

SECTION II

NATURAL GAS FACTS & TIPS

CUSTOMER HANDBOOK

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WELCOME TO THE VILLAGE OF COBDEN

This Handbook is issued by the Village of Cobden to answer most questions you may have about your natural gas service. It is designed to inform you of the policies and procedures of the Village's natural gas utility. However, if you have a question and can't find the answer here, please feel free to give us a call.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

The Village of Cobden business office hours are from 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Village Hall Number
(618) 893-2425

Emergency After Hours, Weekends and Holidays
(618) 559-7406

Call Before You Dig
(Free Mark-Out of Utility Lines)
JULIE toll-free number
1-800-924-0123

The Village Hall Address
P.O. Box 218, 112 E. Maple St.
Cobden, IL 62920

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If You Smell Gas

Natural gas is lighter than air and has no odor. To help you detect the presence of natural gas, a strong odorant that smells like rotten eggs is added. If you smell this odor:

1. Exit the building immediately.
2. Do not use matches, lighters, electrical switches, appliances or your telephone.
3. Call from a nearby building by dialing (618) 893-2425. Do not re-enter the building until Village of Cobden has declared it safe.

We urge you to call us the first time you smell the odor of natural gas. The Village personnel will be happy to assist you. This service is provided free, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

Call Before You Dig

Before you dig any hole in the street or your yard call JULIE toll-free number 1-800-924-0123, 24 hours a day , 365 days a year. Its a free service to mark out underground water, sewer, electric and gas utility lines. You must call two days prior to digging or excavating. Help prevent damage to property or injury by making the call **before** you dig.

Safety Tips

- For your safety. Never use your oven or range to heat your home.
- Gas fireplaces and space heaters are meant for added warmth, not a main source of heating. Remember to turn these appliances off before you go to bed or leave your home.

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- Hot water can be dangerous and cause serious burns. If your hot water is above 125 degrees, it's too hot! To avoid a potential accident, lower your water heater thermostat setting to 125 degrees or less.
- Know your meter location and keep the area free of snow and ice. Use a broom to remove snow from your meter. Exercise care when shoveling, plowing or snow blowing in the area around your meter.
- Your natural gas appliances should have a clear, steady blue flame. Small amounts of yellow and orange are normal and may occur occasionally. Be sure to schedule a service call by a qualified professional if your appliance is not operating in this manner.
- Change the filter on your furnace at least once a year. Dust and pet hair can collect and block the airflow.
- Never attach electrical grounding wires to gas piping inside or outside your house. Consult with a licensed electrician.

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Tune Up Your Heating System

Keep the area around your furnace and water heater clear. It is important to have your heating equipment checked for safety and efficiency. When your gas fired appliances do not work right, they may produce carbon monoxide: a colorless, odorless and potentially dangerous gas.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Learn to recognize the signs of carbon monoxide poisoning: headaches, dizziness, nausea, confusion, weakness, vision, or hearing impairment and drowsiness. If you notice these symptoms and suspect that carbon monoxide is the cause, you should:

1. Get some fresh air immediately.
2. Contact the Village of Cobden.
3. *Seek* medical help.

Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Check for these indications that your heating system requires service:

1. The presence of soot or carbon deposits on your heating equipment
2. Clogged chimneys and flues
3. Rusted or rotted flues

Help Prevent Heating System Problems

Help prevent problems with your heating system.

- > Do not cover floor vents with rugs
- > Have a qualified professional check your natural gas appliances once a year
- > Keep all external vents and chimneys unblocked and free from debris
- > Use external vents for all gas appliances where appropriate
- > Keep area around your furnace clear
- > Make sure your chimney and flue are inspected and cleaned of residues if you recently converted your heating system from oil to natural gas

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If you have no heat and all other appliances are not functioning, call the Village immediately. We will respond as soon as possible. If you choose not to call the Village and decide to call a private repair service to fix the problem, we will not be responsible for any charges you incur.

If you smell gas, exit the building immediately. Call the Village from a nearby telephone by dialing (618) 893-2425 or after hours cell phone (618) 559-7406.

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Check Your Heating System

Don't wait for the first cold snap of autumn to find out your natural gas heating system is not working. Instead, have it serviced annually by a heating contractor during the warmer months to ensure safe and efficient operation when the cold weather arrives.

Conserve Energy

Conservation may reduce your energy bills and help preserve the environment. Here are some tips to help make your home more energy efficient and comfortable:

- Install low flow shower heads to reduce water use.
- Insulate ceilings and sidewalls to keep heat inside your home
- Weather-strip and caulk around doors and windows
- Install and maintain storm windows and doors
- Tune-up your furnace for the winter and change your filters regularly
- Keep your thermostat at the lowest comfortable setting
- Close your fireplace damper when the fire is out
- Turn your water heater down to a low or medium setting
- Fix leaky faucets that waste energy and water