

Lorain County Safety Council Presentation



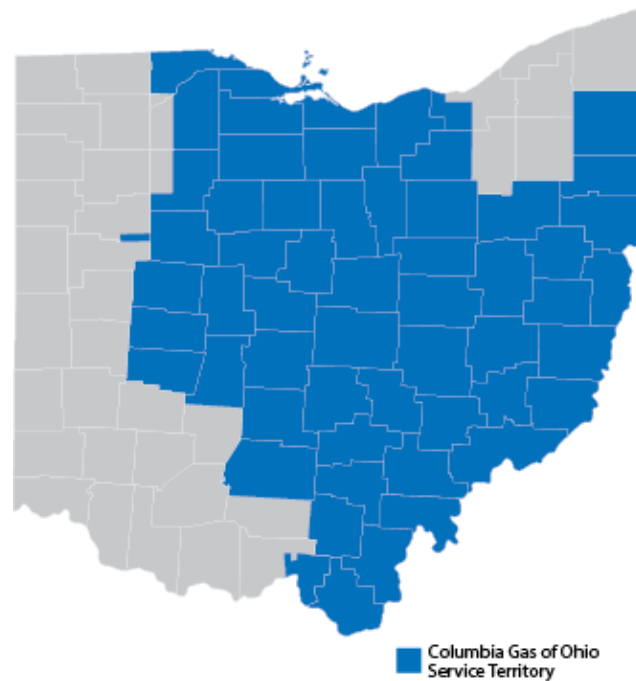
A NiSource Company

Wednesday, December 15, 2021

Benjamin M. Cutler - Public Affairs Specialist, Columbia Gas

Who we are...

- ▶ Largest natural gas utility in Ohio
 - Owned by NiSource Inc. (NYSE: NI)
- ▶ Roughly 1,000 employees
- ▶ 1.4 million residential, commercial and industrial customers
- ▶ 20,000+ miles of natural gas pipeline
- ▶ 61/88 Ohio Counties
- ▶ 1,200 communities
- ▶ Lorain County footprint



Public Affairs team responsibilities

- ▶ Primary liaison with municipality partners
- ▶ Oversee 60-70 replacement projects each year, including several in Lorain County
- ▶ Public/City Council meetings
- ▶ Daily problem-solving
- ▶ Reaching customers where they are

Columbia Gas of Ohio beginning pipeline replacement project in Clinton Township

COMMUNITY



By Mount Vernon News reports

Nov 20, 2020

Columbia Gas of Ohio will be undertaking a pipeline

NEWS

Eastside Block Watch to hear from Columbia Gas representative



Metro Creative Connection

Metro Creative Connection

By **MORNING JOURNAL** | morningjournal@dfmdev.com |

PUBLISHED: June 13, 2021 at 10:43 a.m. | UPDATED: July 14, 2021 at 7:51 a.m.

The next Eastside Block Watch meeting is set for 6:30 p.m., June 16, at the Lorain Senior Center, 3361 Garfield Blvd.

The speaker will be Ben Cutler from Columbia Gas. He will talk about the pipeline replacement project going on on the eastside and answer questions from the audience, according to a news release.

All are welcome to attend.

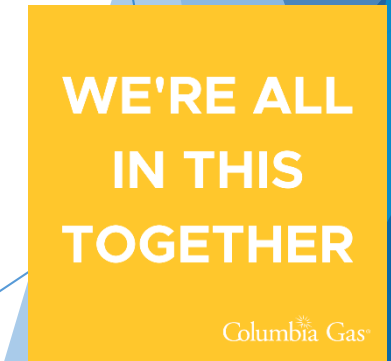
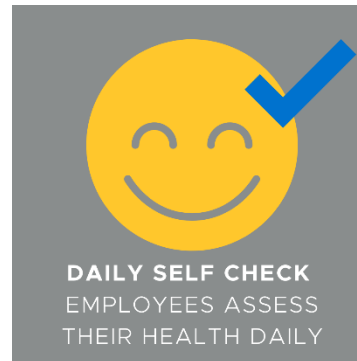
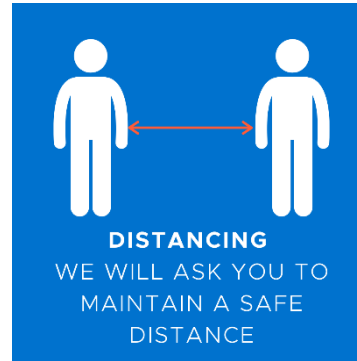
<https://www.columbiagasohio.com/>

