

Natural Gas Pipeline Safety:

Customer Awareness & Damage Prevention

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Safety Checklist: Preventing Damage to Your Gas Meter

- ✔ Use caution when mowing, weed trimming and using snow removal equipment near a gas meter.
- ✔ Do not store garden hoses, anchor pet leashes, or use a gas meter as a post to lock up bicycles.
- ✔ Outdoor gas meters should not be enclosed. Do not have house additions or decks built around or over the top of a meter.
- ✔ Ice and snow should be carefully removed to avoid damage to the meter and piping.

Austin Utilities welcomes your questions about natural gas safety. The following are ways to contact us with your questions or for more information:

- ◆ Call **507-433-8886** or stop by our office during regular business hours:
 - * Monday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
 - * Tues-Fri, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
- ◆ Visit our website at www.austinutilities.com



400 4th Street NE Austin MN

Austin Utilities is a community-owned, not-for-profit natural gas, water and electric supplier, created by local residents more than a century ago to provide high quality, affordable services tailored to the unique needs of the Austin area.

Carbon Monoxide: What You Need to Know

What is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas produced by incomplete burning of natural gas. Carbon Monoxide is a dangerous gas that can be harmful in large amounts over a long exposure period.

Is Carbon Monoxide Present in My Home?

Signs of CO in your home could include water or soot collecting near a burner or vent, or excessive indoor humidity with heavy condensation on walls and windows.

What are the Symptoms of CO poisoning?

The initial symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the flu but **without a fever**. They include:

- ◆ Headache
- ◆ Dizziness or disorientation
- ◆ Nausea or vomiting
- ◆ Fatigue and difficulty waking
- ◆ Shortness of breath.

If these symptoms are present, everyone in the home feels ill, and symptoms seem to disappear when you leave the house you may have a CO problem.

What Should I Do?

Please call Austin Utilities if you suspect a CO problem. A Gas Service Technician will immediately be dispatched. We have the tools to test and inspect various natural gas appliances in your home for carbon monoxide. This service is available to our customers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Austin Utilities suggest all customers have a working Carbon Monoxide detector installed in their home.

Natural Gas Pipeline Safety: Public Awareness & Damage Prevention

Austin Utilities Natural Gas Pipelines A History of Safety and Reliability

Since 1935 Austin Utilities has continued to provide safe and reliable natural gas service to our customers. Today natural gas is distributed to more than 10,000 customers in Austin, MN. Austin Utilities safely operates and maintains over 177 miles of natural gas main and service lines in compliance with State and Federal standards. We are also continuing to upgrade existing pipelines by replacing older gas main and services.

Austin Utilities takes great pride and concern for our customers to provide them a safe and reliable source of natural gas. Annual leak surveys are performed on buried pipelines and above ground meter sets. Business Districts, Schools and Churches all receive quarterly patrolling inspections of their natural gas metering and piping looking for any potential problems.



Austin Utilities Gas Service Technician inspecting a commercial gas meter set for leaks.

How do I Recognize a Natural Gas Leak?

Leaks are unusual, but we want you to be able to recognize a leak should it occur. Your sense of sight, hearing and smell are all ways to identify a leak.

Look:

- ◆ Dead or brown vegetation spots in lawns or boulevards.
- ◆ Dirt being blown into the air.
- ◆ Water bubbling at a creek, pond, river, or wet flooded area.
- ◆ Fire or explosion near a natural gas line.

Listen:

- ◆ Hissing, blowing or roaring sound.

Smell:

- ◆ Sulphur or rotten egg smell.
(may not always be present)

What Should I do if I Suspect a Leak?

- ◆ Leave the area immediately.
- ◆ Do not operate any type of electrical device or source of ignition. This includes phones, cell phones and light switches (anything that could cause a spark).
- ◆ Do not attempt to make any repairs or extinguish a fire.
- ◆ From a remote and safe location immediately call Austin Utilities at 433-8886.

Austin Utilities will dispatch a trained Gas Service Technician who will take the appropriate steps to monitor the leak and shut down any equipment or valves to minimize the impact of the leak. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 day a week.

Homeowners Can Help Prevent Natural Gas Leaks

Call Before You Dig

Buried utilities could exist just about anywhere you dig. Homeowners can prevent damage to underground utilities and service interruptions by calling Gopher State One Call (GSOC). GSOC is the underground utility notification center for the state of Minnesota. Calling GSOC is **free**, so please call before you dig.

Austin Utilities participates and complies with the GSOC requirements by locating all natural gas pipelines within proposed excavation areas.

Helpful Tips for Homeowners when Digging








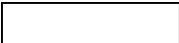
- ◆ Call GSOC two business days before digging.
- ◆ GSOC can only locate services that utilities have installed.
- ◆ A private locator can locate private services such as sprinkler lines or natural gas lines to a garage.
- ◆ Mark the digging area with white stakes or paint.
- ◆ Hand dig carefully within two (2) feet of either side of the utility markings.

Report any damage to the affected utility immediately. Nicks to cable and dents to steel could eventually cause a leak.

Planting a Tree or Building a Fence? Call Before You Dig!



This chart explains the color coded markings you will see when locates are complete:

	Electric
	Natural Gas/Oil/Steam
	Communication CATV
	Water
	Reclaimed Water
	Sewer
	Temp. Survey Markings
	Proposed Excavation

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!
GOPHER STATE ONE CALL
1-800-252-1166