



Arkansas Natural Gas Customer Handbook





Welcome!

You've likely unpacked a few (more than a few?) boxes and are enjoying your new utility services, including natural gas from Black Hills Energy. I trust that all went well, because after the safety of our customers and employees, our goal is to provide you with service that exceeds your expectations.

In Arkansas, Black Hills Energy provides clean, efficient natural gas service to 190,000 customers in 100 communities. Our mission, *Improving Life with Energy*, reflects the role natural gas has in our daily lives. It also refers to the energy our company and our employees dedicate to volunteerism, civic and community support and partnerships, economic development and much more.

As for this handbook, we hope you'll keep it as a handy reference full of valuable tips for account management, energy conservation, special services, contact information and more. If you have questions about our services, we're here for you day or night, toll-free, at 888-890-5554 or www.blackhillsenergy.com. And on behalf of all our employees, welcome home!



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Key Contacts

Guide to Black Hills Energy natural gas services in Arkansas

For your convenience when contacting us, we suggest you write your 10-digit account number here so it's readily available.

Your account number is on your monthly Black Hills Energy natural gas bill.

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Contact Us

Customer Service **888-890-5554**

Available 8:00am - 6:00pm. Not available on major holidays for anything except emergencies

Our trained customer service professionals are ready to serve you . Our automated touch-tone system allows you to help yourself to many of our service options, including bill payment by phone or reviewing your account history.

24-hour Emergency Service **888-890-5554**

Open 365 days a year

Our emergency line (to report a gas line that has been hit, if you smell gas or suspect you have a carbon monoxide leak) is answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Websites

Black Hills Energy www.blackhillsenergy.com

Learn about payment options and other programs available in your area.

Black Hills Corporation..... www.blackhillscorp.com

Mail Payment

Remittance Address **Black Hills Energy**

Address to mail in your monthly payment. **P.O. Box 7966**
Carol Stream, IL 60197

Service Solutions

Customer Service **888-890-5554**

E-mail.....customerservice@support.blackhillsenergy.com

Black Hills Energy Customer Service

P.O. Box 6006, Rapid City, SD 57709

We strive to meet and exceed your expectations. If you have a concern about a service or product we provide, please contact us via the e-mail address, phone number or mailing address listed above. We'll need pertinent details and your name, address, account number and daytime phone number. If you contact us through our mailing address, we'll follow up in writing or by phone. We'll work hard to address your concern and resolve it to your satisfaction. We also work with the Arkansas Public Service Commission to resolve customer concerns.

Arkansas One Call

Telephone **811**

Calling 811 for a free utility line locate before digging helps ensure and maintain safe, reliable natural gas service to your home and in your neighborhood. It's free, it's easy and it's the law. See page 20 for more information.

State Commissions & Regulators

Black Hills Energy's operations and rates for service are regulated in Arkansas by the Arkansas Public Service Commission. For our rate schedules and details of our rules and regulations, contact us or visit www.blackhillsenergy.com.

Arkansas Public Service Commission

Customer Services Division

1000 Center St, PO Box 400, Little Rock, AR 72203
800-482-1164

To file a complaint with the APSC, call or visit apsc.arkansas.gov

A photograph of two young boys, seen from the back, looking out a large window. Outside, a residential street is covered in a thick layer of snow. Several houses with snow-laden roofs and red shutters are visible in the background. The scene is captured in a soft, slightly grainy style.

Managing My Account

Budget Billing

Avoid seasonal fluctuations in your natural gas bill with our Budget Billing plan. This optional service is free and makes following a budget easy. With Budget Billing, the amount you are billed each month is based on an average of your previous 12 months usage. This monthly budget amount will only change if there are changes in either natural gas costs (which we pass through to you from the natural gas suppliers we use) or usage (typically driven by weather) that cause your monthly budget bill amount to increase or decrease by at least 10 percent.

The benefit of Budget Billing is that your monthly budget amount generally will remain the same. However, if your billing average increases or decreases significantly, the impact to you will be gradual.

If you are new to your home, we will check the average usage in our surrounding service area to determine a starting point for calculating your budget bill amount. We'll monitor and adjust it, if needed, after you establish an adequate billing history.

