



# Fort Belvoir Directorate of Emergency Services

*Fire and Emergency Services Division*

*Office of the Fire Marshal*

6100 Abbot Road

Fort Belvoir, VA 22060

Office: (703) 805-2091 Non-Emergency Dispatch (703) 806-6911



## *Smell. Go. Let Us Know.*

**Fort Belvoir, VA**—November 20, 2015—It's the time of the year where facilities and our home's heating systems are working more frequently. Occasionally, natural gas piping to these heating systems and other appliances may have a leak and we want you to know what to do to be safe. Additionally, natural gas is distributed through a network of underground pipes and service lines. If a leak should occur, it is possible for gas to migrate into buildings, including those without natural gas service.

Natural gas in its normal state is odorless and colorless; for easy detection the gas company injects an odorant called mercaptan into the gas before it is inserted into the distribution system. Mercaptan gives off a foul smell, reminiscent of rotten eggs or sulfur. If you suspect a natural gas leak or other gas emergency and are unsure of its severity or what to do, evacuate the area *immediately* and call **9-1-1** or **703-781-1800** immediately from a safe location. If you smell natural gas, do not attempt to locate the source of the odor

If the odor is very strong or you hear a blowing or hissing noise, evacuate the building or area immediately, leaving doors unlocked as you go. Warn others as you exit, if possible. Do not pull the fire alarm or anything that could create an ignition source. Do not light a match or use any type of motorized equipment.

Follow the same precautions if you are outside and smell natural gas, hear hissing or blowing noises, or if you see: dirt being thrown into the air; fire coming from the ground or appearing to burn above ground; water bubbling or being blown into the air at a pond, creek, or river; or a dry spot in a moist field or dead or dying vegetation on or near a pipeline right-of-way.

Just remember: **Smell. Go. Let us Know.** Here are some other steps to take if a natural gas leak is detected.

- Call **9-1-1** or **703-781-1800** on Fort Belvoir from a safe location. Do not use your cellular telephone or any other portable communications devices. These items can spark and create a source of ignition.
- Evacuate everyone from the area
- Do not operate ANY electrical switch, including the fire alarm system or lights, on or off. This could create a spark.
- Do not light matches or create any source of ignition



***"Keeping the Homefront Safe"***