

# Washington Gas Contact Information

<b>Customer Service</b> (translation services available)	844-WASH-GAS
<b>If You Smell Natural Gas</b> (24-hour self-service)	<b>911</b> and 844-WASH-GAS
<b>Telecommunication Relay Service/TTY/TTD</b>	711 or 800-735-2258
<b>Call Before You Dig/Miss Utility</b>	<b>811</b> or 800-257-7777
<b>Natural Gas Availability and Conversions</b>	703-941-HEAT (4328)
<b>Gas Theft Hotline</b>	703-750-4570
<b>Speakers Bureau</b>	202-624-6092
<b>Website</b>	washingongas.com

This handbook is prepared and distributed in compliance with regulations of the Maryland Public Service Commission. Rates and charges discussed are for residential customers only. All programs and charges listed in this book are those in effect at the time of printing and are subject to change. Call **844-WASH-GAS** for additional copies.

Este manual del cliente es disponible en español si lo solicita. Llámennos al **844-WASH-GAS** para obtener una copia.

## MARYLAND Customer Handbook

2018-2019



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# Welcome to Washington Gas

Thank you for choosing natural gas.

We appreciate the opportunity to serve our new customers and those who have been with us over the years. Washington Gas has been a vital part of the vibrant Washington-area community and economy for over 170 years.

Our primary focus is to provide safe and reliable natural gas service. We continually monitor our natural gas pipelines and respond to maintenance requirements and emergencies around the clock. We are committed to making continuous improvements and service enhancements for our customers.

We deliver natural gas to more than 1.1 million customers across the region, including nearly 470,000 homes and businesses in Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, Prince George's and St. Mary's counties.

We are committed to our community and our commitment goes well beyond providing natural gas service. Washington Gas employees volunteer thousands of hours on projects year-round. Our philanthropy efforts are centered on health, education, energy assistance and the environment.

To assist you in understanding our services and policies, we are pleased to provide this customer handbook. It details natural gas safety, energy efficiency, convenient payment programs and much more. You will find a number of ways to reach us in the Customer Service section of this handbook as well as on the back cover. We welcome your comments.

Thank you for the privilege of counting you among our many valued customers.



## Giving Customers Choice

There are two key components to your natural gas service: the supply or actual gas product and the distribution or delivery of the gas. As a natural gas consumer in Maryland, you may purchase your natural gas supply from one of a number of licensed energy supply companies or from Washington Gas, which is a regulated utility. As a regulated utility, Washington Gas must charge customers the same price the company pays for the natural gas it delivers to customers. Licensed energy supply companies may have greater flexibility in what they charge you. They compete for your business and some may offer price incentives that could result in cost savings to you.

While customer choice is voluntary, as of August 2018, more than 102,000 Maryland customers participate in the program. If you choose an energy supply company other than Washington Gas, you will sign an agreement with that supplier for the terms of your service. If you wish to continue to buy from Washington Gas, no further action is necessary. Regardless of which company sells you natural gas, Washington Gas will continue to deliver the gas safely and reliably to your home through its distribution system, address your customer needs, bill and collect for usage (if requested) and respond around the clock to natural gas emergencies.

To foster a more competitive energy environment that benefits consumers, and as required by the Maryland Public Service Commission, Washington Gas provides limited customer information to licensed competitive energy suppliers to use for marketing purposes. Customers are notified of the opportunity to have their names removed from the list through notices in the spring and fall issues of the Washington Gas customer newsletter. Energy supply companies serving residential and small commercial customers in Maryland must be licensed by the Maryland Public Service Commission.

For more information and a list of energy supply companies that serve Maryland, visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com), go to *My Account* and then click on *Customer Choice*; call us at **844-WASH-GAS**; or go to the Maryland Public Service Commission's website at [www.psc.state.md.us](http://www.psc.state.md.us).

## Customer Service

### Contacting Us by Phone

Call us if you have questions, suggestions or concerns.

- Our main number is **844-WASH-GAS** and representatives are available Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (except major holidays). Non-English speaking customers can call the same number for translation services available in many languages, including Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Arabic, French and others.
- In a natural gas emergency, call **911** and Washington Gas at **844-WASH-GAS** at any time.
- For information on natural gas availability or to convert to natural gas appliances, call **703-941-HEAT (4328)**.
- Hearing impaired customers may reach us through the Maryland Relay Service at **711** or **800-735-2258**.

Please see the back cover for additional contact information. Our customer service representatives are available to answer questions about your gas bill and to schedule service.

### Contacting Us by Mail

Please address all correspondence — change of address, comments or questions — to **Washington Gas, Customer Care, 6801 Industrial Road, Springfield, VA 22151** unless otherwise instructed. *Payments should not be sent to this address. Please use the address on your bill.*

Your letter should include:

- A daytime phone number, including area code, where you can be reached;
- A brief summary of the inquiry or problem;
- Your account number and address; and
- Copies of gas bills and proof of payment, such as a bank statement, if the question is about billing.

## Contacting Us Online

You also will find helpful information and many quick and convenient services at **washingtongas.com**. Go to *My Account* and click on *Contact Us* for inquiries related to your account and other services. Find information about customer services and policies, natural gas safety, energy efficiency and heating season preparedness.

## Making Service Appointments

Washington Gas strives to meet your needs when scheduling service appointments. Appointment windows are determined by available field service resources. Depending on the service required and your availability, Washington Gas offers morning, afternoon and all-day appointments, with a limited number of shorter appointment windows also available.

## Service Appointment Guidelines

Please consider the following guidelines when you schedule a service appointment with Washington Gas:

- Washington Gas schedules service Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Access to Your Meter:** If your meter is located inside your house or building, or behind a locked fence, someone who is at least 18 years old must be home during the appointment time to provide access.
- **Access to Your Home/Building:** If your appointment requires that gas service to your home or building be interrupted, someone at least 18 years

old must be present to provide access to your natural gas appliances for relighting. If no adult is present, we will not be able to turn on the gas service.

- **Rescheduling Missed or Late Appointments:** Washington Gas' goal is to arrive at 100 percent of our service appointments on time. Unfortunately, there are circumstances that can cause a late or missed appointment. Circumstances include, but are not limited to, a high volume of emergency calls (for safety reasons, these take priority over non-emergency appointments), weather or traffic conditions, or earlier appointments that run long. If we miss the scheduled appointment time or if the customer is not available to provide access to the meter and/or appliances, and we are unable to return on the same day, we will reschedule for the next available day.

## Service Appointment Notification Program

Washington Gas' automatic notification program provides customers with an automated reminder call before their scheduled appointment. The automated call gives customers the option of confirming, rescheduling or cancelling their service appointment. Customers should provide a primary and secondary phone number when scheduling service appointments to ensure they receive the reminder call.

