



Level billing programs even out natural gas bill amounts

CenterPoint Energy's level billing programs, Average Monthly Billing and Budget Plan (Minnesota only) allow customers to spread natural gas costs more evenly throughout the year. Customers only pay for the amount of natural gas used and get the benefit of more predictable and even payments.

It's easy to enroll at CenterPointEnergy.com/selfservice. First register for *My Account Online*, and then enroll in Average Monthly Billing or Budget Plan. Once enrolled, customers may cancel at any time. ●

Tips for a more energy-efficient home




Winter is a great time to find ways to trim energy use. Here are a few tips to help you get started.

- Have your furnace or boiler tuned yearly by a qualified technician.
- Set thermostats between 65° and 70° during winter and to 58° when away from the house for four or more hours. For greater temperature control, use a programmable or setback thermostat.
- Seal leaks around doors, windows and other openings with weatherstripping or caulk.
- Install water-flow restrictors in showerheads and faucets.
- Repair leaky faucets.
- Run washing machines and clothes dryers with full loads only.

Learn how to stay safe around natural gas pipelines

Each day, underground pipelines are used to safely transport natural gas to CenterPoint Energy customers. However, because natural gas is flammable, it's important to be aware of how to stay safe around pipelines. If a leak occurs, it has the potential to cause a fire or explosion.

Use your senses to detect a pipeline emergency. Here are the signs of a potential leak:

 <p>SEEING dying vegetation or blowing dirt near a pipeline.</p>	 <p>HEARING a hissing sound.</p>	 <p>SMELLING natural gas, which is similar to rotten eggs.</p>
--	--	--

What to do if you suspect a leak:

- Leave the area immediately
- Go to a safe location and call the CenterPoint Energy Gas Leak hotline number for your area.

Arkansas.....	800-992-7552
Houston Texas.....	713-659-2111 888-876-5786
Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas (except Houston).....	888-876-5786
Minnesota.....	800-722-9326
Twin Cities metro area.....	612-372-5050

What not to do if you suspect a leak:

- Do not use anything that could cause a spark, even a telephone or a light switch.
- Do not ignite a match or other flame.
- Do not try to repair the leak yourself. ●



Centerpoint Energy employee volunteers pitch in to help others during United Way's Day of Caring.

Changing the World—the United Way

CenterPoint Energy is a proud supporter of the United Way, a national network of nearly 1,300 local organizations working to advance the common good. During CenterPoint Energy's annual campaign, employees make pledges and hold fundraisers for this important organization.

"When we campaign for the United Way, we are also campaigning for the well-being of our communities. By rallying together, we enable the United Way to provide essential services to nonprofit organizations that enhance the lives of our friends and neighbors," said David McClanahan, CenterPoint Energy president and chief executive officer.

To find your local United Way, visit national.unitedway.org/myuw

Be sure your natural gas connectors are safe



Natural gas connectors are tubes that connect a home's natural gas appliances to the fuel source. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission warns that older brass, uncoated appliance connectors could crack or break, causing fires and explosions resulting in deaths and injuries. The connectors are no longer used for new installations, but if your natural gas

appliance is 20 years old or older, the connectors may be defective. Brass-coated connectors are most commonly found on natural gas ranges, ovens and clothes dryers. If you suspect you have an uncoated, brass connector, follow these steps:

1. NEVER move the appliance or disturb the connector. This could cause the connector to break, which could cause a fire or explosion.
2. Schedule a qualified plumber or heating dealer to inspect the connector. NEVER try to do this yourself.
3. If necessary, ask the qualified technician to replace the old connector with a new model certified by the American Gas Association. Newer connectors are made of stainless steel or plastic-coated metal.
4. Replace all uncoated brass connectors immediately. ●

Behind on your natural gas bill?

If you are having difficulty paying your natural gas bill, help is available. To avoid having service disconnected and incurring reconnection charges, contact CenterPoint Energy at 612-372-4680 or 1-800-729-6164 right away to make a payment arrangement. Or call us at 612-372-4727 or 800-245-2377 to learn about energy assistance programs, including The Salvation Army HeatShare program (see article below), the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the CenterPoint Energy Gas Affordability program, which helps income-eligible customers lower their monthly natural gas bill and pay past-due balances.

Additional information is also available at CenterPointEnergy.com/paybill.

Share heat, share kindness

The Salvation Army's HeatShare program provides a convenient way for customers to help struggling neighbors with their heating bills. It is a last resort for many who have no other resources available. Since CenterPoint Energy founded the program in 1982, it has helped ease the burden for thousands of customers, including the elderly, disabled and others experiencing financial crisis. With rising food, gasoline and energy costs, contributing is more important than ever.

The program is administered by The Salvation Army and all of its administrative costs are covered by The Salvation Army by corporate gifts. That means that all donations go directly for assistance in the community. It's easy to contribute – donations can either be made on a one-time basis or ongoing contributions can be made with your natural gas payment.

Ways to contribute

Complete the form below and return it with your next CenterPoint Energy payment or visit CenterPointEnergy.com/heatshare to complete the form online. ●



Your contribution is tax-deductible and your gift will go right to your community. . . maybe even to someone you know.

Your generous contribution is appreciated.

CenterPointEnergy.com



Always There.®

©2008 CenterPoint Energy 81907

HeatShare

To contribute to HeatShare, please complete this form and return it with your next natural gas bill payment or contribute at CenterPointEnergy.com. Thank you.

Yes! I will share the warmth.

Each month I would like to have the following contribution to HeatShare conveniently included on my bill: \$2 \$5 \$10 \$25 Other amount \$_____

I prefer to make a one-time contribution of \$_____ (You may either send a separate check made payable to HeatShare, or include your contribution with your regular gas bill payment.)

Name _____ Account # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____