Safety first – ALWAYS



COVID-19 safety precautions

Our employees and contractors are following these recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to keep themselves and our customers safe:



Natural gas safety

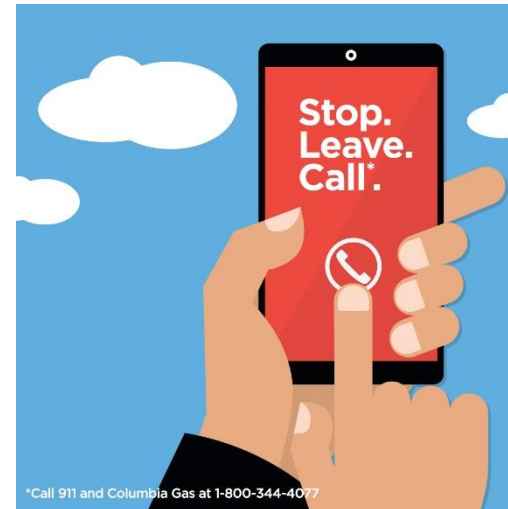
- ▶ Most reliant on natural gas during the winter
- ▶ Safe and reliable, but leaks can sometimes occur
- ▶ Leak causes
 - Corrosion
 - Damaged facilities
 - Faulty appliances and connections
- ▶ Signs of a natural gas leak
 - Rotten eggs (mercaptan)
 - Blowing dirt, bubbling water, dead vegetation, or a hissing/roaring sound.



STOP.LEAVE.CALL.

If you ever encounter the smell of natural gas, Columbia Gas recommends doing three things:

- ▶ Stop whatever you are doing
 - Avoid sparks
- ▶ Leave the area immediately and get to a safe location
- ▶ Call 911 and the gas company at **1-800-344-4077**
- ▶ COH will respond 24/7/365 at no charge
- ▶ Always err on the side of caution
- ▶ Never ignore potential leaks



Safety at home

- ▶ Always call 811 at least two business days before digging
- ▶ Ensure gas appliances are up to date and inspected regularly
- ▶ Never use a gas stove or range top as a heater
- ▶ Avoid storing flammable products such as paint stripper near your natural gas water heater or furnace.
- ▶ Leakage inspectors
- ▶ ALF



Carbon monoxide (CO)

- ▶ Colder months are peak time for CO poisoning
- ▶ Odorless, tasteless and colorless gas created when fuels burn incompletely
- ▶ Can be produced when there is not enough oxygen present for natural gas, oil, or any other fuel to burn properly
- ▶ Best protection? Fully functioning CO detectors
 - Test monthly and replace batteries every 6
- ▶ Symptoms: flu-like including headaches, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, irregular breathing or feeling ill
 - Tired at home, but fine when away from home.
- ▶ **Stop.Leave.Call.**



Carbon monoxide leak at Cuyahoga Falls hotel sends 4 to the hospital

—
Captain Rychlik with CFFD said that firefighters found "significant carbon monoxide in the building" upon arrival.

CO poisoning prevention

- ▶ Buy and install carbon monoxide detectors; some models double as smoke detectors. \$20-\$70
 - On every level and in every room
- ▶ Provide adequate ventilation in your home when using stoves, fireplaces or unvented space heaters
- ▶ Never use a stove or oven as a source of heat
- ▶ Ensure appliances are installed in accordance with local building codes and manufacturer's instructions
- ▶ Don't burn charcoal or run a generator indoors or in an enclosed space
- ▶ Clean the chimney and check for blockage at least once a year before using the fireplace
- ▶ Open the garage door before starting a vehicle



Know your home

► www.columbiagasohio.com/safety/know-your-home

Safety in every space



Exterior

You see the outside of your home every day, but are you aware of the potential hazards? Learn ways to keep safe.

[Explore Exterior](#)



Basement

Your most used appliances may be in the basement. Learn ways to keep your heating and water heating equipment safe.

[Explore Basement](#)



Kitchen

Ranges can be a fire source and can cause burn injuries in the kitchen. Learn how you can keep it safe.

[Explore Kitchen](#)



Living Room

Relax in the comfort of knowing your living room is both safe and cozy. Learn how you can keep your living room safe.

[Explore Living Room](#)



Laundry

The average family of four does about ten loads of laundry every week. Learn how to keep your dryer running safely.

[Explore Laundry](#)



Bedroom

Carbon monoxide poisoning can be dangerous for people who are sleeping. Learn how you can stay safe in your bedroom.

[Explore Bedroom](#)

<https://www.columbiagasohio.com/>



Smell gas? Stop. Leave. Call.

