



SEMCO ENERGY  
GAS COMPANY

# Connectivity

July / August 2018 | [www.semcoenergygas.com](http://www.semcoenergygas.com)

## WHO IS CALLING OR KNOCKING ON MY DOOR?

*Periodically, customers call SEMCO ENERGY Gas Company to ask who is calling them at home or knocking on their door, asking about their natural gas service.*

Typically, phone calls and visits to your home can be separated into these categories:

### 1. SEMCO Business

SEMCO does not frequently call or visit customers. However, you may be contacted in the following cases:

- To discuss payment arrangements if payment has not been received.
- To schedule maintenance on the gas meter or gas service at your home or business.
- If there is a service interruption in your area.

If you receive a call or visit from someone claiming to be from SEMCO, be sure to verify that they actually are from SEMCO. Feel free to ask to see his or her identification or call Customer Service at 1-800-624-2019 to verify.

### 2. Alternative Gas Suppliers

Alternative Gas Supplier(s) may call or visit you in an effort to convince you to switch your natural gas purchases from the **regulated** SEMCO rate to an **unregulated** Supplier rate. These Suppliers do not represent SEMCO.

In some cases, they request specific account number and consumption information. **Be advised** that in order to switch your account, a Supplier needs your SEMCO account number. Do not give the Supplier representative your SEMCO account number unless you want to switch suppliers. You do not have to provide this information in order to learn about the Supplier or to receive information about the program.

Before giving out your account number, make sure you are making an informed decision.

- Visit <https://w2.lara.state.mi.us/GasChoice/>
- Shop and compare rates from various Suppliers and SEMCO for the current month.
- Make sure you understand the rate you are committing to pay. Is it just an introductory rate that only lasts a few months?
- Will the price remain constant (a "fixed rate") or change periodically (a "variable rate")?
- How have the Supplier's prices compared to SEMCO's prices historically? (SEMCO's Cost of Gas is a direct pass through and does not have a profit markup.)
- Visit the SEMCO website for a rate calculator that will compare the Supplier's price with SEMCO's.
- Make sure you understand the contract. Don't rely on verbal guarantees.
- What are the cancellation penalties, if any?

If you have signed up with an Alternative Gas Supplier, you must contact them directly to discuss the rates or cancel your participation with the Supplier. For further information, you should visit the Michigan Public Service Commission Website; [https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/0,4639,7-159-16385\\_17144---00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/0,4639,7-159-16385_17144---00.html).

It is important to remember that even if you choose a Supplier, you should still call SEMCO at 1-888-GAS-1-GAS (1-888-427-1427) for any natural gas related emergency.

### 3. Energy Efficiency Contractors

SEMCO offers several Energy Optimization programs to its customers, offering incentives and initiatives to promote energy efficiency. SEMCO contracts with Efficiency United and CLEAResult to offer these programs. In some cases, energy efficiency subcontractors contact SEMCO customers directly, either by phone or by visiting their home. Feel free to ask to see his or her identification or call SEMCO at 1-800-624-2019 to verify that the contractor is working on behalf of SEMCO or Efficiency United.

## WHY IS SOMEONE FROM SEMCO IN MY YARD?

*SEMCO ENERGY Gas Company owns and maintains natural gas underground pipelines in the road and the pipelines that run from the road to your home or business.*

SEMCO is required by law to periodically inspect these pipelines to look for signs of damage or potential problems and verify that no natural gas leaks exist.

- Some of these inspections are done by using a van or truck that travels along the road. The vehicle uses specially-designed equipment to detect natural gas and the driver also looks for any signs of damage or potential problems.
- Other inspections require an employee walking near SEMCO lines with a hand-held detector. The employee visually inspects the meter and other above-ground facilities and uses the detector to check for natural gas leaks.

**Dog Safety Alert** – Please keep all dogs indoors while our crews are working on your property. We like dogs and encounter them daily, however, it is difficult to determine which dogs are friendly and which pose a threat to our workers.

All SEMCO employees wear clothing with the SEMCO logo prominently displayed and are required to carry company identification. If you are concerned about a SEMCO employee in your yard, feel free to ask to see his or her identification or call 1-800-624-2019.



## NATURAL GAS SAFETY FACTS

As part of our ongoing education efforts, SEMCO ENERGY Gas Company offers these facts about natural gas safety:

- Natural gas is colorless, odorless, and tasteless. To help you recognize the presence of natural gas, an odor similar to rotten eggs is added.
- Natural gas is lighter than air, rises quickly, and disperses harmlessly in open areas. However, in an enclosed area, natural gas displaces air at ceiling level and fills the room from the ceiling down. As gas fills an enclosed space, it displaces air and suffocation may occur.

