



NATURAL GAS FACT SHEET

Overview

- Every day, Ameren Illinois delivers safe and reliable natural gas to more than 800,000 customers via 18,600 miles of pipeline across central and southern Illinois.
- Natural gas is odorless and colorless, but Ameren Illinois adds an odorant – mercaptan - to create the distinctive rotten egg smell. This makes it easier to identify and detect leaking gas.
- Natural gas is pumped into your home via pipes. Sometimes that inside piping deteriorates over time and might cause a leak. Additionally, old brass stove connectors are a common cause of inside gas leaks.
- Outside gas leaks may be caused by someone hitting or nicking an underground pipeline. If not addressed, these outside leaks can migrate into your home. Warning signs of an exterior gas leak include blowing dirt, an unusual dead area of vegetation or bubbling water.
- If you catch any scent of natural gas inside your home, leave the premises immediately and call Ameren Illinois at 800-755-5000.
- Crews will respond at any hour of the day, seven days per-week. **Additionally, there is zero customer charge for responding to a gas leak.**
- Average response time for reports of a natural gas leak is about 22 minutes.
- Upon arriving at the scene, gas emergency response crews (journeymen) will first take steps to ensure everyone is safe. Depending on the situation, they may also evacuate neighbors as a precaution.
- Once safety is addressed, crews will then begin the process of identifying and addressing the source of the leak. This starts with a comprehensive inspection of the piping, appliances and meter set.
- Before entering the premises, crews will take a reading from around the front door in order to tell if levels are safe.
- If a leak is confirmed, the journeyman will isolate the leak and make the premises safe.
- In certain cases, a journeyman may have to shut-off and “red-tag” the leaky appliance and the customer will have to contact a qualified repair person to address the issue.
- Firefighters may arrive on the scene as well, but Ameren Illinois works closely with first responders to educate them on where pipelines are located and natural gas proper emergency response protocols. Ameren Illinois gas co-workers conduct more than 100 face-to-face presentations annually with first responders across the service territory.

General Natural Gas Safety Tips

- If you smell gas, act fast. Do not under any circumstance ignore the natural gas smell.
- Natural gas is safe and reliable, but can be dangerous if leaks are not reported and addressed.
- Do not use light switches, phones or any electrical device that could generate a spark on your way out.
 - Venting a house or even static electricity from the carpet can ignite natural gas if it’s within the flammable range of 5-15% percent
- Make sure to also have your gas appliances inspected regularly and avoid storing products such as paint stripper, fabric softener or salt bags near any natural gas burning appliance, including the water heater.
- Call JULIE (8-1-1) before you dig or install a new fence, basketball hoop, replace mailbox, plant a tree outside, or any type of digging or driving stakes in the ground.
 - This helps to prevent the damage and danger associated with potentially striking a natural gas pipeline or other important and/or potentially dangerous facilities below ground.
- Customers should add Ameren Illinois to their cell phone contact list, 800-755-5000.
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