Managing your account is easy when you combine Budget Billing with any of the following payment options. For more information or to sign up for Budget Billing, call 888-890-5554 or visit www.blackhillsenergy.com.

Preferred Due Date

Under certain circumstances, we do allow qualifying residential customers to extend their due date to allow payment to coincide more closely with the receipt of their income. Call 888-890-5554 for qualifications and to enroll.

Sales Tax Exempt

Any business that has filed for a Sales Tax Exemption certificate from the state of Arkansas may qualify. To determine if you qualify, contact the Secretary of State. If you qualify, send a copy of your certificate to enroll in tax exemption program.

My Payment Options

Bank Transfer

This free program allows you to authorize your bank or credit union to automatically pay your monthly natural gas bill from the account you specify. You'll receive a monthly statement detailing your charges before the withdrawal is made—and there's no fee to use it.

Online

We offer two ways to pay online, one through eBill, the other with Speedpay.

- **eBill:** You can now receive and pay your monthly natural gas bill online through eBill. Our eBill program gives you secure, convenient delivery and saves you time and money.
- **Electronic paperless billing:** Access your bill at your convenience through e-mail or www.blackhillsenergy.com.
- **Free online payments:** Use your checking or savings account to pay your bill with no fees when you enroll in the eBill program.
- **Paymentus:** Go to www.blackhillsenergy.com, click "Make a Payment" in the Billing and Payments section. This secure link allows you to pay by Visa, MasterCard, American Express or Discover, Apple or Google Pay, Venmo, PayPal or from your checking account using Paymentus. Paymentus charges a convenience fee for each payment.

Mail

You can mail your check or money order with your bill stub in the envelope we provide with your monthly statement.

Mail payments should be sent to:

Black Hills Energy
P.O. Box 7996
Carol Stream, IL 60197

For your protection, do not send cash payments through the mail.

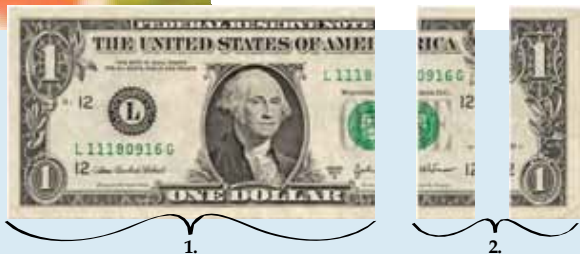
Phone

Paymentus allows you to pay by phone using Visa, MasterCard, American Express or Discover – or from your checking account. Paymentus charges a convenience fee for each payment. Call **888-890-5554** and follow the prompts to make a payment.

In Person

Walk into any of our authorized pay stations or pay at a kiosk. Bring your complete bill to ensure proper processing and to obtain a receipt for your records. Go to www.blackhillsenergy.com, click "Pay Bill" and then "In person" to find the closest pay station or kiosk.

For more information on any of these pay options or to enroll in the payment option that is right for you, visit www.blackhillsenergy.com or call **888-890-5554**.



1. Natural Gas Commodity Portion

- Typically 65 percent to 75 percent of a residential bill, representing what Black Hills Energy pays for the actual commodity.
- Black Hills Energy does not earn a profit on the price of the natural gas commodity; the cost is passed to customers without mark-up.
- Gas costs fluctuate and are impacted by the overall economy and supply and demand.
- We use a portfolio purchasing strategy to manage volatility and remain competitively priced, buying up to 70 percent of our gas supplies throughout the spring and summer in preparation for winter through the use of fixed-price and option contracts, and by placing some gas supplies in storage facilities.

2. Base Rate & Customer Charge

- Accounts for about 25 percent to 35 percent of a residential bill
- State regulators approve the recoverable amount of base rate and customer charges. This amount must cover the company's operating costs, system maintenance and improvements, and customer service support. The company's profit also is derived from this portion of the bill; this return on investment is not guaranteed and is limited by state regulators. The base rate is a per-therm rate based on usage; the customer charge is a flat fee for providing natural gas service.

