

News about your natural gas bill for the upcoming winter.

National Grid has submitted a proposal to the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities for winter natural gas prices. This proposed adjustment is a contrast to 2015-16, when customers saved an average of \$5 each month through a bill credit. Due in part to the expiration of that credit, a typical residential natural gas customer could see a roughly \$14 increase in monthly bills, effective November 1, if approved by the DPU. For typical commercial and industrial customers the rate impacts will range between 2 and 9 percent.

Why did National Grid propose to raise natural gas delivery rates at this time?

National Grid requests changes to its gas rates every year around this time, with the changes taking effect on November 1 of each year. While we change our rates at other times of the year, November 1 is also the time when we transition into the peak, or winter season. We recognize the challenges our customers face managing their winter heating bills. There are two primary reasons for the adjustment at this time.

1. In general, when gas usage is high, National Grid returns money to our customers the following year. When usage is lower, such as it was last winter, customers may in fact receive a surcharge, as is the case this year.
2. We are working to improve safety and reliability through our main replacement program. We expect to replace nearly 140 miles of gas main this year, compared to 126 miles in 2015.

Will there be changes to the gas supply portion of my bill this winter?

Yes, our gas supply rates always change on November 1 and May 1, indicating the seasonality of our gas costs and thus our gas supply rates. Supply – the portion of the bill the National Grid passes to customers at cost – is responsible for less than a dollar of the anticipated monthly increase for the typical residential customer.

Are there programs available to help me manage my natural gas bill?

Energy Saving Programs – From simple no-cost tips to more comprehensive energy efficiency programs, we offer solutions whether you rent or own your home. Maintaining an efficient heating system is an important step to conserving energy. Have your heating system serviced once every two years by a licensed, qualified professional. Now is a great time for homeowners to sign up for a no-cost energy assessment to learn ways to save money and improve comfort.

Balanced Billing – This program allows you to spread out your energy costs over the course of the year, so your bill is more predictable. To qualify, your account must be current, with no outstanding balance.

Payment Assistance – Lower-income families and customers needing special assistance may qualify for programs to help meet their energy needs. We also offer payment arrangements for customers who have fallen behind on payments and cannot pay their bill in full. For additional information on payment assistance programs, please call our Customer Contact Center at **800-322-3223**.

Energy Suppliers – You can choose who supplies your natural gas. We encourage you to consider all available energy supply options. Whoever you choose as your supplier, we'll continue to deliver your natural gas, maintain our system and respond to emergencies.

To learn more about these solutions and options, please visit ngrid.com/billhelp