

# KNOW YOUR HOME <sup>SM</sup>

KNOWING YOUR HOME & WORKPLACE IS  
THE FIRST STEP TO KEEPING THEM SAFE



**Columbia Gas**<sup>®</sup>  
A NiSource Company

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, CALL COLUMBIA GAS

**1-800-544-5606, 24/7**

## Why Are You Receiving This Brochure?

Because you live or work in the general area of an underground natural gas pipeline system, you play a key role as our partner in keeping that system safe, reliable and secure.

We operate an underground network of pipelines and related equipment that bring clean-burning natural gas to homes, businesses and factories in your area.

As part of our effort to increase your awareness of pipeline safety and maintenance, this brochure will explain how to recognize and respond to a natural gas leak or identify our pipeline equipment, how to detect and report suspicious activity around pipeline equipment, and most importantly, how to prevent damage and protect against personal injury. Please read this information, share it with others at your address, and keep it for future reference.

## Pipelines Deliver Our Nation's Energy

Many people don't realize the importance of our nation's natural gas pipeline system. Each day, the underground network of over a million miles of pipeline safely carries natural gas from supply areas to customers' homes, businesses and factories across the country.

The natural gas industry has a proven record of safety. The safe delivery of natural gas to the communities and customers we serve is not only our commitment, but also a core value.

## National Pipeline Mapping System

Visit the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)\* website at **phmsa.dot.gov** for more information and to view pipeline locations using the National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS)\*\* public map view.

\* PHMSA is the federal agency that regulates safety aspects of the natural gas industry.

\*\*NPMS data is for reference purposes only. It should never be used as a substitute for always contacting 811 prior to excavation activities.



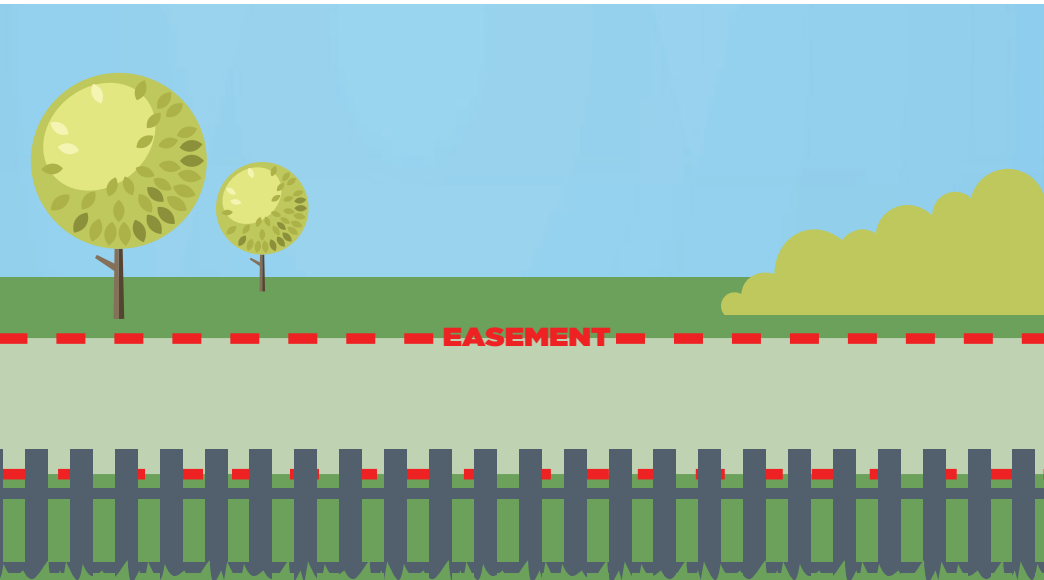
## Pipeline Rights-Of-Way

A pipeline right-of-way is the strip of land over and around a pipeline. Rights-of-way are kept clear of obstructions to enable Columbia Gas to safely protect, operate, patrol, inspect, maintain and repair our pipelines. Columbia Gas regularly inspects our rights-of-way.

