



NEWS RELEASE

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THE GAS COMPANY OFFERS CUSTOMERS EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS AND NATURAL GAS SAFETY TIPS

Oct. 18, 2010 – As millions of people get ready to participate in this week’s California ShakeOut practice drill, Southern California Gas Co. (The Gas Company) is reminding customers to prepare in advance for when the next real “Big One” hits.

The Gas Company offers these safety tips to help reduce the chance of injuries or property damage from the next quake:

Before an earthquake:

- Securely strap water heaters to prevent them from moving or toppling over. The water heater should be fastened securely to the wall studs in two places -- the upper and lower one-third of the tank -- with heavy bolts and metal straps.
- Replace semi-rigid (aluminum or copper) gas appliance connectors with approved connectors made of corrugated metal. These are less likely to crack during an earthquake. Connectors and water heater strapping kits are available at most hardware and home improvement stores.

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- Know where the natural gas meter is located. Gas meters are commonly located above ground next to the home on the side, front or back, but may also be in a cabinet or below ground level.
- Have a 12-inch or larger adjustable wrench handy to manually turn off the gas meter should it be necessary if a gas leak is suspected after an emergency.

After an earthquake:

- Do not turn off the gas meter after an earthquake, unless there is a gas smell, the sound of gas escaping, or other signs of a gas leak such as dirt, water or debris being blown into the air, or a fire near a pipeline. Once the gas has been turned off, it may take The Gas Company several days to restore service, depending on the magnitude of the emergency. Do not turn the gas back on yourself.
- If an appliance appears to have a leak, turning off the valve between the appliance and gas line may stop the leak. If not, shut off the gas at the meter.
- If there is an apparent gas leak, remain calm. Do not light a match, candle or cigarette, and do not turn electrical devices – not even a light switch -- on or off. From a safe location, call The Gas Company at **1-800-427-2200** or **1-800-342-4545** in Spanish, 24 hours a day, seven days a week; or call **911**.
- If a gas leak is suspected and it is safe to do so, turn the gas off at the meter. Using an adjustable wrench, make a quarter-turn of the valve, moving it from a vertical position to a horizontal position. This will shut off the flow of gas. (A diagram and instructions for turning off the gas meter are printed in the “Survival Guide” section of most telephone directory white pages and is also available at www.socalgas.com).
- If the gas is shut off at the meter, **do not turn it back on**. Call The Gas Company to turn the meter back on and check your natural gas piping and equipment for safe operation.

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For more natural gas safety information, visit The Gas Company's website at www.socalgas.com/safety.

[Southern California Gas Co.](#) has been delivering clean, safe and reliable natural gas to its customers for more than 140 years. It is the nation's largest natural gas distribution utility, providing safe and reliable energy to 20.5 million consumers through 5.7 million meters in more than 500 communities. The company's service territory encompasses approximately 20,000 square miles in diverse terrain throughout Central and Southern California, from Visalia to the Mexican border. The Gas Company is a regulated subsidiary of [Sempra Energy](#) (NYSE: SRE). Sempra Energy, based in San Diego, is a Fortune 500 energy services holding company.

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