



Natural gas leaks and spark hazards



Even the tiniest spark can ignite leaking natural gas, and spark hazards are everywhere! You may already be aware of some common ones, such as matches and electrical switches. But did you know that vape pens, doorbells and even garage door openers can all create a spark that could ignite a gas leak? You can reduce the risks of gas ignition on your job site by understanding gas leak behavior and eliminating spark hazards for any known or suspected leak.

How leaking gas behaves

Natural gas is lighter than air and will travel upward through any available space. An unconfined gas leak will rise in a plume before it disperses into the surrounding atmosphere. However, dense tree canopy, nearby buildings and weather conditions can concentrate the plume and keep it from dispersing rapidly.

Gas that leaks underground will move laterally under roadways and sidewalks, along natural gas pipes and along other utility lines until it finds a way up. In this fashion, gas may accumulate in buildings some distance from the original leak site.



Eliminating spark hazards

When you know or even suspect that natural gas is leaking, make sure everyone at the job site avoids using anything that could create a spark:

- Do NOT turn off engines or generators. A spark from the ignition could ignite leaking gas.
- Do NOT attempt to bend, crimp, tape or otherwise try to stop the flow of gas from a broken pipe. Moving or even touching a plastic gas pipe may discharge an electrical spark.
- Do NOT use matches, lighters, cigarettes (including e-cigarettes or vape pens), light switches or anything electrical – not even a phone or garage door opener. Do NOT ring doorbells; knock instead.
- Do NOT step on doormats or shuffle across carpet. Friction from boots could create a spark of static electricity.

Leave the area quickly. From a safe location, call 911 and National Grid immediately and report the incident to your supervisor. Stay away from the area until National Grid personnel say it is safe to return.

Smell Gas. Act Fast. Be the one to call 911.

To report emergencies, **call 911** and **National Grid** immediately.
Always **call 911** if you suspect a gas leak!