

Tips of the Trade

If you suspect a natural gas leak

Welcome to National Grid's Tips of the Trade. National Grid is committed to your safety, and these tips are intended to help you work safely near our facilities. Please review these tips with your coworkers at your tailgate or toolbox meetings before work begins.

Please help us improve our safety tips to meet your training needs. Take our two-minute survey.

Take Survey

Recognizing gas leaks

If you're like most people, you've learned to rely on your sense of smell to detect a natural gas leak. In and around your home, that distinctive, sulfur-like odor is in fact a sure sign that natural gas is leaking from an appliance or pipe. But odor is not the only sign, especially on the job site. And in some cases, natural gas leaks don't smell at all.

National Grid adds the odorant mercaptan to natural gas. This odor, which is similar to sulfur or rotten eggs, helps most people smell a leak. But in some cases, the odor of natural gas can be masked by other smells, or the gas can be stripped of its odor. This is known as "odor fade."

So be sure to not only rely on your nose, but your eyes and ears as well to detect the warning signs of a gas leak. Be alert for hissing, whistling or roaring sounds; dirt blowing into the air from a hole in the ground; continuous bubbling in water; or a damaged connection to a gas appliance.



Respond safely to a natural gas emergency

If you hit a gas pipeline or suspect a gas leak, protect yourself, your coworkers and the public by taking the following steps:

1. **Leave your equipment behind.** Warn others of the danger, and leave the area quickly. Stay away until utility personnel say it is safe to return.
2. **Do not use matches, lighters or anything electrical – even a phone.** A spark could ignite the gas.
3. **Do not operate underground pipeline valves or attempt to stop the flow of gas.** Never bury a contacted pipeline.
4. **From a safe location, call 911, and then call National Grid at one of the numbers below.**
5. **Report the incident to your supervisor.**

There's no such thing as minor damage

Even a slight gouge, scrape or dent in a pipeline or its coating may cause a catastrophic break or leak in the future. Cutting or damaging a wire attached to or running alongside the pipe may make it impossible to locate. Report **ALL** gas line contacts to National Grid so crews can inspect the line and make necessary repairs.

Would you like to know more?

Additional overhead and digging guidelines, case studies, instructional videos and training tools can all be found, at no charge to you, on [National Grid's e-SMARTworkers](#) website.

Do you like this email series? Do you find the information helpful? We'd like to know. Please reply to this email and tell us what you think, or let us know what topics you'd like to see in future emails.

For more contractor safety information, visit [ngridssafety.com](#).



Know what's below.
811 before you dig.

Smell Gas. Act Fast.

Call 811 or enter an online request at least 72 hours before digging in Massachusetts and Rhode Island (excluding weekends and legal holidays) and at least two full working days in New York (excluding the day you call and weekends and legal holidays). It's the law!

- **Massachusetts and Rhode Island:** [digsafe.com](#)
- **Upstate New York:** [digsafelynewyork.com](#)
- **Metro New York, Long Island and the Rockaways:** [newyork-811.com](#)

In case of an emergency, call 911 and National Grid.

National Grid emergency contacts:

Massachusetts contacts

Gas emergencies:
1-800-233-5325

Electric emergencies:
1-800-465-1212

New York contacts

Gas emergencies:
Long Island and the
Rockaways:
1-800-490-0045

Metro NY:
1-718-643-4050

Upstate NY:
1-800-892-2345

Electric emergencies:
1-800-867-5222

Rhode Island contacts

Gas emergencies:
1-800-640-1595

Electric emergencies:
1-800-465-1212