*NOTE: Representatives of Washington Gas, third-party contractors working on behalf of Washington Gas and other subsidiaries of our parent company, WGL, wear or carry identification and will present it upon request. If you have concerns about whether a worker in your area is from Washington Gas or is affiliated with its parent company, call 844-WASH-GAS.*

## Meters and Meter Reading

Meters measure how much natural gas you use and monthly bills are based on that usage. The date of the next scheduled reading appears on your gas bill, along with the current and past readings and dates.

We test and replace meters according to the requirements of the Code of Maryland Regulations. Washington Gas owns and maintains all natural gas pipe *up to and including the meter* and requires that the meter and area around it be easily accessible. It is the customer's responsibility to provide easy access to the meter.

### Reading Your Own Meter

If we are unable to gain access to your meter, we may leave a postage-paid meter reading card. If you receive one of these cards, please record the meter reading on the card and mail it to us the next day. Other options include calling us at **844-WASH-GAS** with your reading. Customers also may submit the meter read online by logging into the eService Center website at **eservice.washgas.com**.

If you have a digital meter, simply record the numbers displayed. To read a meter with dials, please do the following:

- Starting with the left dial on the row of four, locate the dial hand and record the last number it has passed.
- If the hand is between two numbers, record the lower number. If one hand is directly over a number, record that number.
- Continuing to the right, follow the same procedure for the three remaining dials.



*The complete reading from left to right is 9587.*

## Remote Meter Reading

Many meters in our service territory are equipped with an automated meter reading device that combines radio and computer technologies to allow us to read the meter remotely. However, certain conditions can block the transmitted signal and the meter reader may need to be closer to obtain the reading. If the meter is equipped with this automated technology, we occasionally will require access for testing, replacement or repair.

### Estimated Readings

Sometimes it is necessary for us to estimate readings, especially if we cannot gain access to the meter or when the automated device is not transmitting. Bills are estimated based on historical usage, weather conditions and length of the billing period. The next time an actual meter reading is obtained, your bill will be adjusted for any difference between what you have been billed based on an estimate and the actual usage shown by the meter reading. You will know if your meter has not been read if you see *“Estimate”* after the words *“Current Reading”* on your gas bill.

If you have a concern regarding the accuracy of your meter, please call us at **844-WASH-GAS**. If you wish to have your meter tested by the Maryland Public Service Commission, please contact the Office of External Relations at **410-767-8028**. Please note that the Maryland Public Service Commission charges a \$10 fee for this test.

### Structures Over Service

It is very important to keep the area around your gas meter clear of all objects, including mulch, construction debris or other flammable materials that could create a fire hazard.

Please be advised that building a structure over – or too close to – a natural gas pipeline is a safety hazard and an unacceptable building practice that

may be in violation of federal and/or local pipeline safety regulations.

Washington Gas policy prohibits building an enclosed structure over a natural gas line. If you have an enclosed structure over your gas line, or believe you do, please contact us at **703-750-4360** to arrange for a locating inspection.

## Relocating Your Meter or Service Line

If you are remodeling and want your natural gas service line or meter moved, call **844-WASH-GAS** at least 8 to 12 weeks before the project starts. This gives us time to schedule a site visit and prepare a written estimate. The relocation fee will depend on the difficulty of the installation.

*NOTE: There is a Maryland Public Service Commission-approved, \$72 fee for providing the estimate to relocate the meter. The fee is in addition to the relocation fee and charged whether or not the customer proceeds with the relocation work. If the customer chooses to relocate the meter, the estimate fee shall be credited to the customer's account upon completion of the meter relocation by the company.*

To confirm compliance with federal pipeline regulations and Washington Gas policy, the company will follow up with the customer to inspect the completed third-party construction project that prompted the relocation of the meter or service line. In the event of non-compliance, Washington Gas will be forced to shut off the service until corrective action can be taken to comply with federal and/or local pipeline regulations and Washington Gas policy.

For more details, contact us at **844-WASH-GAS**.

## Gas Theft

Tampering with a natural gas meter is *illegal* and *dangerous*. Tampering with a meter is a misdemeanor and is subject to imprisonment, fine or both. The

natural gas meter at your home, whether located inside or outside, belongs to Washington Gas. Call our **Gas Theft Hotline** at **703-750-4570** if you see suspicious activity involving a Washington Gas meter. The company offers rewards for verified reports of illegal piping connections or stolen meters. You may leave a recorded message with your name and other contact information, but you are not required to identify yourself unless you wish to be considered for the reward.

## Your Gas Bill

### Billing Status

You may buy your natural gas from Washington Gas, which is the regulated utility, or from a licensed energy supply company of your choice. Washington Gas delivers the gas through its system of pipes to your home no matter which company sells you natural gas.

- **Washington Gas Sales Service** - Customers buy gas from Washington Gas.
- **Washington Gas Delivery Service** - Customers buy gas from an energy supply company.

Sales Service customers receive one bill from Washington Gas. Delivery Service customers could be billed by either method listed below and should discuss billing choices with prospective energy supply companies.

- **One bill.** This method combines Washington Gas' charges and the energy supply company's charges. The bill may be provided by Washington Gas or by the energy supply company. If you choose to receive a combined bill from Washington Gas, which includes Washington Gas' delivery charges and natural gas charges from the energy supply company, Maryland regulations require Washington Gas to purchase the supplier charges and they become utility charges due to Washington Gas.

- **Two separate bills.** Washington Gas sends the customer a bill for the System Charge, Distribution Charge and applicable taxes. The energy supply company sends the customer a bill for the natural gas supply and any other applicable charges.

## Rate Schedules

Billing Items are covered in rate schedules showing the amount the Maryland Public Service Commission allows us to charge. Residential service is covered under Rate Schedules No. 1 (residential sales customers) and 1A (residential delivery customers). For copies of rate schedules and general service provisions, visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com), go to *My Account* and then click on *Rates*, or call us at **844-WASH-GAS**.

## Understanding Your Charges

Whether you buy your natural gas from Washington Gas or from an energy supply company, the following services are listed on your bill:

- **Distribution Service:** This covers the cost of transporting the natural gas through the Washington Gas system to your meter. The monthly *Distribution Charge* is based on the amount of natural gas you use (stated in therms on your bill). The *System Charge* is a fixed monthly amount that covers certain costs of providing you service, including maintenance and repair of customer lines, depreciation, taxes and customer-related expenses, such as meter reading and billing.
- **Natural Gas Supply Service:** This relates to the purchase and provision of the natural gas supply or commodity.
- **Strategic Infrastructure Development and Enhancement Plan (STRIDE) Surcharge:** On May 6, 2014, the Maryland Public Service Commission approved the company's Strategic

Infrastructure Development and Enhancement Plan (STRIDE) and Associated Cost Recovery Mechanism (Case No. 9335). Through this plan, Washington Gas is authorized to accelerate replacement of targeted pipe throughout its Maryland service territory. The STRIDE surcharge is adjusted as approved by the Commission.

