



The Gas Company

A Sempra Energy utility<sup>®</sup>

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2007

# GasCompanyNews

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## Taking the chill off WINTER BILLS

The colder the weather, the harder your furnace and water heater work to maintain the comforts of home. As a result, gas bills usually peak during winter. And although the national price for natural gas isn't as high as last winter\*, your bill may still seem high since you're probably using more natural gas to keep your home warm.

To help manage winter gas bills, consider these helpful programs and tips as part of our commitment to providing exceptional customer service.

• **Energy-saving tips:** You can cut heating costs up to 20% just by setting your furnace thermostat 3 to 5 degrees lower while you're at home and off while you're away. Use extra blankets and bundle up to stay warm.

- **Rebates:** Energy-efficient home improvements and appliances may be eligible for rebates, such as \$200 for qualifying gas furnaces (see inside).
- **Special payment arrangements:** Let us know right away if you're having trouble paying your bill.
- **Level Pay Plan:** We can average out the highs and lows of your gas bills so your payments are more predictable throughout the year.
- **Assistance programs:** Income-qualified customers may receive a rate discount, free home energy-saving services or other assistance.

For details, visit [www.socalgas.com](http://www.socalgas.com) or call 1-800-427-2200.

\*As of January 2007, residential customers of The Gas Company can expect the average monthly bill for 75 therms of natural gas to be about \$80 to \$85 this winter versus \$98 last winter. Actual bills may vary.

Central heating represents about two-thirds of most winter gas bills, with a typical furnace costing about \$1.15 an hour to run. To save money, start with our home heating tips.

# SAVE MORE with rebates for energy-smart choices



Saving energy is a smart way to save money, and you can save even more with rebates\* from The Gas Company. Choose qualified high-efficiency products when you upgrade your home and you could get:

- \$200 for ENERGY STAR®-qualified central natural gas furnaces,
- \$30 for qualifying natural gas water heaters, or
- \$0.15 per square foot for attic and wall insulation.

**Now** you can even receive cash back immediately with The Gas Company's new **Instant Rebate program**. When you buy a qualifying high-efficiency water heater, ENERGY STAR®-qualified dishwasher or clothes washer from a participating retailer, you'll get the rebate instantly at the cash register instead of filling out a mail-in application and waiting for a check to arrive.

In addition to saving you money for years to come, such energy-efficient choices may help preserve natural resources and reliable energy supplies for future generations. For the latest information on rebates and participating retailers, visit [www.socalgas.com/residential/savemoney](http://www.socalgas.com/residential/savemoney).

\*Certain restrictions apply. This program is funded by California utility customers and administered under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission.

"Our instant rebates make it quicker and easier than ever for you to get cash back on energy-efficient appliances at participating retail stores."

— RODNEY D., ENERGY PROGRAMS SUPERVISOR

## SAFETY WISE: Water heater tips

You count on your natural gas water heater for warm baths, fresh laundry and clean dishes. To use it safely, take these simple steps.

- Prevent scalding accidents – and trim energy costs – by setting your water heater thermostat at or slightly below the manufacturer's recommended temperature.
- Keep the area around your water heater clean and well ventilated.
- Never use or store flammable products, such as gasoline or paint thinner, near your water heater or other heat-producing appliances. Unseen vapors from these products can ignite when exposed to a flame or spark.
- To reduce the risk of igniting accidentally spilled flammables, be sure the main burner and pilot light of your water heater are at least 18 inches above the floor.
- Anchor your water heater to wall studs in two spots to secure it during earthquakes. Use metal straps and heavy bolts at the top and bottom thirds of the tank, at least 4 inches above the thermostat controls, or buy a strapping kit from your local hardware store.
- When installing a tankless water heater or other equipment, don't block the gas meter (see article on next page).

You'll find more safety tips at [www.socalgas.com/safety](http://www.socalgas.com/safety) as part of The Gas Company's commitment to providing safe, reliable energy.



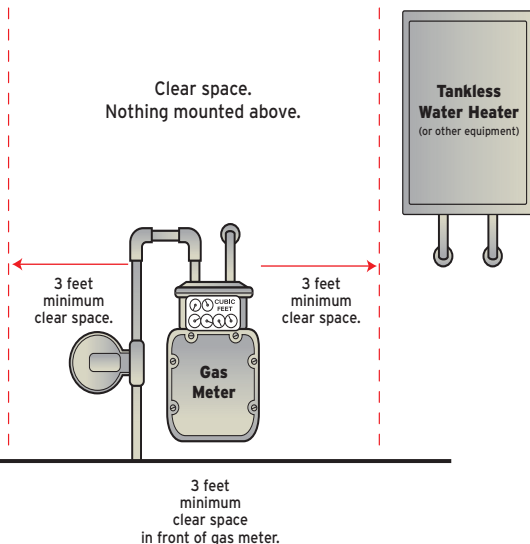
Lowering the temperature setting on your water heater can help prevent scalding accidents and reduce your energy costs.

# INSTALLING NEW EQUIPMENT? Don't block the meter

Do you plan to install a tankless water heater or any other new equipment at your home or business? If so, please keep enough clear space around the gas meter set so it's easy to reach during service calls.

In addition, whenever you install new appliances or remodel your home or workplace, ensure your own safety and the safety of others by removing any electric device or other potential source of ignition from anywhere above the meter or within three feet below or from the sides of the meter.

For more information – or to request a free safety checkup on your gas appliances – call The Gas Company at **1-800-427-2200** or visit [www.socalgas.com/service](http://www.socalgas.com/service).



