

To: City of Blakely Utility Customers
From: City of Blakely Gas Department

Natural gas is America's most popular home fuel, heating more households than all other energy forms combined. In all, 52% of all heated U.S. households have natural gas heat.

Natural gas is increasingly popular for use by homeowners, schools, businesses, factories and electric power-generation plants because it is efficient, clean, reliable and a economical compared to alternative energy sources.

In our community, the City of Blakely Natural Gas Department provides natural gas to more than 875 customers through a network of underground distribution lines. Main gas lines branch into households' service lines. The pipes are typically made of "caution yellow" plastic or tar coated steel which helps prevent corrosion. As the industry shifts, steel pipes are being replaced with the more durable plastic piping. The main lines are typically 2-inches in diameter and are located roughly two feet below the surface, while service lines are typically half-inch to three-quarter-inch in diameter and buried 12-to-inches below the surface.

That is why it is extremely important to "Call Before You Dig" or move earth in any capacity. Whether installing an underground dog fence, running water to an outbuilding or post-hole digging for a new mailbox post, underground piping and other utilities can be damaged. Call the Utilities Protection Center of Georgia at 1-800-282-7411 and then the City of Blakely will locate our buried utility lines on your property so you can safely dig and prevent a potentially hazardous

condition. In 2004, the Federal Office of Pipeline Safety recorded 48 cases of third party excavation damage to distribution lines nationwide resulting in more than \$10 million dollars worth of property damage and four injuries. Calling before you dig can prevent a costly or even deadly mistake.

Natural gas is a colorless, odorless gas; however, a chemical that smells like rotten eggs is added to help detect a possible leak. If you think you smell gas, no matter how fleeting, leave the area immediately and call 229-723-5150 or 911 from a neighboring home or business. Never turn off switches or use a flashlight or phone in the presence of the gas smell, because an electric spark could ignite the gas, causing an explosion.

Do your part to familiarize yourself and your family with these natural gas safety tips and continue to enjoy the value, comfort and benefits of America's cleanest, most efficient energy source!

This message is brought to you by City of Blakely Natural Gas Department as a public service. To learn more about our natural gas service and the benefits of natural gas, call **229-723-5150**.