

# Your Rights & Responsibilities For Non-Residential Customers



National Fuel®

At National Fuel, it is important to us that all of our customers know about our policies and many helpful programs. This bill insert contains useful information about our procedures and your rights. For more details, visit our website at [NationalFuel.com](http://NationalFuel.com) or call us at **716-686-6123** or toll-free at **1-800-365-3234**, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

## Application for Service

Before your service can be turned on, you may be required to complete a written application and to pay a security deposit. It is important to be sure that your application is complete and accurate.

Upon receipt of a completed application and satisfaction of the security deposit requirement, we will initiate service within 10 calendar days. If conditions beyond our control prevent us from extending service to your location within 10 calendar days, we will make every attempt to do so as soon as possible.

## Billing Information

Each month, you will receive a bill that includes information, such as the amount of gas used during the service period, total current charges, the date payment is due and the date any charges would be imposed for late payment.

## Meter Reading & Estimated Bills

At National Fuel, our meters are scheduled to be read once every other month on or around the date indicated on your bill. Whenever we are unable to gain access to read the meter, we will leave a door hanger that provides you with the number for our automated meter reading reporting system, **1-888-NFG-READ (634-7323)**, and our website, [NationalFuel.com](http://NationalFuel.com), where you can enter your meter reading online.

If circumstances beyond our control prevent the meter reader from obtaining a reading at the premises, you will be rendered an estimated bill. These bills are calculated in accordance with an established formula that has been approved by the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) and take into account several factors (such as past usage and current weather conditions).

If we become aware that your gas usage was underbilled as a result of low estimates or other factors, we have 6 months to correct the discrepancy and provide you with a revised bill. We will also provide a written explanation of the circumstances, error or condition that resulted in the underbilling. We are permitted to revise that bill within 12 months if the customer knew, or reasonably should have known, that the original billing (or the first bill) was incorrect, or new information shows that the first bill was incorrect. If we find that a bill was excessive, we will revise it and issue a new bill within 2 months.

## Access to Meter and Piping

Our field representatives may enter any building or other location where we provide natural gas service in order to inspect and examine any meters, pipe fittings, wires or any other equipment used for providing gas service. We need this access to perform required safety inspections and to provide accurate bills. If you do not control access to the meter at your service address, you must advise us of that fact. **If we are denied access to the meter, piping, fittings or equipment at reasonable times, you or the person who controls access may be assessed a non-access charge of \$100 and your gas service could be shut off after National Fuel provides you with a disconnection notice.**

## Payment Agreements

If you fall behind on your gas bills, a deferred payment agreement may be offered if: there is no outstanding balance on a prior payment agreement; your business is not publicly held or a subsidiary of a publicly held company; your account is not established on a seasonal, short-term or temporary basis; during the previous 12 months the combined total consumption for all your accounts was not in excess of 400,000 cubic feet of gas; or we believe that you do not have the resources to pay the bill in full. A payment agreement will not be considered to be in effect until the required down payment is made.

If we conduct a field visit to disconnect service for nonpayment, we may require a down payment of up to 50 percent of the unpaid amount or 4 times your average monthly usage. We will also include the full amount of any charges billed after the Final Termination Notice was issued, which were past due at the time the agreement was made.

## Special Protections

As a commercial customer, you may be entitled to certain protections under the New York State Home Energy Fair Practices Act (HEFPA) if one of the following situations applies to you: **(1)** You operate a business out of your home and are billed at a commercial rate; **(2)** You use your commercial premises for residential purposes; or **(3)** You own a two-family residence and live in one unit while renting the other. If you are eligible for Special Protections, please call us at **1-800-365-3234**.

## Termination Procedures

Terminating gas service for nonpayment is a last resort. However, we can terminate your service if you fail to: pay undisputed charges for service; pay amounts due under a payment agreement; pay a lawfully required security deposit; or provide access to the premises as reasonably required. Before termination can take place, we will send you a Final Termination Notice and offer you, if you are eligible, a payment agreement.

We will not send a Final Termination Notice for nonpayment until at least 20 calendar days have elapsed from the date payment was due. If you think there is a mistake on your bill, we will postpone termination and investigate your account.

Termination can take place on business days between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. We will not terminate service on Saturday or Sunday, a public holiday, on a day when our offices or the PSC is closed, or after 3 p.m. on the day before any of those days, unless we have made personal contact to inform you that your service is about to be terminated. In an emergency, we can terminate service any time there is a serious safety problem. In this case, service will be restored as soon as the problem is corrected.

## Turn-On Procedures

If service has been turned off for nonpayment, we will attempt to reconnect your service within 24 hours if: the overdue amount has been paid or a payment agreement is signed and a down payment has been made; you have allowed access to the meter(s) and arrangements have been made for future access; you have provided proof (or a field visit confirms) that a tariff violation has been corrected; or we are directed by the PSC to do so.

Please note that there is a charge to restore service, unless it is deemed that an error has been made. Payment of this reconnection charge may be required before service is restored. If circumstances beyond our control prevent us from restoring service within 24 hours, your service will be reconnected within 24 hours after those circumstances cease to exist.

## Understanding Natural Gas Safety

Natural gas is one of the safest and cleanest-burning energy sources available. At National Fuel, providing our customers with safe, reliable service is our highest priority.

### Detecting a Gas Odor

Natural gas, in its natural state, is colorless and odorless. Because of this, natural gas providers must add a harmless, nontoxic odorant to it to make it more readily detectable. These odorants produce the well known “gassy odor” that is associated with natural gas, usually described as a rotten egg smell. If you detect a gas smell:

#### DO

- Leave the premises or area following the building emergency evacuation plans and proceed to a deemed safe location, at least 330 ft. away.
- Call National Fuel's emergency line at **1-800-444-3130** from a different location.

