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TIPS ON USING YOUR WATER HEATER SAFELY

Good maintenance and proper use of your water heater are essential to keeping your family out of harm's way. The following tips will help to ensure its safe operation:

- Make sure it is installed per local building codes and the manufacturer's recommendations. If installed in a garage, make sure the pilot and other ignition source is at least 18" above the floor.
- Strap your water heater firmly to wall studs in two places—the upper and lower one-third of the tank—with heavy bolts and metal tape to keep it anchored in the event of an earthquake. You can find kits and instructions at most home-improvement stores.
- Keep the surrounding area clean and well ventilated, and never use or store flammable products, such as

gasoline, paint thinner or cleaning products in the same room or near any gas or heat-producing appliance.

- Water temperatures above 125° F can cause severe burns or even death. To prevent scalding accidents, consider setting your water heater thermostat at 120° F or below. Consult the manufacturer's recommendations for safe temperature settings.
- Have your water heater annually inspected by a licensed, qualified professional or The Gas CompanySM.



For more safety tips, visit socialgas.com/safety.

SAVING MONEY >>>

SIMPLE WAYS TO STRETCH YOUR HEATING BUDGET

Home heating is the biggest winter energy expense for most people, accounting for 65 percent of a typical residential winter gas bill. To help lower winter heating bills:

- **Turn down the thermostat.** Lowering your furnace thermostat by 3 to 5 degrees can reduce home-heating costs up to 30 percent.
- **Make energy-saving changes.** Take our 15-minute online Home Energy Efficiency Survey and get customized tips to make your home more energy efficient. Go to socialgas.com/residential/energysurvey. You can also find money-saving rebates on qualifying energy-efficient appliances or upgrades for your home at socialgas.com/rebates/residential.
- **Enroll in our Level Pay Plan.** This program helps smooth out the ups and downs of your monthly gas bill by averaging annual gas consumption and costs over a 12-month period. For details, go to socialgas.com/assistance/levelpayplan.
- **Consider assistance programs.** You may qualify for a 20 percent discount on your gas bill, no-cost energy-saving home improvements or other assistance if you meet certain requirements. Visit socialgas.com/assistance for more information. You can request payment arrangements at socialgas.com/assistance/paymentarrangements or call 1-800-427-2200.



SAFETY >>>

BE PREPARED IN THE EVENT OF A GAS LEAK

Leaks in natural gas pipelines can be caused by careless digging, hidden corrosion or natural disasters. It's important to be prepared for an emergency to ensure your family's safety. Here are a few things you need to be aware of:

- 1 **Recognize the signs of a gas leak.** These include a distinct, unpleasant odor*; a hissing or whistling sound near a gas appliance; dirt or water being thrown in the air, dead or dying vegetation, a hissing or roaring sound, or fire near a pipeline; or exposed pipeline after a disaster.
- 2 **Remain calm.** Don't light a match, candle or cigarette, and don't turn electrical appliances or lights on or off or use any device that could cause a spark.
- 3 **Immediately evacuate the area.** From a safe location, call The Gas Company at 1-800-427-2200 or dial 911.

For more information, visit socialgas.com/safety.

*Some people may not be able to smell the odor because they have a diminished sense of smell, or because of a temporary, normal inability to distinguish odor after a prolonged exposure to it; or because the odor is being masked by other odors that are present; or because of certain conditions in pipe and soil that may cause the loss of odorant ("odor fade") so that it is not detectable by smell.

TIMELY TIP

If you rent or own your home and meet certain requirements, you may qualify for no-cost, energy-saving home improvements through our Energy Savings Assistance Program. Weather-stripping, caulking, faucet aerators, low-flow shower heads, window repair, attic insulation, high-efficiency clothes washers are among the available home improvements. To learn more, visit socialgas.com/assistance or call 1-800-331-7593.

HELP A FRIEND OR NEIGHBOR STAY WARM THIS WINTER

Each year, the Gas Assistance Fund (GAF) helps customers—including the elderly, disabled and newly unemployed—who are having financial difficulty with paying their winter gas bills.

The Gas Company and United Way of Greater Los Angeles work with nonprofit organizations to assist income-qualified customers with obtaining a grant of up to \$100 to pay their gas bill. The program is made possible by generous donations from customers, employees and shareholders.

