

OCS/OEGW Procedures Regarding Gas Safety Concerns

Because of the need to ensure safety with respect to gas service, Department of Public Service Staff are provided specific instructions on how to respond to a report of gas leaks or odors to our Call Center, the Department's 800-number used for filing complaints. Staff is required to investigate such complaints as soon as possible. This includes leaks that the customer believes is not imminently dangerous yet still needs to be repaired. Department Staff are instructed that they must take extra precautions to ensure that these situations receive immediate attention.

These are the Instructions provided to Call Center Staff:

A natural gas leak within a structure needs to be considered a high-risk situation. Light or appliance switches can create a spark that can potentially cause an explosion if natural gas is present. Some safety literature also advises the public not to use the telephone within an area of potential danger. Some studies indicate that the temperature of the spark within the telephone receiver is not hot enough to ignite natural gas. However, because the gas might reach some other source of ignition during the telephone call, in some situations it may be advisable for the individual to leave the area as soon as possible and then call from a remote location.

Therefore, when a caller contacts the Department's Office of Consumer Service Call Center, Department Staff are instructed to:

- Ask the customer if they smell gas inside or outside the building
- If inside, ask customer to leave premise immediately and to call 911 from a safe location. If they need further assistance they can call us back.
- If outside, ask customer if they have reported the smell to the utility and then TAKE BASIC INFORMATION -- name and location.
- Immediately call the utility company and notify DPS Gas Safety.
- Record the consumer's name, address, telephone number and information pertaining to the gas leak or report of odor.
- With the customer on the line, contact the utility, using the attached contact list, to report the safety issue. Note in the "text of case" field the name of the person you spoke with at the utility.
- File complaint with utility, using complaint code 320 – Gas Leak - and electronically transmit the complaint to the utility.
- Send a Notice of the complaint to the Department's Office of Gas Safety at:
Gas.Safety.Concerns@dps.ny.gov
- Call the Department's OEGW to notify OEGW that a gas safety concern is being forwarded for review. Note in the case file who you spoke with from OEGW.

For complaints about Central Hudson, National Fuel, National Grid, NYSEG and RG&E call Daniel Millham (Upstate) at [REDACTED]

For Consolidated Edison, National Grid Metro and Long Island, and Orange & Rockland, call Rosa Rodriguez (Downstate) at [REDACTED]

- OEGW will assess the concern and determine if follow-up is required.
- OEGW staff will notify OCS whether or not it will investigate the matter further. OEGW will send such notification to OCS via Lotus Notes at OCS.Operations@dps.ny.gov. In the event that OEGW chooses **NOT** to investigate the matter further, OEGW staff should notify both Marie Thompson and Barry Bedrosian via Lotus Notes at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], [stating that OEGW has concluded further investigation is not warranted.](#)

- OEGW staff will forward to OCS copies of final reports and documents as a result of the investigation via lotus notes at OCS.Operations@dps.ny.gov to be posted in the case file. Any notes pertaining to the case will be placed in staff comments.

If OEGW investigates the safety concern, OEGW staff shall follow-up to ensure that the condition has been corrected prior to closing the case file. Confirmation shall be sent to OCS.Operations@dps.ny.gov.

=====

4/9/14 Note:

The PSC's Office of Consumer Services is not the primary reporting point for gas odor calls. Utility public education campaigns (which, pursuant to a February 20, 2014 Commission order, are being re-assessed in a statewide -utility collaborative) instruct anyone who smells a gas odor to call the utility first, which most customers generally do. Callers may subsequently contact the PSC because the utility has not responded to what may be a minor, "Type 3" leak.

The Office of Consumer Services and the Office of Electric, Gas and Water are currently revising these procedures. The revised procedures are expected to be released by 4/30/14 and will be forwarded to the NTSB upon being finalized.

NY Gas Utility Emergency Numbers

Utility	Telephone	How they answer & steps needed (if applicable)
Central Hudson	800.942.8274	Representative answers
Con Edison	800.752.6633 212-243-1900	press 1, then 1, then 2 press 1, then 1, then 2
National Fuel Gas	800.444.3130	Representative answers
National Grid Upstate	800.892.2345	Representative answers
National Grid Metro	718.643.4050	Goes through an ACD Press "9" for a gas leak
National Grid - LI	631.755.6500	Representative answers
NYSEG	800.572.1121	Dispatcher answers
Orange & Rockland	800.533.5325	Representative answers
RG&E	800.743.1702	Representative answers
Corning Natural Gas	800.834.2134	Goes through an ACD Press 1 for a gas leak
St Lawrence Gas	800.673.3301	Goes through an ACD Press 1 for a gas leak
Bath Municipal	(607) 776-3121	Representative answers