



Natural Gas Safety: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Detect and Report Gas Leaks

Here are three ways to detect a gas leak:

Smell: A gas leak will give off a smell of rotten eggs. This is because natural gas is injected with a harmless but odorous substance called mercaptan.

Sight: If you see dirt blowing around, bubbling water or discolored vegetation near a buried natural gas line, you may have a leak.

Sound: Beware of a hissing or blowing sound near the gas meter, gas appliance or piping.

IF YOU SUSPECT A GAS LEAK, FOLLOW THESE STEPS:

- Put out any cigarettes, candles, or matches.
- Don't switch on or off any lights or appliances.
- Move to a safe area and leave your doors open as you exit.
- Do not use your phone in area where you smell gas.
- Call VGS immediately at **1-800-639-8081 or 911**.
Do not assume someone else will make the call.

Keep Sidewall Vents Clear

If a vent becomes buried in snow or otherwise, this may shut down your equipment—or draw exhaust fumes into your home, which can produce high levels of CO inside your house.

Remove snow around vents approximately 48 inches in all directions, and trim shrubs around the vent, so your equipment can discharge exhaust.

Make sure vents are installed at the highest possible level, but no less than 12 inches above the ground. We recommend placing signage over sidewall vents for easy identification.

IMPORTANT: State code requires signage to be placed over sidewall vents. For guidance visit the Vermont Department of Public Safety website: firesafety.vermont.gov/pubed/media/heating-safety



Carbon Monoxide: Be Vigilant

Carbon monoxide (CO) is colorless, odorless and tasteless. Exposure to small quantities of CO can cause flu-like symptoms. Higher levels can be dangerous—even fatal.

Know the symptoms:

- Dizziness, nausea, headache and coughing.
- Irregular heartbeat.

Important safety precautions:

- Install CO detectors in your home, with battery backup.
- Have an annual heating system checkup—test and replace CO detectors per manufacturers instructions.
- Properly maintain and ventilate your appliances.
- Keep all sidewall vents clear of vegetation and snow.
- Never run a vehicle in the garage, CO can seep into your home.
- Inspect your chimney for any blockages.
- Never heat your home or building with your gas range or oven.
- Do not use your gas (or charcoal) grill in enclosed areas.

If you suspect CO poisoning:

- Seek fresh air and remain outside.
- Call 911 or your local fire department.

IMPORTANT: State and local codes require hard-wired CO detectors. For guidance, visit the Vermont Department of Public Safety website: firesafety.vermont.gov/pubed/media/

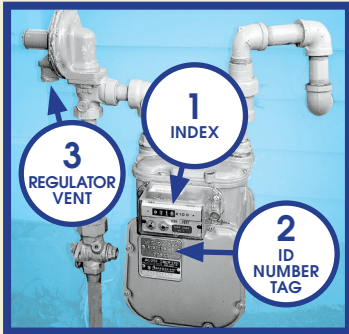


Call Before You Dig.
It's the Law.

If you plan to do any type of digging on your property, you or your contractor must contact Dig Safe™ at 811, at least **72 hours** prior to digging. Before the work begins, Dig Safe will notify member utilities, who will then ensure the locations of buried facilities they own are clearly marked. Insist that any work within 18 inches of the marked lines be done by hand. Visit the Dig Safe™ website for more information: digsafe.com/

Protect Your Meter and Piping

Your meter should be clear of obstructions that could prevent VGS & first responders from reaching the meter during an emergency. Don't build enclosures, decks, porches or similar structures over or around your meter.



Painting pipes is recommended for protection

Paint your meter and associated above-ground piping. Any color is fine. Do not paint over the three noted areas:

- (1) meter index cover,
- (2) ID number tag or the
- (3) regulator vent screen.

Ice and snow

Ice or snow accumulation can interfere with meter operation. Snow removal activities can also pose a hazard to your meter and piping, resulting in a dangerous leak. Follow these guidelines:

- Remove large icicles hanging over meter assemblies and appliance vents.
- Make sure whoever removes snow from your property is aware of its location.
- Use a broom—not a shovel—to clear snow from your meter assembly and vents.
- If your meter gets encased in ice, please call VGS.

Other safety measures

Do not place mulch, topsoil or rocks in contact with your meter. Meters buried in such materials could corrode and leak. Be careful when mowing and report any damage to meter assemblies. If your meter is located where large objects such as vehicles or dumpsters could collide with it, make sure to erect an appropriate barricade. Contact VGS about barricade options.

Call Before You Clear Sewer Lines

A blocked sewer may be the result of a utility line which was accidentally “cross bored” through a sewer line. Attempting to clear a blockage caused by a gas line can result in a serious gas leak. If unable to visually verify that a cross bore blockage does not exist, follow these steps before attempting to clear a blockage beyond the outside wall of a building:

- Call Dig Safe at 811 and request an emergency utility mark out.

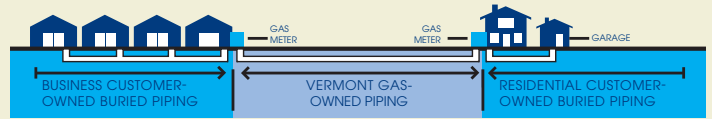
If you suspect a cross bore blockage:

- DO NOT attempt to clear the blockage with a mechanical device or high pressure water jet.
- Get help from the involved utility operator.
Call VGS at 800-639-8081.

If you suspect a natural gas leak:

- Leave and instruct others to leave the area.
- Call 911 and then VGS.

Maintain Customer-Owned Piping



VGS owns and maintains the pipeline system up to the gas meter. The customer is responsible for maintaining buried and above ground gas piping that extends beyond the gas meter to appliances (see illustration below).

If customer-owned piping is not maintained, it may be subject to the potential hazards of corrosion and leakage. Gas piping should be periodically inspected for leaks and corrosion if the pipe material is metal, and repaired if unsafe conditions are discovered.

If you think you have a customer-owned buried service line on your property, contact VGS. We'll send a technician to check it out. If an unsafe condition is discovered, the technician will secure the line and provide you with repair options.

When excavating near buried gas piping, the piping should be located in advance, and the excavation done by hand.

Gas Appliance Safety

We recommend an annual inspection of your appliances and heating system by a qualified contractor or VGS.

Appliance Safety Tips:

If you see any of the following danger signs in your appliances or venting, call a qualified contractor immediately:

- Gas appliances not vented outdoors.
- Odor coming from appliance.
- Blocked, broken, rusted, disconnected, corroded or unsealed appliance vent piping.
- Soot near burners or appliance venting.
- Gas burners in a garage installed less than 18 inches above the floor.
- Noisy appliances.
- Appliances damaged by flooding.



Scalding Hazards:

Hot water can be dangerous. Be sure your water heater is set at a temperature recommended by the manufacturer.

Storing Flammables:

Never store flammables such as paint thinners or gasoline near appliances. Their dangerous vapors are easily ignited. Never store things on top of gas appliances or hang things on gas piping.

Beware of old appliance connectors

Appliance connectors are corrugated metal tubes that connect your appliances to the gas line. If you think your connectors are over 20 years old and are uncoated, please have them replaced.