If you suspect a gas leak or that a natural gas line has been damaged stop what you're doing, leave the area immediately and call 911 and us.



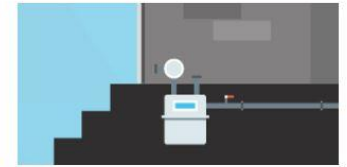
Call 811 before you dig

Big or small, call 811 before you dig, your local utilities will mark their lines so you can dig safely. It's free to homeowners. It's easy. It's the law.



Installing, repairing or replacing appliances

If you need to install, repair or replace an appliance, hire a qualified professional to make sure the work is properly done. Never attempt this yourself!



Keep your meter clear

Don't let leaves and snow build up on or around your natural gas meter. Take time to gently clear the meter of any leaves or snow with a broom, and never hang or place any objects on or around your natural gas meter or piping.

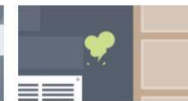
Garage

Some of your most used appliances - heating and water heating - may be located in the garage. Keep these simple natural gas safety tips top of mind to keep your garage safe.



Check gas appliance venting

Have a qualified professional inspect natural gas appliances for proper venting to avoid carbon monoxide exposure. They can verify things are in good working condition.



Smell gas? Stop. Leave. Call.

If you suspect a gas leak or that a natural gas line has been damaged stop what you're doing, leave the area immediately and call 911 and us.



Caring for your furnace

Heating systems should be clean, properly vented and checked regularly by a qualified professional, including cleaning or replacing your furnace filter regularly and cleaning your chimney and flue.



Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning

Hire a qualified professional to ensure your equipment is properly vented and adjusted for an adequate supply of fresh air for safe and efficient combustion.

Gas meter safety in winter weather

Your meter, regulator and outdoor piping can withstand harsh winter weather, but hard-packed snow, icicles and water dripping on outdoor equipment can create a safety hazard. Follow these tips to stay safe and warm this winter:

- ▶ Meter should be visible at all times for maintenance/emergency situations
- ▶ Never let snow completely cover the meter setting
- ▶ Don't use a shovel to break up snow or ice on the meter
- ▶ Don't shovel snow up against your meter
- ▶ Watch for freezing rain or water dripping from your roof that can create icy build-up on your meter
- ▶ Use a broom to gently clear snow from the meter
- ▶ Be careful using a snow blower or plow near the meter
- ▶ If your meter is completely encased in ice, or if you think there's a potential problem with the outside piping or equipment, call us.



811/Safe digging

- ▶ Facility damage is one of the primary causes of natural gas leaks across our service territory
- ▶ 811 is a national number that connects Ohioans to Ohio811
- ▶ When a call is placed to 811, Columbia Gas and other utilities are notified. Utility locators will visit the dig area and mark underground facilities with flags at no cost to the customer
- ▶ 48 hours



Know the Color Codes



Electric



Reclaimed Water,
Irrigation and
slurry lines



Gas, oil, Steam
or Petroleum



Communication
Systems



Proposed
Excavation



Temporary
Surveying Markings



Potable Water



Sewer and Drain

"Do you
know what
each colored
flag means?"



811/Safe digging

- ▶ Digging can only begin once the marking process is complete. After the facilities are located, digging within 18 inches of a marked line should be completed carefully by hand
- ▶ If an underground gas line is damaged while digging, **Stop.Leave.Call.**
- ▶ COH must arrive on site
- ▶ Don't attempt to fix it yourself
- ▶ Encroachments





811 Day Photo Contest





Daisy
from Toledo

Columbia Gas
A NiSource Company





Calling 811 – What you need to know!

- Call at least two business days in advance to ensure lines can be marked prior to the start of your project
- Call regardless of depth – any digging requires you to call 811
- Ensure the company doing the digging has placed the call (you cannot piggyback on another company's ticket)
- Wait for facility owners to mark their facilities
- Start excavation within 10 days – otherwise the ticket expires



Ohio 811 App

The Ohio811 app is designed to support excavators.



- Check ticket status (and confirm positive response of all utilities)
- Access to the Excavator Manual
- Review Ohio Marking Standards
- Update tickets (if i-dig capability is available)
- Search for ticket information with Near Ticket/Ticket Search feature
- Find general 811 information (DP councils, locate company contact information, etc.)