#### DON'T

- Switch lights on or off.
- Light any matches.
- Use any gas or electric appliances

### Heating Safely and Efficiently

To ensure safe and efficient operation of your heating system, it is important for you to have it inspected by a qualified contractor prior to the beginning of each winter season.

### Protecting You from Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas produced when fuel (heating oil, propane, charcoal or natural gas) is burned without enough air for complete combustion. If inhaled in large quantities for a prolonged period of time, carbon monoxide can cause unconsciousness, brain damage and even death. Learning to identify the symptoms

of carbon monoxide poisoning is the first step toward protecting yourself. Symptoms include: fatigue, coughing, headache, irregular breathing, dizziness, overall paleness, nausea, and cherry red lips and ears.

If anyone at your workplace experiences these symptoms, immediately open windows and doors for ventilation, then move outside and call 911 or your fire department.

### Stay Safe—Call Before You Dig

A damaged gas pipeline or service line to a building may create an explosion hazard resulting in injury and death, severe property damage and loss of vital service. If you are planning a project that involves digging, trenching, drilling, grading or excavating:

- **Call 811 before you dig** at least 2 full business days before the start of your project.
- We will send a professional to conduct a FREE site survey and mark the underground lines on your property.
- Once your underground lines have been marked, you will know the approximate location of your utility lines.
- Respect the marks and dig with care.
- Have an emergency plan.

811 is the national number you should call before you begin any digging project. Whether you are planning to do it yourself or hire a professional, smart digging means calling 811 before each job.

### Ask for Identification

For your safety, every National Fuel representative carries an identification card. If the badge is not clipped onto his or her clothing for easy viewing, ask to see it. If proper ID is displayed, please let the representative complete his or her job. If you are suspicious or have questions, call us immediately at **1-800-365-3234**. If you feel there might be a problem, call the local police.

## Service Classification

Below are descriptions of the most commonly used non-residential service classifications. They include:

**Service Class 3 – General Service (SC-3):** This is the service rate schedule used by most small-volume (less than 5,000 Mcf/year) non-residential customers, small volume non-residential customers that choose to purchase their gas supply from a qualified marketer, and those who purchase firm gas supply from National Fuel. This rate schedule consists of a delivery component and a natural gas supply component. Nonresidential customers also have the choice of purchasing their gas supply from a qualified marketer under the Supplier Transportation Balancing and Aggregation Service (SC-19).

**Service Class 18:** This is the primary transportation service classification used by most large-volume (greater than 5,000 Mcf/year) commercial customers. Under this rate schedule, you can purchase your gas supply from a qualified marketer under the Supplier Transportation Balancing and Aggregation Service (SC-19).

**Service Class 13 – Daily Metered Transportation Service (SC-13):** This service is available to non-residential customers using 5,000 Mcf/year or more. This rate schedule requires measurement and communication equipment that allows us to monitor your consumption on a daily basis. You can elect to purchase your gas supplies from a qualified marketer under the Daily Metered Transportation Service. You, or designated supplier, will be responsible for daily differences between the amount of gas used and the amount delivered to us by the supplier on your behalf.

Please call us at **1-800-365-3234** or visit our website at **NationalFuel.com** for a copy of the tariff, service classification eligibility guidelines, and/or current rate information associated with these service classifications.

## Security Deposits

**New Non-Residential Customers:** As a new non-residential customer, you may be required to pay a security deposit in order to initiate service. Alternate forms of cash security deposits include surety bonds and irrevocable bank credit letters. The amount of the deposit is calculated by multiplying the average monthly usage (for peak consumption months) by 2. If a billing history for the service address is not available, we will work with you to determine a deposit amount. Security deposit payments can be made at any of our Customer Assistance Centers.

**Existing Non-Residential Customers:** If you are an existing non-residential customer, you may be required to pay a security deposit if: your account is delinquent; we have reason to believe that the account may become delinquent in the future; you have filed for reorganization or liquidation relief through bankruptcy court; or you have been rendered a bill during the past 12 months for services obtained through tampered equipment.

In some cases, we may determine that a security deposit is necessary to continue service or that the existing deposit is no longer adequate. When this happens, we will notify you in writing. We will also provide you with all of the appropriate information as required by the PSC.

Existing customers may have the option of paying 50 percent of the deposit amount at the same time the security deposit payment agreement is signed. The remaining balance can then be paid in 2 monthly installments. We will retain your security deposit for a period of three years from the date the full deposit amount was paid. If a good credit record was maintained during that time, and none of the conditions described above in the section “Existing Non-Residential Customers” are present, your deposit will be returned to you with interest (at a rate determined by the PSC). The amount will be credited to your account.

For Gas Emergencies, call **1-800-444-3130**  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## Billing Questions and Customer Service

If you have a question, problem or request, please call us Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Buffalo-area: **716-686-6123**

All other areas: **1-800-365-3234** or visit **NationalFuel.com** for more information.

Customers with hearing or speech difficulties can communicate with us on electronic display (TTY or teletypewriter) by calling **711** to have a relay-call placed to us.

If, after speaking with us, you are still not satisfied, you may file a complaint with or ask a question of the PSC as follows: Internet at **www.dps.ny.gov/complaints**; Telephone weekdays at **1-800-342-3377** from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.; or Mail by writing the PSC's Office of Consumer Services at **Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223**.

For more information, including translation services, call **1-800-365-3234**.

Esto folleto tambien es disponible en español. Para más información, llame al **1-800-365-3234**.