- **EmPOWER Maryland Surcharge:** On October 7, 2015, the Maryland Public Service Commission approved the company's EmPOWER Maryland Surcharge (Case No. 9362). Through this plan, the company is authorized to implement a surcharge in support of the company's approved energy efficiency and conservation programs. .
- If you buy gas from Washington Gas, you will see the abbreviation "PGC" on your bill. This *Purchased Gas Charge* includes the cost to purchase the natural gas supply, plus the expense of transporting it through the interstate natural gas pipeline system. By regulation, Washington Gas must charge customers what it pays for the natural gas supply they use and cannot profit by increasing the cost of the natural gas supply it sells.
- If you buy gas from an energy supply company, the price should be specified in your contract with that supplier.
- **Taxes:** Imposed by your local jurisdiction, taxes are collected by Washington Gas and remitted to the appropriate taxing authorities.

For billing purposes, your natural gas usage is expressed in *therms*. A therm is a measure of the heat energy in natural gas and is approximately equal to the heat content in 100 cubic feet of natural gas, or a CCF. Your meter reading (expressed in CCF of natural gas) and an energy content conversion factor determine the total number of therms you

use. Other important explanations and customer information can be found on your Washington Gas utility bill or at [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com).

## Gaslights

Many newer gaslight installations are metered. Older gaslights may be unmetered and are billed at a fixed rate, itemized on the bill as *Unmetered Gaslight*. A typical two-mantle residential gaslight consumes about 219 therms annually. If you turn an unmetered gaslight on or off, please let us know immediately so we can bill you correctly.

## Paying Your Gas Bill

### Payment Options

Please check your bill to make sure that the name and address on your account are correct. This helps us provide you more efficient service should there be any questions or concerns regarding your account. Authorized account users may call **844-WASH-GAS** with any changes.

#### **By Mail:**

Return your remittance stub with your **check or money order** — *never send cash*. Write your full account number on your check or money order to ensure proper credit of your payment. *Do not include any correspondence with your payment and do not write on or make requests on the stub.*

When you pay your Washington Gas bill by check, you authorize Washington Gas to clear it electronically. Your check will not be returned to you. Your bank statement serves as proof of payment.

If you send your payment in an envelope other than the one we provide, address it to **Washington Gas #37747, 400 White Clay Center Drive, Newark, DE 19711**. Sending the payment to any other address will delay processing.

#### **By Phone:**

To pay your bill with your personal checking account, credit card or debit card, call **844-WASH-GAS**. When paying by check, you will need your current Washington Gas account number, the bank's *routing number* and your *checking account number*, which are listed at the bottom of the check. The *routing number* consists of the first nine digits, and your *checking account number* is the second set of digits. *Please do not use the last set of digits in the row — this is your check number.* There is no charge for use of the credit card or debit card payment option.

#### **Online:**

Log in to our eService Center, **eservice.washgas.com**, to view or pay your current gas bill quickly and securely. Use your personal checking account, credit card or debit card to pay your bill. There is no charge for using a credit card or debit card to pay your bill.

Go to **washingtongas.com** for billing and payment information. You also can view and pay your bill at **mycheckfree.com**.

If you pay your gas bill through an online banking service, make sure the account number you enter matches the full account number printed on your Washington Gas bill.

#### **Walk-in Payment Centers:**

**Washington Gas Main Office:** Pay by cash, check or money order at 1100 H Street NW, Washington, DC, Washington, DC 20005, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., except holidays.

**Washington Gas Frederick, MD Office:** Pay by cash, check or money order at 1800 N. Market Street, Frederick, MD 21701, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., except holidays.

**Washington Gas Anacostia/Congress Heights Office:** Pay by check or money order only at 2300 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20032, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., except holidays. *Note: Cash is not accepted at this location.*

**Washington Gas Winchester, VA Office:** Pay by cash, check or money order at 350 Hillandale Lane, Winchester, VA 22602, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., except holidays.

**Drop Boxes:**

*Washington Gas accepts only checks and money orders at drop boxes.*

In **Maryland**, a 24-hour drop box is available in the parking lot of our Forestville office at 4000 Forestville Road, Forestville, MD 20747 and at 1800 N. Market Street, Frederick, MD 21701.

In **Virginia**, a 24-hour drop box is located in the parking lot of our Springfield location at 6801 Industrial Road and at 350 Hillandale Lane, Winchester, VA 22602.

In the **District of Columbia**, customers will find drop boxes at 1000 Maine Avenue SW and our Anacostia/ Congress Heights location at 2300 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE.

**Self-Service Payment Kiosks:**

Pay your natural gas bill with your credit card or debit card at one of our self-service payment kiosks available at the following locations during normal business hours (8 a.m. to 4 p.m.):

- 1100 H Street NW, Washington, DC
- 1800 N. Market Street, Frederick, MD
- 6801 Industrial Road, Springfield, VA
- 350 Hillandale Lane, Winchester, VA

**Global Express Locations:**

As the authorized walk-in payment provider for Washington Gas, Global Express will accept cash-only payments for Washington Gas bills at more than 300 authorized payment locations throughout Washington Gas' service territory, including approximately 160 locations in Maryland. Payments made through a Global

Express agent are subject to a \$1.50 service fee. This fee is paid directly to Global Express and must be paid in cash at the time of the transaction. No portion of this fee is shared with Washington Gas.

However, fee-free payments may be made at 13 locations, including four in Maryland. Visit **washingtongas.com** or call **800-989-6669** for a list of fee-free payment locations or to find a Global Express agent near you.

**Western Union:**

You may pay your gas bill through the Quick Collect service at Western Union locations nationwide. Call Western Union at **800-325-6000** for the location nearest you and for applicable Western Union service fees.

**Dishonored Payments and Late Charges**

A \$20 fee is charged for a dishonored payment and requires cash, certified check or money order for the amount of the dishonored payment, plus the fee. Payments are due on or before the due date shown on your bill. If we do not receive your payment within 20 days after rendition, a late charge may be assessed at the rate of 1.5 percent per month for the first two months on the unpaid balance, then 2 percent per month to a maximum of 5 percent on the unpaid balance.

**Payment Plans**

The **Budget Plan** spreads the cost of winter heating over the entire year. We calculate your average monthly payment based on historical natural gas usage, adjusted for normal weather and projected gas costs. Periodically, we review your account to confirm that our monthly estimate is on target. Each month, your bill will show actual gas usage and bill amounts, along with budget installments, so you can review the information. Depending on the time of year, your budget installment may be more or less than your actual monthly usage.

