

Energy *Lines*

December 2008

RG&E
AND

www.rge.com

Time Is Running Out to Voice Your Choice

While you have until **7 p.m. on December 30, 2008** to **Voice Your Choice**, why wait to enroll? All the information you need is at **rge.com**, in your enrollment material you received in the mail or at **1.800.RGE.VYCN**ow (1.800.743.8926). If you choose a supplier other than RG&E (also known as an energy services company or ESCO), your supplier will enroll your account for you.

THE ONLY WAY TO ENSURE YOU RECEIVE THE OPTION YOU WANT FOR 2009 IS TO VOICE YOUR CHOICE NOW.

Visit **rge.com** for pricing information, the most up-to-date supplier list, descriptions of pricing options, frequently asked questions, enrollment material, information on how to enroll and more.



Enroll today!
voice
your choice
for your electricity supply.

Need Help With Winter Heating Bills?

You might be eligible for a Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) grant. HEAP is a federal program that provides financial assistance to eligible households. The 2008-2009 HEAP season began November 3 and closes when funds are exhausted. Eligibility depends on income and family size (at right). HEAP grants can be used to pay heating bills or for other energy-related emergencies.

It's important to apply early, since federal funding for this year's HEAP season is limited.

For more information or to apply for a HEAP grant, contact your county's Department of Social Services.

IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE PAYING YOUR RG&E BILLS, don't wait, contact us immediately at 1.877.266.3492.

Income Eligibility Guidelines for HEAP

Household Size	Monthly Income (gross)
1	\$1,963
2	\$2,567
3	\$3,172
4	\$3,776
5	\$4,380
6	\$4,984
7	\$5,097
8	\$5,210
9	\$5,324
10	\$5,437
11	\$5,800



Help Those in Need With the Power of Your DOLLARS

The Red Cross/RG&E Heating Fund is an energy assistance fund that helps eligible customers cope with unexpected energy emergencies. You can help make sure the dollars are there to assist people this winter.

Three ways you can give:

- 1 Through automatic giving – visit **rge.com** (check out our new online enrollment form) or call us at **1.800.743.2110**.
- 2 Add exactly **\$1, \$2 or \$5** to your next RG&E bill payment.
- 3 Send a check payable to the Red Cross/RG&E Heating Fund to:
Red Cross/ RG&E Heating Fund – American Red Cross Greater Rochester Chapter, 50 Prince Street, Rochester, NY 14607.

✓ **The Red Cross/RG&E Heating Fund is a joint effort of RG&E and the American Red Cross.**

Generator Safety

Emergency generators are a popular way to supply stand-by electricity. When properly sized, installed and operated, stand-by generators (or emergency or back-up generators) can safely power electrical equipment during power interruptions. However, you must follow proper procedures or you may place yourself and your family at serious risk. Also, improperly operated generators can feed electricity back into our lines, putting our people who are working to restore service in danger.

- **Portable** generators are smaller, stand alone and are not connected to any existing wiring system. Extension cords are used to connect portable generators to electrical equipment or appliances.



Typical portable generator

- **Stationary** (integrated) generators are typically much larger. They are built-in units connected directly to the wiring system of a home or business. *According to the National Electric Code, all generators connected directly to a home's or business's wiring system must use a double-pole, double-throw (DPDT) transfer switch to safely isolate the generator from utility power lines.*



Typical stationary natural-gas fired generator

A Special Note About Natural Gas-Fired Generators >> Many generators fueled by natural gas require a delivery pressure that's greater than RG&E's standard pressure. If the generator is not supplied with the manufacturer's suggested delivery pressure, it may not run. *Before purchasing a natural gas-fired generator, contact RG&E at 1.800.743.2110 to ensure an elevated delivery pressure is available to your home or business.* This is **NOT** available in all areas.



Watch Out For Meters When Removing Snow and Ice

When you remove snow and ice from driveways and sidewalks, make sure you know where our meters are so you don't damage them, inadvertently disrupt service to your home or business or put yourself in danger. Snow and ice can damage electricity and natural gas meters, natural gas pipes and natural gas regulators, so never bury that equipment when you are shoveling, using a snowblower or plowing. When removing snow or ice from a roof, never let it fall on our meters and other equipment.

