



A  Sempra Energy utility®

# NEWS

## WINTER 2013

SAFETY >>>

## TIPS ON USING YOUR WATER HEATER SAFELY

- Make sure it is installed per local building codes and the manufacturer's recommendations. If installed in a garage, make sure the pilot and other ignition source are at least 18 inches above the floor.
- Strap your water heater firmly to wall studs in two places—the upper and lower one-third of the tank—with heavy bolts and metal straps to keep it anchored in the event of an earthquake. You can find kits and instructions at most home-improvement stores or through a licensed, qualified professional.
- Keep the surrounding area clean and well ventilated, and never use or store flammable products, such as gasoline, paint thinner or cleaning products in the same room or near any gas or heat-producing appliance.
- Water temperatures above 125 degrees Fahrenheit can cause severe burns or even death. To prevent scalding accidents, consider setting your water heater thermostat at 120 degrees Fahrenheit or below. Consult the manufacturer's recommendations for safe temperature settings.
- Have your water heater inspected annually by a licensed, qualified professional or The Gas Company<sup>SM</sup>.

For more safety tips, visit [socialgas.com](http://socialgas.com) (search "SAFETY").

SAVING MONEY >>>

## SIMPLE WAYS TO STRETCH YOUR HEATING BUDGET

Home heating is the biggest winter energy expense for most people, accounting for 65 percent of a typical residential winter gas bill. To help reduce winter heating bills:

- **View our Buyer's Guide for energy savings.** Learn about efficient natural gas appliances and get conservation tips that can help reduce your monthly energy use at [socialgas.com](http://socialgas.com) (search "BUYERS GUIDE").

- **Use our new Ways to Save tool.** This tool will help you create an energy action plan, track and update your progress and see how your actions can help you save energy and money. Visit [socialgas.com](http://socialgas.com) (search "WAYS TO SAVE").
- **Enroll in our Level Pay Plan.** This program averages gas usage and costs over a 12-month period. Customers pay an average bill amount each month instead of actual charges. Visit [socialgas.com](http://socialgas.com) (search "LEVEL PAY PLAN").

- **Consider assistance programs.** You may qualify for a 20 percent discount on your monthly gas bill, no-cost energy-saving home improvements or other assistance. Visit [socialgas.com](http://socialgas.com) (search "ASSISTANCE") for more information.

If you are having difficulty paying your gas bill, please contact us to make payment arrangements at [socialgas.com](http://socialgas.com) (search "PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS") or call 1-800-427-2200.

SAFETY >>>

## RECOGNIZING AND RESPONDING TO SIGNS OF A GAS LEAK

Leaking gas could cause a fire, explosion, property damage or serious bodily injury. Use your sense of sight, hearing or smell and any of the following signs to alert you to the presence of a gas leak:

### Look

- A damaged connection to a gas appliance
- Dirt or water being blown in the air
- Dead or dying vegetation (in an otherwise moist area) over or near pipeline areas
- A fire or explosion near a pipeline
- Exposed pipeline after an earthquake, fire, flood or other disaster

### Listen

- An unusual sound, such as a hissing, whistling or roaring sound near a gas line or appliance

### Smell

- The distinctive odor\* of natural gas

If you suspect a natural gas leak, follow these important steps:

- REMAIN calm

- DON'T light a match, candle, or cigarette
  - DON'T turn electrical appliances or lights on or off or use any device, including a telephone, that could cause a spark
  - IMMEDIATELY EVACUATE the area and, from a safe location, call The Gas Company at 1-800-427-2200, 24 hours a day, seven days a week; or call 911
- For more information, visit [socialgas.com](http://socialgas.com) (search "GAS LEAK SIGNS").

\* Some persons may not be able to smell the odor because they have a diminished sense of smell, olfactory fatigue (normal, temporary inability to distinguish an odor after prolonged exposure to it) or because the odor is being masked or hidden by other odors that are present, such as cooking, damp, musty or chemical odors. In addition, certain conditions in pipe and soil can cause odor fade—the loss of odorant so that it is not detectable by smell.

## GIVE THE GIFT OF WARMTH

Each year, the Gas Assistance Fund† (GAF) helps customers—including the elderly, disabled and newly unemployed—who are having financial difficulty paying their winter gas bills.

Between January and May, The Gas Company works with United Way of Greater Los Angeles and non-profit organizations to help customers obtain a one-time grant for the gas bill amount, not exceeding \$100. The program is made possible by generous donations from customers, employees, ratepayers and shareholders‡.

