

# Washington Gas Contact Information

<b>Customer Service</b> (translation services available)	703-750-1000
<b>If You Smell Natural Gas</b>	<b>911</b> or 703-750-1400
<b>Outside the Local Calling Area</b>	800-752-7520
<b>Automated Services Line</b> (24-hour self-service)	703-750-7944
<b>Telecommunication Relay Service/TTY/TTD</b>	711 or 866-246-9300
<b>Call <i>Before</i> You Dig</b>	<b>811</b> or 800-552-7001
<b>Natural Gas Products</b>	washingtongasliving.com
<b>Natural Gas Availability and Conversions</b>	703-941-HEAT (4328) or washingtongasliving.com
<b>Gas Theft Hotline</b>	703-750-4570
<b>Speakers Bureau</b>	202-624-6092
<b>Website</b>	washingtongas.com

This handbook is prepared and distributed in compliance with regulations of the Virginia State Corporation 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 **703-750-1000** for additional copies. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

Este manual del cliente es disponible en español si lo solicita. Llámenos al **703-750-1000** para obtener una copia. Residentes fuera del área local deben llamar al **800-752-7520**.



**Washington  
Gas**

A WGL Company

30649-I-0274  
1115-90K-MP

**VIRGINIA**  
Customer Handbook



**Washington  
Gas**

A WGL Company

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# Welcome to Washington Gas

Thank you for choosing to use 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 more than 166 years.

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

We deliver natural gas to more than one million customers across the region, including over 510,000 homes and businesses in Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties; the Cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, Fairfax, Manassas and a portion of Manassas Park; the Towns of Leesburg, Middleburg and Vienna; and a large part of the northern Shenandoah Valley, including Clarke, Frederick, Shenandoah and Warren counties and the surrounding cities and towns.

Our commitment to the community 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 natural gas product, and the distribution or delivery of the gas. As a natural gas consumer in Virginia, 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 that the company pays for the natural gas supply. 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 October 2015, approximately 56,150 of our Virginia 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 your natural gas supply from Washington Gas, no further action is necessary. Regardless of which company sells you natural gas, Washington Gas will continue to deliver gas safely and reliably to your home or business through its distribution system, address your customer needs, bill and collect for usage, and respond around the clock to natural gas emergencies.

In response to state regulations, Washington Gas annually provides a list of customers to licensed energy supply companies. 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.

For more information and a list of energy supply companies that serve Virginia, visit either [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com), click on *Customer Information* and then *Customer Choice*, or the Virginia State Corporation Commission's website [www.scc.virginia.gov](http://www.scc.virginia.gov). You also may call Washington Gas at **703-750-1000** or **800-752-7520**.

## Customer Service

### Contacting Us by Phone

Call us if you have questions, suggestions or concerns.

- Our main number is **703-750-1000**. Call 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. Customers outside the local calling area, dial **800-752-7520**.
- In a natural gas emergency, call **911** and Washington Gas at **703-750-1400** or **800-752-7520** at any time.
- For 24-hour automated bill payment and other self-service options, call the *Automated Services Line* at **703-750-7944**.
- 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 Virginia Relay Service at **711**.

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. Please consider the following when you call us:

- Washington Gas schedules service appointments Monday-Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- When you have scheduled service with us, Washington Gas will require access to your meter and the appliances inside your home. Someone over 18 years old will need to be available at the service location and phone number provided. If we are unable to gain access to your meter and/or appliance at the scheduled appointment time and are unable to return on the same day, we will reschedule for the next available day.

*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 **703-750-4370** or **703-750-4246** or Customer Service at **703-750-1000**. Customers outside the local calling area, dial **800-752-7520**.*

## 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**. 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. Manage your Washington Gas account by visiting the *Customer Information* section of the site.

