

**Audience:**

*Customers and LDC area residents  
Excavators  
Elected Officials*

**Messages:**

*Pipeline Purpose  
Reliability  
Hazard Awareness & Prevention*

*Leak Recognition & Response  
Damage Prevention*

Natural gas is America's most popular home heating fuel – heating more households than all other energy forms combined. In all, 52 percent of all heated U.S. households have natural gas heat.

Natural gas is increasingly popular for use by homeowners, schools, businesses, factories and electric power-generation plants because it is efficient, clean, reliable and a relative bargain compared to alternative energy sources.

In our community, City of LaFayette provides natural gas to more than 2400 through a network of underground distribution lines. Main gas lines branch into household service lines. The pipes are typically made of “caution yellow” plastic or tar-coated steel which helps prevent corrosion. As an industry steel pipes are being replaced with the more durable plastic piping. The main lines are typically 2-inches in diameter and are located roughly two-feet below the surface, while service lines are typically half-inch to three-quarter-inch in diameter and buried 12- to 18-inches below the surface.

That's why it's important to “Call Before You Dig” or move earth in any way. Whether you're installing an underground dog fence, running water to an outbuilding or post-hole digging for a new mail box post, underground piping and other utilities can be damaged. When you call the “Call Before You Dig” hotline at 8-1-1, they will directly connect you to your local authorities who can locate all buried utility lines on your property, so you can safely dig and prevent a potentially hazardous condition. In 2004 the Federal Office of Pipeline Safety recorded 48 cases of third party excavation damage to distribution lines nationwide resulting in more than \$10 million dollars worth of property damage and four injuries. Calling before you dig can prevent a costly or even deadly mistake.

Natural gas is a colorless, odorless gas; however, a chemical that smells like rotten eggs is added to help detect a possible leak. You can also recognize a leak if you see bubbles in standing water, blowing patches of dirt or dead patches of grass or plants surrounded by live materials. You can also hear a hissing noise coming from gas lines going to appliances or near your gas meter. If you recognize any of these signs, or just think you might be smelling gas, leave the area immediately and call your local gas provider at 706-639-1511 or 911 from a neighboring home or business. Never turn on or off switches or use a flashlight or phone in the presence of the gas smell, because an electric spark could ignite the gas, causing an explosion.

Do your part to familiarize yourself and your family with these natural gas safety tips and continue to enjoy the value, comfort and benefits of America's cleanest, most efficient energy source!

This message is brought to you by City of LaFayette as a public service. To learn more about our natural gas service and the benefits of natural gas, call 706-639-1511.