- Natural gas is not Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). Liquefied petroleum gases, such as propane, are heavier than air and, unlike natural gas, will collect in low places.
- Natural gas is not toxic or poisonous.
- Natural gas cannot burn without oxygen. For natural gas to burn, it must be mixed with air and must have an ignition source, such as a pilot light or electric arc from a light switch, electric motor, doorbell, or telephone.
- Burning natural gas will not explode. In many cases, it is better to let the natural gas burn than to extinguish the fire. If the fire is extinguished prior to stopping the flow of gas, the gas has the potential to build up to an explosive level.

## LINE SAFETY AND MAINTENANCE

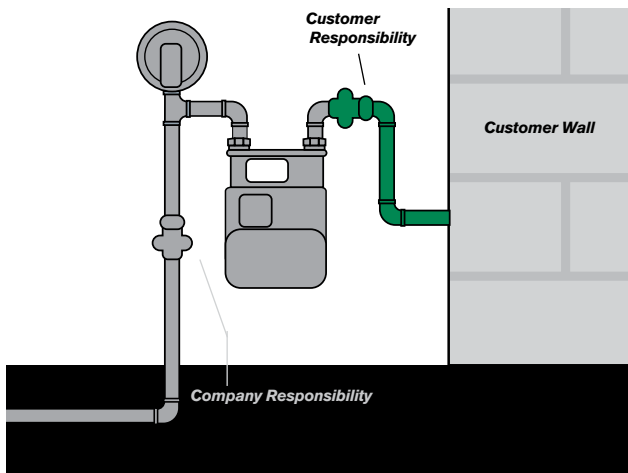
*SEMCO ENERGY Gas Company maintains all gas and service lines that connect our gas distribution system to your home.*

You are responsible for “customer-owned lines” or the lines after the meter into your home and to your appliances. This includes underground lines on your property to yard lights, pool and spa heaters, garages, workshops, and similar areas. Please make it a routine to have all gas lines checked for leaks or corrosion. Here are some signs to look for when you suspect a leak:

- Blowing or hissing sounds
- Brown patches of vegetation on or near a right-of-way
- Bubbling water at a pond, creek or river
- Gas odor
- Dry spot in moist earth

If you suspect a leak or a safety hazard, leave the area and then call SEMCO immediately at 1-888-GAS-1-GAS (1-888-427-1427). A trained technician will check for leaks and shut off your gas supply, if a safety hazard exists.

SEMCO technicians do not perform repair service on customer-owned lines. After you have a qualified heating or plumbing contractor make the necessary repairs to your customer-owned lines, a SEMCO technician will restore your gas service if required.



## ARE GAS PIPELINES RELIABLE?

*SEMCO ENERGY Gas Company utilizes an extensive network of underground pipelines to deliver natural gas to its customers. The purpose of these pipelines is to transport the natural gas from pipeline supply points to residential, commercial, and industrial customers. SEMCO is committed to ensuring these pipelines are operated safely and reliably.*

According to National Transportation Safety Board statistics, pipelines are the safest method for transporting natural gas. Pipelines have a safety record unparalleled by any other mode of transporting energy products.

As part of SEMCO's continuing effort to maintain the reliability and integrity of its pipelines, prevent incidents from occurring, and respond to emergencies, SEMCO has developed and maintains good communication networks with state and local emergency officials in Michigan. SEMCO meets with emergency officials in your area to discuss emergency preparedness and response plans to prepare for various scenarios. SEMCO provides natural gas emergency training and specialized equipment to a majority of emergency response organizations and, when necessary, participates in joint response planning with local, state, and federal emergency responders.

## HOW DEEP ARE THE GAS PIPELINES?



*Unlike water, natural gas doesn't freeze so the natural gas pipes are not buried as deep as water pipes.*

In some cases, natural gas pipes may only be about 1½ to 2 feet deep, but can vary beyond that. That's why it is critical to call the free service, MISS DIG (811), before any digging is performed. Although gas lines can vary in material and size, the most common pipe in a customer's yard is a yellow ½-inch diameter plastic pipe. This looks very different than the gas pipe used inside your home.

## HOW TO REACH SEMCO ENERGY

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

1-800-624-2019 or

customer.service@semcoenergy.com

### GAS LEAKS AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

1-888-GAS-1-GAS (1-888-427-1427)



www.semcoenergygas.com