It's important that property owners not install any structures, store anything that could be an obstruction, or plant trees or shrubs along the right-of-way. Normal gardening and agricultural activities are generally acceptable. But you should never dig or construct anything in the area without first contacting 811 and having a Columbia Gas representative mark the pipeline, stake the right-of-way and explain our construction guidelines.

A right-of-way agreement between Columbia Gas and the property owner is called an easement. Easements provide us with permanent, limited interest to the land to enable us to access, operate, test, inspect, maintain and protect our pipelines. Although agreements may vary, rights-of-way can extend up to 25 feet each way from the center of the pipeline.

If Columbia Gas has an easement on your property, you should be aware of the guidelines for encroachment and construction near these easements. Call Columbia Gas at **1-800-543-8911** for more information about the easement on your property. Learn more at **[ColumbiaGasVA.com/Encroachment](http://ColumbiaGasVA.com/Encroachment)**.



# Protecting Natural Gas Lines Is A Shared Responsibility

## Don't DIY

Hire a qualified professional to:

- Inspect/install your appliances
- Inspect/install your gas lines
- Identify, repair and alert you of safety concerns

You're responsible to maintain all the gas lines and appliances inside your home.

We're here to help, you can find a local contractor by going to **ColumbiaGasVA.com/SafetyContractors** or choose your own.

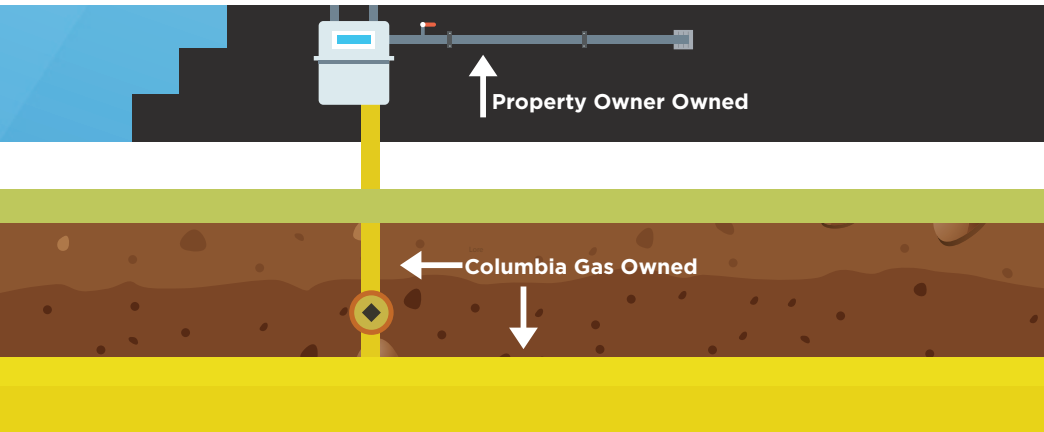
Natural gas is transported from producing wells through large underground pipelines called transmission lines to regulator stations, usually near city limits. The gas then travels within cities and towns through main lines. From the main lines, natural gas is carried to your home or business through service lines, which stop at the gas meter.

Columbia Gas owns and maintains the pipeline up to and including the meter. We conduct routine inspections of all company-owned pipe up to the meter, repairing and replacing lines and meters as necessary.

The property owner owns the "house lines" - any pipe that

extends beyond the meter to appliances inside the home or business, or to other locations on the property, such as pool heaters, garages, or other appliances. It is the responsibility of the property owner to initiate any inspection and necessary repair or replacement of house lines through a qualified professional, such as a qualified heating/cooling contractor or plumber.

If there is a buried house line pipe between the meter and your appliances, it might become subject to corrosion and leakage over time. Buried pipe should be inspected periodically for leaks and for corrosion if the pipe is metallic.



