



Northeast Supply Enhancement

## NATURAL GAS: THE FACTS

Learn the facts for natural gas customers and its environmental benefits.



# Natural Gas: The Facts

## Natural Gas Customers

- Natural gas serves nearly 66.7 million homes; 5.4 million businesses like hotels, restaurants, hospitals, schools and supermarkets; 192,000 factories; and 1,900 electric generating units. On a daily basis, the average U.S. home uses 196 cubic feet of natural gas.
- Natural gas comprises almost one-fourth of all primary energy used in the U.S. and is directly linked to jobs and economic health. The natural gas industry supports the employment of nearly 3 million Americans in all 50 states.
- Residential space heating and water heating cost analyses show that natural gas costs less to use than other major home energy sources. Households that use natural gas appliances for heating, water heating, cooking and clothes drying spend an average of \$840 less per year than homes using electric appliances.
- Fertilizer used to grow crops is composed almost entirely of natural gas components, so U.S. agricultural producers rely on an affordable, stable supply of natural gas.
- Natural gas utilities do not earn a profit on the natural gas they deliver. They earn their revenues from the service and delivery fees they charge customers to transport the natural gas to them. This fee is directly linked to the volume of natural gas consumed, rather than the price of natural gas being delivered.

## Environmental Benefits

- Washington State University conducted a nationwide field study in 2015 that found that as little as 0.1 percent of the natural gas delivered nationwide is emitted from local distribution systems.
- Due to the higher efficiency of natural gas combined cycle generation compared with coal-fired boilers, natural gas emits 52 to 56 percent less GHG than coal for the same amount of electricity.
- Natural gas is the cleanest fossil fuel on the market today because it produces much lower emissions than those of other fossil fuels like coal or oil. It is also extraordinarily efficient.

**72**  
MILLION

*There are more than 72 million natural gas customers in the United States.*

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## Efficiency

- The direct use of natural gas in America’s homes and businesses achieves 92 percent energy efficiency.
- The average American home consumes 40 percent less natural gas than it did 40 years ago.
- By funding natural gas efficiency programs, natural gas utilities helped customers save 175 trillion Btu of energy and offset 9.1 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions in 2014.

## Domestically Abundant

- Domestic gas production accounts for nearly 93 percent of all natural gas consumed in the United States and shale gas production now accounts for about 50 percent of gas produced.
- According to the Energy Information Administration and the Potential Gas Committee, the U.S. estimated future supply of natural gas stood at 2,884 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) at year end 2014 – enough to meet America’s energy needs for more than 100 years.

## Safe and Reliable

- According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, pipelines are the safest form of energy transportation. Safety is the number one priority for America’s natural gas utilities.
- There are more than 2.5 million miles of pipeline that transport natural gas to more than 177 million Americans throughout the U.S.
- Natural gas utilities spend more than \$22 billion annually to help enhance the safety of natural gas distribution and transmission systems.
- The dedicated efforts of natural gas utilities over the past decade have led to an approximately 40 percent decline in serious pipeline incidents throughout the natural gas distribution system.
- There are nearly 1.3 million miles of plastic pipe – the leading edge of advanced utility pipeline materials. In the past decade, natural gas utilities have installed updated plastic lines at a rate of 30,000 miles per year.

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**2.5 MILLION**