

Floralia Utilities

Natural Gas Public Awareness Program

The Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 requires pipeline operators to develop and implement a public awareness program. At Floralia Utilities, our goal is to continue to provide safe, reliable natural gas service to our customers and ensure the safety of those who live and/or work near our natural gas pipelines.

The objective of this Public Awareness Programs is:

♦To educate the public on how to recognize the odor of natural gas and how to respond if they detect possible gas odors. Early

recognition of a gas odor and proper response saves lives and property.

- ♦To raise awareness about the presence of buried natural gas pipelines in our community.
- ♦To help the public and excavators understand the steps that they can take to prevent damage and respond properly if they cause damage to our pipelines.

What Is Natural Gas?

Natural gas is a mixture of hydrocarbon gases, primarily methane (CH₄), naturally occurring in rock formations deep below the earth's surface. The natural gas is withdrawn and transported to homes and businesses through and underground system of pipes.

Natural Gas Safety Precautions

Natural Gas is colorless, odorless, lighter than air, and non-toxic. Breathing natural gas is not harmful as long as there is an adequate supply of fresh air to breathe along with it. Natural gas by itself will not burn, but with the proper mixture of gas and air combined with an ignition source, combustion can occur.

Why Does Natural Gas Smell So Bad?

Natural Gas is safe, clean, and efficient, but it also has no odor. To identify natural gas we add a harmless odorant called mercaptan, which gives natural gas its distinctive "ROTTEN EGG" smell.

What Should I Do If I Smell Natural Gas?

The natural gas industry has an outstanding safety record, but if you smell natural gas, in the event of a gas leak inside a building:

- ♦**Do not** turn on or off any appliances.
- ♦**Do not** use your home phone or cell phone in your house.
- ♦**Do not** light matches. **Immediately** extinguish any cigarettes or open flames such as candles.
- ♦**DO** leave the building and call **Floralia Utilities** from a nearby phone at **858-6722** and follow the given instructions, then wait for our representative to arrive.

Leaks from natural gas pipelines are extremely rare; however, it is important that you know how to recognize the signs of a leak if one were to occur in your area. A strong odor of "ROTTEN EGGS," hissing sounds, or dirt blowing up from a hole are signs of a leak. If you suspect a leak:

♦**Do not** try to fix the leak.

♦**Do not** light matches, smoke, use a cell phone, or attempt to enter or start any vehicle.

♦**DO** move away from and upwind of the suspected pipeline leak before calling **Floralia Utilities** at **858-6722**. Follow the given instructions, then wait for our representative to arrive to investigate the situation.

In any case, if you feel that life or property is in danger, CALL 911. Floralia Utilities has an excellent working relationship with the police and fire departments.

Flammable Vapors And Appliances Are A Dangerous Mix

Natural Gas Appliances Use Pilot Flames to Start the Appliance. Do Not Store Substances With a flammable Vapor Near a Natural Gas Appliance.

Both gasoline and kerosene produce vapors that can catch fire causing severe burns or property damage. Vapors cannot be seen. They are heavier than air and can move along the floor a good distance from the original source by way of air currents coming from other rooms. An active pilot light can light these vapors causing a fire.

DO NOT use or store flammable products such as gasoline, solvents, or adhesives in the same room or area where a water heater or any other gas appliance is installed. Keep flammable products stored in approved containers with lids tightly closed, and keep them away from children and appliances. Keep paper, curtains, paints, solvents, etc. away from gas appliances. They can be a fire hazard.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG: *It's not just another catchy slogan, it's the LAW.*

Today, more and more utility companies that supply your home with electrical power, natural and propane gas, water, sewer, telephone, and cable television service are delivering those services underground. It's also possible that these buried service lines are close to the surface, making digging a dangerous and expensive proposition. Fortunately, you can find out where utility owned lines are buried on your property with one FREE call to **One Call** at **811**. When you make that single call, **One Call** will notify our member companies of your project and will, in turn, tell you where the buried lines they own are located.

The law requires that you wait 2 full business days before beginning your project. This law also applies to contractors, excavators, or anyone who is digging on private or public property. The majority of utility accidents are caused by hitting underground utility lines.

Dig Safely!