

Safety Memo

Natural Gas Safety

Natural gas is one of the safest, most reliable, efficient, and environmentally friendly fuels in use today. It is used for heating, cooking, heating water, as well as the fuel for other natural gas appliances. Like any other form of energy, it must be handled responsibly. Always remember safety first when operating natural gas appliances of any kind. Natural gas for Delta State University is delivered through a jurisdictional natural gas pipeline system. Delta State University is known as a Master Meter Operator and has valves, regulators and pressure stations on campus.

Natural gas is a nontoxic, colorless, and odorless fuel that is lighter than air. This lighter-than-air quality is an important safety factor. If a leak occurs, natural gas will mix readily with air and rise into the atmosphere. As a safety measure, the natural gas, which is piped on campus (like the natural gas used in your home,) has a harmless odor similar to rotten eggs so you can easily detect it even when the smallest amount of gas escapes.

From the design and construction to operations and maintenance, natural gas utilities like ours follow high standards in order to keep natural gas pipelines incident-free.

Damage Prevention

Natural gas is safe, tested, and regulated; however, the gas system's most common hazard is from 3rd party damage as a result of excavation. Before any excavations are done on campus, contractors must contact Dig Safety, the Mississippi One-Call System, Inc. 1-800-227-6477 or 811, and they should call DSU Facilities Management 662-846-4740. The motto of "Always call before you dig" is very important for safety reasons, and it is as easy as **dialing 8-1-1** which is required by law.

Detecting a Natural Gas Leak

Although natural gas is one of the safest fuels in use today, occasionally leaks can occur. There are three key ways to recognize a natural gas leak.

- **Look.** Blowing dirt, bubbling creeks or ponds, dry spots in moist areas or dead plants surrounded by green, live plants also may indicate a natural gas leak.
- **Listen.** An unusual hissing sound near gas lines or appliances may indicate a natural gas leak.
- **Smell.** In its raw state, natural gas is colorless and odorless. Natural gas utility companies add a substance called mercaptan to create the familiar, rotten-egg-like odor usually associated with natural gas. You should take action even if you detect only a faint odor of natural gas in the air.

Natural Gas Safety Tips

Here are some key words to help you remember what to do if a natural gas leak is suspected.

- **Leave.** Leave the area immediately. Do not try to find the leak.
- **Don't touch.** Do not smoke, use a cell phone, flashlight, turn on or off any lights or appliances or operate any kind of vehicle or equipment that could create a spark.
- **Dial.** Immediately notify us. If a leak is suspected, call the DSU Police Department 662-846-4155.

REMEMBER: Never try to find the leak yourself!

To report a gas leak: Call the Delta State University Police at 662-846-4155.

For additional information: Contact DSU Master Meter Operator Jeff Borganelli at 662-846-4740.