If actual gas costs, weather and/or usage differ significantly from our original estimate, we may adjust your monthly budget payment to prevent significant charges or credits at the end of your budget year. You also may request an adjustment to your monthly budget payment. If an adjustment to your monthly budget payment is necessary, you will receive a message on your bill.

Your 12th monthly bill will reflect the last installment of your budget cycle, adjusted for the difference between actual and budgeted gas usage. Overpayments are credited to your account unless a refund is requested. If you use more gas than you paid for, you owe the company the difference. This amount will be billed on the 12th monthly bill of the budget cycle.

The **Budget Plan** is designed as a 12-month program, and we encourage you to stay on it year-round to realize the potential benefits. Remember that continued participation in the plan depends upon your ability to make the monthly budget payment. A late payment or failure to pay may result in removal from your Budget Plan, and the full amount of the account balance will become due. For information or to enroll, call our *Automated Services Line* at **703-750-7944** or visit our eService Center at **eservice.washgas.com**. Please have your Washington Gas account number available.

Please call us at **844-WASH-GAS** if you choose to purchase natural gas from an energy supply company and want to participate in the Budget Plan.

#### **eBill Automated-Payment Plan (EBAP)**

Pay your bill automatically each month through the **eBill Automated-Payment Plan (EBAP)**. Washington Gas will continue to bill you each month but, on your payment due date, the bill amount will be automatically deducted from your checking account – no check writing, postage or waiting in line.

An email notice will be sent every month with a link to view your electronic bill. With EBAP, you can select the number of days after billing when you would like the payment to be deducted and you can set a maximum payment amount. If the amount of the bill surpasses the maximum amount, the payment will be suspended to allow the account holder to investigate the charges. Additionally, all program details can be managed online any time, day or night. To learn more, visit **washingtongas.com**. To enroll, visit our eService Center at **eservice.washgas.com**.

#### **Automated Payment Plan (APPL)**

Would you rather receive a paper bill each month? Then pay your gas bill automatically each month through the **Automated Payment Plan (APPL)**. Washington Gas will continue to mail you a statement each month but, on the due date, the amount of the bill will be deducted electronically from your checking account. If you have questions about the amount of your bill or wish to suspend an automated payment, please call us at **844-WASH-GAS** at least three business days before your bill is due. When an automated payment is suspended, another form of payment must be made. Also, please notify Washington Gas if you change your checking account. To enroll or learn more, visit **washingtongas.com**, call **844-WASH-GAS** or visit our eService Center at **eservice.washgas.com**.

The **Payment Extension Plan** (offered to residential customers only) can extend the due date for customers – typically individuals whose main source of income is a monthly government or pension check – who purchase gas from Washington Gas and receive their bills after the 10th of the month. With this plan, the due date (last day to pay without a penalty) of your current monthly gas bill is extended to the 5th of the next month, making it easier for you to apply a portion of your government or pension check to your gas bill. There is no late charge if the payment for your gas bill is received by the extended due date. For details or to enroll, call **844-WASH-GAS**.

Remember that it is the customer's responsibility to notify Washington Gas as soon as possible if he or she is unable to pay for service in accordance with the requirements of the company's billing practices. Customers are also advised that your account status must be current to enroll in a payment plan. Customers are also advised that your account status must be current to enroll in a payment plan.

For more information about payment plans, visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com) or call us **844-WASH-GAS**.

## Service Initiation and Termination

### Applying for Service

To initiate service, please notify us at least two business days prior to the date you need service. Please note, there is a fee (approved by the Maryland Public Service Commission) to set up service and access to your home is required. If you have gas appliances with an electronic ignition, your electric service must be active before we can turn on gas service to your appliances. If you have a gas water heater, your water service must be active before we can light the appliance.

To begin natural gas service contact us at one of our walk-in offices, by calling our *Customer Service Line* at **844-WASH-GAS** or through our eService Center at [eservice.washgas.com](http://eservice.washgas.com).

See the sections below for more details on initiating and terminating service.

### Protecting Customers' Information

Washington Gas protects customers' account information. It is shared only with the person whose name appears on the account, and only that person can authorize that a second name be added. Call the company's *Customer Service Line* at **844-WASH-GAS** if you wish to revise your account information or add another authorized name to your account.

## Security Deposit

A security deposit may be required to open, or in some instances of delinquency, to maintain an account and payment arrangements may be available. All deposits earn simple interest at a rate established annually by the Maryland Public Service Commission. After 12 months, Washington Gas will credit the deposit, plus accrued interest, to the customer's account, if:

- The customer has paid all bills with no more than two occasions in which a bill was not paid within 20 days after date of rendition;
- The customer is not then delinquent in the payment of his/her bills; and
- The customer has not had service terminated for nonpayment.

**NOTE:** *Deposits cannot be used to pay a current or delinquent bill.*

Residential customers who are 60 years of age or older are exempt from any cash deposit requirement if:

1. The customer presents satisfactory proof of age;
2. The customer is the primary user, i.e., the service account is in his or her name and he/she is to be responsible for the bill; and
3. The customer is not then delinquent in the payment of his or her bills.

## Moving

To schedule disconnection of your existing service or connection of your new service, visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com) to submit a secure online form to start or stop natural gas service at least two business days (excluding weekends and holidays) prior to the date requested. Go to *My Account*, select *Available Services* and then click on *Turn On/Turn Off Service*. There is a fee, approved by the Maryland Public Service Commission, to set up service.

A customer service representative will contact you if there are any questions or if we require access to your meter for a final reading.

## Automatic Name Change Program

This program features a written agreement between Washington Gas and property managers and/or landlords that transfer a tenant's gas service to the landlord when a tenant informs Washington Gas that he or she is moving. To learn more about the ANCP, visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com) or call the *ANCP Program Support Hotline* at **703-750-4299**. Customers outside the calling area may dial **844-WASH-GAS**.

If you are moving into a location where the property manager and/or landlord is enrolled in the **Automatic Name Change Program (ANCP)**, you can have the existing account transferred to your name with no disruption in service. You must verify occupancy by completing a move-in order on our eService Center website, [eservice.washgas.com](http://eservice.washgas.com), at least 48 hours before you are scheduled to occupy the unit. Washington Gas will then transfer the account to you from the property manager/landlord name and billing will begin in your name.

If the new occupant placed an order with Washington Gas to leave the gas service on, you may read the meter and phone in your reading to us.

If you do not have online access, please call us at **844-WASH-GAS**.