## HELP FOR PEOPLE with certain medical needs

Certain medical conditions may qualify you or a full-time resident of your home for additional natural gas at our lowest (baseline) rate. This **Medical Baseline Allowance** is 0.822 therms of natural gas per day in addition to the standard baseline allowance. It's available for those who may require a sustained level of home heating due to paraplegia, quadriplegia, hemiplegia, multiple sclerosis, scleroderma, a compromised immune system or a life-threatening illness.

To qualify, you must have a doctor certify the medical condition. To receive an application for the Medical Baseline Allowance, call us at **1-800-427-2200** or download one at [www.socalgas.com/medical](http://www.socalgas.com/medical).

## Home improvements available for income-qualified customers

The **Direct Assistance Program (DAP)** offers eligible, income-qualified renters and homeowners free energy-saving home improvements. Improvements may include ceiling insulation, door weatherstripping, caulking, low-flow showerheads, water heater blankets and minor repairs to exterior doors and windows. In addition, eligible homeowners may receive limited appliance repair or replacement services. For more information, call the DAP hotline at **1-800-331-7593**.



A Sempra Energy utility®

*Glad to be of service.®*

**1-800-427-2200**

TDD: 1-800-252-0259

*Gas Company News*

is published bimonthly by  
The Gas Company for  
its customers.

You'll find this information and  
more available online at  
[www.socalgas.com](http://www.socalgas.com).

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# Noticias de The Gas Company

Valiosa información de sus amigos de The Gas Company™

## Cómo evitar que lo dejen helado SUS FACTURAS DE INVIERNO

Entre más frío hace, más trabajan su calefactor y calentador de agua. Como resultado, las facturas de gas por lo general llegan a su máximo en invierno. Y aunque el precio nacional del gas natural no es tan alto como el invierno pasado\*, su factura podría seguir pareciendo elevada porque probablemente esta usando más gas para mantener su hogar calentito.

Para ayudar a controlar las facturas de gas, considere estos prácticos programas y sugerencias.

- **Sugerencias para ahorrar energía:** puede reducir los costos de la calefacción hasta 20% con sólo ajustar el termostato de su calefactor de 3 a 5 grados menos mientras esté en casa y apagándolo cuando sale. Use cobijas adicionales y abríquese para mantenerse calentito.

\*A partir de enero de 2007, los clientes residenciales de The Gas Company pueden esperar que la factura mensual por un promedio de 75 termias de gas natural sea de entre \$80 y \$85 este invierno, versus \$98 del invierno pasado. Las facturas reales pueden variar.

- **Reembolsos:** la instalación de mejoras en el hogar y la compra de aparatos domésticos eficientes en energía pudieran darle derecho a un reembolso, como \$200 por calefactores de gas que reúnan los requisitos.
- **Arreglos especiales para pagar:** háganos saber de inmediato si tiene problemas pagando su factura.
- **Plan de pagos nivelados:** podemos ayudar a suavizar los altibajos de sus facturas de gas.
- **Programas de asistencia:** los clientes que reúnan los requisitos pueden recibir un descuento sobre la tarifa, servicios gratuitos para el ahorro de energía en el hogar u otro tipo de asistencia.

Para más detalles, visite [www.socalgas.com/sp](http://www.socalgas.com/sp) o llame al **1-800-342-4545**.

## Hay mejoras para el hogar *para clientes que reúnen los requisitos de ingreso*

El Programa de Asistencia Directa (DAP) ofrece a inquilinos y propietarios que reúnen los requisitos mejoras gratuitas para el ahorro de energía en el hogar. Estas mejoras pueden incluir aislamiento de techo, colocación de burletes en puertas, cabezales para regadera de bajo flujo, y recubrimientos para

calentadores de agua. Además, los propietarios de inmuebles que reúnan los requisitos pudieran recibir servicios limitados de reparación o reemplazo de aparatos domésticos. Para mayor información, llame **1-800-331-7593**.



**1-800-342-4545**

TDD: 1-800-252-0259

Publicamos *Gas Company News* cada dos meses. Esta información, y más, está disponible en [www.socalgas.com/sp](http://www.socalgas.com/sp).

## HABLANDO DE SEGURIDAD: *sugerencias para el calentador de agua*

Usted depende de su calentador de agua de gas natural para bañarse, tener la ropa limpia y lavar los platos. Para usarlo de manera segura, siga estos pasos:

- Evite quemarse accidentalmente con agua hirviendo – y recorte los costos de la energía – ajustando el termostato de su calentador de agua según o por debajo las recomendaciones del fabricante.
- Mantenga el área alrededor de su calentador de agua limpia y bien ventilada.
- Nunca utilice ni almacene productos inflamables, tales como gasolina y solvente para pinturas, cerca de sus aparatos domésticos de gas. Los vapores invisibles pueden encenderse al exponerse a una llama o chispa.
- Para reducir el riesgo de que se enciendan flamables derramados accidentalmente, asegúrese de que el quemador principal y el piloto de su calentador de agua estén al menos 18 pulgadas por encima del piso.
- Sujete firmemente su calentador de agua en los pies derechos de dos lados para asegurarlo en caso de terremoto. Utilice fajillas metálicas y tornillos reforzados en el tercio superior y en el tercio inferior del tanque, cuando menos 4 pulgadas por encima de los controles del termostato.
- Al instalar un calentador de agua “sin tanque” u otro equipo, no obstruya el medidor de gas.

Encontrará más sugerencias sobre seguridad en [www.socalgas.com/sp/safety](http://www.socalgas.com/sp/safety).