



# Natural Gas Safety

Spring/Summer 2022

Important Information from Richmond Gas Works Serving Richmond, Henrico and North Chesterfield

## Prevent Damage to Underground Natural Gas Lines



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

The greatest risk to underground pipelines is accidental damage during excavation. To protect our natural gas pipelines and other underground facilities, it is critical that you use the Miss Utility system prior to ANY excavation on public or private property.

The law requires that ALL excavators call 811 or file out the request online at [va811.com](http://va811.com) before digging.

Virginia 811 will contact the owners of all underground facilities and pipelines so that they can mark the locations for you. Excavators are required to allow time for utilities to mark their lines and are required to take precautions when working in the area.

Even if you cause seemingly minor damage to a gas line or meter, notify Richmond Gas Works immediately at 646-4646. Any damage may cause a future leak or failure.

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

### If You Detect Even a Faint Scent of Gas...

**A gas leak is usually recognized by the smell, sight, or sound.**

**Smell** - Natural gas is colorless and odorless. We add a distinctive, pungent odor similar to rotten eggs so that you will recognize it quickly.

**Sight** - You may see mist, fog, or bubbles in standing water, or vegetation that appears to be dead or dying for no apparent reason.

**Sound** - You may hear an unusual noise like roaring, hissing or whistling.

#### What should you do if you suspect a leak?

Protect life first. Move to a safe environment. Call 911.

Do not strike a match, use telephones, switch on or off appliances, lights or even a flashlight in the area where you smell gas. These items can produce sparks that might ignite and cause an explosion.

**IF YOU SMELL IT,  
REPORT IT!**  
**24-hour emergency  
number  
646-4646  
(TDD: 711 to 646-4646)**



Richmond Gas Works is specially equipped to locate gas leaks. We'll send someone right away to ensure your safety.

## For More Information

Call 811 or 800-552-7001 before you dig

<http://www.VA811.com>

[rva.gov/public-utilities/natural-gas-utility](http://rva.gov/public-utilities/natural-gas-utility)

[rva.gov/public-utilities/natural-gas-safety](http://rva.gov/public-utilities/natural-gas-safety)

[www.richmondgasworks.com](http://www.richmondgasworks.com)

Office of Pipeline Safety [www.phmsa.dot.gov](http://www.phmsa.dot.gov)

## Damage Prevention Awareness

The greatest risk to underground pipelines is accidental damage during excavation. To protect our natural gas pipelines and other underground lines, it is critical that people use the 811 call system prior to any excavation related activities on public and private property.

The law requires all excavators call 811 or 800-552-7001 before digging.

This one call system will contact the owners of the underground lines in the immediate area of the digging so that they can mark the locations. Failure to comply with this law can jeopardize public safety and result in costly damages and fines.

Even if you cause what seems like minor damage to a pipeline or gas meter, notify Richmond Gas Works immediately at 646-4646. A gouge, scrape, dent, or even a crease to the pipe on its coating may cause a future leak or failure. It is imperative that the pipeline owners inspect and repair any damage.

## Hazard Awareness and Prevention

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, natural gas transmission and distribution systems have the best safety record of any type of transportation system in the country. Like all forms of energy, however, it must be handled properly. Damage to an underground pipeline can cause natural gas to escape, which could cause a hazard. We work diligently to ensure pipeline safety through a variety of measures, including:

- One-call and Dig Safe programs (VA 811)
- Inspection programs
- Design and construction practices
- Workforce qualification programs
- Public education programs
- Industry safety practices and government oversight
- Pipeline markers and facility mapping
- Natural gas leak surveys
- Patrol of critical natural gas facilities
- Natural gas pressure monitoring
- Natural gas odorization
- Liaison with city, county and municipal agencies
- Security measures



## Yellow CSST Safety Campaign and Precautions

Do you have this fuel gas piping installed in your home or business? This product, called corrugated stainless steel tubing or CSST, should be properly bonded and grounded to current requirements in order to reduce the risk to your home or business from lightning activity. The American Public Gas Association partnering with the National Association of State Fire Marshals want you to be safe.

### What is CSST?

Corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) is a flexible, stainless steel piping system used to supply natural gas and propane in residential, commercial, and industrial structures. Standard CSST is coated with a yellow exterior plastic coating.

CSST has been safely used in homes and businesses since 1990 and is an effective means of delivering natural gas and propane gas to homes and businesses. CSST has typically 75% fewer fittings than traditional pipe which means a safer system, less leak potential and reduced callbacks.

### Why am I being contacted?

If lightning strikes on or near a structure, there is risk it can travel through the structure's gas piping system and cause a leak, and in some cases a fire.

**All manufacturer's instructions have required direct-bonding and grounding of yellow CSST in new installations since 2006.** A bonding connection installed on a gas piping system, as with any metallic system within a house, will reduce the likelihood of electrical arcing to or from other bonded metallic systems in the structure, thus reducing the likelihood of arc induced damage.

### What should I do if I find CSST?

#### 1. Inspect.

If work has been performed on the gas piping system in your house or business since 1990, it's possible that yellow CSST was installed but not to current installation requirements.

#### 2. Mitigate

If you find yellow CSST, it is strongly recommended that you contact a licensed electrician. The licensed electrician can make sure that your system is properly bonded.



For more information concerning the safety of CSST go to [CSSTsafety.com](http://CSSTsafety.com)