Customer and Public Safety Awareness

Dig Safely

If you are planning to dig on your property, follow these important steps:

811 Know what's **below.** **Call** before you dig.
The 811 logo is a registered trademark of Common Ground Alliance.

1. **Call before you dig**. State law requires that you notify North Carolina 811 by dialing 811 to have your utilities located before you begin any excavation work. When a utility locate request is received by NC 811, utilities have two business days beginning at 12:01 am of the next business day to mark their underground facilities.
2. **Wait**. At no cost to you, technicians will mark the location of the utility lines on your property. Once all lines are marked, you can then safely begin your digging project.
3. **Respect** the markings for your safety.
4. **Dig with care**. If you accidentally hit the pipeline, no matter how minor it may seem, leave the area immediately and call PSNC Energy from a safe place at **1-877-776-2427** and **911**.

What's that smell? Natural gas has a built-in odor for your safety.

Natural gas is odorless. The odor you smell is a chemical we add to natural gas so you can detect even the smallest amount that might escape. Everyone should be able to recognize it and associate it with natural gas.

Natural gas has a safety record we can all be proud of. We are working to keep it that way. Knowing this odor and what to do when you smell it helps keep you and your family safe.

If you ever smell the rotten egg odor

- Leave your house immediately
- Do not light a match
- Do not turn your lights on or off
- Do not use a cellular phone inside the house
- Call PSNC Energy immediately from a neighbor's house or a cellular phone when you are safely outside the house.

Inspection and Maintenance of *Customer-Owned* Buried Natural Gas Lines

PSNC Energy is committed to providing natural gas to you in a safe, reliable manner. We maintain all our lines in accordance with the U.S. Department of Transportation Pipeline Safety regulations.

PSNC Energy's responsibility to maintain natural gas lines ends at our gas meter. We do not maintain any natural gas lines beyond the meter. The inspection and upkeep of these customer-owned lines are the customer's responsibility.

We are directed by Federal Law to notify all customers of the following:

1. *Customer-owned* **BURIED** natural gas piping, such as pipes that deliver natural gas to outdoor grills, heated pools, exterior lights or patio heaters, should be periodically inspected for leaks. If the pipes are metal, they should also be inspected for corrosion.
2. Any unsafe conditions which are found should be repaired.
3. When digging near **BURIED** gas piping, the piping should be located in advance, and the digging should be done by hand.

You may contact a certified plumber or heating contractor in your area to assist you in locating and inspecting your **BURIED** gas piping. If you have questions, you may call PSNC Energy.

Avoid snow and ice buildup around your natural gas meter

There is the potential for snow and ice to accumulate on natural gas equipment. Meters, regulators and vents are designed to withstand all kinds of weather, however abnormal buildup of snow and ice has the potential to create operational problems for customer-owned equipment and appliances.

Although such occurrences are extremely rare, in the event of severe winter weather, excess snow and ice should be carefully cleared from gas equipment and appliance exhaust vents - preferably with a broom instead of a shovel.

Safety related to side wall vented appliances

For sidewall vented appliances such as direct vent furnaces, fireplaces, and tank less water heaters, do not allow the outside vent terminal to be blocked or obstructed by vegetation, ice, snow or any other materials. Blocked or obstructed vents can cause carbon monoxide to back-up into the building.

For new sidewall vented appliances always follow manufacturer installation instructions and adhere to all applicable codes.

Warning signs of carbon monoxide poisoning

It's important to be aware of the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. Since the symptoms mimic those of the flu, victims often don't realize the cause of their illness. Symptoms can occur immediately or more gradually after long-term exposure and include:

- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath
- Headaches
- Confusion
- Nausea
- Fainting

If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, get fresh air immediately. Call for help before helping others. That way you don't pass out before making that first call to alert emergency responders.

Carbon monoxide is invisible and has no smell. Only a carbon monoxide detector can alert you to a problem.

Health officials recommend having carbon monoxide detectors on every level of your home and within ten feet of any sleeping areas. Just as you do with smoke detectors, check and replace batteries in CO detectors too.

Storage of flammables near gas appliances

Properly caring for your natural gas appliances helps to keep them operating safely and efficiently. It's just as important take precautions with the storage of flammables near gas appliances.

- Never store flammable materials such as mops, brooms, laundry or newspapers near gas appliances.
- Never store or use flammable products in the same room or near any gas or heat-producing appliances. Flammable products include gasoline, spray paints, solvents, insecticide, cleaning products and

other pressurized containers
- Never store anything near a gas appliance that might interfere with normal appliance airflow.

Avoiding Tap Water Scalds

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends setting water heaters to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. In addition to preventing accidents, this decrease in temperature will conserve energy and save money.