Understanding My Bill

Your monthly natural gas bill may vary from month to month or year to year. There are many factors that can affect your natural gas bill.

Weather

Cold weather and shorter daylight hours can mean an increase in natural gas usage for heating – both for your furnace and water heater.

Efficiency of your appliances

Older, less-efficient appliances use more energy. Replacing them with high-efficiency natural gas appliances can significantly reduce your energy costs.

Living habits

Washing more clothes, taking more baths, or setting the thermostat higher during the winter are all lifestyle habits that can increase your energy use.

Late payment charges

Bills not paid by the due date will be subject to a late payment fee. (If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please see page 8 on ways to manage your bill.)

If your natural gas bill differs from your neighbors', compare home sizes, layouts and insulation factors. Family size, thermostat settings and the hours spent at home can also cause variations. Contact us if you suspect an error on your bill.

Your bill charges are based on actual or estimated usage. The amount due is calculated by using rate schedules approved by the Arkansas Public Service Commission. If you suspect an error on your bill, please call us at **888-890-5554**.

Identify Your Balance Due:

2 Reach Out To Us: Visit us online, email or call us to learn about the services we provide or to manage your account.

3 Evaluate Your Energy Usage: An easy-to-read graph illustrates current and historical usage.

4 View Your Account Summary: Provides information about transactions since your last bill that were used to determine your balance due for the billing period.

5 Read Your Messages: Important information and tips.

6 See The Details: This area provides detailed usage information for each service on your account, including meter readings and dates, total energy usage and charges for the billing period. This is the “nuts and bolts” about how your bill was calculated.

7 Look At Your Transaction History: Listed in this area is detailed information for financial transactions affecting your account including payments made since your last bill, fees and adjustments and budget balance amount if you are on a budget billing plan.

[illegible]

BlackBerry Energy.com
energy@blackberryenergy.com
 800-555-5554

NAME Account #0000 6000
 Service address ACORR55

Usage history

Period	Usage	Rate
Feb	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF
Jan	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF
Dec	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF
Nov	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF
Oct	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF
Sep	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF
Aug	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF
Jul	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF
Jun	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF
May	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF
Apr	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF
Mar	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF
Feb	14.00 CF	\$1.00 CF

February bill details

BlackBerry Energy.com/bill

Item	Amount
Monthly Service Fee (MSF) - 10.000000	\$10.00
Energy	\$42.50
Reading	2.00
Reading	1.50
Subtotal	\$56.00
Discount	(\$13.50)
Total Due	\$42.50

Delivery and distribution: Costs to bring energy to your address. \$76.00

Billings for the following:

Item	Amount							
Customer Charge	\$25.50							
Delivery Charge (DC) - 0.000000	\$0.00							
Safety and Integrity (S&I) - 0.000000	\$0.00							
Emergency Response (ER) - 0.000000	\$0.00							
Weather Normalization (W&N) - 0.000000	\$0.00							
Rate Adjustment (RA) - 0.000000	\$0.00							
Energy supply: Cost of natural gas. \$193.38								
Billings for the following: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Item</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Winter Storm Charge (WSC) - 0.000000</td> <td>\$0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Security Charge (SC) - 0.000000</td> <td>\$0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Storm Use Charge (SUC) - 0.000000</td> <td>\$0.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Item	Amount	Winter Storm Charge (WSC) - 0.000000	\$0.00	Security Charge (SC) - 0.000000	\$0.00	Storm Use Charge (SUC) - 0.000000	\$0.00
Item	Amount							
Winter Storm Charge (WSC) - 0.000000	\$0.00							
Security Charge (SC) - 0.000000	\$0.00							
Storm Use Charge (SUC) - 0.000000	\$0.00							

Other charges: credits, adjustments and other charges. \$0.00

Taxes and fees: Local and state taxes and fees. \$26.55

Billings for the following:

Item	Amount
Franchise Fee (FF) - 0.000000	\$0.00
City Sales Tax (CST) - 0.000000	\$0.00
County Sales Tax (CST) - 0.000000	\$0.00
State Sales Tax (SST) - 0.000000	\$0.00
Total charges this month	\$227.77

5 Messages

If you're not getting any mail, check the email addresses listed on the left side of the screen.

