

Safety is our top priority

We carefully maintain a network of pipelines that deliver natural gas to the communities we serve. As part of our commitment to providing safe and reliable service, we conduct visual inspections, routine maintenance and leak surveys of our pipeline system, up to and including the meter located on your property.

As our partner in safety, we ask that if you see someone surveying or working with the gas meter on your property that you ask for identification. All **Nicor Gas** employees and contractors will be happy to show you their ID. If you are not satisfied that they are one of our employees or a contractor performing work on our behalf, please call our Customer Care Center **888.Nicor4U (888.642.6748)**.



Teach your child about natural gas safety with Sniffy at nicorgas.com/Sniffy

Natural gas meter safety

It is important that we have full access to the gas meter located on your property and that you keep it clear of obstructions that can damage the meter or prevent us from reading it.

- **Snow and ice** – Be mindful that snow or ice covering the outside venting of a furnace, water heater or clothes dryer, or around a natural gas meter, can cause hazardous buildup of carbon monoxide. Use your hands or a broom, not mechanized equipment or a shovel, to clear snow from the meter and vents.
- **Meter/regulator relocation** – If the natural gas meter on your property needs to be moved, call **Nicor Gas** to have a qualified service representative perform the work. Moving or tampering with a meter or regulator can cause a potentially hazardous natural gas leak.

Never try to find a leak yourself

Avoiding carbon monoxide

Natural gas is a safe fuel source. However, incomplete combustion of any fuel – charcoal, gasoline, wood or even natural gas – produces carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is poisonous and has no odor, taste or color. Carbon monoxide detectors are helpful, but they are no substitute for using equipment safely. This includes having your appliances inspected at least once a year by a certified contractor. For a referral to one in your area, visit our website or call **888.Nicor4U (642.6748)** and choose option four.

Corrugated Stainless Steel Tubing (CSST)

CSST is a flexible, stainless steel pipe used to supply natural gas and propane to appliances and equipment in homes and businesses. Coated with a yellow or black exterior plastic coating, CSST is usually mounted alongside floor joists, inside wall cavities or on top of ceiling joists and attic spaces.

Recent updates to safety guidelines concerning the installation of CSST specify that proper bonding and grounding of this kind of pipe significantly reduces the risk of damage and fire from a lightning strike as well as the chances of possible electric shock by someone who comes in contact with it.

While **Nicor Gas** does not use CSST in our work and maintenance, it is a possibility that CSST was used when your equipment or appliances were installed at your premises. If you suspect you may have CSST, have a certified contractor or plumber perform an evaluation. If it is found that you do have CSST, a bonding device may need to be installed by a professional in order to reduce the chances of possible injury.

Safety regarding sewer lines

It is important that you be aware of a remote, yet potentially hazardous, condition that could exist within your sewer line.

Information about transmission pipelines operating in your community is available through the **National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS)** and is online at www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov.

Here's what to do

Natural gas is a safe and reliable energy source. While leaks are uncommon, caution should be exercised in the event of a suspected natural gas leak. Natural gas is colorless and odorless, so we add an odorant called Mercaptan with a distinctive, "rotten egg" type odor for easy detection. If you suspect a natural gas leak, keep away from any ignition sources because natural gas can ignite near a spark, possibly causing a fire or explosion.

Natural gas is non-toxic, lighter than air and displaces oxygen. In severe cases, if not used properly, it can also lead to asphyxiation.

If you suspect you smell natural gas – anywhere, anytime – leave the area immediately and call us at **888.Nicor4U (642.6748)** or dial **911**. And please:

- If you smell natural gas indoors, everyone should leave the building immediately.
- Do not light a match, operate natural gas appliances, use a phone or turn an electrical switch on or off. Keep everyone away from the area of the odor. Do not start a car. Go to a nearby phone away from the odor and call **888.Nicor4U (642.6748)**.

Natural gas appliance and equipment safety

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency:

- It's important that you have your furnace inspected by a qualified specialist according to manufacturer guidelines to ensure that it is in good working condition. Do not attempt repairs yourself unless you are qualified.
- Be sure all furnace controls and emergency shutoffs are in proper working condition.
- Keep trash and other combustible material away from your heating and water heating systems.
- Keep natural gas vents unobstructed and free of debris. Some direct-vent and high-efficiency appliances have direct side wall outdoor vents and air intakes that could become obstructed during heavy snowfalls.

Directional boring and cross bores

Utilities install underground lines using trenchless technology known as horizontal directional drilling (or directional boring) to pull cable, conduit and pipe underground. This installation method causes minimal impact to the surrounding area and minimizes environmental disruption. There are instances when an underground sewer line is not properly identified prior to directional boring activities and it's possible that a natural gas pipe can be inadvertently "pulled" through a sewer line. **The resulting condition is known as a "cross bore."** **If a natural gas pipe has been bored through the sewer line, the gas pipeline could be damaged, resulting in a loss of service and a potentially hazardous leak condition. If you are aware of the existence of a cross bore, call Nicor Gas at 888.Nicor4U (642.6748) and report it as a natural gas emergency.**

Removing sewer blockages safely

If your sewer line backs up, we recommend hiring a professional drain cleaning ("roooter") company or sewer contractor. You are required to call **811** before doing any digging to repair the blockage. Even if you will not be digging, the safest method of clearing the blockage, if it is out in the yard, is to first have all underground facilities on your property located by calling **811**. If it is determined that underground natural gas pipes intersect with your sewer line, the drain cleaning company should use a camera to visually inspect the blocked line to ensure no gas pipes, cables, or conduit exist within the sewer line.

While it is common practice to use a mechanical rotary device to cut out the blockage, doing so without locating utility facilities or without a visual camera inspection of the sewer line could be dangerous. **If a natural gas pipe has been bored through the sewer line, the gas pipeline could be damaged, resulting in a loss of service and a potentially hazardous leak condition.**

If a natural gas pipe is found in your sewer line:

- **Stop** all work immediately.
- **Call** Nicor Gas at **888.Nicor4U (642.6748)**.
- **Report** it as a natural gas emergency.
- **Be sure** to let the customer service representative know that you have discovered a cross bore. We will take the appropriate steps to remove the natural gas line and make the area safe.

For more natural gas safety information visit: nicorgas.com/safety