

THE CUSTOMER PIPELINE

An Information Source for the Customers of York County Natural Gas Authority



SPRING 2006

Gas Authority to begin Year-Round Program for Fixed Income Customers

As you are aware, natural gas prices increased dramatically this past winter. Fortunately, we are now seeing market prices fall but it is unclear in the current political and economic climate whether or not prices will return to levels seen before Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Even without the problems associated with a natural disaster, we have seen first-hand how many of our senior citizens and disabled customers struggle to pay their rent and utility bills on incomes of as little as \$500 per month.

While we are sympathetic to these customers, the Authority can do only so much to help them. Specifically, we are limited to setting up payment plans and directing them to help agencies like the Salvation Army and Carolina Community Action. Many times, funds are not available to help.

For that we reason, the Authority partnered with you and the United Way of York County to create the Winter 2006 Fund. The fund was set up for a six-month period (ends with the April billing cycle). We are proud to report that you pledged approximately \$3,500 of which over \$2,000 has been collected and turned over to the United Way for direct heating assistance to fixed income customers.

Many of the recipients of the Winter 2006 Fund have called to thank us for the help they received. One of those customers was Ms. Elizabeth Morrow of Fort Mill who called to tell us how appreciative she was and to "Bless Us" for helping her. When we

See Winter Fund on back

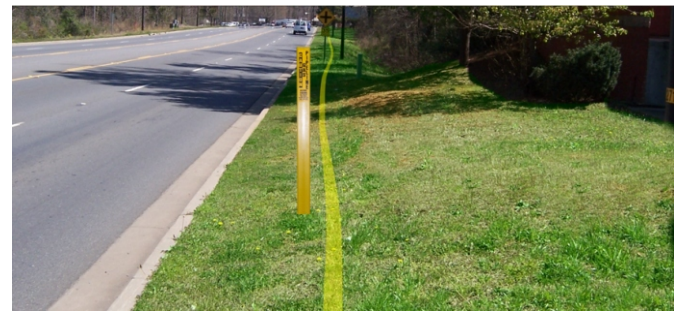
What you should know about Natural Gas Pipelines in York County

York County Natural Gas Authority (YCNGA) is providing you with this public safety information because we own and operate a natural gas pipeline distribution system near your home or business. This information explains what you should do in the event of an emergency and how you can contribute to pipeline safety.

YCNGA has a large network of pipes that deliver natural gas to consumers throughout York County and a small area of Cherokee County. Disruption of any of these facilities could affect public safety.

How to know if a pipeline is near

YCNGA's pipelines are identified with yellow marker posts positioned along the route of the pipeline. Most of YCNGA pipelines are located inside of highway right-of-way. Service lines to individual customers are located on private property and are not marked. If you have a question about the pipeline, you may contact us at 803-329-5255.



Pipeline markers DO NOT indicate the exact location of the pipeline. The pipeline may or may not be directly under a marker.

See Awareness on back

Equalized Billing Signup (until Monday, May 15th)

Want to know how much your gas bill will be every month? Want to avoid those higher gas bills in the winter months? Try our Equalized Billing Program (EBP) and pay an equal payment all year long. To find out how much your monthly payment would be:

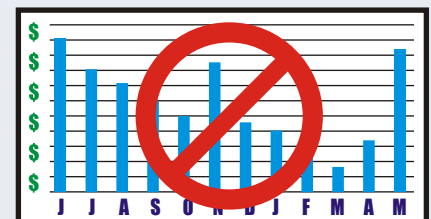
- Call our Customer Service Department at 803-329-5254.
- We will calculate your equal payment amount based on the billing history at the service address. You must have lived at the requested address for 12 months to be eligible for the program.
- We will generate and mail the plan for your review and authorization. You must sign the plan and return it to us before the equalized billing plan can be activated on your account.
- The plan begins to bill in June.

How does the Equalized Billing Program (EBP) work?

The equalized billing plan is set up to bill you in equal amounts for eleven (11) months beginning in June. In the 12th month, (May 2007), we calculate the difference between the actual gas charges and the actual payments received. If your actual charges were more than your payments, you will be billed for the difference. If your actual charges were less than your payments, a check will be mailed to you.

Note to Our Current Equalized Billing Customers

If you are already using our Equalized Billing Program, we will analyze your account after the reconciliation month (May or August depending on your agreement) and if changes are needed, adjust the equal payment amount accordingly. There is no need to call. The new payment amount will be shown on the billing statement following the reconciliation.



contacted her to ask permission to print her name in this article, she said she “wanted to thank you for everything that you did for her”.

