



January 2014

# EnergyLines

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## Start the New Year 'Energy Smart'

- For low-cost and no-cost energy-saving tips, visit [rge.com](http://rge.com), click on "Usage and Safety" and then on "Using Energy Wisely." The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's [getenergysmart.org](http://getenergysmart.org) website also offers valuable energy conservation information.
- Shopping for new appliances? Look for the ENERGY STAR® designation that indicates the most **energy efficient models**. Also look for yellow EnergyGuide labels that provide energy use and operating cost information.
- Take advantage of **rebates for installing high-efficiency natural gas equipment**. To learn more, visit [rge.com](http://rge.com) and click on the "energy efficiency programs" icon.
- Install energy-saving automatic **set-back thermostats**.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with **compact fluorescent bulbs** that use up to 75% less energy and last up to 10 times as long.
- Sign up for RG&E's **Budget Billing service** and spread your energy costs evenly over 12 months. For more information or to sign up, visit [rge.com](http://rge.com) (click on "Your Account," "Pay Your Bill" and then on "Budget Billing") or call us at **1.800.743.2110**.



For more energy-wise tips, visit [rge.com](http://rge.com).

## Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Here are three important safety tips for you to remember:

1. Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas that is a product of the incomplete combustion of natural gas, propane, fuel oil, 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. To report a natural gas emergency, natural gas odor or suspected carbon monoxide problem, RG&E customers should call **1.800.743.1702** or **911**.
2. Leave natural gas appliance installation to the professionals. Only professional plumbing and heating contractors or appliance installers should install natural gas lines, change appliance connectors or check service lines running from the natural gas meter to your appliances.
3. Studies have linked corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) – sometimes used for natural gas appliances or equipment with the risk of fire due to lightning strikes. Proper bonding and grounding can reduce this risk. Consider asking the professional checking your heating system about this.



**Under New York State law (Amanda's Law) all residences must have a carbon monoxide (CO) detector. The National Fire Protection Association recommends CO detectors be installed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home.**

### How to Contact Us

**Customer Relations Center: 1.800.743.2110**  
(Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.)

**Electricity interruptions or emergencies:**  
**1.800.743.1701** (24 hours a day, every day)

**Natural gas odors or emergencies:**  
**1.800.743.1702** (24 hours a day, every day)

**Payment arrangements: 1.877.266.3492**

**Hearing- and speech-impaired: 1.800.962.3293**

**Self service line, available anytime: 1.800.295.7323**  
(Enter a meter reading, pay by phone, learn your account balance and more)

**Electronic message:** Use our "Write to RG&E" form online at [rge.com](http://rge.com).



# Generator Safety

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. **Please be sure to read, understand and follow all manufacturer's instructions for safe operation.**

**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. Review these safety tips before using your portable or stationary generator.

- Operate your generator outdoors in a clean, dry, well-ventilated area, and never indoors or in a garage.
- Your generator must be properly grounded.
- After losing power, turn off the main breaker or pull the main fuse block.
- Never connect a generator to an existing wiring system without an automatic transfer switch.
- Make sure all electrical connections comply with the National Electric Code (NEC).
- Never overload your generator with too many appliances.
- Use properly sized extension cords in good condition.
- Never let children play near a generator.



**Stationary generators** require additional consideration. They should be installed only by professionals. National Electrical Code and local code requirements must be met, and a double-pole, double-throw switch for safety is a must. If you are planning to install a stationary emergency generator powered by natural gas:

- Check (or be sure your contractor checks) with the municipality to see if a permit is required.
- Contact RG&E at **1.800.743.2110** to ensure that there is adequate natural gas pressure.

**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.

For our free, downloadable Emergency Generator Safety information sheet, visit [rge.com](http://rge.com), click on "Usage and Safety," then on "Electrical Safety" and then click on the "Generator Safety" icon.

## Facing an Energy Emergency? HEAP and EAP Can Help!

The **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)** is a federal grant program that helps income eligible households with energy bills, repairs and weatherization. Households may receive one regular HEAP benefit per season and may also be eligible for emergency HEAP benefits. The number of emergency benefits varies per season depending on the availability of funds. **The 2013-2014 HEAP season opened on November 18, 2013. Emergency HEAP was scheduled to open on January 2, 2014.** Your county's Department of Social Services will accept applications on or after those dates. To apply, go to [mybenefits.ny.gov](http://mybenefits.ny.gov) or for more information, visit [otda.ny.gov/main/programs/heap](http://otda.ny.gov/main/programs/heap).

### Income Eligibility Guidelines for HEAP

Household Size	Monthly Income (gross)
1	\$2,175
2	\$2,844
3	\$3,513
4	\$4,182
5	\$4,852
6	\$5,521
7	\$5,646
8	\$5,772
9	\$5,897
10	\$6,023
11	\$6,461



### With HEAP comes EAP – RG&E's Energy Assistance Program (EAP)!

RG&E's Energy Assistance Program (EAP) is designed to help eligible customers gain control of their energy bills. The program has two levels of assistance: EAP Basic Benefit (monthly bill credit) and EAP Limited Benefit (arrears forgiveness).

EAP monthly bill credits are available automatically to customers with a HEAP grant on an active RG&E account. (If HEAP is supplied to an account with another fuel vendor you must provide a copy of your HEAP award letter to the Energy Assistance Program, RG&E, 89 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14649-0001. Or fax it to: 585.771.6383.)

For more information, please visit [rge.com](http://rge.com), click on "Your Account" and then on "Energy Assistance: HEAP and EAP Can Help."

