



Rising Natural Gas Costs and Colder Weather Affect Winter Heating Bills in 2021-2022

Corning, N.Y. (March 1, 2022) Corning Natural Gas Corporation (CNGC) is providing information to customers regarding higher heating bills this winter. Customer bill increases are primarily related to higher gas usage associated with colder weather and increases in the cost of purchased natural gas. Despite these

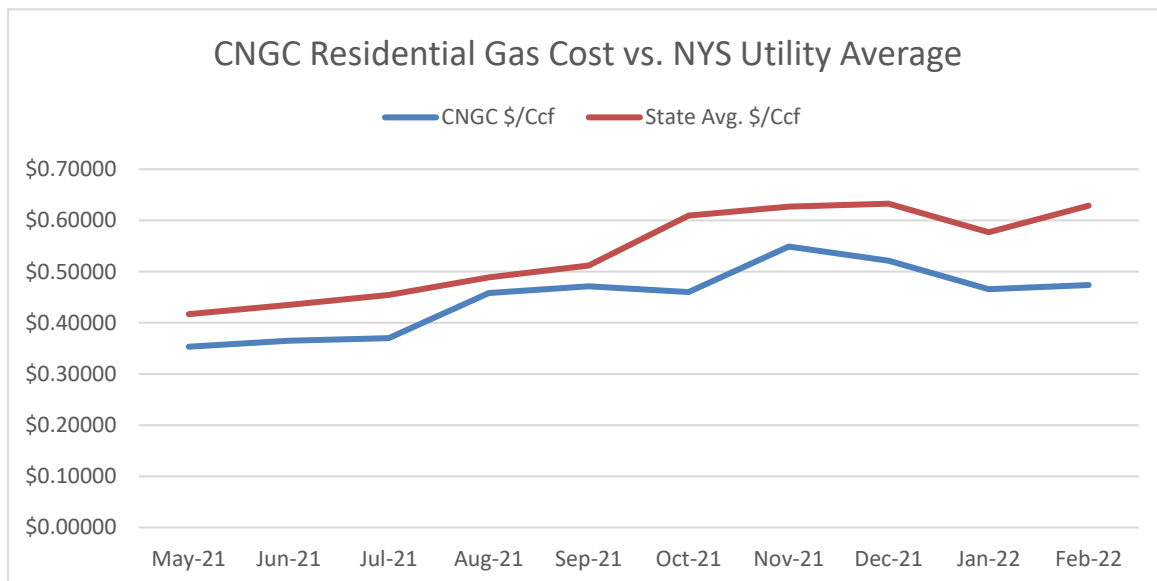
factors, CNGC had the second lowest gas acquisition cost of any New York gas utility for January, and the lowest gas cost of any New York gas utility in February.

Across CNGC’s service territory, approximately 95% of residents rely on natural gas to heat their homes and fuel their businesses. The average residential customer’s heating bill increased 25% compared to last winter’s bill. This increase was due to rising natural gas wholesale prices and colder weather in Western and Central New York. Customer bill increases were mitigated in large part by CNGC’s two successive base rate decreases, and the company’s consistent, low, purchased gas costs.

Market prices for natural gas supplies have increased from the historic lows experienced in the winters of 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. Despite the wholesale cost increase, the company’s customers continue to benefit from their proximity and access to abundant, reliable, and lower-cost natural gas supplies produced in the Southern Tier of New York and the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania. Last summer, CNGC filled its storage inventories with regionally produced gas supplies when prices were lower. This, coupled with the utility’s purchasing strategy, helped mitigate price increases.

Consistent Low Residential Rates and Gas Cost

CNGC consistently has some of the lowest residential rates and gas cost out of the 16 local gas distribution companies regulated by the New York State Department of Public Service. The graph below shows that CNGC Residential Natural Gas Commodity Costs are consistently below the state’s average.



CNGC purchases natural gas in accordance with its approved purchasing plan. Natural gas is a commodity bought and sold in a national deregulated market and prices fluctuate daily due to supply and demand pressures. CNGC's plan is designed to limit price volatility and ensure delivery reliability. Over the past year, supply and demand forces have been affecting the market price with demand coming back faster than supply, causing prices to increase. While the Company can't control the price in the national wholesale market or weather, CNGC continues to execute a gas purchasing strategy on behalf of its customers to maintain affordability and ensure reliable service even in frigid winter weather.

Customer Assistance Options

Due to higher bills, CNGC wants to remind customers that substantial financial assistance is now available. Recently, New York State announced a one-time **Home Energy Assistance Program Regular Arrears Supplement** (HEAP RAS) benefit to pay up to \$10,000 in gas and/or electric arrears for low-income households. Administered through the local Departments of Social Services, the HEAP RAS benefit will pay the entire current balance, including arrears. The HEAP RAS grant will be in addition to the **HEAP Regular** benefit (up to \$426) presently available. **Emergency HEAP grants** were offered in January 2022 for up to \$350.

CNGC can help its customers enroll in the following assistance programs and encourages all customers struggling to make payments to call us.

- **Deferred Payment Agreement** allows customers to negotiate a repayment plan based on individual financial circumstances.
- **Special Protections** are applicable for households where all residents are aged 62 years and up, or are 18 years and younger, or are blind or disabled.
- The **NYS Emergency Rental Assistance Program** (ERAP) provides rent, utility, and home energy payment assistance for tenant households.
- **Budget Plan Billing** allows winter payments to be spread out over the whole year, providing stable monthly bills.

Assistance for Corning Natural Gas customers is available weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. by contacting **1-800-834-2134**.

Energy and Money Saving Tips to Help Lower Your Bill

Customers can also take steps that can assist in conserving energy and saving money on their winter heating bills, as well as accessing several programs available to assist qualifying customers with home energy costs. Tips can be found at [Energy Conservation Tips | Corning Natural Gas Corporation \(corninggas.com\)](https://www.corninggas.com/energy-conservation-tips). Some common guidelines include:

- Reduce air leaks and cut as much as 10% from your monthly energy bill by using caulk or weather-stripping to seal leaks around floors, walls, ceilings, ducts, doors, windows, fans/vents, electric outlets, fireplaces, and plumbing.
- Set thermostats between 65° and 70° during the winter and at 58° when away from the house for more than a few hours. By turning your thermostat back 10°-15° for eight straight hours, you can save about 5%-15% a year on your heating bill — a savings of as much as 1% for each degree.
- Turn down thermostats automatically without sacrificing comfort by installing a programmable thermostat.

- Close vents and doors in unused rooms. Close dampers on unused fireplaces. Warm air rises, so use registers to direct warm airflow across the floor.
- Set your water heater to 120° or the medium temperature setting. Drain a quart of water from the bottom of your water heating tank every three months to remove sediment that can hamper the efficiency of your unit.

Gas usage and bills will increase when customers experience weather that is significantly colder—January 2022 was 25% colder than January 2021—even though CNGC has recently had two successive base rate decreases, and its gas costs are consistently lower than the state average. Customers can seek assistance and should try energy and money saving tips to help keep bills as low as possible.

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Russell S. Miller
Senior Vice President Energy Supply
Corning Natural Gas Corporation