# *Keeping The Public And Our Pipelines Safe Is Our Top Priority*

Our natural gas control and monitoring center operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We regularly patrol our pipeline right-of-ways and conduct regular inspections of our pipeline system. Our employees and contractors receive regular training and are qualified under U.S. Department of Transportation standards and guidelines for natural gas pipeline operators.

We spend millions of dollars each year on infrastructure replacements and upgrades. Employees are on-call at all times to respond to any emergency. In addition, we work with emergency responders to make them aware of our pipelines and how to respond in an emergency. In accordance with federal regulations, some segments along the pipeline have been designated as High Consequence Areas. We have developed supplemental assessments and damage prevention plans for these highly populated areas near transmission-class pipelines.

Learn more at **[ColumbiaGasVA.com/Integrity](http://ColumbiaGasVA.com/Integrity)**



# Contact 811 Before You Dig

## HOW TO IDENTIFY UNDERGROUND NATURAL GAS PIPELINES

Natural gas pipelines are sometimes identified by markers placed at intervals along pipeline rights-of-way. Markers display 24-hour emergency telephone numbers and may provide other identifying information. They generally indicate the presence of a pipeline, at locations such as where a pipeline easement intersects a street, railroad, or river, or in other congested areas. Pipeline markers are important to your safety. It's a federal crime to willfully deface, damage, remove or destroy any pipeline sign or right-of-way marker. While the markers help indicate the general location of pipelines in the area, they may not identify the number of pipelines or the exact location, depth, or direction of the pipeline. That's why you should not rely solely on the presence or absence of a pipeline marker. Always call VA811 at 811 or visit **VA811.com** to have underground utility lines marked.

## CONTACT 811 BEFORE YOU DIG - IT'S THE LAW!

By law, anyone planning to excavate is required to contact VA811 at least three business days before work begins. Whether you're building a major development or planning an excavation as part of a home landscaping project, like building a fence, avoid property damage and personal injury by contacting 811 before you start to dig.

VA811 will notify all member utilities to mark the approximate location of underground utility lines, including natural gas pipelines that might be in the construction area, at no cost to property owners. Once the utility lines are marked it is important to dig with care and respect the marks while carefully excavating around utility markings.

## CONTRACTORS AND EXCAVATORS

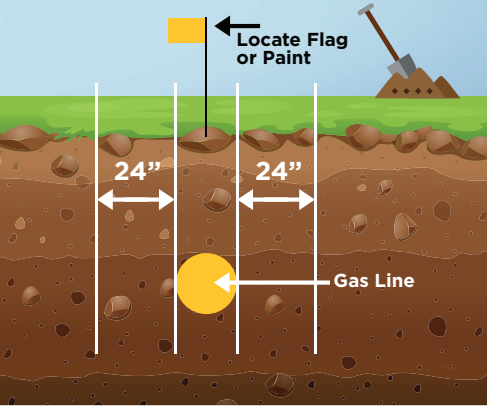
Pipeline damage is most frequently caused by contractors doing excavation or other work that could disturb underground utility lines. Don't take chances! Damaging underground utility lines may result in loss of life, personal injury, property damage, fines or liability for costly repairs. Always contact 811 at least three business days in advance of any excavation, or if you're planning to cross pipeline rights-of-way with heavy equipment, or to perform blasting in the vicinity of any pipelines. For more information, visit **ColumbiaGasVA.com/Excavators**.

## FARMERS

Pipelines installed in active farm fields are susceptible to erosion caused by normal farming operations. Because locating procedures do not verify depth of main, many of these lines are at risk of damage during plowing, planting and other farming practices. Never assume pipeline location or depth; always contact 811 first.

## TOLERANCE ZONE

The width of the utility line plus 24"  
on either side of the markings



## RESPECTING THE MARKS

Once you've contacted 811 and had the approximate location of underground utility lines marked, state law requires that you "respect the marks" by hand digging or using other non-mechanical means within the tolerance zone. In Virginia, the tolerance zone is defined as the width of the utility line plus 24 inches on each side. Methods of excavation within a tolerance zone include, but are not limited to, hand digging, pot holing and vacuum excavation.