As the list grows, there will be changed if payment has not been received by the due date.

To receive mail, there is no need to add payment on your email address. BlackBerry Energy will send you the bill to the email address you provided. (BlackBerry Energy.com/customer-support for this and other self-help options.)

You must include a billing or payment email. Please email us if you have a problem. The problem is resolved immediately if it is not an email address problem. To change your email or to update your contact name:

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Energy supply: Cost of natural gas. \$193.38

Billings for the following:

Item	Amount
Winter Storm Charge (WSC) - 0.000000	\$0.00
Security Charge (SC) - 0.000000	\$0.00
Storm Use Charge (SUC) - 0.000000	\$0.00

7

Franchise Fee (FF) - 0.000000 \$0.00

City Sales Tax (CST) - 0.000000 \$0.00

County Sales Tax (CST) - 0.000000 \$0.00

State Sales Tax (SST) - 0.000000 \$0.00

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Manage your account at BlackBerryEnergy.com/my-account

- Save payment options for future use
- Bank, credit and transfer services
- View usage details
- See your billing and payment history
- Download bill and payment history
- Change your address

If you're not getting any mail or you still have payment or email address problems, contact us at energy@blackberryenergy.com or call 800-555-5554. We will resolve the problem as quickly as possible. Please contact us if you have any questions or comments.

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Ways to pay your bill at BlackBerryEnergy.com/pay

- Send bill to you
- Pay with your checking or credit card
- Pay without a credit card
- Auto pay**

Auto pay: You will be automatically billed on the date you set for payment.

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Credit card

Pay with a credit card



Reduce Energy Use to Save Money

Energy Efficiency Tips

Homeowners enjoy the daily benefits and comforts provided by natural gas – from a warm home on a cold winter day, to instant hot water and gourmet kitchen appliances, to outdoor living spaces with gas grills and standby generators. Below are some ways you can make the most of your natural gas appliances and equipment by using energy wisely.

Natural Gas Furnaces: Directly vented to enhance indoor air quality. Natural gas furnaces provide almost instantaneous heat – no “warm up” period – and provide up to 95 percent efficient energy usage. Install a programmable thermostat to automatically adjust the temperature at night and when you are away.

- Maintain your heating system
 - × Have your heating system serviced regularly
 - × Seal ducts where there are air leaks
 - × Change/clean furnace filters monthly
- Let the sunshine in
 - × Open shades to allow sunlight to warm the inside of your home; close at night to help keep it inside
- Seal the inside of your home to keep warm air in
 - × Put plastic on windows and caulk and seal air leaks around attic doors; provides year-round benefits
- Clear space
 - × Clean air registers, baseboard heaters and radiators; ensure they are not blocked by furniture, carpeting, drapes or other items

Natural Gas Water Heaters: Quickly recovers hot water. Natural gas water heaters are the most efficient way to heat water and can provide long-term savings on utility bills.

- Reduce water heater temperature setting
 - × Set water heater temperature as low as possible, but follow manufacturer recommendations for specific appliances
 - × Insulate hot water pipes and water heaters that are 10 years old and older
- Reduce hot water use
 - × Install low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators
 - × Take showers, not baths
 - × Repair leaking faucets and water lines
 - × Wash clothes in warm or cold water
- Wash full loads of dishes
 - × Select the energy-saver cycle
 - × Open the dishwasher door after the cycle is complete to let dishes air dry

Natural Gas Clothes Dryers: Enjoy warm fluffy towels from your natural gas clothes dryer.

- Clean the dryer lint screen after each load
- Dry large, bulky items by themselves; use a short cycle for small, light garments
- Purchase clothes dryer with moisture sensor
- During the summer, wash and dry clothes during the cooler evening hours

Natural Gas Ranges, Cooktops & Ovens: Preferred by nine out of 10 professional chefs. Natural gas cooking equipment provides precise temperature control with instant on/off capabilities, and are an economical and energy efficient choice.

