



National Fuel Offers Winter Safety, Efficiency Tips and Provides Payment Assistance Information

(Jan. 4, 2022) WILLIAMSVILLE, N.Y. – National Fuel advises homeowners to be prepared and safe this winter and pay attention to outdoor gas meters, furnaces, and vents.

Snow, ice, and extreme cold temperatures can pose a variety of issues for heating systems. Ensure outdoor gas meter safety and proper service by:

- Keeping the gas meter and area around the meter free of snow.
- Clearing paths to the meter.
- Informing those working, shoveling, plowing, or snow blowing of the meter location.
- Not letting children play or climb on the meter.
- Exercising caution when removing icicles from the meter or the area above it.
- Calling National Fuel, 1-800-365-3234, if a meter becomes encased in ice.

Natural gas furnace exhaust vents can become easily clogged by debris, ice, or snow, causing the furnace to shut off or operate inefficiently. Blocked vents also can lead to a buildup of carbon monoxide (CO) gas inside a residence. CO is a colorless, odorless, and dangerous gas produced when fuel is burned without enough air for complete combustion. CO poisoning can cause death. Symptoms include fatigue, coughing, headache, irregular breathing, dizziness, overall paleness, nausea, and cherry red lips and ears. Open windows and doors, move outside, and call 911 immediately if experiencing symptoms. Avoid a CO emergency by:

- Having a professional inspect and test chimney and heating equipment annually.
- Install at least one CO detector.
- Never use a gas oven or stovetop for heating.
- Never run a gasoline engine, generator, or automobile in an enclosed space.
- Never use a portable charcoal or propane grill indoors.

Smell gas, leave fast! If a rotten-egg natural gas odor is present, leave the premises immediately and call National Fuel's emergency line, 1-800-444-3130, from a different location. If you smell gas outdoors, call National Fuel's emergency number and provide the address nearest to the site of the odor.

Customers should be aware that similar to smoke and CO detectors, natural gas detectors are available to detect gas leaks and will sound an audible alarm or voice alert when natural gas is detected. Customers should leave the premises immediately and call National Fuel's emergency line, 1-800-444-3130, from a different location when gas is detected. Natural gas detectors are available at home improvement stores and online. To learn more about natural gas safety, visit nationalfuel.com/utility/gas-safety.

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Efficiency Tips

Customers can save money this winter and help the environment by becoming more energy efficient. Small, inexpensive adjustments include:

- Using caulk or weather-stripping to reduce leaks and save up to 10% on monthly energy bills.
- Buying a programmable thermostat or setting thermostats between 65° and 70° during the winter and at 58° when away from the house.
- Closing vents and doors in unused rooms, closing dampers on unused fireplaces, and using registers to direct warm airflow across the floor.
- Setting water heaters to 120° or the medium temperature setting, and draining a quart of water from the bottom of the heating tank every three months to remove sediment.

Payment Assistance Available

National Fuel customers who are having trouble paying their bills are encouraged to call 1-800-365-3234.

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is open. A family of four earning \$62,983 or less may qualify for assistance this year. A one-time is now available to pay up to \$10,000 in gas and/or electric arrears. For more information, visit HEAPhelps.com or call 1-877-443-2743.

Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) remains open for eligible tenant households. ERAP helps renters impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic receive assistance with paying rent and utility bills. Bill assistance includes past and future bills. Visit nysrenthelp.otda.ny.gov/en or call 1-844-NY1-RENT.

Other payment assistance programs include:

- The **Neighbor For Neighbor Heat Fund** offers grants up to \$500 year-round. Qualified customers must be aged 55 years or older, disabled, currently receiving unemployment benefits, or are military veterans.
- **Deferred Payment Agreement** allows customers to negotiate a repayment plan based on individual financial circumstances.
- **Special Protections** is applicable for households where all residents are aged 62 years and up or are 18 years and younger, or are blind or disabled.
- **Budget Plan** billing allows winter payments to be spread out over the whole year, providing stable monthly bills.

National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation is the Utility segment of National Fuel Gas Company, a diversified energy company that is engaged in a number of natural gas-related activities. The Utility provides natural gas service to nearly 2 million residents in Western New York and northwestern Pennsylvania. For more information, visit nationalfuel.com.