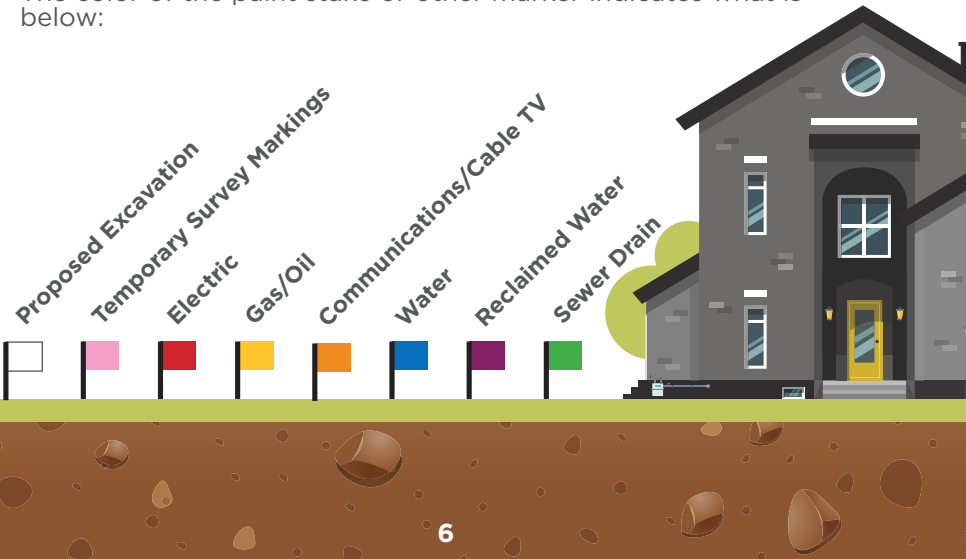
## IF YOU HIT A PIPELINE

If you expose, hit or touch a pipeline or other natural gas equipment, immediately vacate the area and from a safe location call 911 and Columbia Gas at **1-800-544-5606**. Even if it looks minor at the time, a scratch, scrape, gouge, dent or crease to the pipe or coating might cause a safety problem in the future. It's important that we inspect any potential damage, whether or not it's apparent.

**NOTE: Property owners are responsible for the maintenance and locating of private, non-utility facilities, such as septic systems, irrigation, invisible fencing and gas lines beyond the gas meter.**

## What do those colors mean?

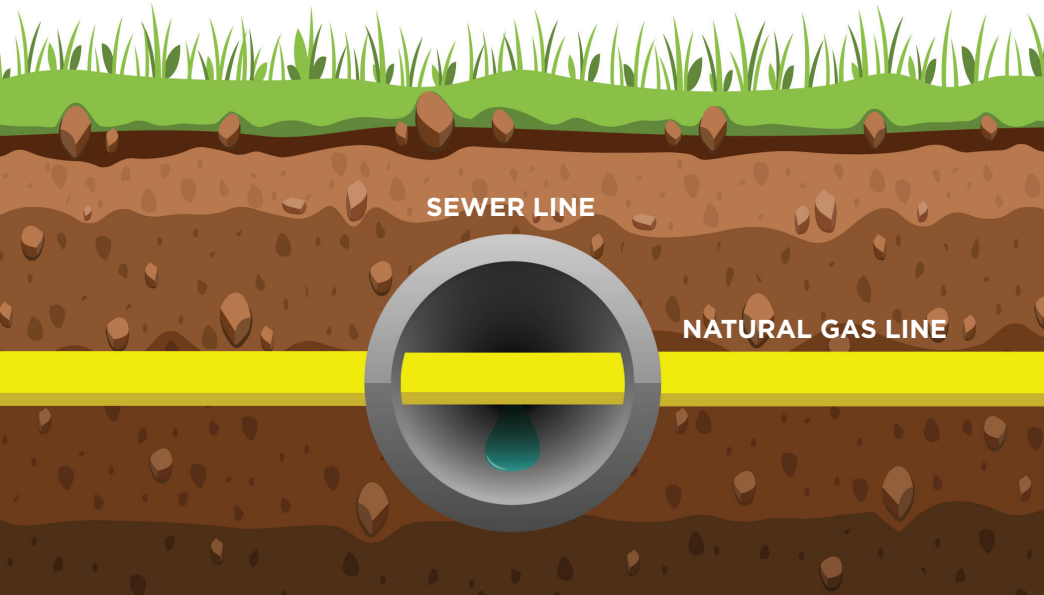
The color of the paint stake or other marker indicates what is below:



