

Corning Natural Gas Corporation Advises Customers to Expect Higher Heating Bills This Winter

October 1, 2022

Corning, N.Y.

Corning Natural Gas Corporation (“CNGC”) anticipates higher gas cost for its 15,000 customers this winter. Gas bills typically increase this time of year simply as a result of increased gas usage by customers due to colder weather.

Starting last March, primarily due to restrictions on energy development and world events, the market saw a steady increase in wholesale natural gas prices after many years of stability and relatively low prices. This past summer’s natural gas cost increased significantly due to high electric generation demand from warmer than normal weather, supply constraints due to limited gas production growth, and higher export demand to address the energy crisis in Europe due to the war in Ukraine.

The New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) natural gas pricing for deliveries this upcoming winter is higher, as well. Current winter pricing is \$6.75 per MMBtu, an increase from last winter when pricing averaged under \$5.30 per MMBtu. In comparison, just two years ago, wholesale gas prices were at \$2.80 per MMBtu.

CNGC is encouraging its customers to save money on winter energy bills by making sure home heating systems are operating efficiently and effectively to prevent wasted energy. Outdated heating systems and worn-out or lacking insulation can increase energy costs. Also, there are inexpensive ways for consumers to make their living spaces more energy efficient. Tips can be found at:

www.fuelingtomorrowtoday.com/energy-sustainability-tips/tips-for-the-home/

- Reduce air leaks and cut as much as 10% from your monthly energy bill. Be sure to use caulk or weatherstripping to seal leaks around floors, walls, ceilings, ducts, fireplaces, plumbing, doors, windows, fans, vents, and electric outlets.
- 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.
- Change or clean furnace air filters once a month during the heating season. Furnaces consume less energy if they “breathe” more easily. Use the arrival of your natural gas bill as your reminder to change the filter.
- Warm air rises, so direct register airflow across the floor.
- Close vents and doors in unused rooms. Close dampers on unused fireplaces.

- 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.
- Insulate water heaters with insulation blankets in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines.
- Install water-flow restrictors in showerheads and faucets.
- On sunny days, open curtains and blinds on windows that receive direct sunlight. Close them at night or on cloudy days to insulate against the cold air outside.
- If radiators are located near cold walls, place a sheet of aluminum foil between the radiator and the wall to reflect heat back into the room.

Due to higher bills, CNGC wants to remind customers that substantial financial assistance is now available:

- **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)** – opening Nov. 1st, this federally-funded program provides significant help with energy bills with grants ranging from \$400 – \$476 for basic grants and an additional \$400 for emergency grants.
- **Bill Relief Program for NYS residential customers** – a state energy bill forgiveness program for income-eligible customers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Residential customers receiving qualifying government assistance will receive a bill credit for unpaid balances for service billed through May 1, 2022.
- **Neighbor for Neighbor Heat Fund** – \$500 grants help customers meet basic energy needs with any of the following situations: disabled, have a certified medical emergency, at least 55 years old, recently unemployed, or a veteran.
- **Special Protections** – safeguards exist for customers who live in households where all residents are 62 years or older, 18 years or younger, or disabled.
- **Deferred Payment Plans** – CNGC can make special arrangements for a repayment plan based on individual financial circumstances.
- **Budget Billing Plan** – CNGC recommends customers utilize a budget billing plan for predictable, stable, monthly payments. This plan prevents seasonal billing swings and takes the guesswork out of planning for utility costs.

Assistance for Corning Natural Gas customers is available weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. by contacting us at **1-800-834-2134** or by visiting us at 330 West William Street in Corning.

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