

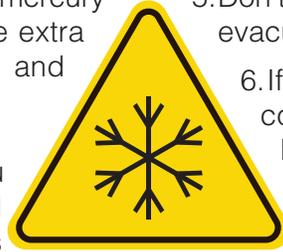
# Winter Safety: Smell Gas? Leave Fast!

As we enter the peak winter months, and the mercury begins to drop, it is important that we use extra precautions when heating our homes and businesses.

Always err on the side of caution. If you think you smell gas, evacuate immediately and call your utility provider. While natural gas is odorless and colorless in its purest form, utility companies add an odorant, mercaptan, to create a distinctive scent similar to that of rotten eggs. If left unattended, a gas leak can have deadly consequences.

Follow these natural gas safety tips:

1. Make it a point to have the natural gas furnace and appliances inspected annually by a qualified contractor. If purchasing new natural gas appliances, ensure they are high quality and ENERGY STAR certified.
2. Never use an oven or stove range for heating purposes.
3. Avoid storing flammable products such as paint stripper, fabric softener or salt bags in close proximity to natural gas appliances.
4. Always call 8-1-1 (J.U.L.I.E) before conducting any projects that require digging. This will help prevent underground facility damage and potentially dangerous situations.



5. Don't ignore the rotten egg smell. If you smell gas, evacuate immediately and call for help.

6. If you smell gas, never take any action that could generate a spark on the way out of the building. This includes flipping light switches, plugging and unplugging or using electronics. In fact, don't even call for help until you are clear of your home or workplace. Sparks may cause natural gas to ignite. Also, avoid opening windows in an effort to vent the area.

7. Never try to fix a potential gas leak on your own. Always call the professionals.

## Important Emergency Contact Information

Mid-American Energy: 800-595-5325

Mt Carmel Public Utility: (618)262-5151  
(toll free at 1-877-262-7036)

Nicor Gas: 888.Nicor4U (642.6748)

North Shore Gas/Peoples Gas: 866-556-6005

Ameren Illinois: 800.755.5000

Liberty Gas: 1-855-872-3242

Consumers Gas Company: 618-382-4158  
(toll free 800-322-4158)

*Information for this article gathered from Illinois utilities companies and the Illinois Energy Association.*

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Some browsers will have a "subscribe" link at the top of the page automatically. Clicking this link will add the subscription to a "Feeds" section of your browser's favorites or bookmarks.

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