# Sewer Line Safety

**CALL 811 FOR AN EMERGENCY LOCATE BEFORE YOU CLEAR!**

**IN ADDITION TO CONTACTING 811 BEFORE DIGGING, PROPERTY OWNERS AND PLUMBERS SHOULD ALSO CALL 811 PRIOR TO CLEARING BLOCKED SEWER LINES.**



## HERE'S WHY

Many utilities use proven trenchless excavation construction methods to install underground lines. During this process, a cross bore could be created.

Cross bores occur when natural gas lines or other utility lines are inadvertently installed through sewer lines. While rare, cross bores can go undetected for months or years. Typically they cause sewer backups of wastewater in your home or yard. And, they can pose an unknown risk.

When sewer line blockages are cleared with mechanical rotary devices or high water pressure, a gas line could be damaged and allow natural gas to migrate into neighboring homes or buildings, including those without natural gas service, causing a fire and explosion risk.



If you have a blocked sewer line, you or your plumber should call 811 and request an emergency locate ticket to ensure a natural gas line is not involved in the blockage. If a natural gas line cross bore is discovered, Columbia Gas will immediately respond to correct the conflict to allow the sewer blockage to be cleared safely and you will not be charged to correct it.

When any new or replaced natural gas line is installed using trenchless technology near a sewer line, Columbia Gas performs an inspection of the sewer system to ensure no conflicts from the gas pipeline installation.

**Always call 811 to request an emergency locate ticket prior to clearing blocked sewer lines. A cross bore could be present.**

**To learn more about cross bores, use the QR code to the right to watch an informational video.**



### *If You See Something, Say Something*

Many people don't realize the importance of our nation's natural gas pipeline system. Each day, the underground network of more than a million miles of pipeline safely carries natural gas from supply areas to customers' homes, businesses and factories across the country. If you observe any unusual or suspicious activity near our pipeline facilities, from a safe place, call 911 and Columbia Gas at **1-800-544-5606**.

Columbia Gas and authorized contractors carry photo identification, drive marked vehicles and have company-issued clothing. Always ask to see photo identification. If you have questions, call Columbia Gas at **1-800-543-8911**.

## What Is That Smell?

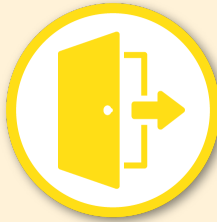
Some say it smells like rotten eggs or sulfur. It is actually mercaptan, an odorant added to natural gas as a safety precaution. Recognizing this smell can alert you to a natural gas leak.

Gas leaks can also be detected by sight and sound. Be aware of signs such as blowing dirt, bubbling water or dead vegetation and a hissing or roaring sound. To learn more about leak detection and natural gas safety, visit [ColumbiaGasVA.com/StaySafe](http://ColumbiaGasVA.com/StaySafe).

## THINK YOU SMELL NATURAL GAS?



**1. STOP**  
WHAT YOU  
ARE DOING



**2. LEAVE**  
THE AREA  
IMMEDIATELY  
(IF INSIDE, GET OUT)



**3. CALL**  
911 & COLUMBIA GAS  
FROM A SAFE  
LOCATION

### WHAT TO DO

- If inside, **get out immediately**.
- If outside, safely abandon any motorized equipment you might be using and **leave the area immediately**.
- From a safe location, away from the area, call **911** and **Columbia Gas** at **1-800-544-5606**
- **Wait for our service crew and emergency responders to arrive.** We work closely with emergency responders to prevent and respond to incidents.

