

Electric and Natural Gas Safety

Electricity and natural gas are important to a healthy and comfortable home. We use them so often that we can forget the dangers they can present. Make sure you know these safety rules for keeping your family safe and your home protected.

Electric Safety

Main Switch: Find the main electrical switch for your home. This is called a circuit breaker and it works to protect your electric system from getting overloaded.

Be Aware of Warning Signs: Electricity is a leading cause of home fires. Watch for signals that you may be in danger and that your system needs repair. Examples of warning signs:

- If the power goes off in part of your house, causing you to reset the circuit breaker, this is a sign that your electrical system is overloaded.
- Warm or discolored wall outlets and switch plates may mean that the wires are faulty or burning.
- A burning or rubber smell could mean an appliance is overheating.



Indoor Safety: Look at all of the cords that you use for plugging things in, including appliances, lamps, hair dryers, fans, radios, and anything else that uses electricity. If the wires are showing or the plugs are loose they are not safe to use. Damaged cords can cause fire or electric shock.

- Do not change the plug at the end of the cord. **Never** remove the third prong on a plug to make it fit into an outlet. You can buy an inexpensive adapter that fits the wall and the plug at many hardware stores.
- When you disconnect a plug from the wall, always hold the plug to remove it from the outlet. Never pull on the cord.
- Don't overload an outlet. Plugging too many things into one outlet may cause it to work too hard and overheat, which could cause a fire.
- Keep electrical appliances away from water. Never touch an appliance when you are near water.



Outdoor Safety:

- Be careful of water and wet areas.
- Do not use indoor appliances such as lamps or fans outside.
- Do not use electrical appliances in the rain.
- Keep electrical appliances far away from swimming pools.
- Always stay far away from overhead power lines.
- Be careful when repairing roofs, painting, fixing antennas, and trimming trees. If your tree has grown into the power lines, ask the utility company for help. **NEVER** touch an electric power line that has fallen to the ground. Call 911 and stay away.

Natural Gas Safety



Natural gas is used to heat your home, for cooking, and to heat water.

Watch out for signs of a gas leak!

- **Smell:** Natural gas has a smell similar to rotten eggs. The odor has been added to alert you to a possible leak.
- **Listen:** Whistling, hissing, or rumbling sounds coming from an appliance or underground can be signs of a leak.
- **Look:** Damaged connections from the wall to a gas appliance such as a stove or water heater, dirt spraying into the air, or patches of dying plants near a pipeline might be signs of a gas leak.

If you suspect a gas leak, remember:

- Remain calm
- Leave the area immediately and call 911
- Do not light a match or candle
- Do not use a flashlight, turn lights on or off, or use appliances
- Using electricity nearby could cause a fire

Staying Safe at Home: **Never** use your gas stove or oven to heat your home. This could cause gas poisoning or start a fire in your house.

Keep your stove clean and make sure that there is no grease near the burners. If a grease fire occurs, do not try to put it out with water. Use a fire extinguisher or baking soda to smother the fire.

Your CHANGES organization can check your bills, help you fill out paperwork, talk to the utility company for you, and answer your questions and/or concerns.

Contact your local CHANGES organization for assistance:

Community Help and Awareness of
Natural Gas and Electricity Services

“CHANGES”



CHANGES is a program
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