

# Natural Gas Safety

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- If you choose to install any appliances, check the local codes & closely follow
- Operate appliances according to their instructions & intended purpose (Don't use a range to heat a room, etc.)



## Our Commitment to Gas Safety

Like any other form of energy, natural gas can be unsafe when not maintained properly. At Fort Pierce Utilities Authority, safety is our number one priority, value and investment. Not only is our emergency team on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but we take ongoing proactive measures to maintain our solid safety record, as well as over-all industry integrity.

These include:

- Visual inspection programs
- Design & construction techniques
- Continual workforce training
- Industry safety practices & government oversight
- Pipeline markers & facility mapping
- Regularly testing emergency procedures & communications
- Public education programs
- Involvement with Dig Safe (See 8-1-1) & other government and public projects

## What you can do

While natural gas leaks and related incidents are rare, there are basic steps you can take to help ensure your safety.

- Have natural gas appliances installed and maintained by a licensed contractor
- If you choose to install any appliance, check the local codes & closely follow the manufacturer's instructions
- Operate appliances according to their instructions & intended purpose (*Don't use a range to heat a room, etc.*)

## 8-1-1 Before You Dig

Call 8-1-1 before you dig and know what's below. Even the shallowest digging or excavating can damage underground utility lines, causing lost utility service, injuries or worse! Before you pick up a shovel, pick up a phone. We'll be on the mark within two to three business days—at no charge to you.

## Storm Survival

While reliable natural gas enables hot showers and home cooking—even when the power goes out—we can help ensure optimal post-storm safety. Call FPUA at 466-1600 and a trained technician will:

- Safely turn your gas back on
- Relight pilot lights
- Inspect all appliances to ensure proper working condition

## How to sense danger

While natural gas is naturally odorless, a “rotten egg” odor is added so you and your family can easily detect even the smallest leak. Teach everyone in your home or business to recognize the “rotten egg” smell and take the following steps should someone suspect a leak:

1. Clear your home or business immediately
2. Call your local FPUA office once safely outside  
(Or dial 9-1-1 if you sense an emergency)

### Do Not:

- Use a cell phone or telephone until securely outside the location
- Smoke, light a match or do anything else that may cause a spark
- Turn on or off any electric switches
- Ring the doorbell or open any garage doors

## Flammable Vapors & Appliances Are A Dangerous Mix

Both gasoline and kerosene produce vapors that can catch fire causing severe burns or property damage. Vapors cannot be seen. They are heavier than air and can move along the floor a good distance from the original source by way of air currents coming from other rooms. An active pilot light on an appliance can light these vapors causing a fire.

**DO NOT** use or store flammable products such as gasoline, solvents, or adhesives in the same room or area where a water heater or any other gas appliance is installed. Keep flammable products stored in approved containers with lids tightly closed, and keep them away from children and appliances.

Keep paper, curtains, paints, solvents, etc. away from gas appliances. They can be a fire hazard.

Be prepared for unexpected problems with your home and natural gas appliances – and save. With our *Customer Care Protection Service Plan*, you can rest assured that a trusted FPUA technician will fix your natural gas system at no cost to you for covered parts and labor. You avoid the stress and inconvenience of being without hot water or cooking appliances, while eliminating repair bills that can cost hundreds of dollars. Call 466-1600 to find out more.

# Fort Pierce Utilities Natural Gas Public Awareness Program

The Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 requires pipeline operators to develop and implement a public awareness program. At Fort Pierce Utilities (FPUA), our goal is to continue to provide safe, reliable natural gas service to our customers and ensure the safety of those who live and/or work near our natural gas pipelines.

## What is Natural Gas?

Natural gas is a mixture of hydrocarbon gases, primarily methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), naturally occurring in rock formations deep below the earth's surface. The natural gas is withdrawn and transported to homes and businesses through an underground system of pipes.

## Natural Gas Safety Precautions

Natural gas is colorless, odorless, lighter than air, and nontoxic. Breathing natural gas is not harmful as long as there is an adequate supply of fresh air to breath along with it. Natural gas by itself will not burn, but with the proper mixture of gas and air combined with an ignition source, combustion can occur.

## Why Be Concerned About Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an odorless, tasteless, invisible gas that can be formed when fuels like charcoal, coal, gasoline, kerosene, natural gas, propane, or wood are burned with a insufficient supply of air.

A natural gas appliance could produce carbon monoxide if:

- Boxes, laundry, or other materials are blocking the base, restricting air flow.
- The vent hood, pipes, or flues are blocked or corroded.
- The unit is installed or adjusted improperly.
- It's used incorrectly (i.e., heating a room with a gas stove or using a gas or charcoal grill indoors).
- The heat exchanger is cracked.

Call FPUA for natural gas appliance inspections. Natural gas furnaces and heating products such as fireplace logs and space heaters should be inspected every year. Other appliances, such as heaters, clothes dryers, ranges, and cooktops should be checked for proper operations.

All natural gas appliances come with a manual. Always read the manual for proper installation, cautions, and warnings or have your service technician review it with you.

## What Is Carbon Monoxide Poisoning?

The early effects of Carbon Monoxide poisoning mimic the flu, so watch out for these warning signs:

- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness and disorientation
- Muscle weakness or fatigue

If the flu-like symptoms are NOT accompanied by fever, or if everyone in the family is ill, or if the symptoms disappear when you leave the house, you may have a CO problem. If CO symptoms are present, leave the building immediately and call FPUA at **466-1600, extension 3900**, and we will send a trained technician to test for CO. **Prevention** is the only way to deal with carbon monoxide, and the best prevention is regular inspection by a trained service technician.

## Our Service Territory

Fort Pierce Utilities has over 161 miles of gas main and over 88 miles of gas service lines servicing Fort Pierce, except for Hutchinson Island, and also parts of Saint Lucie County.

The four boundaries of our System are:

- North on U.S. 1 to Ridgecrest Mobile Home Park,
- South to Beach Court in Port St. Lucie,
- East to Indian River Drive, and
- West to Rock Road.

Natural gas is delivered to two gate stations from a high pressure transmission line located just west of the Florida Turnpike.

## Fort Pierce Utilities Authority

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