### WHAT NOT TO DO

- Don't light a match or candle, or operate anything that could cause a spark, including cell phones, lights, appliances, flashlights, garage door openers, etc.
- Don't open the windows and doors in an attempt to ventilate the building.
- Don't try to find the leak yourself, repair a leak or operate pipeline valves.

## METHANE DETECTORS

You've heard of smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors, but did you know there's a detector for natural gas? Methane detectors can identify a potential natural gas leak. Natural gas detectors come with various features and are available in home improvement stores and online.

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## *Emergency Responders & Public Safety*

As a public utility, we consider emergency responders part of our safety team. That's why we participate in meetings with other pipeline companies and work with emergency responders to be prepared for any possible incident.

### EMERGENCY RESPONDER GUIDELINES

Follow these guidelines to help safeguard the public in the event of a pipeline emergency.

#### WHAT TO DO

- From a safe location, report the type (leak, rupture, fire, other) and location of the emergency to Columbia Gas at **1-800-544-5606**.
- Secure a safety zone around the emergency site and control access. This might include evacuating people within the safety zone.
- Allow Columbia Gas employees access to the area and work with them to control the emergency.
- Be aware of wind direction.
- Avoid ignition sources.
- Preserve the area for accident investigation.

#### WHAT NOT TO DO

- If natural gas is not burning, avoid doing anything that could ignite it.
- If natural gas is burning, control secondary fires, but do not attempt to put out a pipeline fire unless directed by Columbia Gas personnel or the pipeline owner.
- Do not attempt to operate any pipeline valves.
- Do not put water on natural gas fires.

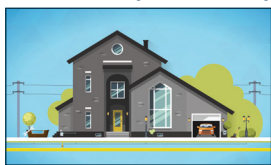
### RAILROAD DERAILMENT PROCEDURE

Should you experience a train derailment in your community and there is clear evidence of a natural gas pipeline marker or a natural gas facility, please contact Columbia Gas immediately at our 24-hour emergency number and request immediate response. We will check for damage to our natural gas facilities and eliminate any potential hazardous natural gas conditions. It is also recommended that you call 811 and request the emergency location of natural gas and other facilities.

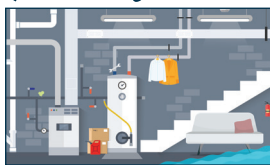


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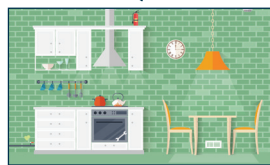
*Safety in every space/Seguridad en cada espacio*



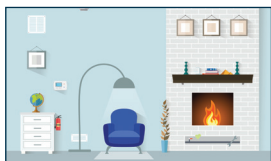
*Exterior/Exteriores*



*Basement/Sótano*



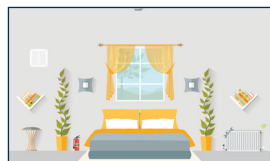
*Kitchen/Cocina*



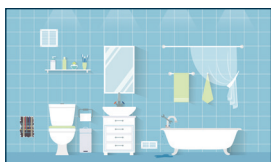
*Living Room/Sala*



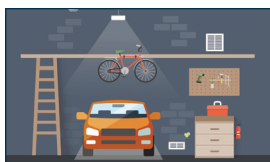
*Laundry/Lavandería*



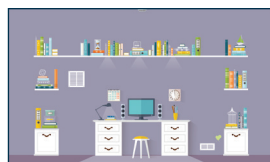
*Bedroom/Habitación*



*Bathroom/Baño*



*Garage/Garaje*



*Office/Oficina*

Learn more at  
**ColumbiaGasVA.com/KnowYourHome**

Para mayor información, visite  
**ColumbiaGasVA.com/KnowYourHome**





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