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Safety Notice to Natural Gas Customers

Gas Line Maintenance Requirements

Recently, the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) issued an order to all operators of natural gas service line (natural gas distribution companies) requiring them to notify customers who own buried natural gas piping not maintained by the operator that the customer is responsible for maintaining the buried piping.

“Maintenance” means to monitor buried piping for corrosion if it is metallic, survey for leaks, and if an unsafe condition is found, shut off the flow of gas, advise the customer of the need to repair the unsafe condition, or repair the unsafe condition.

“Customers’ buried piping” means buried natural gas piping not owned by the utility.

How Do I Know If I Own Buried Piping?

The portion of buried piping that you own is generally the portion of gasline on your side of the meter. Many customers do not own any buried gas piping.

What Are Customers’ Responsibilities Regarding Buried Piping?

BUECI does not maintain customer-owned buried piping. All customers should periodically inspect the buried piping for leaks, and customers who own buried metallic piping should also periodically monitor the buried piping for corrosion. If the buried piping is not maintained, it may be subject to potential hazards of corrosion and leakage.

Customers’ buried gas piping should be repaired or replaced if any leaks or unsafe conditions are discovered.

How Do I Know If I Have A Natural Gas Leak?

Signs of a natural gas leak include:

- Areas of dead vegetation directly above the buried piping.
- A meter dial that continues to move after all natural gas appliances and equipment have been shut off.
- Unexplained sudden increase in gas consumption
- Distinct natural gas odor

If you become aware of a gas leak in your piping, please call BUECI, 852-6166 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. and emergency line at 852-3176 after 5 p.m.

What Could Happen If There Is A Leak?

If a leak is discovered in a customer’s piping during the course of a leak survey, the customer will be notified. If a leak represents a probable hazard to persons or property, gas service will be disconnected until the proper repair or line replacement is made.

If your local utility becomes aware of an unsafe condition with respect to the customer’s equipment or facilities, service will be discontinued until such unsafe conditions have been eliminated.

How Do I Locate Buried Piping?

When excavating near buried gas piping, the piping must be located in advance, and the excavation done by hand.

Who Can Do the Maintenance For Me?

Customers may choose to have repairs, replacements or maintenance performed by any qualified contractor.

Proper construction of buried piping also is critical for operations safety. Only approved installation practices and material should be used.