Never take hot water temperature for granted. Most adults will suffer third-degree burns if exposed to 150 degree water for two seconds. Burns will also occur with a six-second exposure to 140 degree water or with 30 second exposure to 130 degree water. Even if the temperature is 120 degrees, a five minute exposure could result in third-degree burns.

You should always hand-test before using, especially when bathing infants and young children. Leaving a child unsupervised in the bathroom, even if only for a second, could cause serious injuries. Your presence at all times is the best defense against accidents and scalding to infants and young children.

If precise temperatures are not given on your water heater, hold a candy or meat thermometer under faucet for most accurate reading first thing in the morning or at least two hours after water use. If reading is too high, adjust thermostat on heater, according to manufacturer's instructions, and check again with thermometer.

Interior piping and gas appliance connector safety

Gas connectors need to be inspected regularly, and replaced as needed. Certain kinds of flexible connectors manufactured between 1970 and 1980 may fail over time and need to be replaced.

Only a qualified professional should check your connector and replace it if needed. Don't try to do this yourself, because a brittle connector could fail with minimal movement.

After disconnecting gas appliances, gas connectors should always be removed and the fuel line should be plugged and capped. It's a good idea to replace approved flexible connectors once every ten years.

Gas pipes should be properly maintained and never used for unintended uses such as hanging clothes.

Corrugated Stainless Steel Tubing (CSST) and lightning

CSST is a flexible, stainless steel pipe commonly used to supply natural gas inside residential, commercial and industrial structures. CSST is typically coated with a yellow or black exterior plastic coating. CSST is usually routed beneath, through and alongside floor joists in basements or crawl spaces, inside interior wall cavities and on top of ceiling joists in attic spaces. If your home or business was built after 1990, or you've had work done to your natural gas piping system, it's possible that CSST was installed.

Why is lightning a risk to CSST?

If lightning strikes a structure containing CSST, there is a risk it can travel along the gas piping system and cause a leak, or potentially, a fire. For this reason, CSST gas piping systems are required by the manufacturer to be bonded to the electrical service grounding electrode system at the point where the gas service enters the structure. When a CSST system is directly bonded to the electrical service, it will reduce the risk of arcing damage.

How to ensure your CSST system is protected.

Local building officials typically inspect homes and buildings after construction or renovations are complete. If you believe your home may have CSST and that the piping may not have been directly bonded to the electrical service grounding electrode system, PSNC Energy recommends that you hire a licensed electrician or plumber to determine whether your CSST installation meets the

current requirements of the NC Building Code, the National Electrical Code (NFPA 70), the National Fuel Gas Code (NFPA 54) and the manufacturer's instructions.

Potential safety risk when responding to a block sewer line

PSNC Energy is dedicated to operating and maintaining a safe and reliable natural gas infrastructure. That's why it's important for you, your employees and subcontractors to consider the possibility of a "cross bore" when responding to a blocked
sewer line.

What is a natural gas CROSS BORE?

- Natural gas mains and service lines are commonly installed using trench less technology. Cross bores can occur when natural gas lines are unintentionally bored through sewer system mains and laterals.
- A cross bore can exist for years before sewer lines clog or collapse.
- Cross bores may be discovered when plumbers or other contractors accidentally auger through the natural gas line while attempting to clear the sewer blockage.
- If a gas line is damaged, gas can migrate through sewer lines into homes and buildings, causing potentially dangerous conditions.

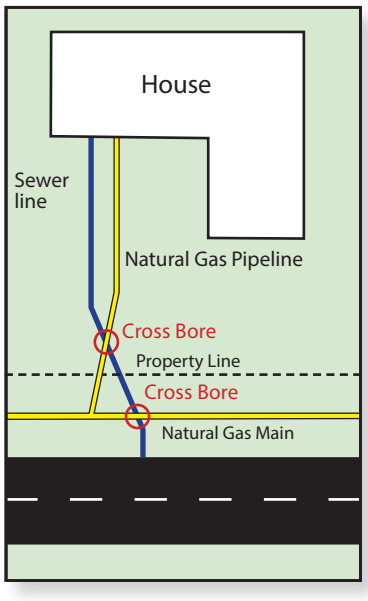
Should a cross bore exist and you, your employee or subcontractor uses a mechanical rotary device (auger) to root out the blockage, a serious safety risk could result.

How to avoid a natural gas CROSS BORE

- Call North Carolina **811** to have utility lines located before beginning any excavation project.
- Determine the location of sewer facilities such as clean outs and if there has been any recent excavation to install utility lines.
- Use a camera to assess the condition of the sewer line. If you find an obstruction not caused by a root or other plumbing issue, it may be a natural gas line cross bore.

What to do if a CROSS BORE is discovered

- Stop all work immediately.
- Do not attempt to clear the blockage with a mechanical device.
- Call PSNC Energy at **1-877-776-2427** to have a local representative meet you on site.



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