## 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 in accordance with requirements of the Virginia State Corporation Commission. 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

In some areas, 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 **703-750-1000**, with your reading. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**. Customers also may submit the meter read online by visiting **washingtongas.com**, then clicking *Customer Information, Manage Your Account*, then *Reading Your Meter* from the Account Services menu on the eService Center homepage. 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 (taking note of the direction of the arrow on the dial).
- 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

Most meters in our service territory are equipped with an automated meter reading device that combines radio and computer technologies to allow us to read your meter from a distance. However, certain conditions can block the transmitted signal, so the meter reader may need to be closer to obtain the reading. Also, if your 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 your meter or when the automated device is not transmitting. Bills are estimated using historical usage, actual weather 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 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 **703-750-1000**. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

## Enclosed Structures

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 us 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 \$78 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 and 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 **703-750-1000**. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

## Gas Theft

Tampering with a natural gas meter is **illegal** and **dangerous**. 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. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

# 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 a retail energy supplier.

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.
- **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 the rate schedules showing the amount the Virginia State Corporation 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) and click on *Rates*, or call us at **703-750-1000**. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

## 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 terms 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.
- Since September 2011, the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC) requires Washington Gas to combine all SCC-approved billing adjustments that are applied to the distribution charge into a single line item, "**All Applicable Riders**," on all Virginia customer bills. For an explanation of each component of the "All Applicable Riders" line item, visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com), click on *Customer Information and Billing and Payment*. Then choose *Understanding Your Bill* and click on *All Applicable Riders*.
- 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**. Click on *Customer Information*.

## Gaslights

Many newer gaslight installations are metered and charges are based on the volume of gas used. Older gaslights may be unmetered and are billed at a fixed charge, 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 **703-750-1000** with any changes. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

**By Mail:** Return your remittance stub with your **check or money order** — *never cash*. Write your 10-digit account number on your check or money order to ensure

proper credit of your payment. *Do not include any correspondence with your payment or 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, P.O. Box 37747, Philadelphia, PA 19101-5047**. Sending the payment to any other address will delay processing.

**By Phone:** Use our *Automated Services Line, 703-750-7944*, to pay your bill with your personal checking account, credit or debit card. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**. 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 or debit card payment option by Virginia customers.

**Online:** Log onto **washingtongas.com** to view or pay your current gas bill quickly and securely. Use your personal checking account, credit or debit card to pay your bill. There is no charge for use of the credit or debit card payment option by Virginia customers.

Go to **washingtongas.com/eBill** 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, be sure the account number you enter matches the 10-digit account number printed on your Washington Gas bill.

### ***In Person:***

**Washington Gas Main Office:** Pay by cash, check or money order at 1100 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., except holidays.

**Washington Gas Anacostia/Congress Heights Office:** Pay by check or money order 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.

**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.

**Drop Boxes:** In **Virginia**, use the 24-hour drop box located in the parking lot of our Springfield location at 6801 Industrial Road, Springfield, VA 22151 or at 350 Hillandale Lane, Winchester, VA 22602. In **Maryland**, use the 24-hour drop box available in the parking lot of our Forestville office at 4000 Forestville Road, Forestville, MD 20747 or at 1800 N. Market Street, Frederick, MD 21701. In the **District of Columbia**, customers will find drop boxes at 101 Constitution Avenue, NW and our Anacostia/Congress Heights location at 2300 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE. *Washington Gas accepts only checks and money orders at drop boxes.*

**Global Express Locations:** Global Express is an authorized walk-in payment provider for Washington Gas. Global Express will accept cash-only payments for both residential and commercial accounts at nearly 300 locations throughout Washington Gas' service territory. Payments made through a Global Express agent are subject to a \$1.50 service fee. However, fee-free payments may be made at 14 locations, including five in Virginia. Visit

[washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com) and click *Customer Information*, then *Billing and Payment* and *Payment Locations* 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 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**

We charge a fee of \$25 for a dishonored payment and require cash, certified check or money order for the amount of the dishonored payment and fee.

Payments are due on or before the due date shown on your bill. If we do not receive your payment by the due date, a late payment charge will be added equal to 1 percent of the unpaid bill and at the end of each thirty-day billing period thereafter, an additional charge will be made equal to 1.5 percent of any total amount which remains unpaid at that time.

## **Application of Payments**

If you choose to buy gas from an energy supply company and receive a consolidated bill from Washington Gas for the delivery and supply service, at publication of this document, payments of your accounts are applied as follows:

- First, to any past due amount owed to Washington Gas for utility related charges;
- then, to any past due amount owed for the commodity of natural gas;
- next, to any current amount due Washington Gas;
- then, to any current amount due for the commodity of natural gas; and
- finally, to any other non-regulated purchase that is on the bill.

## 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, an adjustment in your monthly budget payment may be necessary to prevent significant charges or credits at the end of your budget year. You also may request an adjustment to your monthly budget payment. You will receive a message on your bill if your monthly budget payment amount has changed.