Please note, failure to notify Washington Gas to stop service will prevent us from closing your account and you will be responsible for all subsequent charges until your account has been closed. Additionally, failure to confirm with Washington Gas that your service has been stopped may cause your account to remain open and you will be responsible for all subsequent charges until your account has been closed.

*NOTE: If you move during the winter and the gas service is turned off, the water pipes could freeze.*

## Emergency Turn-Off

In an emergency, we may turn off your natural gas service without notice. We also do this if there is evidence the gas meter has been tampered with or if there is evidence there may have been a violation of federal, state or local safety codes. Our goal is to restore service as soon as possible, but if safety violations exist, your gas equipment must be repaired before service is restored.

**Customers should not attempt to restore natural gas service themselves.** Customers who wish to have natural gas service to their home or business either shut off or restored should contact Washington Gas at **844-WASH-GAS**.

## Termination Policy Statement

If you have trouble paying a bill or security deposit, or if there is some other problem, please notify us immediately. Alternative payment plans are available for qualified customers. Energy assistance also may be available. To learn more about energy assistance programs in Maryland, including information on the Utility Service Protection Program, see page 40 this handbook. We make every effort to work out a solution before we terminate natural gas service.

*NOTE: If you have received a termination notice and your gas is still on, please call Customer Service at 844-WASH-GAS, or see a representative at a Washington Gas payment office to pay the minimum balance or make a payment arrangement to avoid disconnection.*

In addition to emergencies and suspicion of meter tampering noted above, Washington Gas may

terminate a customer's natural gas service for failing to do any of the following after the appropriate notice has been given: comply with the company's requirement for service applications; pay a required deposit; pay a bill for gas service; provide reasonable access to customer premises.

Before the company disconnects a customer's service for a reason other than an emergency or suspicion of meter tampering, it will send the customer a written notice of termination at least 14 days before the date that termination is scheduled to occur. The notice of termination will include, at a minimum, the following information:

- The name and account number of the customer whose service is to be terminated;
- The address of the premises where service is to be terminated;
- A statement of the reasons for the proposed termination;
- The date on or after which the proposed termination will occur;
- The charges for reconnection of service, if any;
- A statement of the total amount due, if applicable;
- A statement of the customer's rights and remedies, which shall include a summary of the dispute procedures, the office address of the utility, and the telephone numbers at which the utility representatives who handle customers complaints may be reached;
- A statement that it is the responsibility of the customer to notify the utility if he/she is unable to pay for service in accordance with the requirements of the utility's billing practices; and
- A statement that it is the responsibility of the customer to notify the utility that he/she, or an occupant of the premises, is elderly, handicapped, has a serious illness, or relies upon life-support

equipment; a brief explanation of the special provisions regarding elderly, handicapped, or persons seriously ill or relying on life-support equipment; and an explanation of the notification procedures.

The cause for disconnection must be corrected, and any past due amount must be paid on or before the termination date stated on the bill notice to avoid disconnection. The due date for the remaining current balance also is specified.

## **Landlord-Tenant Termination Policy**

Pursuant to Maryland law, in the event of natural gas service termination for residential customers, if the billing address for the service account is different from the service address for the same account, Washington Gas will send a termination notice to both the billing address and service address. The termination notice will be sent by first-class mail or posted in a conspicuous location at the service address at least 14 days before terminating natural gas service to the affected dwelling unit. The notice of termination shall contain: (i) the earliest date that service will be terminated; and (ii) the telephone number the tenant may call to obtain additional information. The outside of the envelope containing the written notice shall state, "IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL OCCUPANTS: UTILITY SHUT-OFF TERMINATION PENDING." The envelope will be addressed to the named tenant, if Washington Gas knows the tenant's name, or to "All Occupants," if the company does not know the tenant's name. (Md. Code Ann. Public Utilities Sec. 7-309)

## **Natural Gas Service Restoration Procedures**

If gas service is disconnected, it can be restored when violations are corrected and outstanding bills are paid. A reconnection fee, as approved by the Maryland Public Service Commission, is charged, and a deposit will be required prior to reconnection if your gas has been turned

off for non-payment. Full payment to restore service can be made in one of the following ways:

- In-person at one of our walk-in offices;
- By mail;
- By phone at **844-WASH-GAS**; or
- Online at **eservice.washgas.com**, using your checking account, credit card or debit card.

*Be sure to make note of and keep your confirmation number. You will need it to schedule reconnection of service.* There is no charge for use of the credit card or debit card payment options.

Remember that you will need to contact Washington Gas at **844-WASH-GAS** to set up an order to *reconnect your service* **after** your payment has been posted to your account.

If you choose to pay by mail, service will not be reconnected until Washington Gas has received and posted the payment to the account.

## Dispute Procedures

To dispute charges on your bill, please contact a customer service representative at **844-WASH-GAS** to review your case. If you disagree with our findings, you may contact the Office of External Relations at the Maryland Public Service Commission at **800-492-0474** or **410-767-8028**. You also may write to the Commission at: Office of External Relations, William Donald Schaefer Tower, 6 St. Paul Street, 16th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202 or visit the Commission's website at **www.psc.state.md.us**.

## Turn-Off Restrictions for Serious Illness, Life-Support Equipment, the Elderly and Disabled

If a member of your household is seriously ill, disabled, elderly, relies on life-support equipment, or has an existing condition for which a termination of service

would be a threat to life, health or safety, we take special steps to avoid turning off your natural gas service.

In accordance with the Code of Maryland Regulations, gas service may not be terminated for an initial period of up to 30 days beyond the scheduled date of service termination when the termination will aggravate an existing serious illness or prevent the use of life-support equipment of any occupant of the premises.

Please inform us of these circumstances in advance, in the event that a turn-off is warranted. In accordance with regulations, Washington Gas requires a written statement from a licensed physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant to prevent the turn-off. In addition, the customer must make satisfactory arrangements to pay the unpaid bills.

In accordance with the Code of Maryland Regulations, between the date the notice of termination is mailed to the elderly or disabled customer and the date on or after which service is to be terminated, Washington Gas shall attempt to make personal contact with the customer on two separate occasions.

For more information, please call **844-WASH-GAS**.

## Third-Party Notification

The **Third-Party Notification Program** can help you avoid a disconnection if you are out of town for long periods, are ill or have difficulty handling your affairs.

Washington Gas sends a copy of your disconnection notice to a third-party of your choice. The third-party is not responsible for payment but will be notified about the impending service disruption in time to help you avoid potential disconnection. Call us at **844-WASH-GAS** for details.

## Disconnection During Extreme Weather Periods

Regulations prohibit the termination of gas service during an Extreme Weather Period, when the forecasted temperatures are not expected to exceed 32 degrees Fahrenheit (F) at any time during the following 72-hour period, beginning at 6 a.m. Regulations also prohibit the termination of gas service for *gas cooling customers* during an Extreme Weather Period, when forecasted temperatures are expected to be 95 degrees F or above at any time during the following 72-hour period, beginning at 6 a.m.