- Minimize exhaust; turn off exhaust fans within 20 minutes after cooking
- Moisture from cooking can help humidify the house and make it more comfortable

Natural Gas Grills & Patio Appliances: No propane bottles, so you never run out of energy during cooking. Natural gas grills and patio appliances turn outdoor space into enjoyable living space.

- Cook entire summer meals at one time on your gas grill; cooking outside saves energy because there is no additional load on air conditioning
- Place food directly over the heat; for a small meal, use only one side to save energy

Natural Gas Fireplaces: No wood to chop or carry. Natural gas fireplaces are warm, clean, inviting and environmentally friendly.

- Close your damper when the fireplace is not in use



Natural Gas Meter

Providing Access to Meters

Black Hills Energy personnel must have access to meters at anytime for any reasonable purpose. Black Hills Energy may discontinue service if not allowed access to a meter upon request, or at any time in the event of fraud, illegal or unsafe use of services.

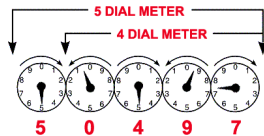
Automated Meter Reading

We have begun installing Automated Meter Reading (AMR) units on natural gas meters in some areas. AMR provides a more efficient way to read meters and increases accuracy by allowing the company to read meters remotely.

If you live in a community that does not have automated meter reading yet, a Black Hills Energy meter reader will read your natural gas meter approximately every 30 days. Locked gates, family pets, extreme weather or inside meters can prevent us from reading your meter on the scheduled read date. Unlocking gates, keeping pets restrained, and brushing snow from around the gas meter all help ensure you receive an accurate monthly meter read and bill. If you believe your usage isn't being reported correctly, please call our customer service at 888-890-5554. If needed, a meter test can be requested. Should the meter be faulty, it will be replaced at no charge; if it's working properly, you may be responsible for the test cost.

How to Read an Analog Meter

Analog meters have a set of dials. Most gas meters have four dials:



If the dial hand is between two numbers, write down the lower number. There is one exception however; if a dial hand is between 9 and 0, write down 9. If the hand is barely touching the bottom of a number or has not passed the midpoint of that number, use the lower number.

Self-read Customers

If you are set up as a self-read customer, we will send you a letter each month, in a separate mailing from your bill, reminding you how and when to read your natural gas meter. If your meter is inside and you are set up as a self-read customer, please make sure your window card is up on the days scheduled. You may also call in your read to our easy-to-use automated customer service line at **888-890-5554** or use the secure online entry at **www.blackhillsenergy.com**. If we don't receive your meter read for two consecutive months, a Black Hills Energy employee may be sent to read your meter, resulting in a meter read fee.

If we do not receive a company or customer monthly meter read, we will estimate your bill based on usage history, weather and other factors. When an actual reading is obtained, we'll then adjust your bill to show actual usage.



Avoiding a Service Disconnection

If you're having trouble paying your bill, call Black Hills Energy at 888-890-5554 right away. We can help set up a payment plan, accept partial payments, and connect you with financial assistance. If your payment will be delayed or you'll be away from home, let us know so we can help avoid service interruption. If no payment or arrangement is made, we'll notify you before disconnection. If disconnection would pose a health risk to anyone at your address, please tell us immediately. If extended travel takes you away from home, please pay in advance or call us to arrange for your bill to be forwarded or sent to someone you designate as responsible for prompt payment.

Landlords and Tenants

If you're a landlord or tenant in Arkansas, here's how we handle utility shut-offs when the account is in the landlord's name. First, we try to identify rental properties by asking landlords to tell us who their tenants are. If we don't have that information, we may not know someone is a tenant unless we have clear evidence. If a landlord doesn't pay their bill, we won't shut off service right away. We'll send a notice to the landlord, and if they don't respond within 7 days, we'll either post shut-off notices in visible places like mailboxes and entrances or mail notices to all tenants at least 14 days before shutting off service. We'll also wait at least 30 days after the bill's due date before taking action. If separate meters are available, tenants can apply to have service in their own name. Importantly, tenants are not responsible for their landlord's unpaid utility bills, and we won't deny service to a tenant because of a landlord's debt.

