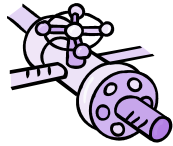


Florence Energy News

NATURAL GAS: DISTRIBUTION AND SAFETY



Local distribution companies (LDCs), like the larger interstate and intrastate pipelines, maintain the highest safety standards to ensure that preventable accidents are avoided. Problems with the distribution network are remedied in a timely fashion. Many of the safety programs maintained by LDCs are quite similar to those of interstate pipeline companies. Safety measures at the local level are listed below.

LEAK DETECTION EQUIPMENT

LDCs have in place sophisticated leak detection equipment designed to pick up leaks of natural gas from the distribution network. In addition, odor is added to the natural gas by LDCs to make it easier to detect a leak.

TECHNICIANS ON CALL

LDCs maintain fleets of technicians on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week to respond to customers' problems and concerns.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

LDCs participate in community and local emergency preparedness programs. This allows them to educate and prepare for emergency events such as natural disasters.

ONE CALL SYSTEM

The One Call System provides customers, contractors, and excavators with a single phone number to call before commencing excavation or construction to ensure that the distribution network is unaffected.

These are a few of the safety measures maintained by LDCs. The education of consumers is important for the safe distribution of natural gas in densely populated areas.

By teaching natural gas customers the safe use of natural gas, what to do in an emergency, and how to detect leaks, LDCs ensure that the distribution of natural gas will remain one of the safest forms of energy transmission.

For more information on natural gas safety in your area, contact the City of Florence Utilities Gas Department at 767-3430.

ROOM AIR CONDITIONERS

A room air conditioner's efficiency is measured by the energy efficiency ratio (EER). The EER is the ratio of the cooling capacity (in British thermal units [Btu] per hour) to the power input (in watts). The higher the EER rating, the more efficient the air conditioner. National appliance standards require room air conditioners built after January 1, 1990, to have an EER of 8.0 or greater.

When buying a new room air conditioner, look for units with an EER of 10.0 or above. Check the Energy Guide label for the unit, and also look for room air conditioners with the ENERGY STAR® label.

SIZING AND SELECTING A ROOM AIR CONDITIONER

The required cooling capacity for a room air conditioner depends on the size of the room being cooled. Room air conditioners generally have cooling capacities that range from 5,500 Btu per hour to 14,000 Btu per hour. A common rating term for air conditioning size is the "ton," which is 12,000 Btu per hour.



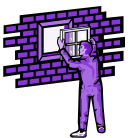
Based on size alone an air conditioner generally needs 20 Btu for each square foot of living space. Other important factors to consider when selecting an air conditioner are room height, local climate, shading, and window size.

Verify that your home's electrical system can meet the unit's power requirements. Room units operate on 115-volt or 230-volt circuits. The standard household receptacle is a connection for a 115-volt branch circuit. Large room units rated at 115 volts may require a dedicated circuit and room units rated at 230 volts may require a special circuit. Other features to look for are listed below.

- A filter that slides out easily for regular cleaning
- Logically arranged controls
- A digital readout for the thermostat setting
- A built-in timer

INSTALLING AND OPERATING YOUR ROOM AIR CONDITIONER

A little planning before installing your air conditioner will save you energy and money. The unit should be level when installed so that the inside drainage system and other mechanisms operate efficiently. If possible, install the unit in a shaded spot on your home's north or east side. Direct sunshine on the unit's outdoor heat exchanger decreases efficiency by as much as 10%. You can plant trees and shrubs to shade the air conditioner, but do not block the airflow.



Set your air conditioner's thermostat as high as comfortably possible in the summer. The less difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your overall cooling bill will be. Do not set your thermostat at a colder setting than normal when you turn on your air conditioner; it will not cool your home any faster and could result in excessive cooling and unnecessary expense.

Set the fan speed on high, except on very humid days. When humidity is high, set the fan speed on low for more comfort. The low speed on humid days will cool your home better and will remove more moisture from the air because of slower air movement through the cooling equipment.

September-October Calendar of Events

August 18 - September 22

Mixed Media Works by Scott Smith

Location: Kennedy Douglas
Center for the Arts

Hours: 9am-4pm Mon.-Fri.
1pm-3pm Sun.

Admission: Free

Contact: 760-6379

September 19-24

North Alabama State Fair

Location: North Alabama State Fairgrounds

Hours: 5pm Tues.-Fri.
Noon Sat.-Sun.

Tickets: \$6 adults, \$4 children (6-12)
5 years & under-free

Contact: 383-1817

October 12

Outdoor Expo—Speaker: Phil Robertson

Location: Rogersville United Methodist
Church

Hours: 6pm

Admission: \$5.00

Contact: Jamey Cosby, 247-1793

October 28-29

Alabama Renaissance Faire

Location: Wilson Park

Hours: 10am-6pm Sat.
Noon-6pm Sun.

Admission: Free

Contact: 768-3031

October 3-30

Shoals Artist Guild Exhibit

Location: Kennedy Douglas
Center for the Arts

Hours: 9am-4pm Mon.-Fri.
1pm-3pm Sun.

Admission: Free

Contact: 760-6379



**YOUR ADDRESS AND THE
PHONE NUMBER AT THE
OUTAGE LOCATION IS THE
KEY TO GETTING YOUR
POWER BACK ON**

There are many things that can cause your power to go off. Lightning, tree limbs, auto accidents, and storms are a few causes of power outages. Sometimes Florence Utilities may require an outage for maintenance or to improve the power system. When maintenance or improvement to the system requires a planned outage, we inform our customers of the planned outage in the local newspaper. But, in the case of an outage caused by an accident or the weather, we may not have the opportunity to inform our customers of an outage in their area.

When you call to report an outage, if we have no other calls from your area, the dispatcher may ask that you check the breakers in your switch box to see if that may be the problem. After checking your breakers, if your power is still off, the dispatcher will send a service crew to your location. If you see or hear anything at the time the power went off, the dispatcher needs to know to better direct the service crew to the problem.

If your power goes off, call our 24-hour dispatch office at **764-4456**. We use your address and the phone number at the outage location to determine if you are located in a planned outage area or if the outage is caused by accident or weather. Your address and phone number allows us to locate you in our system. With your service located, we can keep you better informed and get your power back on as quickly and safely as possible.

**CALL 760-6512
TO UPDATE
YOUR PHONE NUMBER**

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Florence ENERGY

NEWS YOU CAN USE FROM FLORENCE UTILITIES

Power outages can be caused by lightning, tree limbs, and storms. Florence Utilities' goal is to supply electrical service with few interruptions. However, if you do happen to lose power, make sure you provide us with your complete address and phone number. This information allows us to locate you in our system and enables us to restore your power quickly. For more information about this look on the back.

Room air conditioners, sometimes referred to as window air conditioners, cool rooms rather than the entire home or business. If they provide cooling only where they are needed, room air conditioners are less expensive to operate than central units, even though their efficiency is generally lower than that of central air conditioners. More details about room air conditioners are listed inside.

Local distribution companies maintain the highest safety standards to ensure that preventable natural gas accidents are avoided as mentioned in the article inside. Safety measures at the local level include leak detection equipment, technicians on call, emergency preparedness, and an One Call System.

www.florenceutilities.com