In addition, service disconnections are limited during the winter heating season. Between November 1 and March 31 we are required to certify to the Commission, in advance of a turn-off, that disconnection does not threaten the health of the occupants. We also verify we have taken steps to inform the customer about state energy assistance programs.

## Safety

**If you suspect a natural gas leak or other gas emergency, evacuate the area immediately and call 911 and 844-WASH-GAS from a safe location.**

### What Does Natural Gas Smell Like?

Natural gas is non-toxic, colorless, odorless and combustible. For your safety, we add an unpleasant odorant called mercaptan to natural gas delivered through Washington Gas' distribution system.

Mercaptan gives natural gas a strong, unpleasant odor so you will be able to detect escaping natural gas.

Call **202-624-6092** to receive our *Natural Gas Safety* brochure with a scratch-and-sniff sample of mercaptan. Government agencies, schools, businesses, property managers and others are welcome to request multiple copies of the brochure for public education and awareness purposes.

## If You Smell Natural Gas

If you smell natural gas, **do not attempt to locate the source of the odor.** Evacuate the premises *immediately* and call **911** and our *Emergency Leak Line* at **844-WASH-GAS**.

- If the odor is very strong or you hear a blowing or hissing noise, vacate the building *immediately*, leaving doors unlocked as you go. Warn others as you exit, if possible. **Do nothing that could create an ignition source.** Do not light a match or use any type of phone or battery-powered equipment. Do not turn electrical equipment or light switches on or off. Do not start your car or any type of motorized equipment. Call **911** and the appropriate Washington Gas emergency numbers as instructed above, only after you have reached a safe distance away from the building or area.

### Other Signs of Natural Gas

Because gas traveling through a small portion of our transmission pipeline may not be odorized, visible and audible signs of a possible leak are described below.

Follow the same precautions if you.

- Are outside and smell gas;
- Hear hissing or blowing noises;
- See dirt being thrown into the air; see fire coming from the ground or appearing to burn aboveground;
- See water bubbling or being blown into the air at a pond, creek or river; or
- See a dry spot in a moist field or dead or dying vegetation on or near a pipeline right-of-way.

### Gas Migration

We distribute natural gas through a network of underground pipes and service lines. If a leak should occur, it is possible for gas to migrate into buildings, including those without natural gas service.

Note: When calling us from another location to report a natural gas leak or other gas emergency at your home or business, please give the Emergency Leak Line representative the address or phone number where you can be reached, so we can gain unimpeded access to the house or building if necessary.

## Responding to Your Call

Washington Gas dispatches trained technicians to the scene 24 hours a day, seven days a week to address natural gas leaks and other gas emergencies. If a leak poses an immediate threat, the company takes quick action to make the area safe. If a natural gas leak does not pose an immediate threat, the area is made safe and corrective action may be scheduled for a later date. This prioritization process helps the company ensure the safety of all its customers while allocating resources more efficiently, coordinating necessary work with customers' schedules and minimizing traffic disruptions.

## How Pipelines Work

The Washington Gas system is part of a vast nationwide network of mostly underground pipelines that deliver natural gas. The company operates a relatively small segment of DOT-regulated **transmission pipelines** – approximately 180 miles – and thousands of miles of **distribution pipelines**.

Typically, **transmission pipelines** carry natural gas at higher pressure from “gate stations,” where gas enters the pipeline system, to “regulator stations,” where pressure is reduced for distribution to customers. Pipeline markers indicate the presence, but not the exact location or depth, of **transmission pipelines** in underground rights-of-way. Markers identify the type of fuel being transported; the name of the pipeline operator; and 24-hour, toll-free phone numbers to **call in an emergency**. Nearly one-half of Washington Gas' **transmission**

**pipelines** are in High Consequence Areas (HCAs), where the potential failure of a pipeline could have significant impact on people or property.

**Distribution pipelines** deliver natural gas directly to customers and, like **transmission pipelines**, can have an impact on people and property if damaged by digging or excavating. The majority of underground **distribution pipelines** are generally **not** marked aboveground, so it is critical to **call Miss Utility at 811** to have the lines located **before** you begin any digging, gardening or excavating. This service is **free**.

For additional information visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com) or call our *Damage Prevention Hotline* at 800-428-5364 with your questions and contact information. A Washington Gas representative will return your call.

## Call Miss Utility at 811 Before You Dig

Digging-related damage is a major cause of pipeline accidents. **811**, the national **Call Before You Dig/ Miss Utility** telephone number, initiates the process of marking the underground utility lines in your yard or on your job.

Your call to **811** will be routed to your local One Call Center — in the District of Columbia, Maryland or Virginia. Local One Call Center personnel then notify member utilities, such as Washington Gas, to mark the approximate locations of underground utility lines with high-visibility safety paint and/or flags. This marking service is **free**.

Everyone, **including homeowners and construction companies**, should **always** call **Miss Utility at 811** at least **two full business days** — excluding weekends and holidays — **before** you are scheduled to begin any type of



Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.



digging, regardless of size or depth. This includes, but is not limited to:

- General digging;
- Gardening;
- Landscaping;
- Home improvements and/or major construction;
- Excavation; or
- Demolition.

When using mechanized equipment it is **required by law** to call **Miss Utility** at **811** **before** digging.

You must call **811** before you dig and you should not begin digging until the lines have been marked or confirmed as “no conflict.” If you are unsure whether the underground utility lines have been marked in your yard or on your job site, check back with your One Call Center to make certain there are no underground utilities where you plan to dig. If for any reason you cannot connect to **Miss Utility** at **811**, call **800-257-7777**.

Most importantly, dialing **811** can help avoid serious injury and even fatalities, as well as property damage and significant expense that can occur when underground utilities are damaged. **Always call Miss Utility at 811 before you dig, each dig, every dig.**

To learn more about the **811** waiting period for line marking in Maryland, visit **washingtongas.com**.

For more information, visit **call811.com**, **missutility.net** or the Common Ground Alliance at **commongroundalliance.com**.

## Cross Bore Safety

**What is a Cross Bore?** While rare, in some cases, a cross bore could be created when an underground utility line is unknowingly installed through an unmarked sewer line. Cross

bore can lay dormant for months or even years, their exact locations unknown. Often, the first sign of a cross bore is a sewer blockage that may cause the backup of wastewater in your home or yard.