Disconnection Notice to a Friend or Relative

Black Hills Energy offers third-party notification to help customers manage their natural gas service and avoid service interruptions due to an oversight or misunderstanding. With the customer's permission, Black Hills will send a courtesy notice to both the customer and a relative, neighbor, friend, landlord or other designee when service is scheduled for disconnection due to non-payment. Call 888-890-5554 to learn more or enroll.

Service Interruptions

Black Hills Energy makes every effort to notify customers of temporary service interruptions when making repairs to the system. In the emergency situations (such as a main break or to prevent potential damage to the system), service may be temporarily interrupted without notice.

Medical Extension Program

This program is available to residential customers whose utility service is medically essential, as certified by a licensed physician, to avoid death or serious medical complications requiring immediate hospitalization. The program offers qualifying customers a limited extension of time to pay their utility bill. Download the certificate of medical extension. For more info and to download the form visit blackhillsenergy.com/assistance

Reconnecting or Discontinuing Service

To Disconnect Service

Call our customer service center at **888-890-5554** at least 24 hours in advance. If your meter is accessible to our service technician, you do not need to be present when service is disconnected.

To Reconnect Service

In most cases you can call our customer service center at **888-890-5554** at least 24 hours in advance. You must be home when service is resumed so our technician can ensure natural gas equipment and appliances are functioning properly and safely.

You may be asked to pay a security deposit if you:

Residential and Commercial Customers:

- Have an unsatisfactory or insufficient credit history.
- Have had an undisputed, unpaid account within the last three years.
- Have interfered with or diverted service within the last five years.
- Fail to pay an undisputed bill before the delinquency date for three consecutive billing periods and one of the payments is at least 60 days in arrears.
- All new commercial customers with the following exceptions:
 - Municipalities/Government
 - Builders with good credit history

For residential and commercial customers, the deposit cannot exceed an estimate of the projected amount of two months of bills. Your security deposit (plus accumulated interest) less any unpaid utility bill, will be refunded:

- When you pay your final bill.
- After 12 months if nine out of 12 bills are paid on time.

The Arkansas Public Service Commission determines the annual interest rate on your deposit.

Cold Weather Rule

Service disconnections for non-payment will not occur between November 1 and April 30 if the National Weather Service forecasts that the temperature will be 32 degrees Fahrenheit or colder within the following 24-hour period.



A vertical photograph on the left side of the page shows a person's hands and arms as they cook on a gas stove. The person is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt. They are using a black spatula to stir something in a silver pan on one of the burners. The stove is white with black grates. The background is slightly blurred, showing a kitchen setting.

Explanation of Arkansas Gas Charges

Customer charge: A fixed monthly charge, separate from energy usage, that recovers a portion of fixed operating costs, such as customer accounting and services, as well as costs associated with our investments in customer-related facilities such as meters and service lines.

Delivery charge: This charge is based on your natural gas usage and recovers costs associated with delivering natural gas to your home through the pipeline system.

Primary gas charge: The estimated cost Black Hills Energy pays for the natural gas that is delivered to customers. Any costs incurred by Black Hills Energy are passed-thru dollar-for-dollar to customers without markup in price.

Secondary gas charge: This charge reconciles the difference between actual cost of gas used and estimated cost.

Storm Uri gas charge: This charge recovers the cost for natural gas incurred during the extraordinary winter weather event that occurred in February 2021.

Act 310 Surcharge: This charge recovers investments for legislative and regulatory requirements to ensure the safety and protection of public health and the environment.

Energy efficiency: This charge recovers the cost associated with promoting energy efficiency programs as ordered by the Arkansas Public Service Commission.

Weather normalization adjustment: This charge reduces the effect of abnormally cold or warm weather. Adjustments are made to bills between November 1 and April 30 and are based on weather conditions during the billing cycle.

Franchise fee, county and state sales tax: Fees and taxes collected and paid to the city, county and/ or state based on city, county, and state laws.

Safety and Integrity charge: This charge recovers the cost associated with the completion of safety and integrity investments that are mandated by Federal and State gas pipeline codes and regulations.

