

WeConnect

Energy news for our gas customers in Massachusetts



Your safety is our top priority. We respond to emergencies 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Gas Emergency
1-800-233-5325
or call **911**
Customer Service
1-800-233-5325

Taking steps to avoid slips and falls this winter.

Icy sidewalks. Slippery steps. Dangerous driveways. During the winter months our field employees encounter a variety of walking conditions. That's why practicing the right way to walk in slippery conditions is an important part of our safety training. You can help by clearing a path if you know we'll be visiting your home or business.



Follow these tips to help avoid injury whenever you encounter winter walking conditions.

- Avoid taking shortcuts across snow-covered areas. Always use cleared sidewalks, paths and parking lots. Be especially careful when stepping to or from different levels (e.g. down or up steps or from curbs).
- Wear the proper footwear for the weather conditions – boots with good tread or anti-slip footwear.
- Keep your eyes on the path and avoid slippery surfaces when possible.
- Take small steps when slippery surfaces can't be avoided.
- Hold on to the handrails on steps and stairs. Place as much of your foot on the step as possible.
- Keep your hands out of your pockets and distribute the weight of bags or packages evenly for better balance.
- Remove as much snow and water from your boots as you can prior to entering a building. Recognize that wet floors and stairs are likely very slippery.

 For a look at the Slippery Surface Simulator that's used in our training program, visit <https://youtube/xrs5Es4mV0U>

Manage energy bills with Balanced Billing.

When it comes to managing winter energy bills, Balanced Billing* can help by allowing you to spread out your energy costs over the course of the year, so your bill is more predictable. You'll still pay for the exact amount of energy used annually, but your consumption rate is divided by 12 to determine your monthly budget amount.

You'll also find energy-saving tips, rebates, incentives and services that can help you keep costs down. When it comes to dealing with winter bills, the right tools can make all the difference.

*To qualify for Balanced Billing, your account must be current with no outstanding balance.

Keep meters, vents clear of snow and ice.

Winter weather can result in the buildup of ice and snow on and around your gas meter.

- Ice and snow buildup around the fresh air and exhaust vents for gas appliances may result in equipment malfunction and could possibly create harmful carbon monoxide.
- Icicles on overhangs near the meter can fall and damage the meter and pipes. Be sure to remove them regularly.
- Please mark your meter if it is located near a snowplow path.



What if I am unable to pay my bill?

We offer payment arrangements to residential customers with past due balances. Please call the phone number on your bill or visit us online to determine your eligibility for these arrangements.

Where to look for assistance with your bill this winter.

If you are having trouble paying your gas bill this winter you may qualify to receive help from the Good Neighbor Energy Fund, which is administered through the Salvation Army. For more information, please call:

1-800-334-3047 (area codes: 617, 508, 781 or 978)

1-800-262-1320 (area code: 413)

Visit **www.magoodneighbor.org** for more information.



Dryer safety starts with a clean filter.

Failure to clean lint from the dryer trap, vents and other areas poses a safety hazard and also reduces energy efficiency. Consider the following for your dryer safety checklist:



- Most dryer vents and dryers should be inspected every two to three years.
- Replace plastic or vinyl exhaust hoses with rigid or flexible metal venting.
- Check the outdoor vent flap to make sure it is not covered by snow.
- Always operate the dryer with the lint filter and clean it after each use.
- Turn the dryer off if you leave home or when you go to bed.

Easy ways to stop heat loss.

Windows and doors can be responsible for up to 25 percent of winter heat loss in a typical home and 33 percent of summer heat gain.

Using affordable supplies from a local home improvement retailer, you may be able to seal your windows and doors yourself.

- Reduce air leakage at the bottom of exterior doors. For a no-cost solution, use rolled-up towels.
- Install sweeps at the bottom of exterior doors. Available at most hardware and home supply stores, sweeps are generally plastic or metal strips that you apply to the bottom of the door.
- Install low-cost compressible foam. This creates a tight seal around the door. Don't forget to seal doors into unheated areas of your home, such as the garage.



Help a loved one to remember to pay their bill.

If you have a friend or relative who occasionally neglects bills, we can help you help them with our Third Party Notification program. Any customer can designate a relative, trusted friend or agency to be a caregiver and receive copies of notices should the account become overdue. The caregiver is in no way responsible for bill payment, but can alert the customer if there is a problem. For more information, please call the number on your bill.

Know carbon monoxide sources, symptoms.

Known as the silent killer, carbon monoxide is a highly poisonous gas that is colorless, odorless and tasteless. Common sources include improperly-used or incorrectly vented fuel-burning appliances such as furnaces, stoves, water heaters and fireplaces.

What you can do

Have all heating equipment checked yearly by a professional.

- Install at least one UL listed carbon monoxide detector in your home, near bedrooms.
- Never use a gas range for heating.
- Never use generators in homes, garages, basements, crawl spaces or other enclosed or partially enclosed areas, even with ventilation.

The symptoms of carbon monoxide are similar to the flu and may include headaches, dizziness, weakness, sleepiness and nausea.

If your carbon monoxide unit sounds the alarm, go outside immediately and call **911**.

This is an important notice. Please have it translated.

Este é um aviso importante. Quiera mandá-lo traduzir.

Este es un aviso importante. Sirvase mandarlo traducir.

Avis important. Veuillez traduire immédiatement.

Questa è un'informazione importante,

Si prega di tradurla.

ĐÂY LÀ MỘT BẢN THÔNG CÁO QUAN TRỌNG

XIN VUI LÒNG CHO DỊCH LẠI THÔNG CÁO ẤY

Это очень важное сообщение.

Пожалуйста, попросите чтобы

вам его перевели.

Smell gas. Act fast.

Gas Emergency?

1-800-233-5325

or call **911**