporting pipeline emergencies to the appropriate agency/company.

Are pipeline markers and signs always placed on top of the pipeline? Not always. Markers indicate the general location of the pipeline. They cannot be relied upon to indicate the exact location of the pipeline they mark, the depth of the pipeline, or the number of pipelines in the vicinity.



Example of a natural gas pipeline marker.

National Pipeline Mapping Center

Information regarding pipeline locations as well as a list of pipeline operators can be electronically accessed from the following website:

www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov

Right-Of-Way (ROW) Encroachment Prevention

Pipeline right-of-ways enable workers to gain access for inspection, maintenance, testing or emergencies. Pipeline right-of-ways must be kept free from structures and other obstructions. If a pipeline crosses your property, please do not plant trees or high shrubs on the ROW. Also, do not dig, store, or place anything on or near the ROW without first having the HMGU personnel mark the pipeline, stake the ROW, and explain the utility construction guidelines to you.

For further information contact:

Humboldt Municipal Gas Utility 605-363-3789
PO Box 72 – Humboldt, SD 605-363-3876 (fax)
www.humboldtsd.com