

Gas FAQ

Q. What If I smell gas, or just think I might have a gas leak?

Leave the area immediately and call the City of Commerce at 706-335-3200 or 911 from a neighboring home or business. Never turn on or off switches, open or close garage doors, use a flashlight or phone/cellphone in the presence of the gas smell, as these devices may be a source of ignition, causing an explosion.

Q. What causes carbon monoxide?

Carbon monoxide, or "CO" for short, happens when an appliance that burns fuel isn't working right. It can also happen if a car is running inside a garage.

If the gas is burning the right way, it mixes with the oxygen in the air to produce harmless carbon dioxide and water vapor. But if the fuel doesn't get enough oxygen, or if equipment parts are broken or cracked, carbon monoxide can develop.

That's why it's so dangerous to try to use a gas stove to keep warm if the power goes out. There won't be enough oxygen in the room for both the stove and you!

Q. What safety precautions can I take to prevent Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is odorless, colorless, and tasteless. It's produced when any fossil fuel, including natural gas, is burned. When fossil fuels do not burn properly, CO can build up and cause sickness – even death.

Safety measures:

- Never heat your home with your gas range or oven.
- Never burn charcoal inside your home or garage.
- Always open the chimney flue when you use your fireplace.
- Never run a combustion engine, such as your car, lawn mower or snow blower, in enclosed areas.
- Install a CO detector near all bedrooms in the house.
- Do not install a detector near your kitchen or garage or in a room with a furnace.
- If your detector goes off and you feel ill, leave the house and call 911 or the local fire department. If you

Do not feel ill; push your detector's reset button. If the alarm goes off again after a few minutes, open the windows, and check the batteries. If the alarm goes off again leave the house and call 911 or the local fire department.

Recognize the symptoms of CO poisoning:

- Dizziness, nausea, headache and coughing

- Irregular heartbeat
- Pale skin with cherry red lips and ear tips

Know what to do if you suspect CO poisoning:

- Get fresh air and stay outside.
- Call 911 or the local fire department.

Why does natural gas smell like rotten eggs?

When natural gas comes out of the ground, you can't see it or smell it. Gas companies add the odor of rotten eggs to make even the smallest gas leak easier to notice.

Why is the flame on our gas stove blue?

The blue flame means that the gas is getting the oxygen it needs.

If the flame on the stove or pilot light is yellow, it might be giving off harmful fumes. The appliance needs to be checked by a professional right away.

How deep are the gas lines?

Distribution lines (main gas lines), typically 2-inches in diameter, branch into household service lines which are typically half-inch to three-quarter-inch in diameter and buried 12- to 18-inches below the surface. The service lines end at each customer's meter where gas is delivered.

Who do I call if I need my gas lines marked?

To protect you and others in the community; federal and state government, along with your utility provider have made your safety a high priority. Any time you dig or move earth in any way, you are required to "Call before You Dig" at least 48 hours before beginning any digging. When you call 811, they will contact utility owners who will locate all buried utility lines on your property, so you can safely dig and prevent a potentially hazardous condition. Failure to use the 811 system is a known cause of pipeline accidents. Calling before you dig can prevent a costly or even deadly mistake.

Why should I use natural gas?

Natural gas, America's most popular home heating fuel, 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.

Where can I get more information about natural gas?

For additional information please call the city of Commerce at 706-335-4200.