Your 12th monthly bill will reflect the last budget 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 the plan, and the full amount of the account balance will become due. For more information or to enroll, visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com) and click on *Customer Information*, then *Billing and Payment*. Select *Billing Options* and then *Budget Billing*. You also may call the *Automated Services Line* at **703-750-7944**. Please

have your Washington Gas account number available. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

Please call us at **703-750-1000** 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)**

Receive and pay your gas bill automatically each month through the **eBill Automated Payment Plan (EBAP)** program. Washington Gas continues to bill you each month but, on your selected payment date, the amount of the bill 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 enroll or learn more, visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com) and click on *Customer Information*, then *Billing and Payment* and *Automatic Payment*.

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

Rather receive a paper bill each month? Then pay your gas bill automatically each month through the **Automated Payment Plan**. Washington Gas continues 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 want to question the amount of your bill or suspend an automated payment, please call us at **703-750-1000** prior to 4 p.m., at least three working days before your bill is due. When an automated payment is suspended, other payment arrangements must be made. Also, please notify

Washington Gas if you change your checking account. To enroll or learn more, visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com) and click on *Customer Information*, then *Billing and Payment* and *Automatic Payment* or call **703-750-1000** to request an application. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

The **Payment Extension Plan** can extend the due date for customers – usually 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, visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com) and click on *Customer Information*, then *Billing and Payment* and *Payment Arrangements*, or call us at **703-750-1000**. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

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.

For more information about payment plans, go to [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com), click on *Customer Information*, then *Publications Center*. Select *Payment Options and Services* and download the Payment Plans brochure or call us at **703-750-1000**. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

## Service Initiation and Termination

### Applying for Service

Contact us at one of our walk-in offices, by calling our *Customer Service Line* at **703-750-1000**, or through our website, [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com), to begin natural gas service. 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 **703-750-1000** if you wish to revise your account information or add another authorized name to your account. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

### Security Deposit

A security deposit may be required to open or maintain an account and payment terms may be available. All deposits held for more than 90 days earn simple interest from the date the deposit is rendered to the company at a rate approved by the Virginia State Corporation Commission. After 12 months, Washington Gas will credit the deposit, plus accrued interest, to the customer's account or provide a refund by check at the customer's request, if:

1. the customer has not had any bill which was unpaid within 80 days after date of rendition;
2. is not then delinquent in the payment of his/her bills; and
3. has not had service terminated for nonpayment of a bill.

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

Residential customers who are sixty (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 initiate or discontinue service, please notify us at least three working days prior to the time you request service. There is a fee to initiate service. Access to your home is required to initiate or terminate service.

If you have gas appliances with electronic ignition, your electric service must be on before we turn gas on to your appliances. If you have a gas water heater, your water must be on before we can light the appliance.

For convenience, customers may visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com) to submit a secure online form to start or stop natural gas service at least three working days prior to the date requested. Click on *Customer Information*, then *Billing and Payment*. Select *Start/Stop Service*, then choose *Moving In or Moving Out*. A customer service representative will contact you if there are any questions or if we require access to your meter for a final reading. If you do not have online access, please call us at **703-750-1000**. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**. 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.

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 final reading to us.

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

## Automatic Name Change Program

This program features a written agreement between Washington Gas and property managers and/or landlords that transfers a tenant's gas service to the landlord when a tenant informs Washington Gas that he or she is moving. 48 hours before a new tenant is scheduled to occupy a unit, the tenant completes a "moving in" form to transfer the account to his/her name with no disruption in gas service. Visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com), click on *For Your Business*, *Property Managers*, then *ANCP Program Details* to download an enrollment contract, or call the *ANCP Program Support Hotline* at **703-750-4299**. Customers outside the local calling area, dial **800-752-7520**.

## Emergency Turn-Off

In an emergency, we may turn off your natural gas service without notice. We also do this if the gas meter has been tampered with or if there has been a violation of federal, state or local safety codes. We 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 **703-750-1000**. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

## Termination Policy Statement

If you have trouble paying a bill or a 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 Virginia, see pages 35-37 of this handbook. We make every effort to work out a solution before we terminate natural gas service.

*Note: If you have received a disconnection notice and your gas is still on, please call Customer Service at 703-750-1000, or see a representative at a Washington Gas payment office to pay the minimum balance or make a payment arrangement to avoid disconnection. Customers outside the local calling area may dial 800-752-7520.*

Other than for emergencies and meter tampering as noted above, Washington Gas may disconnect 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 requirements for service applications; pay a required deposit; pay a bill for gas service; and/or provide reasonable access to company metering equipment and customer premises.

