

natural gas

SAFETY

2013
PUBLIC
OFFICIALS



SOUTHWEST GAS

swgas.com/safety



Federal regulations require Southwest Gas to share important natural gas safety information with public officials. The following messages are intended to provide essential reminders about natural gas safety.

Building Safe Communities

As a public official with land use and/or street and road jurisdiction along pipeline routes, the decisions you make can impact the safety of the community surrounding the pipeline.

The following messages are intended to provide essential reminders about natural gas safety. **Working together, we can significantly reduce risks to people, communities, and the environment.**

Making Informed Land-use Decisions

The Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA) has developed recommended practices to help in making decisions about what, where and how to build safely near transmission pipelines. The PIPA Recommended Practices document identifies steps that local governments, pipeline operators, and property owners should take when making decisions about developments. **For more information on these land-use best practices near transmission pipeline facilities, visit: primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/pipa/landuseplanning.htm.**

Resources for Safety Information

- Southwest Gas emergency number **1-877-860-6020**
- Southwest Gas Corporation **1-800-654-2765** or swgas.com/safety
- U.S. Department of Transportation Pipeline Safety Community phmsa.dot.gov/pipeline
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) osha.gov
- For information on natural gas transmission pipeline operators near you, please visit the Office of Pipeline Safety's National Pipeline Mapping System at npms.phmsa.dot.gov
- For information about damage protection programs visit commongroundalliance.com

**SAFETY
SAFETY
SAFETY**

Putting Safety First

We use the latest safety inspection tools to determine pipe condition and to safely maintain our pipelines.



Recognizing and Responding to a Natural Gas Leak

A natural gas leak may be present if you:

SMELL

an odor similar to rotten eggs, even if it's faint or momentary.

HEAR

an unusual hissing or roaring sound coming from the ground or an above-ground pipeline.

SEE

dirt or water blowing into the air, discolored vegetation surrounding a pipeline, or standing water continuously bubbling.

Although natural gas pipelines are considered one of the safest methods of energy transportation in the United States, damage to pipelines can occur due to improper excavation, corrosion or natural disasters, which may result in the release of natural gas. This could result in a natural gas leak which has the potential to lead to evacuations, service outages, ignition, property damage, injury, or loss of life. Timely recognition and response help minimize the potential effects caused by escaping gas.



If you suspect a natural gas leak:

- Leave the area immediately.
- From a safe place, call **911** and Southwest Gas at **1-877-860-6020**, day or night, whether you're our customer or not. A Southwest Gas representative will be there as soon as possible.
- Don't smoke or use matches or lighters.
- Don't turn on or off any electric switches, thermostats, or appliance controls; or use automated doors.
- Don't start or stop an engine.

Calling 811 Minimizes Pipeline Damage

When it comes to underground pipes, maintaining their safe and continual operation is the top priority. Accomplishing this objective relies on damage prevention. Improper excavation remains the number one cause of accidents involving pipelines and the leading cause of the injuries and fatalities that are sustained as a result. State law requires that excavators call a one-call center at least two business days before starting any digging project so underground lines can be marked. Making one call to **811** to get lines marked is simple, easy and free. Everyone from facility owner/operators to excavators has a responsibility to ensure the call is made in order to protect the safety of their employees and that of the people and environment in their communities.



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



Rights-Of-Way Encroachment

Pipeline rights-of-way are strips of land of various widths in which pipelines are installed. Southwest Gas acquires rights-of-way to provide natural gas service to our customers and to allow pipelines to be permanently located on public and private land. Encroachments into the rights-of-way may increase the chance of third-party damage, and often occur when there is excavation or other construction activity near the pipeline and the pipe is accidentally struck. Safety of the rights-of-way can be promoted through:

- Using safe excavation practices
- Monitoring and reporting suspicious activity on transmission pipeline rights-of-way
- Keeping rights-of-way free from obstructions and encroachments
- Following recommended practices on land use near transmission pipelines

Pipeline Markers

Since most natural gas pipelines are buried underground, line markers are used to indicate the approximate location of the pipeline. Pipeline markers:

- Are yellow in color
- Are typically seen where a pipeline intersects a street, highway or railway
- Are NOT required for all pipeline facilities
- Do not indicate the pipeline's depth or exact location
- List emergency telephone numbers in case of a natural gas emergency



Keeping Our Communities Safe

Southwest Gas is dedicated to protecting people and property along our natural gas pipelines. Our goal is to identify and resolve potential problems before they occur. The reliability of our pipeline systems is achieved through:

- Safe construction practices
- Comprehensive integrity management programs
- Improvement projects, and
- Routine inspection and maintenance.

Additionally, we use a risk-based integrity management program to evaluate the condition of our high-pressure transmission pipelines and employ specific measures to protect densely populated areas or places where people gather near the pipeline. We continually evaluate our practices to ensure they meet or exceed all federal and state requirements for safe pipeline operations and maintenance.

Emergency Planning and Training

Southwest Gas continually collaborates with local emergency response officials through regular meetings, participation in emergency response drills, and ongoing review of deployment practices. This allows each organization to refine safety procedures, and coordinate how to respond with others involved more effectively in the event of a natural gas incident or emergency. Additionally, Southwest Gas provides ongoing pipeline safety training to our employees and contractors.

Material Safety Data Sheets

Southwest Gas has prepared Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for odorized natural gas. Although natural gas has a very positive safety record, lack of knowledge may lead to unsafe practices. Our MSDS contains extensive information about natural gas safety, such as the nature of potential hazards that you may not be familiar with (including odor masking, odor fatigue, and odor fade), how to recognize and safely account for those hazards, and general precautions for safe handling and use of natural gas. To obtain copies, or to get additional safety information about natural gas, visit www.swgas.com/safety or call **1-800-654-2765**. Please make sure that your employees are familiar with both the content of the MSDS information and how to obtain it.

**FOR EVERYONE'S
SAFETY...**



Southwest Gas continually communicates with the public, public officials, emergency responders, and excavators to remind them about the importance of natural gas safety.