Arkansas Gas Rates

Customers are placed in different rate scheduled based on how they use the service. Residential customers are individually metered service. Business customers are determined by usage:

Small Business Sales Service	Annual Usage of 0 to 50,000 Ccf
Medium Business Sales Service	Annual Usage of 50,0001 to 300,000 Ccf
Large Business Sales Service	Annual Usage of 700,000 to 300,000 Ccf
Large Business Demand Sales Service	Annual Usage of 701,000 Ccf and above

For the most up to date rate information and a full list of rate classes please visit our website at <https://blackhillsenergy.com/billing-and-payments/rates-and-regulatory-information/arkansas-rates-and-regulatory-information>

OTHER CHARGES (Applicable To All Rate Classes)

Service Connection Charge

Regular Business hours..... No Charge (Footnote 3)

Non-Business Hours.....\$65.00

Reconnection Charge

Regular business hours.....\$49.00 (Footnote 3)

Non-Business Hours\$82.00

Insufficient Check Charge\$30.00

Collection Charge\$20.00

Meter Test Charge.....\$40.00

Customer Account Record Charge.....\$5.00

Energy Consumption Statement Charge.....\$5.00

Meter Reading Report Charge.....\$5.00

Natural Gas Safety Information

Natural gas is a safe, reliable fuel used in more than 70 million American homes and businesses. Below are general safety tips.

If You Smell Natural Gas

An odorant resembling the smell of rotten eggs is added to natural gas. If you smell natural gas, leave the building immediately. Do not use the phone in the building where the smell of natural gas was detected or switch lights on or off. Doing so could cause a spark, igniting the gas. Call Black Hills Energy on a cell phone or a neighbor's phone. Black Hills Energy's 24-hour emergency number is **888-890-5554**.

Carbon Monoxide

Have heating and ventilating equipment inspected annually by a professional to ensure they are safe and working properly – especially before using a heating system for the first time in the winter. Properly functioning carbon monoxide detectors may offer an early warning of the presence of carbon monoxide.

Carbon monoxide is colorless and odorless, and results from the incomplete burning of fuels – including wood, gasoline, charcoal and natural gas. Incomplete burning of natural gas means gas furnaces and other gas equipment and appliances are malfunctioning, a danger that is compounded by improper venting. Gas-operated appliances require adequate air for complete combustion and must be properly vented for safe and efficient operation.

Signs of a potential carbon monoxide leak can include, but are not limited to, flu-like symptoms such as a scratchy throat, runny nose, headache, drowsiness or nausea. Other indicators could include excessive humidity, such as frosted windows, or a draft from the front of the furnace when it is not turned on.

If you think carbon monoxide is present, leave the premises immediately and call Black Hills Energy's emergency service line at **888-890-5554** from a nearby location.





Know what's **below**.
Call before you dig.

Natural Gas Safety Information (continued)

Corrugated Stainless Steel Tubing

Does your home or business have CSST?

Corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) is a flexible yellow- or black-coated tubing used since 1988 to distribute natural gas in residential and commercial buildings.

It's important that CSST is installed according to CSST manufacturers' specifications, which may have changed from the time of its initial installation in your home. If it isn't properly bonded and grounded according to these specifications, it may be susceptible to lightning damage. If lightning strikes on or near a building containing CSST, an arc from the lightning could puncture the CSST, allowing natural gas to escape.

Having your system properly grounded can help reduce the chance that a lightning strike will result in a puncture to the CSST. In some cases, a special lightning protection system can be used to offer an additional layer of protection.

If you believe your home or building has CSST, we recommend hiring a licensed electrician to determine if it has been properly bonded and grounded. Further information may be available from the manufacturer whose name is on the tubing.

Call 811 Before You Dig

Planting a garden or putting in a new fence? You must first call **811**. It's the law!

Black Hills Energy reminds all customers and contractors to call **811** for a free utility line locate before digging. Calling **811** before you dig helps ensure and maintain safe, reliable natural gas service to your home and in your neighborhood. It helps everyone avoid the possibility of serious injury; disruption of service to a home, building or entire community; and the considerable expense of repairing underground utilities.