Before the company disconnects a customer's service for a reason other than an emergency or meter tampering, it will send the customer a written notice of termination at least 10 days before the date that termination is scheduled to occur. The notice of termination will include, as 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 customer 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 notice to avoid disconnection. The due date for the remaining current balance also is specified.

## **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 is charged and a deposit will be required prior to reconnection if your gas has been turned off for non-payment. Payment to restore service can be made in one of the following ways:

- in person at one of our walk-in offices;
- **by mail**;
- through our *Automated Services Line* at **703-750-7944**; or
- online at **washingtongas.com**, using your checking account, credit or debit card.

*Be sure to make note of and keep your confirmation number. You will need it to schedule reconnection of service.* Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**. There is no charge for use of the credit or debit card payment option by Virginia customers.

Remember that you will need to contact Washington Gas at **703-750-1000** to set up an order to *reconnect your service after your payment has been posted to your account*. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

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 **703-750-1000** to review your case. Customers outside the local calling area, dial **800-752-7520**. If you disagree with our findings, you may contact the **Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC)**, which regulates all utilities in the state, toll free at **800-552-7945**, or write to the SCC's Division of Energy Regulation, Manager of Consumer Services, P.O. Box 1197, Richmond, VA 23218. Visit their website at [scc.virginia.gov](http://scc.virginia.gov).

## 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 any 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 Virginia Administrative Code 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 doctor or an official source to prevent the turn-off.* In addition, the customer must make satisfactory arrangements to pay the unpaid bills.

The regulations also require Washington Gas to attempt to make personal contact with the customer on two (2) separate occasions 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.

For more information, call **703-750-1000**. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

## Third-Party Notification

The **Third-Party Notification Program** can help you avoid a disconnection if you are out of town for long periods, 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. Call us at **703-750-1000**, for details. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

## Safety

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

## If You Smell Natural Gas

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 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, schools, businesses, property managers and others are welcome to request multiple copies for public education and awareness purposes. Because

gas traveling through a small portion of our transmission pipeline is not odorized visible and audible signs of a possible leak are also described below.

- If you smell natural gas, **do not attempt to locate the source of the odor**. Evacuate the premises **immediately** and call **911** or our *Emergency Leak Line* at **703-750-1400** or **800-752-7520** outside the local calling area.
- 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.
- 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 if you see a dry spot in a moist field or dead or dying vegetation on or near a pipeline right-of-way.

***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 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, 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.

## 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 on all NEW residential natural gas service lines and in cases where residential service lines must be replaced. We will install an EFV on an existing natural gas service line for a cost to the customer of approximately \$500 - \$1,000, 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 **703-750-1000**. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

## 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 that, in such an event,

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 **703-750-1000** to restore service. Customers outside the local calling area may dial **800-752-7520**.

## Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, toxic gas, created when fossil fuels are not burned completely. CO-related incidents can involve car exhaust, blocked furnace/boiler vents and chimneys, and improperly adjusted or inadequately maintained appliances.

Warning signs of CO in your home can include stuffy, stale air; lingering pungent odor; condensation on windows; 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 recommends that you place CO detectors outside bedrooms in each separate sleeping area. It also recommends installing smoke alarms on each level of your house and inside every bedroom. For both types of devices, check batteries monthly and change them at least twice annually.

## Using 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 them. For more product safety information, visit the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov). Some additional tips on the safe and efficient use of appliances are provided below.

- Have a *licensed natural gas contractor* perform an annual pre-winter check of your natural gas **heating equipment** — including furnaces, boilers, water heaters, pilot and burner chambers, venting systems, thermostats and/or unvented 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.
- **Ovens** must circulate air inside when they are operating. Do not cover the holes in the bottom of the oven with foil. Always leave an 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.
- 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, lower the temperature of your water heater. **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 hot 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, special attention must be given 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. Gas logs are not designed for cooking.
- **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 in the open air.

For more information on the safe use of natural gas appliances and systems, visit **washingtongas.com**, click on *Customer Information*, then scroll down to *Safety Information*. 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 without charge to any natural gas emergency, such as escaping gas or a malfunctioning appliance. As a result, 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.

