

ALISO CANYON STORAGE FACILITY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



On October 23, SoCalGas® crews discovered a leak at a natural gas storage well at our Aliso Canyon storage field near Northridge, California. The leak is at an isolated area of our mountain facility more than a mile away and 1,200 feet higher than any homes or public areas.

Public safety is our first priority in any gas leak situation. In outdoor locations such as this, natural gas quickly dissipates into the air. The leak is confined to a localized area. There is no threat to public safety and we're working closely with the fire department to maintain safety.

Although it smells bad, natural gas is not considered to be a toxic or hazardous air pollutant. SoCalGas and other experts are identifying the safest and best solution to stop and repair the leak. Due to the complexity of this underground leak, this may take another week or longer.

We are sorry for any inconvenience or annoyance this may cause neighbors and area residents who may smell the pungent odorant added to natural gas. Thank you for your cooperation, patience and understanding.

FOLLOWING ARE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WE'VE BEEN ASKED:

What is located at Aliso Canyon and what is the significance?

The Aliso Canyon storage facility is one of four SoCalGas natural gas storage facilities in Southern California. SoCalGas has operated it since 1972 and maintains it in accordance with safety regulations established by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and other local, state and federal agencies. The natural underground reservoir is a key part of Southern California's energy infrastructure and enables SoCalGas to safely store natural gas. This facility helps maintain reliable natural gas supplies needed to fuel electricity-generating plants, manufacturing facilities and businesses of all sizes and for residential uses.

Is the area safe?

In outdoor locations such as this, natural gas dissipates into the air and there is no threat to public safety. The area is closed except to highly-trained crews who are currently working on repairs. We are working closely with fire department officials to take every precaution.

Is natural gas harmful to my health?

Natural gas is not considered to be a toxic or hazardous air pollutant. It is colorless, odorless (until we add an odorant), it dissipates quickly and is lighter than air. The gas that is leaking is no different than the gas you use for cooking and heating.

Is the odorant harmful to my health?

No, it does not pose health risks at these concentration levels. Natural gas is odorless and colorless. For this reason, we add a minute amount (2 parts odorant per million parts of natural gas - 2ppm) of a pungent odorant to natural gas to help make leaks more recognizable. The odorant we add to natural gas is designed to be noticeable at very low concentrations of gas in the air. Some people are more sensitive to odors and can feel ill from the smell itself. We apologize for any discomfort that these odors may be causing you or your family.

Is it safe to be outside when you can smell the gas odor?

Yes, the methane safely dissipates into the air. The odorant smell may last longer than the natural gas, but it is diluted at a very low concentration that does not pose health concerns.

Where is the gas leak and why is it taking so long to repair it?

The leak is at a natural gas storage well, which is essentially a 7-inch diameter steel pipeline that allows natural gas to be put into a naturally-occurring underground storage field. After we discovered the leak, our crews performed preliminary analyses and applied best practices that would normally resolve the situation. We soon recognized normal processes would not work because of the complex underground nature of the leak and we called in expert consultants to help conduct further analysis. We are working side-by-side with experts in this field to determine the best approach to resolve the situation as quickly possible. However, because these wells may be thousands of feet deep, it is a complex process that may take another week or longer.

How can I get more information?

We will post frequent updates on socalgas.com. Simply click on the "Aliso Canyon" link at the top of the page.

You can also leave a message with your question or concern at (818) 435-7707, or, you can email us at AlisoCanyon@SoCalGas.com. For gas emergencies or service requests, please call (800) 427-2200.