Another example is Ms. Pearle Morrison of Fort Mill who requested that the Authority turn off her gas service because she was unable to pay the bill. With the monies you supplied, Ms. Morrison's bill was paid and her service was not interrupted.

There are other stories that could be told but probably the most important one to tell is that even with the generous support you provided, many seniors and disabled customers were turned away due to the lack of funding.

Announcing the Feel the Heat Fund

Because of the tremendous needs and after careful consideration, the Authority will start a new year-round program that will give our customers the opportunity to help many more seniors and disabled customers with winter bills. The new fund will be called the **Feel the Heat Fund**.

It's easy to contribute to the Fund

You can make a tax deductible donation to the fund by simply calling our Customer Service Department to let us know how much you would like to contribute each month. We will add that amount to your monthly gas bill. If you prefer, one-time donations may also be made.

Consider what can be done to impact the lives of our fixed-income citizens if every customer would give \$1 dollar per month. The Authority currently serves over 45,000 customers.

One dollar per month will make a significant impact on the lives of many fixed-income citizens in York County.

How are the monies to be distributed?

The **United Way of York County (UWYC)** will be the lead agency for any funds collected through the Feel the Heat Fund. Each month, the Authority will turn over all funds collected to the UWYC for distribution to qualified customers throughout our service area. The UWYC will assume total control of the funds and make all funding decisions based on the following two criteria:

The funds will be used solely for assistance in paying natural gas bills.

The funds can only be used to help qualified senior and disabled customers based on federal income guidelines.

Please consider making a pledge. Just \$1 per month will go along way toward helping others in the community. Call our Customer Service Department at 329-5254 today.

Keep Your Gas Service Active this Summer

During the spring of each year, some customers who use natural gas for heating only- call to have the gas service terminated. While this seems to be the most economical thing to do, you may be surprised to know that keeping your service active year-round has several advantages.

First, keeping the service active will save you money. When service is disconnected over the summer, a reconnection charge of \$85 is added to your account when the service reconnected in the fall. This reconnection charge covers the cost of two service calls one for the termination of service in the summer and one for the service reconnection in the fall. Second, the service must be active year-round to participate in the equalized billing plan.

Practice Pipeline Safety

The leading cause of pipeline damage is caused by an external force that occurs during excavation activities. Most damage is preventable. It is of critical importance that you call to have your utilities located before starting to dig, even projects you do in your own yard. In South Carolina, a system is in place to notify utility members of your intention to dig. The one-call system is known as the Palmetto Utility Protection Service (PUPS). No matter where you are digging, PUPS should be called at least 72 hours before starting excavation. The number is 1-888-721-7877. This is a free service.

If however, you or a contractor should accidentally come into contact with our pipeline, call our office at 329-5255 or after hours at 800-354-7459. Authority personnel will be dispatched immediately to inspect the pipeline for damage or leaks.

Detecting a leak on the pipeline

Leaks on pipelines are rare but they can occur. Signs of a natural gas pipeline leak include:

- Dead or discolored vegetation
- A hissing or roaring sound
- Dirt or debris blowing up into the air
- Persistent bubbles in steams, ponds or wet areas
- Flames if a leak has ignited
- The smell of rotten eggs

Natural Gas is colorless and odorless. To aid in detecting leaks or an unintentional release, a harmless odorant is added to help people smell gas in the event of a leak. Leaks can be dangerous. Natural gas is flammable and can be ignited by flame, electric spark or static electricity.

If a leak is detected or suspected

If you notice any of the conditions described, leave the area immediately and warn others to stay away. From another location contact York County Natural Gas Authority immediately at 329-5255 or after hours at 800-354-7459. Do not strike a match, start an engine or operate an electric switch in the area.

Share this information with others

Please share this information with employees and friends. If you would like additional copies of this information, please call 329-5255 and ask for the pipeline safety information brochure.

Access Your Gas Account Online or By Telephone

York County Natural Gas Online (EPAY)

York County Natural Gas Online is accessed through our website www.ycnga.com. Once in the website, click on the **EPAY** link. First time customers need to register on the site. To register, click on the “Registration” link. You will need the most current copy of your gas bill to register.



Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System

The Interactive Voice Response system is quickly accessed over the phone. To use this system, dial 980-4877. You will need your account number in order access your account information and pay your bill.