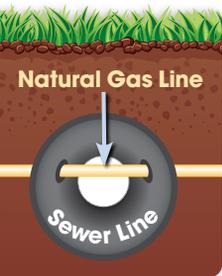
Plumbers typically use a mechanical rotary tool, or root cutter, to clear a sewer line. Clearing blockages with a mechanical rotary tool can damage a natural gas line that has been unknowingly bored through a sewer line. Natural gas can then migrate through the sewer line into a connected structure, including one without natural gas service, and create the potential for a natural gas accumulation and possible ignition.

Do you have a blocked sewer line? If so, it might be a *cross bore*.

*Before clearing a sewer line with a mechanical cutting tool, always...*

## Call Before You Clear

- **Stop all work.**
- Do not attempt to clear the blockage with any mechanical cutting device.
- Immediately call **811** and request an emergency ticket, referencing the key phrases, SEWER CLEARING or CROSS BORE.
- By referencing SEWER CLEARING or CROSS BORE in your **811** emergency locate request, a Washington Gas representative will immediately be dispatched to locate and inspect the natural gas lines on your property to help determine if there is a conflict between natural gas and sewer facilities.
- If a natural gas line cross bore is discovered, Washington Gas will immediately respond to correct the cross bore before you clear the sewer line.
- Washington Gas does NOT CHARGE for any of these services.



## Gas Pipe Maintenance

### *Washington Gas Responsibilities*

Washington Gas owns and maintains all natural gas pipes *up to and including the gas meter*. Our primary focus is to provide safe, reliable service while ensuring the gas piping owned by the company is properly maintained.

### *Customer Responsibilities*

Each natural gas customer is responsible for the maintenance and monitoring of all aboveground and underground piping on *the customer's side of the meter*. If this piping is not maintained, it may corrode or leak. Gas piping located on your side of the meter should periodically be inspected for leaks and corrosion and, if necessary, repaired by a licensed natural gas contractor if any unsafe condition is detected.

If at any time you smell natural gas, immediately evacuate the premises and then call **911** and **844-WASH-GAS** from a safe location.

## Excess Flow Valves

An excess flow valve (EFV) may reduce the consequences of a gas leak in the event of a break in the outside service line. The valve is designed to shut down the gas service to your home and reduce the likelihood of unrestricted gas flow from the broken line. Since January 1999, in response to government regulation, Washington Gas has been installing EFVs at no additional charge to customers on all NEW residential natural gas service lines and in cases where residential service lines must be replaced. At the customer's request, we will install an EFV on an existing residential natural gas service line for a cost to the customer of approximately \$2,000 - \$3,000, depending on the time and labor necessary for the installation.

For more information about EFVs, or if you want an EFV installed on your existing residential service line, call our *Customer Service Line* at **844-WASH-GAS**.

## Emergency Preparedness

Washington Gas does not recommend that customers shut off natural gas service to their homes or businesses as a preventive or preparatory action in the event of an emergency. Washington Gas' natural gas distribution system is divided into sections so that, in the event of an emergency, affected sections can be isolated from the rest of the system and shut down for repairs or as a safety precaution. If for any reason customers do shut off gas service to their homes or businesses, they should call us at **844-WASH-GAS** to restore service.

## Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, toxic gas, created when fossil fuels are not burned completely. CO-related incidents can involve blocked furnace/boiler vents and chimneys, improperly adjusted or poorly-maintained appliances or car exhaust. The use of portable generators, independent lighting sources and independent heating/cooking sources (including charcoal and gas grills) indoors can be hazardous to your health and safety and may produce CO.

Warning signs of CO in your home can include stuffy, stale air; lingering pungent odor; window condensation; back drafts from a fireplace, furnace or water-heating chimney; soot; yellow burner flames (except from natural gas fireplaces and logs); and burner flames or pilot lights that flutter or keep going out. If you detect these warning signs, turn off the equipment, air out the building and call a licensed natural gas contractor to have the equipment inspected.

Symptoms of CO poisoning can include dizziness, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, headaches, ringing in the ears, blurred vision, stinging eyes and fainting. If you suspect CO poisoning, leave the building immediately and call **911** from a safe location.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recommends that you place CO detectors outside each bedroom of your home. The CPSC also recommends installing smoke alarms on each level of your house and inside every bedroom. For both types of detectors, check batteries every month and change them at least twice a year.

## Using Natural Gas Appliances Safely

Many gas appliances have open burners. Older models also have pilot lights that burn continuously. It is very important to keep the area around your appliances clear of *all* flammable objects and substances, particularly gasoline and other fuel containers, paints, adhesives, cleaning solvents and oily rags, which create a fire hazard.

In addition, any natural gas appliance located in a garage or similar location must be installed according to the applicable building code, so that all burners and burner ignition devices are at least 18 inches above the floor. Do not use or store flammable products, such as those mentioned above, in the same room or area where a water heater or any other gas appliance is installed.

Keep your gas appliance owner's manuals available and refer to them regularly. These booklets are provided by the manufacturers of the particular models you own and contain the most complete information about your appliances. For more product safety information, visit the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

Below are some additional tips on how to safely and efficiently use your appliances:

- Have a *licensed natural gas contractor* perform an annual pre-winter inspection of your natural gas **heating equipment** —including furnaces, boilers, water heaters, pilot and burner chambers, venting

systems, thermostats and/or un-vented space heaters. If you see or suspect something is wrong with your heating system, turn it off immediately and call a repair service.

- Clean or replace **air filters** every month during the heating and cooling seasons and every three months during the rest of the year. Clean filters help your system operate properly and reduce your energy bills.
- **Range-top burners** may not light when turned on, or may go out when a pot boils over. In both cases, gas is still being released. Turn the burner off and wait about five minutes to let gas concentrations drop before attempting to relight the burner.
- Sometimes, part of a burner does not light at all or the flames look ragged and yellow. This usually means that the burner ports are clogged. *Turn off* the gas and clean out the tiny holes of the burner with an open paper clip or metal wire. Do not use a toothpick, which may break off in the burner.
- When cooking, **burner flames** should not be allowed to rise up around the outside of a pan. Adjust the flame to match the size of the pan.
- **Ovens** must be able to circulate air inside when they are operating. Do not cover the holes in the bottom of the oven with foil. Always leave one inch of space between pans and oven walls.
- **Range-top burners** or **ovens** should *never* be used for home-heating purposes, even during a winter emergency. Leaving burner flames on and unwatched is a fire hazard and oven burners operating continuously can use up indoor oxygen and lead to the production of deadly carbon monoxide.
- **Dryer exhaust** goes through a flexible metallic vent pipe or rigid vent pipe to the outdoors. Manufacturers do not recommend flexible vinyl hoses. Check venting periodically to remove lint and dust. Lint in

the vent pipe can cause a fire. If there are cracks or holes in the vent pipe, it needs to be replaced. Make sure the outside exhaust hood is in place and the flapper inside it moves freely.

