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**St. Lawrence Gas**

An  ENBRIDGE Company

Fall of 2005

For 24 hour emergency service call: 1-800-673-3301  
For non-emergencies call: 769-3516, 322-5792, 1-800-454-2201  
P.O. Box 270 • Massena, NY 13662 • [www.stlawrencegas.com](http://www.stlawrencegas.com)

## Gas Price Outlook

We strongly recommend our customers take two steps to handle energy costs this year

✓ be energy conscious this winter.

✓ take advantage of the Company's budget billing plan to level payments.

Although natural gas will remain less expensive than alternate fuels, our customers should be prepared for increases in the commodity price of natural gas, which represents the largest portion of the bill. Neither St. Lawrence Gas, nor your Public Service Commission, control the commodity price of natural gas. We do not profit from any increase in the commodity price of gas.



## Energy Efficiency

Below is a checklist of steps you can take to save energy and money around your home and/or business.

✓ **Keep the Heat In and the Cold out!**

- Insulate! Ceilings to R-30 or better, walls to R-11 or better.
- Reduce infiltration! Seal leaks around windows and doors, install storm windows or upgrade to new double pane replacement windows. If this is cost prohibitive, use inexpensive plastic sheeting over your windows.
- Wrap hot water pipes and your water heater, but don't cover the draft hood or block the combustion air inlet or controls.
- On sunny days, open drapes and blinds to let solar heat in. Close them at night to insulate against the cold.



✓ **Use Energy Wisely!**

- Set thermostats between 65° and 70° during the winter and at 58° when away from home for more than a few hours. Keep in mind that warmer temperatures are recommended for homes with ill or elderly persons, or infants. Dress in layers and add an extra blanket at night for warmth.
- Install a programmable thermostat that will set back your temperatures automatically at pre-set intervals without you having to remember to do so.
- Have your heating system cleaned and maintained by a heating professional once a year for peak efficiency.

- Change your furnace filter monthly during the heating season, or wash a permanent filter monthly for optimal air flow.
- Don't block return air registers, and install deflectors to direct warm air across the floor from floor registers.
- Close heating registers and doors to rooms you don't use.
- Lower your water heater temperature to 120 ° unless your automatic dishwasher requires higher temperatures.
- Run washing machines, clothes dryers, and dishwashers only with full loads.
- Install water flow restrictors and/or aerators in showerheads and faucets. Take showers instead of baths.
- When it's time to replace your appliances, install high efficiency gas equipment. The initial cost will likely be paid back in a short time by using less fuel.
- If you have a wood fireplace, make certain the damper is fully closed when not in use. Use the fireplace sparingly, because you will lose more heated air from the room than you will gain from radiated heat from the fireplace.

For more ideas on energy conservation, check the following sources:

[www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov), [www.nyscrda.com](http://www.nyscrda.com),  
[www.stlawrencegas.com](http://www.stlawrencegas.com), [www.energysavers.gov](http://www.energysavers.gov),  
[www.aga.org](http://www.aga.org), [www.peueblo.gsa.gov](http://www.peueblo.gsa.gov)

## Managing your Payments

### Budget Billing Plan

St. Lawrence Gas would like to invite you to consider our Budget Billing Plan for this coming heating season. It's easy and convenient. You're billed the same amount each month, with periodic adjustments if necessary. Take comfort in knowing your bill ahead of time and avoid the large heating bills that come right after the holidays when gas use is typically at its highest. Call us at 769-3516 (1-800-454-2201) and press "3" at the prompt, or visit our web site ([www.stlawrencegas.com](http://www.stlawrencegas.com)) to sign-up. Our friendly representatives will calculate your budget amount and answer any questions that you may have. Remember, the budget ends with your August bill, so the sooner you get on budget the lower your payment will be. Budget billing is available only to customers whose accounts are current.



### Assistance Programs

HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) will be available later this fall. HEAP provides grants (up to \$400) paid directly toward your St. Lawrence Gas heating bill. You may be eligible for up to two grants this heating season. There is also a furnace repair/replacement grant program. Watch your local newspapers for information about HEAP and the starting dates. After the start of the program, St. Lawrence County residents can call 379-2303, 379-2373, or 379-2116 and Lewis County residents can call 376-5400.

### Carbon Monoxide (CO)

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas that is odorless, colorless, tasteless and non-irritating. When CO is breathed into the body, it combines with the body's blood and prevents it from absorbing oxygen. Carbon monoxide comes from the incomplete combustion of such common fuels as natural gas, propane, heating oil, gasoline, coal, wood, charcoal and kerosene, and from almost any other combustible material such as tobacco, fibers and paper.

### Symptoms of CO Poisoning

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.

### What Can I Do To Prevent CO In My Home?

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.
- Do not use a gas range, oven or clothes dryer for heating.
- Have space and water heating equipment inspected regularly by a qualified technician.

## St. Lawrence Gas

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### Managing Your Financial Resources

If you don't have a home budget you don't really know where your money is going. Sit down and work out a budget for your necessary expenses. If you can't increase the amount of money coming into the household, find ways to reduce your expenses. Budgeting assistance is available from consumer credit counseling agencies. Consult the yellow pages.

### Estimated Bills

For several years, St. Lawrence Gas has read meters every other month to keep our expenses and your rates down. A formula is used to estimate your bill for the months we do not read the meter. This formula includes several factors: the temperature, the gas equipment in your home that we know of, your historical usage, and changing gas costs. You can avoid an estimated bill by reading your own meter. Check the message at the bottom of your bill for the next estimated read. You can read your meter on this date and either call in the reading or report that reading on our website ([www.stlawrencegas.com](http://www.stlawrencegas.com))

### Automatic Debit Plan

Now you can have your natural gas bills deducted from your checking account automatically. Forget about check writing, stamps, mailing and due dates! Call us and we can mail you an enrollment form **today!**



## Safety

- 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. If you suspect a CO problem, you should turn off fuel burning appliances, open doors and windows to air out the home and call a qualified technician.

### Exhaust Vent Checks

The exhaust vent may be plastic or metal and is usually located at the top of your furnace or water heater. Make sure your equipment is turned off and then:

- Check that the exhaust vent and connections fit securely.
- Look for cracks, rust marks, white streaks, tiny pits or holes, which indicate a problem that should be corrected.
- Make sure that the outside openings of exhaust vents are free of obstructions.
- Consult your heating contractor and make any repairs before you using your equipment again

### Vent-free Heaters

High fuel costs this year may lead some customers to zone-heat their house with space heaters. Make sure you follow the manufacturers directions and comply with local codes. Vent-free (unvented) heating equipment can be safe if used properly. First, vent-free equipment must be equipped with an Oxygen Depletion Sensor (ODS) and cannot be the sole source of heat in the area where the equipment is installed. Second, any equipment must be properly sized. Third, vent-free heaters cannot be used in commercial buildings and multiple dwellings. Finally, proper clearances from combustibles must be maintained.

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