Also, natural gas appliance chimneys and vents should also be kept free of snow and ice to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

Pipeline Markers Show the Way

Whether you are at home, at work or in a public place, it's likely you are in an area served by natural gas pipelines. Since pipelines are underground, line markers are sometimes used to indicate their approximate location along their route. The markers display the material transported in the line, the name of the pipeline operator and the telephone number where the operator can be reached in the event of an emergency. Markers only indicate the general location of a pipeline and cannot be relied upon to indicate the exact position.



Ensuring Your Safety

Like all forms of energy, natural gas must be handled properly. RG&E works very closely with industry and government agencies to stay abreast of new technologies and security methods to ensure the highest levels of service and safety. Despite an excellent safety record, a natural gas leak caused by damage to a pipeline may pose a hazard and has the potential to ignite. A variety of measures are used to ensure pipeline safety including:

- Coordination with **Dig Safely.New York**
- Industry safety practices and government oversight
- Inspection programs
- Pipeline markers and facility mapping
- Design and construction practices
- Public education programs
- Work force qualifications



Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning; Call Us if You Smell Natural Gas

Now that the heating season is underway, here are two important safety tips for you to remember:

1. Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas that is a product of the incomplete burning of natural gas, propane, gasoline, coal or wood. It can result from a faulty chimney, flue or vent from a heating appliance or water heater, and can cause flu-like symptoms, including headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea and loss of muscle control. Prolonged exposure to CO can lead to serious illness and even death. **To protect yourself, have your heating system and chimney, flues and vents checked once a year by a professional and purchase a CO detector for your home.**
 2. Be prepared if you smell natural gas. If you smell that distinctive odor – it's like the smell of rotten eggs – get up, get out and call RG&E immediately from a neighbor's phone. We'll respond quickly to make sure you and your family are safe.
- >> **If you are an RG&E natural gas customer and need to report a natural gas emergency or suspect a carbon monoxide problem, call us at 1.800.743.1702.**





Help Avoid Hypothermia

Cold weather can put us at risk of hypothermia, a dangerous condition caused by a lowering of body temperature. Some of the symptoms include feeling very cold, tired, weak and shivering, followed by confusion. To help avoid hypothermia:

Wear a hat > Indoors, outdoors, even in bed. Half of our body heat is lost through the head and neck.

Dress in layers > Each layer you add helps insulate you against the cold.

Sleep with layers > If you lower the thermostat at night, add layers of blankets, quilts, etc., to keep you warm and cozy.

Eat and drink right > Food is fuel for the body. Nutritious meals help keep your "body furnace" going. Avoid alcohol, as it speeds up the loss of body heat.

Know your medications > Some medications can increase your risk of hypothermia. If you have questions, ask your health care provider.



Having Trouble Paying Your Bills?

You may qualify for RG&E's Residential Energy Consumer Assistance Program (RECAP). RECAP includes a reduction in your basic service charge, assistance in reducing overdue amounts and referrals to community-based programs and services. You may also qualify for home weatherization assistance.

Don't delay, call us today at **1.877.266.3492** to see if you are eligible for RECAP or other assistance programs.

Be Green – and Save Money – with Compact Fluorescent Lights

Switching to compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) is a way to use energy safely and wisely. Because these bulbs use 75% less energy and last up to 10 times longer than comparable incandescent bulbs, they can help reduce your energy bills while also reducing greenhouse gases and fuel used to generate power.



If every American home replaced just one incandescent bulb with a CFL, it would save enough energy to light 3 million homes a year, and prevent greenhouse gases equivalent to the emissions of 800,000 vehicles.

To learn more visit **rge.com**. Click on "Your Home" then on "Appliances" then on "Lighting."

Source: Environmental Protection Agency and ENERGY STAR

Season's Greetings

WISHING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY
A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON.



Part of RG&E's commitment to the environment ...

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