The GAF distribution is between February 2011 and April 2011 or until funds are no longer available.



To qualify for GAF, customers must meet the following requirements:

- The gas bill must be in the name of the customer requesting assistance.
- The bill address must be the customer's primary residence.
- The customer must not apply for more than the maximum GAF allowance for the current program year.
- The customer must meet certain income guidelines.

Get more information at socialgas.com/assistance/gaf.

To make a tax-deductible donation:

Online: unitedwayla.org/GetHelp/utilityassistance/Pages/utilityassistance.aspx

Mail: United Way Gas Assistance Fund, File 56826
Los Angeles, CA 90074-6826

NOTICIAS – THE GAS COMPANY

SUGERENCIAS PARA USAR EL CALENTADOR DE AGUA CON SEGURIDAD

Un buen mantenimiento y el uso apropiado de su calentador de agua son esenciales para mantener a su familia a salvo. Las siguientes sugerencias ayudarán a asegurar que funcione con seguridad:

- Asegúrese de que su calentador de agua sea instalado de acuerdo con los códigos de construcción o las instrucciones de instalación del fabricante. Si está ubicado en un garaje deberán tener una altura tal que el piloto o cualquier otra fuente de encendido esté por lo menos a 18 pulgadas sobre el nivel del suelo.
- Sujete firmemente el calentador de agua a los montantes de la pared en dos lugares—en el tercio superior e inferior del tanque—con pernos reforzados y cinta metálica para mantenerlo anclado en caso de un terremoto. Puede encontrar kits e instrucciones en la mayoría de las tiendas de artículos para el mejoramiento del hogar.

- Mantenga el área circundante limpia y bien ventilada, y nunca almacene ni use productos inflamables como gasolina, disolventes para pinturas o productos de limpieza dentro del mismo cuarto o cerca de algún aparato doméstico de gas o que produzca calor.
- Las temperaturas de agua arriba de 125° F pueden ocasionar quemaduras graves o incluso la muerte. Para evitar escaldaduras accidentales, ajuste su termostato a 120° F o menos. Consulte la recomendación del fabricante para las configuraciones seguras de temperatura.
- Ve a que un profesional calificado con licencia o The Gas Company inspeccionen anualmente su calentador de agua.

Para más sugerencias de seguridad, visite socialgas.com/sp/seguridad.

ESTÉ PREPARADO EN CASO DE UNA FUGA DE GAS

Fugas en las tuberías de gas natural pueden ser ocasionadas por descuidos al excavar, corrosión oculta o desastres naturales. Es importante estar preparado para asegurar la protección de su familia en caso de una emergencia. He aquí algunas cosas que necesita hacer:

- 1 Reconocer las señales de una fuga de gas.**
Éstas incluyen un distintivo olor* desagradable; un chiflido o un sonido silbante cerca de un aparato de gas; tierra o agua siendo expulsada al aire, vegetación muerta o muriéndose, un chiflido o un rugido, o fuego cerca de una tubería; o tuberías expuestas después de un desastre.
- 2 Conservar la calma.** No encienda un cerillo, vela o cigarrillo y no encienda ni apague ningún aparato eléctrico o luces porque podrían producir una chispa.
- 3 Evacue inmediatamente el área.**
Desde un lugar seguro, llame a The Gas Company al 1-800-342-4545 o marque 911.

Para más información, visite socialgas.com/sp/seguridad.

*Algunas personas tal vez no puedan percibir el olor porque tienen un sentido del olfato disminuido, o quizás no puedan distinguir el olor después de una exposición prolongada o el olor puede estar siendo oculto por otros olores que están presentes en el área. Además, ciertas condiciones en las tuberías y bajo la tierra pueden causar que el olor se desvanezca y no sea detectable.

SUGERENCIA OPORTUNA

Si es inquilino o propietario de su casa y cumple con ciertos requisitos, tal vez tenga derecho a mejoras, sin costo, que ahorran energía en el hogar a través de nuestro programa Energy Savings Assistance Program. Burletes, enmasillado, cabezales de bajo flujo para regadera y aireadores de llave, reparación de ventanas, aislamiento de ático y lavadoras de alta eficiencia son algunas de las mejoras que tenemos disponibles. Para más información, visite socialgas.com/sp/asistencia o llame al 1-800-331-7593.