

A MESSAGE ABOUT GAS PIPELINE PURPOSE AND RELIABILITY

The United States relies on natural gas for nearly one-fourth of its energy needs. Natural gas is clean, convenient, and efficient, which makes it the country's most popular home heating fuel. Every day in the United States, several million cubic feet of natural gas travel through an underground pipeline delivery system to 64 million customers. The natural gas flows from deep inside the earth into producing wells and then into gathering pipelines. These smaller pipelines eventually feed into the large transmission pipes that crisscross the nation. Machines called compressors keep the gas moving through the transmission system at high pressures.

After a journey of up to 700 miles per day, the natural gas arrives at the local utility's gate station. Some of the natural gas is stored underground for later use, the rest of the gas is sent by the utility through a network of smaller pipes to the home or business where it will be used. The normal pressure for natural gas traveling through a household's pipes is less than the pressure created by a child blowing bubbles through a straw in a glass of milk.

The 1.4 million miles of natural gas pipeline transportation system in the United States is one of the safest and most efficient means of transporting energy products. The National Transportation Safety board has found that pipelines provide the highest level of public safety as compared to other transportation modes. Pipelines have fewer accidents causing personal injury than any other form of transportation, such as trucks, railroads, ships, and airplanes. Gas utility and pipeline companies spend close to \$7 billion annually to ensure that natural gas is delivered in a safe and reliable manner. In addition, pipeline operators are extensively regulated by Federal and State regulations with regard to design, construction, operation, and maintenance.