DPS CHECKLIST

Partners in Safety: Damage Prevention Specialists

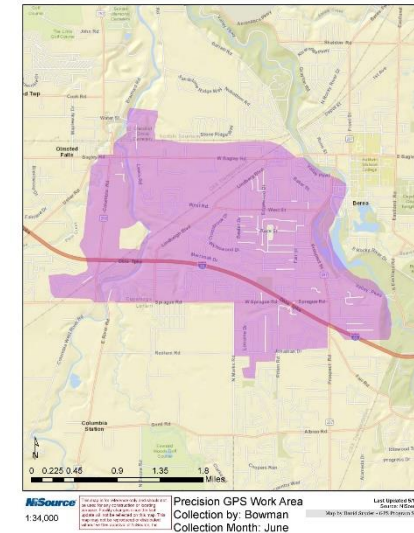
Your DPS can assist with a variety of things to make your job more efficient and safer. Reach out to them for any of the following items, or with a general safety questions.

Stay safe! Your DPS can help with...

- ☐ *Locate issues*
- ☐ *Line relocation assistance*
- ☐ *Risk assessment of locate tickets*
- ☐ *Damage prevention training*
- ☐ *General safety/digging counsel*
- ☐ *Replacements of materials*

Locating gas lines - GPS

- ▶ Customers may notice Columbia Gas contractors in and around their neighborhoods using GPS equipment. We are recording the locations of natural gas lines within inches
- ▶ This helps Columbia Gas enhance its emergency response capabilities and also prevents damages caused by unsafe digging practices
- ▶ The work does not require entry into homes/businesses and natural gas service will not be impacted. Before beginning GPS work in a community, Columbia Gas will provide notice to ensure residents know why surveyors are in the area



Accelerated Main Line Replacement Projects (AMRPs)

- ▶ Replacing old main with new plastic
- ▶ Why plastic?
- ▶ Year 13 of 25-year program
- ▶ 2021 Projects: Lorain, Elyria, Lorain County
- ▶ 2022 Projects: Lorain, Elyria, Westlake, South Amherst
- ▶ 2023 Projects: Amherst, Lorain



Work zone safety

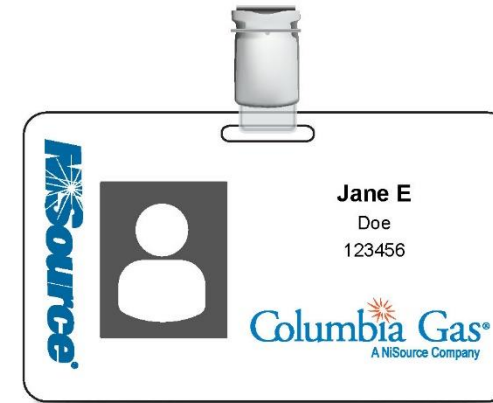
Even during the winter months, motorists can expect to see a number of road construction projects. Columbia Gas reminds all motorists to follow good safety practices in work zones.

- ▶ Expect the unexpected – Normal speed limits may be reduced; traffic lanes may change; and people may be working on or near the road
- ▶ Slow down – Speeding is one of the major causes of work zone crashes
- ▶ Keep your distance – Keep a safe distance between you and the car ahead of you, and don't tailgate
- ▶ Pay attention to signs – Observe posted signs until you see the one that says you've left the zone
- ▶ Obey road crew flaggers – A flagger has the same authority as a regulatory sign, so you can be cited for disobeying his or her directions
- ▶ Stay alert and minimize distractions – Dedicate your full attention to the roadway and avoid changing radio stations or using cell phones while driving



Utility scams

- ▶ One of the most common scenarios involves threats to shut off the gas without immediate cash payment on a bill
- ▶ Scammers will sometimes ask for payment via pre-paid debit cards or gift cards as well
 - While anyone with a phone number is susceptible, scammers often target small businesses, seniors and those who don't speak English as a first language
- ▶ Other common red flags of utility scams include unsolicited requests for personal and banking information, constant pressuring to pay or program offers that seem too good to be true
- ▶ Additionally, Columbia Gas employees and contractors always carry ID badges and will gladly show you upon request
- ▶ The best way to avoid falling victim to utility scams is to always exercise caution. If you are ever suspicious of a phone call, email or any other communication from someone claiming to be Columbia Gas of Ohio, please call us immediately



Charitable giving

- ▶ Through its Columbia Cares Program, Columbia Gas donates time, money and resources each year to local philanthropic programs and organizations
- ▶ Key focus areas include:
 - Safety
 - economic/workforce development
 - energy education & environment
 - Hardship assistance



Any 501C3 interested in learning more about the grant process should visit [columbiagasohio.com/columbiacares](https://www.columbiagasohio.com/columbiacares)

Stay in touch

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- ▶ **800.344.4077** – Save it!
- ▶ Facebook
- ▶ Twitter
- ▶ Nextdoor

THANK YOU!

Questions?