- Items cleaned with a spot remover or similar products give off flammable vapors. These items should never be dried in a natural gas dryer; air-dry them instead.
- Natural gas **water heaters** are highly efficient and provide a generous amount of hot water whenever needed. For maximum efficiency and to prevent scalding accidents, **do not** turn your water heater above 120 degrees Fahrenheit. *Warm* or *Low* should be the appropriate setting on most water heater dials that do not have numbers.
- If you have an **automatic dishwasher** and the manufacturer recommends a *Normal* temperature setting for your water heater, ask your plumber about anti-scald devices for your shower and sink taps.
- When installing **gas logs** or **inserts** in a conventional wood-burning fireplace, pay special attention to the manufacturer's venting specifications. Many log sets need a fully open chimney damper when burning and some require direct venting to the outside. Please note that gas logs are not designed for cooking. In Montgomery and Prince George's counties, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission allows the installation of ventless fireplaces and space heaters.
- Broken, rusted, unsealed gaps or rotted-out areas in flue venting pipes release combustion products. Be sure to have the flues and vent pipes replaced and appliance checked by a licensed contractor.
- **Gas grills** must be lit with the top open. A natural gas grill intended for outdoor use should never be used

indoors. All outdoor grills can produce deadly carbon monoxide and are designed to vent into the open air.

- Bird and animal nests, leaves or loose tiles inside your chimney can block the venting of combustion products produced by gas appliances, posing a CO or fire hazard. Have your chimney checked by a licensed contractor annually during your heating inspection.

For more information on the safe use of natural gas appliances and systems visit **washingtongas.com**.

For free copies of brochures, call **202-624-6092**.

Property owners and managers are welcome to call for multiple copies for their tenants at no charge.

## Making Appliances Safe

We respond immediately and at no charge to customers for any natural gas emergency, such as escaping gas or a malfunctioning appliance.

In the event of an emergency, we may be required to turn off gas service to your home or appliance. If your appliance requires repair or replacement, you will be advised to call a licensed natural gas contractor. As with any major service or repair, you may wish to shop around to get the services and terms that are best for you.

Visit **washingtongas.com** for a Natural Gas Appliance Checklist, provided as a public service by Washington Gas and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. The checklist provides guidelines for specific checks recommended by the National Fire Protection Association and the American Gas Association for residential natural gas appliances. Ask for an explanation of any comments or problems that may be discovered during the inspection.

Washington Gas and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommend annual safety inspections of your natural gas appliances by a qualified technician.

# Energy Assistance

## Maryland Energy Assistance Program

The Federally-funded **Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)**, assists eligible customers in paying their winter heating bills. Grants are based on family size, income and the type of fuel used for heating. Applicants are eligible to apply for MEAP once each program year (July 1 - May 31).

Customers must complete applications for MEAP in the county in which they reside.

- **Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's Counties Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, Inc.**  
8371 Leonardtown Road  
P.O. Box 280  
Hughesville, MD 20637  
**800-255-5313**
- **Frederick County Department of Social Services**  
100 East All Saints Street  
P.O. Box 237  
Frederick, MD 21701  
**301-600-2410**
- **Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services**  
1301 Piccard Drive  
Rockville, MD 20850  
**240-777-4450**
- **Prince George's County Department of Social Services**  
425 Brightseat Road  
Landover, MD 20785  
**301-909-6300**

## Utility Service Protection Program

The **Utility Service Protection Program (USPP)** begins the first week of November and is available to residential customers who are eligible for MEAP aid. With USPP, customers receive a natural gas bill for the same amount each month throughout the year. Payment plans for customers depend on natural gas usage from the previous year and the outstanding balance owed on a customer's gas bill.

For more information about the energy assistance programs above, call the **Office of Home Energy**

**Programs** at the **Maryland Department of Human Resources**, at **800-352-1446** or visit [www.dhr.maryland.gov/ohep](http://www.dhr.maryland.gov/ohep).

## EmPOWER Low Income Energy Efficiency Program (LIEEP)

This program provides home weatherization services, such as weather-stripping, caulking, plastic window covering and gas furnace tune-up and replacement at no cost to eligible families. These improvements may reduce a household's energy use and lower monthly utility bills, and could improve the air quality. For more information or to apply, contact the **Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development** at **800-756-0119** or visit [www.dhcd.maryland.gov](http://www.dhcd.maryland.gov).

## Washington Area Fuel Fund

Founded by Washington Gas and administered by The Salvation Army, the **Washington Area Fuel Fund (WAFF)** helps families who do not qualify for, or who have exhausted, government energy assistance.

The logo for the Washington Area Fuel Fund (WAFF) consists of the letters "WAFF" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. Below the letters is a horizontal orange bar.

[WAFFHelp.org](http://WAFFHelp.org)

WAFF pays for all types of fuel to heat families' homes during the winter heating season. Washington Gas pays the administrative fees of the fund so 100 percent of WAFF contributions go to those who need assistance. WAFF is Washington Gas' signature philanthropic program.

WAFF assistance is available annually between January 1 and May 31.

For more visit **WAFFHelp.org** to receive details on the location and phone number for the office in your area.

You can donate to WAFF in the following ways:

- Visit **WAFFHelp.org** and make a one-time or recurring donation.

- **Mail a donation.** Make your check payable to WAFF and send it to **P.O. Box 1999, Washington, DC 20013.**
- **Make a fixed monthly donation using a pledge form.** The donation will be included in your monthly gas bill. You can cancel it at any time. Go to **WAFFHelp.org** to obtain a pledge form. If you have pledged a fixed amount, please do *not* check the **Washington Area Fuel Fund** box on your bill.
- **Add a donation to your gas bill payment whenever you choose.** Check the box located on your gas bill stub, write in your donation amount and add that amount to your gas payment as a one-time donation.
- **Donate when paying your gas bill online or by phone.** Log onto **eservice.washgas.com**, or call us at **844-WASH-GAS.**

and other natural gas products for your home. Visit **washingtongas.com** to request your free *Product Buyer's Guide* or *Conversion Kit* with the latest information on energy efficient natural gas products and the conversion process. Washington Gas highly recommends that all installations be performed by a licensed trade professional and that you check references.

## Community Services

### Speakers Bureau

Speakers are available at no charge for any community group that would like to know more about our company and the services we provide. Topics include billing, the Customer Choice Program, meter reading, the benefits of using natural gas, energy efficiency or other subjects that you may request. For information or to request a speaker, call **202-624-6092.**

## Natural Gas Product Information

### Product Buyer's Guide

Washington Gas does not sell natural gas products. However, we publish an annual home products guide to provide information about the selection, purchase and installation of heating, water heating