

## energyESSENTIALS

Public Awareness | Virginia



Spring 2024

### CONTACT MISS UTILITY AT 811 BEFORE YOU DIG

Digging related damage is a major cause of pipeline accidents. **811** is the national **Call Before You Dig** telephone number that initiates the process of marking the underground utility lines in your yard or on your job. Your call to **811** will be routed to your local One Call Center – in the District of Columbia, Maryland or Virginia. Local One Call Center personnel then notify member utilities, such as Washington Gas, to mark the approximate locations of underground utility lines with high-visibility safety paint and/or flags. The service is **free**.

Everyone, including **homeowners and construction companies**, should **always** contact **Miss Utility at 811** or go to [va811.com](http://va811.com) at least **two full business days** – excluding weekends and holidays – **before** you are scheduled to begin any type of digging, regardless of size or depth. This includes, but is not limited to, general digging, gardening, landscaping, home improvements and/or major construction, excavation or demolition. It is required **by law** to contact **Miss Utility at 811** or go to [va811.com](http://va811.com) before digging.



Do not begin digging until the lines have been marked or confirmed as “no conflict.” If you are unsure whether the underground utilities have been marked in your yard or on your job, check back with your One Call Center at **811** to make certain there are no underground utilities where you plan to dig. If for any reason you cannot connect to **Miss Utility at 811**, call **800.552.3120**. To learn more about the **811** waiting period for line marking in the District of Columbia, visit [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com).

Most importantly, dialing **811** can help avoid serious injury and even fatalities, as well as property damage and significant expense that can occur when underground utilities are damaged.

### ALWAYS CALL MISS UTILITY AT 811 BEFORE YOU DIG, EACH DIG, EVERY DIG.

For more information, visit [va811.com](http://va811.com), [call811.com](http://call811.com) or the Common Ground Alliance at [commongroundalliance.com](http://commongroundalliance.com).



### GAS PIPE MAINTENANCE WASHINGTON GAS RESPONSIBILITIES

Washington Gas owns and maintains all natural gas pipes up to and including the gas meter. Our primary focus is to provide safe, reliable service while ensuring that the gas pipe owned by the company is properly maintained. These efforts help avoid the potentially damaging effects of leaks and corrosion on natural gas pipes.

### CUSTOMER RESPONSIBILITIES

Each customer is responsible for maintaining and monitoring all aboveground and underground piping on the customer's side of the meter. If this piping is not properly maintained, it may corrode or leak. Gas piping located on your side of the meter should periodically

be inspected for leaks and corrosion and if necessary, repaired by a licensed natural gas contractor if any unsafe conditions are detected.

If at any time you smell natural gas, immediately evacuate the premises and then call **911** and then **844-WASHGAS** (844.927.4427) from a safe location.

Additionally, it is very important to keep the area around your gas meter clear of all objects, including mulch, construction debris or other flammable materials that could create a fire hazard. Washington Gas policy prohibits building an enclosed structure over a natural gas line.

If you have an enclosed structure over your gas line, or believe you do, please contact us at **844-WASHGAS** (844.927.4427) to arrange for a locating inspection.

## EXCESS FLOW VALVES

An excess flow valve (EFV) may reduce the consequences of a gas leak in the event of a break in the outside service line. The valve is designed to shut down the gas service to your home and reduce the likelihood of unrestricted gas flow from the broken line. The valve is designed to shut down the gas service to your home and reduce the likelihood of unrestricted gas flow from the broken line. Since January 1999, in response to government regulation, Washington Gas has been installing EFVs at no additional charge on all NEW residential natural gas service lines and in cases where residential service lines must be replaced. We will install an EFV on an existing natural gas service line for a cost to the customer of approximately \$2,000 - \$3,000, depending on the time and labor necessary for the installation.

For more information about EFVs, or if you want an EFV installed on your existing residential service line, call our Customer Service line at ☎ **844-WASHGAS** (844.927.4427).

## CUSTOMER CHOICE

The Customer Choice Program allows you to purchase natural gas from a licensed energy supply company of your choice or from Washington Gas. As a regulated utility, Washington Gas charges customers the same price that the company pays for the gas supply. Licensed energy supply companies may have greater flexibility in what they charge you. They compete for your business and some may offer price incentives that could result in cost savings to you.

To cultivate a more competitive energy environment that can benefit consumers, state regulations require Washington Gas and other utilities to provide certain customer information (name, address and gas usage history) to licensed, competitive energy suppliers. This provides customers an opportunity to receive information that may help them make informed decisions about energy choices.

You may call ☎ **703.750.4504** at any time throughout the year, to have your name excluded from or added to the list. However, Washington Gas only updates the list twice annually, in the spring and fall. Hearing impaired customers should use the **711** relay service. Customers outside the local calling area, dial ☎ **800.660.7899**.

Regardless of which company sells you natural gas, Washington Gas will continue to deliver gas safely and reliably to your home or business through its distribution system, address your customer needs, bill and collect for usage, and respond around the clock to natural gas emergencies.

## WASHINGTON AREA FUEL FUND (WAFF)

### HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS STAY WARM IN THE DMV

As the temperatures drop across our area every winter, the need for emergency heating assistance soars. Thousands of households in our community may experience a financial crisis brought on by factors such as illness or unemployment.

Created in 1983, **WAFF** helps to fill this critical gap by providing supplemental funding to help neighbors in need stay warm during the frigid months of the season.



For more information about **WAFF** go to **WAFFHelp.org** . To see if you qualify for **WAFF** assistance, please visit **washingtonareafuelfund.org/eligibility** .



## WASHINGTON GAS CARES – WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER

At Washington Gas, we care about our customers and we're committed to finding flexible, affordable solutions for those who need assistance paying their energy bill.

That's why we have launched Washington Gas Cares, a program designed to connect customers with proven energy assistance programs and a variety of flexible payment plans.



**We're here to help. But you need to get in touch. Don't wait.** The sooner you reach out to us, the sooner we can explore your options and find a solution for you. Visit us at **washingtongascare.com** .

### THROUGH OUR WASHINGTON GAS CARES PROGRAM, WE OFFER:

- ✓ Flexible repayment options such as the Installment Plan
- ✓ Payment assistance such as the Budget Plan
- ✓ Energy savings resources
- ✓ Information about energy assistance programs in each state