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St. Lawrence Gas

An **ENBRIDGE** Company

Winter of 2009

For 24 hour emergency service call: 1-800-673-3301
For non-emergencies call: 769-3516, 322-5792, 1-800-454-2201
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GAS COST OUTLOOK

2009 Winter Price Update (Good News)

The market price for natural gas has decreased since our fall 2008 Pipeline Newsletter. In the fall, we predicted a 20% increase in the typical residential winter heating bill over last year based on market pricing at the time. Since then, market prices for natural gas have dropped and we can now predict that the winter prices should be slightly lower than last winter. The biggest threat to a customer's overall natural gas cost this year is weather. If we end the winter season with a normal weather pattern, a typical homeowner should see lower costs this winter. If the weather turns colder, costs will be higher.

St. Lawrence Gas uses a diversified supply portfolio to help protect our customers from large market price swings throughout the winter. Since a portion of the portfolio is directly tied to the market price of gas, today's lower prices should benefit our customers. As noted above however, the final cost will depend largely on the weather. Even

with the current decrease in the market price of natural gas it is still very important to use your energy wisely. St. Lawrence Gas therefore continues to recommend that our customers follow these energy conservation tips:

- Set thermostats back even a few degrees to save on energy use
- Install programmable thermostats
- Have your heating system professionally cleaned and maintained
- Change your furnace filter monthly during the heating season, or wash a permanent filter monthly

For more information and other tips on energy conservation please visit our website at www.stlawrencegas.com.

SAFETY

Space Heaters

Many customers, in an effort to minimize heating costs, will try zone heating with the use of electric, gas, or kerosene space heaters. A space heater is a self-contained, free-standing, air heating appliance intended for installation in the space being heated and not intended for duct connection.

Customers should be aware of the hazards associated with space heaters including:

- Fires and burns caused by close proximity to the flame, heating element, or hot surface area.
- Fires and explosions caused by flammable vapors and faulty wiring.
- Indoor air pollution from improper venting or incomplete combustion.
- Carbon monoxide poisoning caused by improper venting of fuel burning equipment.

Please follow these guidelines when selecting and using a space heater:

- When selecting a heater, look for certification by a nationally recognized testing laboratory such as UL, choose a model that is the correct size for the area you want to heat, and select a heater with a guard around the flame area or heating element.

- Read and follow the manufacturers operating instructions and keep the manual handy for future reference. Make sure all family members are familiar with the proper operation of the heater.
- Keep heaters at least 3 feet away from furniture, bedding, and drapes. Keep children and animals away.
- Never leave a space heater on when you go to sleep or leave the area for extended times.
- Never operate a defective heater. Have all necessary repairs done by qualified repair persons.

CO Poisoning

According to the Consumer Product Safety Administration, there are on average about 170 non-automobile related carbon monoxide deaths in the US each year. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that is produced as a result of the incomplete combustion of a fuel such as natural gas, oil, or propane.



Symptoms

A person exposed to carbon monoxide may complain of dizziness, headache, nausea, fatigue and other symptoms similar to those associated with the flu. The severity of the symptoms will vary, depending on the person's age and general health, level of physical activity, and the duration and concentration of exposure. In very severe cases, CO poisoning can be fatal.

Prevention

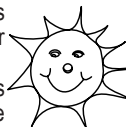
A few common sense precautions can greatly reduce the risk of CO poisoning in the home:

- Never operate vehicles or emergency generators in an enclosed area, such as a garage.
- Keep vents and chimneys clear of blockages.
- Never operate charcoal grills, portable gas grills or similar equipment inside a home, garage or other enclosed area.
- Never use a gas range, oven or clothes dryer for heating.
- Have space and water heating equipment inspected regularly by a qualified technician.
- If an additional measure of protection is desired, consumers may wish to purchase a CO detector, which should be certified to the national standard for CO detectors.

ENERGY SAVINGS

During winter it's a good idea to review some energy conservation tips to help stretch your energy dollars.

- Tighten up your home. Seal leaks around windows and doors with caulk, spray foam, and weather stripping.
- Inspect your insulation, particularly in the attic. It's the easiest place to add insulation and can make a big impact on energy bills.
- If you have a fireplace, make sure the damper is closed when not in use.
- Dress in layers and set your thermostat back as low as is comfortable to you.
- Ceiling fans should be reversed in winter to move warm air down from the ceiling toward the floor. Set the fan speed on its lowest setting to avoid the feeling of a draft.



What to do if you suspect CO in your home or business

Call your fuel supplier and explain why you think carbon monoxide may be present and ask for an investigation. If someone has been overcome, get them to fresh air and call 911 immediately. Turn off fuel burning appliances and ventilate the house.

Snow & Ice on Meter

This winter please check, on a regular basis, your outside gas meter and regulator to make sure that no ice builds up on either. The gas regulator is a disc shaped device usually installed near the outside wall of your house in the piping connected to the gas meter.

Ice build-up around the meter and regulator can cause an uneven supply of natural gas to your appliances. Do not use sharp objects to remove the ice. If you notice a significant build up and are unable to safely remove the ice, please call St. Lawrence Gas.

- Regularly clean or replace air filters in your forced-air heating system for fuel economy and better air quality.
- Leaky ducts can reduce your system's overall efficiency. Sealing ducts is especially important if they run through the attic or crawlspaces.
- Wait until you have a full load before running your washer, dryer or dishwasher.
- Open window shades during the day to let the natural warmth of the sun into your home. At night, close them again to help insulate your windows against heat loss.
- If you're replacing any household appliances, choose Energy Star rated equipment for peak efficiency.

PAYMENTS

Where to Pay

Effective November 17, 2008 St. Lawrence Gas no longer accepts cash payments at our Massena office. Natural gas payments can be made by mail or, at one of our collection boxes located at the Massena Town Hall, Ogdensburg Commerce Park, or in the night deposit box at our 33 Stearns St., Massena office.

Assistance Programs

HEAP

Funds are available to eligible households for assistance with heating expenses. If you are having difficulty managing your heating costs, contact the HEAP office to apply. HEAP stands for Home Energy Assistance Program. Income limits depend on the number of persons in the household. Customers who have had their service disconnected due to non-payment, or are in danger of disconnection, may also qualify for an emergency HEAP benefit in addition to regular benefits. HEAP information is available by calling 379-2303.

Deferred Payment Arrangements

The Home Energy Fair Practices Act (HEFPA) provides consumer protections that may help you avoid termination of service if you have fallen behind in your payments. Utilities must offer the customer an opportunity to pay their arrears balance over time while the customer agrees to pay all future charges in full and on time. The monthly payments on the arrears balance will be based on the customer's ability to pay after taking a financial statement from the customer. This is called a Deferred Payment Arrangement, or DPA for short. A customer who adheres to the terms of the agreement will not be disconnected.

Other Assistance

Customers facing financial difficulties may also apply for assistance from the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, and local social service agencies such as the Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, and Neighborhood Centers. Family members are also encouraged to help one another.

METER INSPECTION PROGRAM

The New York State Public Service Commission mandates that we regularly and randomly exchange meters and bring them in for testing. About 350 meters will be exchanged under the program this year.

St. Lawrence Gas will perform these exchanges in a manner so as not to interrupt service for an extended time. If your gas service is selected, you will be notified and asked to make an appointment for the exchange. Because the selection process is random, it is possible that customers who had an exchange last year could be chosen again

this year. St. Lawrence Gas appreciates your patience and understanding as we comply with this regulatory requirement.

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