

# UTILITY *Talk*

Winter 2010  
Winner

PRSA - Virginia Best in Show



NATURAL GAS

WATER

WASTEWATER

STREET LIGHTING

STORMWATER

Para una copia de este boletín en español, visite la página [www.richmondgov.com/publicutilities/UtilityTalk.aspx](http://www.richmondgov.com/publicutilities/UtilityTalk.aspx) o llame a la Oficina de Enlace Hispano de la Ciudad de Richmond al 646-0145.

## Reduction in gas rates to ease winter heating expenses

Consumers are catching a break this winter with their heating costs due to the 18 percent reduction in the purchased gas cost (PGC) announced last September. The decrease was primarily due to a decline in the price of natural gas over the summer.

"The fact that natural gas bills will continue to go down for our customers is good news I'm happy to bring during this turbulent economic time," said city Mayor Dwight C. Jones.

The city passes along the cost of the natural gas it purchases to its customers, dollar for dollar, without any markup.

Beginning with the October bills, the PGC decreased from \$.895 to \$.735 per Ccf (100 cubic feet of natural gas). As a result, the average residential customer who uses

70 Ccf per month is paying approximately \$91.75 compared to a previous bill of \$102.95, an 11 percent reduction in the total gas bill.

DPU analysts periodically review and adjust purchased gas costs up or down based on market and weather conditions.

DPU offers information and programs year-round to encourage customers to better manage their utility bills and seek assistance before those bills become unmanageable. DPU also encourages customers to consider enrolling in the Equal Monthly Payment Plan (EMPP) in order to avoid large seasonal fluctuations in their monthly bill. More information about EMPP and other programs is available by calling 644-3000 or visiting DPU's website at [www.richmondgov.com/dpu](http://www.richmondgov.com/dpu).



## Why Stormwater Management is Important to You

In city and suburban areas, there's more buildings and pavement that do not allow rain and snowmelt to soak into the ground. Most developed areas rely on storm drains to carry runoff from roofs and paved areas to nearby waterways.

Stormwater runoff carries pollutants and garbage such as motor oil, dirt, chemicals, lawn fertilizers, cans and bottles, pet and animal waste, and road salts directly to streams and rivers where it pollutes the water.

In addition, stormwater travels at a faster speed, causing erosion along its way and wiping out aquatic habitats. Stormwater is often warmer

than rain water because it's coming from roofs and parking lots, and the sudden change in water temperature can be harmful to the health and reproduction of aquatic life.

The result is fewer fish, foul drinking water, and unpleasant recreational areas.

The stormwater utility fee you pay annually is helping to manage the damage caused by stormwater runoff, keep the James River and Chesapeake Bay clean, and reduce flooding.

-- For more information, write the  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency,  
Nonpoint Source Control Branch (4503T),  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20460

### Resources

Turn your home into a stormwater pollution solution:  
[www.epa.gov/nps](http://www.epa.gov/nps)

Low Impact Development Center:  
[www.lowimpactdevelopment.org](http://www.lowimpactdevelopment.org)

Chesapeake Bay Program:  
[www.chesapeakebay.net](http://www.chesapeakebay.net)



79717-0044680

**IMPORTANT  
PHONE NUMBERS**

Customer Service: 644-3000 TDD: 1-800-855-1155  
Streetlight Outages & Gas, Water & Sewer Emergencies: 644-3000  
TDD: 1-800-855-1155  
Miss Utility: (Before You Dig): 811



# Protect your gas meter

As the owner or occupant of a building that is supplied with natural gas, you have a shared responsibility to ensure that the gas meter, regulator, and associated piping are protected from damage.

In addition, you are responsible for the maintenance of any piping between your gas meter and your appliances.

- Take care when using lawn mowers, brush cutters or digging in gardens or flower beds so you do not damage gas piping.

- Do not scratch or damage the protective paint coating on the gas meter and piping.

- Do not hang things from the gas piping.

- Do not chain a pet, bicycle, gas grill or anything else to the gas meter or piping.

- Do not anchor laundry lines or plant supports to the gas meter or piping.

- Maintain a safe clearance between your gas, charcoal or propane grill and the gas meter.

- Maintain a two foot clearance to allow access to the meter and meter shut-off valve. Maintain at least a three foot clearance around commercial meters.

- Do not disconnect, move or disturb the gas meter.

- Do not change or alter the service



connection in any manner.

- Call Miss Utility (8-1-1) at least three full business days before digging in your yard. This notice will allow affected utilities time to mark the location of their underground lines for your safety. The call and markout service are free.

For more information call 646-8300.

## DID YOU KNOW...?

### Underground utility color codes

When underground utility lines are marked, the colors indicate the type of line.

- Red - Electric power, cables, conduit and lighting cables
- Yellow - Gas, oil, steam, petroleum or gaseous materials
- Orange - Communications, alarm or signal lines, cables or conduits
- Blue - Potable water
- Purple - Reclaimed water, irrigation and slurry lines.
- Green - Sewer and drain lines
- Pink - Temporary survey markings
- White - Proposed excavation

## FIND US ONLINE



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[www.facebook.com/utilitybuddy](http://www.facebook.com/utilitybuddy)

[www.twitter.com/UtilityBuddy](http://www.twitter.com/UtilityBuddy)



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## Win a \$25 bill credit!

The Department of Public Utilities selects at random two customer account numbers to hide in the *Utility Talk* newsletter each issue. If you find your account number in this issue, call 646-3937 by January 15 to claim a \$25 credit on your utility bill.



Always remember to read each issue of *Utility Talk* carefully, and you might be the next big winner of a \$25 credit on your bill!



**NATURAL GAS smells like ROTTEN EGGS**

Use your NOSE to recognize the "ROTTEN EGG" smell of NATURAL GAS



Natural Gas smells BAD for a GOOD reason --

**YOUR SAFETY!**

If you smell gas, leave the area immediately.

Go to a safe location and call 9-1-1.

For a free natural gas safety brochure, visit [richmondgov.com/publicutilities](http://richmondgov.com/publicutilities)