NATURAL GAS SAFETY ALERT

Hutchinson Utilities is reminding you to keep the snow and ice clear from your natural gas meter and regulator. Natural gas regulators have a vent that must not get blocked with snow. Storms, drifting snow and warmer temps melting the snow can cause problems. This build-up around the meter can cause the natural gas regulator to malfunction, resulting in overpressure or loss of natural gas altogether.

- Brush away snow on the meter with a broom or gloves. Never bang on the meter or pipes or use a shovel to clean the snow off, this may cause a leak.
- Do not use a torch, salt or chemicals to try and melt the ice.
- Watch for dripping water freezing on the meter.
- Carefully remove icicles hanging above the meter.
- Do not pile snow on or near the meter.
- Keep a safe path to the gas meter for emergencies.

Make sure appliance sidewall and roof-top vents are clear of snow and ice, check them often. Blocked venting can cause a furnace or hot water heater to stop working, or even worse, the buildup of deadly carbon monoxide.

Be aware of the dangers and risks of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, and know the symptoms. The risk of illness or death from carbon monoxide increases in the winter. HUC suggests every home and business should have at least one CO monitor.

Be Carbon Monoxide aware outside your home; A car stuck in the snow with blocked exhaust, an unvented fish house heater or the holiday griller in the garage are all examples of where CO may be present. Remember - If a fuel is burned (gasoline, wood, charcoal, propane or natural gas) carbon monoxide may be in the exhaust.

Understand how your CO alarm works and replace per manufacturers recommendations, as they do not last forever. "When the leaves are off the trees its time to replace the batteries" in your CO and smoke detectors.

If you ever suspect Natural Gas or Carbon Monoxide
Call HUC at 320-587-4745 or dial 911.
A safety message brought to by:
Hutchinson Utilities Commission

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