State law requires that everyone who plans to excavate or disturb the surface of the ground must first contact Arkansas One Call at least two business days in advance to have all underground utilities located. **It's free, it's easy and it's the law.**

Flex Connectors

Safety information pertaining to some older natural gas appliances and connectors

Here's important information from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

Some older, uncoated brass natural gas connectors commonly used on ranges, water heaters and other gas appliances have a serious flaw that can cause a dangerous gas leak, fire or explosion.

If you have an uncoated brass connector on any gas appliance, schedule an appointment with Black Hills Energy or a qualified professional as soon as possible to have it replaced. Newer, stainless steel or plastic-coated brass connectors are recommended for safety reasons.

If you aren't sure, have the connector inspected by a qualified professional plumber. Do not attempt to move an appliance yourself, as the slightest kink, twist, stretching or stress can cause the connector to leak. Black Hills Energy will inspect your connectors at no charge. If replacement is necessary, we will charge you only for the part.

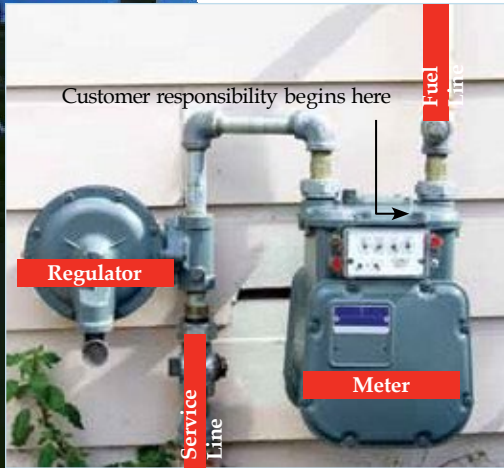
To schedule an inspection or replacement, call **888-890-5554**.



Older uncoated brass flex-connector



Safer, stainless steel or coated connectors



Buried Piping and Meters What's Yours; What's Ours

Natural gas is delivered to homes and businesses by an underground **service line**. The service line runs from the main in the street to the **meter**. Black Hills Energy is responsible for maintenance, repair and location of the service line, including the **regulator** and meter. For residential and small-commercial customers whose meter is located at the property line, Black Hills Energy is also responsible for monitoring and surveying for leaks between the meter and building wall.

Our customers are responsible for the **fuel line** on the "house side" of the meter. The fuel line begins after the meter as noted in the accompanying graphic.

Some fuel lines are installed underground. If an underground fuel line is not maintained, it may be subject to potential hazards of corrosion and leaks.

Customers with natural gas lines buried from the meter should have the lines inspected and, if necessary, repaired by a qualified professional.

To locate underground service lines call **811** for a free utility line locate.

Be aware, 811 does not locate buried fuel lines after the meter.

When excavating near a buried fuel line, locate the line in advance and excavate by hand.

Natural Gas Meter – Winter Safety Tips

- Carefully clear/brush snow away by hand, but never with a shovel
- Point out your meter to snow removal contractors so they can avoid it
- Clear snow by hand away from outdoor furnace vents
- Don't pile snow on meter or piping
- Don't remove ice; instead, contact us

Natural Gas Meter – Summer and Flooding Safety

Black Hills Energy is prepared when weather-related issues, such as flooding, disrupt service. Our field resource center, responsible for dispatching Black Hills Energy service crews, operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

- It is important to avoid the risk of natural gas leaks that may occur when equipment or appliances are submerged and pilot lights are extinguished.
- For safety reasons, if a customer's residence is flooded, we will temporarily shut off natural gas service to affected customers.
- We will provide ongoing service restoration updates.
- A Black Hills Energy technician must inspect the metering equipment and an appliance repair professional must inspect natural gas appliance equipment before service can be restored.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you.

We are privileged to provide you with safe, reliable natural gas service. At Black Hills Energy, we continuously implement measures that can help us to better serve our customers. One way we strive to improve our service to you is by regularly conducting customer satisfaction surveys. J.D. Power and Associates administers the survey on our behalf by randomly selecting customers to provide feedback on their experiences with Black Hills Energy. In the event you are selected to participate in a survey, we appreciate your candid responses and feedback. Individual responses are anonymous and help us to enhance our service to you.

