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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10
Concord, N.H. 03301-2429

TDD Access: Relay NH
1-800-735-2964

Tel. (603) 271-2431

FAX No. 271-3878

Website:
www.puc.nh.gov

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Contact: Amanda Noonan, Director
Consumer Services and External Affairs
Public Utilities Commission
(603) 271-2431

CONSUMER ALERT: FALLING ICE AND SNOW MAY CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR NATURAL GAS CUSTOMERS

Concord, N.H. A series of recent snowfalls and icy conditions in New Hampshire have increased the risk of potentially unsafe situations resulting from damage to gas service equipment, such as meters and piping, as well as blocked vents on customer gas appliances, such as dryers, hot water heaters and furnaces. "Customers with outside gas services, particularly those located underneath an eave or overhang, should be aware that snow and ice buildup on roofs could cause damage when sliding off the roof," advises Randy Knepper, the Commission's Safety Division Director. Customers should also look at the area around their outside gas services to make sure the snow and ice are not covering the meter or blocking appliance vents. According to Knepper, there have been an increased number of evacuations due to damage to gas service equipment leading into homes and businesses resulting from the weight of snow piles and falling snow and ice as well as several near miss situations. Snow plowing and other snow removal activities have resulted in large snow banks around gas service equipment which can also create unsafe conditions.

"Customers should be alert to accumulating ice and snow on roofs and aware of the location of gas service to their home or business when removing snow or ice from roofs so as to prevent damage to the meter and piping," Knepper stated. "Make sure your snow removal contractors know exactly where your gas meter is located, and create a buffer area surrounding them so that plows or snow throwers do not come into contact with the gas meters. Keeping the area around your meter clear from snow and ice can also help prevent safety issues. If you cannot safely clear the area around your meter, contact your local gas company for assistance."

If you smell gas, immediately evacuate your home or business and then call your local gas company and local fire department. Customers of Liberty Utilities should call 1-855-327-7758 customers of Liberty Utilities - Keene should call 603-352-1230, and customers of Unitil should call 1-866-900-4115.

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