## Pipelines and Damage Prevention

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 200 miles – and thousands of miles of **distribution pipelines**.

Typically, **transmission pipelines** carry natural gas at higher pressures 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 **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 **811** Before You Dig

Digging-related damage is a major cause of pipeline accidents. **811** is the national **Call Before You Dig** telephone number that 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. The service is **free**.

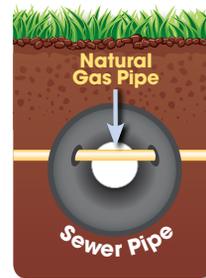
Everyone, including **homeowners and construction companies**, should **always** call **811**, at least **two full working days** – excluding weekends and holidays – **before** you are scheduled to begin any type of digging, regardless of size or depth. This includes, but is not limited to, general digging, gardening, landscaping, home improvements and/or major construction, excavation or demolition. When using mechanized equipment, it is **required by law** to call **811 before** you are scheduled to begin any type of digging. Do not begin digging until the lines have been marked or confirmed as “no conflict.” If in doubt, check back with your One Call Center to be sure there are no underground utilities where you plan to dig. If for any reason you cannot connect to **811**, call **800-552-7001**. To learn more about the **811** waiting period for line marking in Virginia, visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com), click on *Customer Information*, then *Safety Information* and *Damage Prevention*.

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 **811 before you dig, each dig, every dig**.

For more information, visit [va811.com](http://va811.com), [call811.com](http://call811.com) or the Common Ground Alliance at [commongroundalliance.com](http://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 bores 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 make certain there is no 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 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 that the gas pipe owned by the company is properly

maintained. We make these efforts to avoid potentially damaging effects of leaks and corrosion.

Each 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 **703-750-1400** or **800-752-7520** from a safe location.

## Energy Assistance

### Virginia Energy Assistance Program

The **Virginia Energy Assistance Program (VEAP)**, federally funded the **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**, assists eligible customers in paying their heating and cooling bills. Eligibility factors include household size, total household income, heating source and type of dwelling. For more information on this and other energy assistance programs, call the **Virginia Department of Social Services Information and Referral Line** at **800-230-6977** or **211** if you are dialing in-state. You also may visit **211virginia.org** or **www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/ea**.

### Weatherization Assistance Program

This program provides funds for qualifying families to help finance repairs and improvements to home heating and cooling systems and covers the cost of installing energy-saving measures in the home. This program does not offer assistance with paying utility bills. For more information, call the **Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development** at **804-371-7000** or visit **www.dhcd.virginia.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. 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 assistance is available annually between January 1 and May 31.

For more information or to apply for assistance, contact The Salvation Army at **888-318-WAFF (9233)** or visit **washingtonareafuelfund.org** to receive details on the location and phone number for the office in your area.

You can contribute to WAFF in the following ways:

- **Log on to [washingtonareafuelfund.org](http://washingtonareafuelfund.org)** and make a one-time or recurring donation.
- **Mail a contribution.** Make your check payable to WAFF and send it to **P.O. Box 1999, Washington, DC 20013**.
- **Make a fixed monthly contribution using a pledge form.** The contribution will be included automatically in your monthly gas bill. You can cancel it at any time. Go to **washingtonareafuelfund.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 gas bill.
- **Add a donation to your gas bill payment whenever you choose.** Simply check the box located on your gas bill stub, write in your donation amount and add that amount to your gas payment. It is a one-time contribution.

- **Contribute when paying your gas bill online or by phone.** Log onto **washingtongas.com** or call our *Automated Services Line* at **703-750-7944**.

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

### Energy Efficiency Rebate Program

Washington Gas customers in the Virginia service territory can apply to receive rebates for installing energy efficient natural gas water heaters, programmable thermostats, natural gas boilers and for having a home system check up. In addition, Energy Star certified new homes with natural gas heating and natural gas water heaters are eligible for rebates. Equipment installation and services must

be performed by a licensed natural gas contractor. Rebates are offered in limited quantities and for a limited time.

For more information about the Energy Efficiency Rebate Program in Virginia or how to apply for a rebate, visit [washingtongasrebates.com](http://washingtongasrebates.com).

## Virginia State Corporation Commission

All utilities in Virginia are regulated by the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC), Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, P.O. Box 1197, Richmond, VA 23218. The SCC approves our rules of operation, as well as rates and charges for natural gas service. You can contact the SCC toll-free at **800-552-7945**.