### Donate to GAF:

Make your tax-deductible donation by visiting [socialgas.com](http://socialgas.com) (search "DONATE") or mail it to United Way Gas Assistance Fund, File 56826, Los Angeles, CA 90074-6826.

### To qualify for GAF:

- The gas bill must be in the name of the customer requesting assistance.
- The bill address must be the customer's primary residence.
- The customer must not apply for more than the maximum GAF allowance for the current program year.
- The customer must meet certain income guidelines.

For more information, including program application, visit [socialgas.com](http://socialgas.com) (search "GAF").

† This program may be modified or terminated without prior notice and is provided to qualified customers on a first-come, first-served basis, until funds are no longer available. Additional terms and conditions may apply. Permit to solicit donations are available at [socialgas.com](http://socialgas.com) (search "GAF"). ‡ Shareholder donations do not affect gas or service rates.

The Gas Company

NOTICIAS

INVIERNO DE 2013

## SUGERENCIAS PARA USAR EL CALENTADOR DE AGUA CON SEGURIDAD

- Asegúrese de que su calentador de agua sea instalado de acuerdo con los códigos de construcción o las instrucciones de instalación del fabricante. Si esta ubicado en un garaje deberá tener una altura tal que el piloto o cualquier otra fuente de encendido esté por lo menos a 18 pulgadas sobre el nivel del suelo.
- Sujete firmemente el calentador de agua a los montantes de la pared en dos lugares—en el tercio superior e inferior del tanque—con pernos reforzados y correa metálica para mantenerlo anclado en caso de un terremoto. Puede encontrar kits e instrucciones en la mayoría de las tiendas de mejoras para el hogar o a través de un profesional calificado y licenciado.
- Mantenga el área circundante limpia y bien ventilada, y nunca almacene ni use productos inflamables como gasolina, disolventes para pinturas o productos de limpieza dentro del mismo cuarto o cerca de algún aparato doméstico de gas o que produzca calor.
- Las temperaturas de agua arriba de 125 grados Fahrenheit pueden ocasionar quemaduras graves o incluso la muerte. Para evitar una quemadura accidental, ajuste su termostato a 120 grados Fahrenheit o menos. Consulte la recomendación del fabricante para las configuraciones seguras de temperatura.
- Vea que un profesional calificado con licencia o The Gas Company inspeccionen anualmente su calentador de agua.

Para más sugerencias de seguridad, visite [socialgas.com/espanol](http://socialgas.com/espanol) (busque la palabra clave "SEGURIDAD").

## CÓMO IDENTIFICAR Y RESPONDER A LAS SEÑALES DE UNA FUGA DE GAS

Una fuga de gas podría causar un incendio, explosión, daños a la propiedad o lesiones físicas de gravedad. Use los sentidos de la vista, el oído y el olfato, y cualquiera de las siguientes señales, para que le alerten sobre la presencia de una fuga de gas:

### Observe

- Si está dañada la conexión a un aparato de gas
- Tierra o agua siendo expulsada al aire
- Vegetación muerta o muriéndose (en una superficie húmeda) encima o cerca de un lugar donde hay tuberías
- Un incendio o explosión cerca de una tubería
- Tubería expuesta después de un terremoto, incendio, inundación u otro desastre

### Escuche

- Un sonido inusual, como un silbido, un chillido o un estruendo cerca de una tubería o un aparato de gas

### Huela

- El olor distintivo\* del gas natural
- Si sospecha que hay una fuga de gas natural, siga estos importantes pasos:
- CONSERVE la calma
  - NO encienda un cerillo, vela o cigarrillo

- NO encienda ni apague aparatos eléctricos o luces ni use un dispositivo, ni siquiera un teléfono, que pudiera causar una chispa
  - EVACUE INMEDIATAMENTE el área y, desde un lugar seguro, llame a The Gas Company al 1-800-342-4545, 24 horas al día, siete días a la semana; o llame al 911
- Para más información, visite [socialgas.com/espanol](http://socialgas.com/espanol) (busque las palabras clave "FUGAS DE GAS").

\* Algunas personas tal vez no puedan percibir el olor porque tienen un sentido del olfato disminuido, fatiga olfativa (una incapacidad temporal normal para distinguir un olor después de una exposición prolongada al mismo) o porque el olor está siendo disimulado u oculto por otros olores que están presentes, como olores de cocina, humedad, olor a cerrado o a sustancias químicas. Además, ciertas condiciones en las tuberías y el suelo pueden ocasionar el desvanecimiento del olor—la pérdida del compuesto aromático, de tal manera que no sea detectable por medio del olfato.