

New Mexico Gas Company Recommends Customers Hire Professional for Annual Furnace Light and Safety Check

(ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.) – With temperatures dropping and winter approaching, New Mexico Gas Company recommends that customers hire trained, certified professionals to light their furnace pilot lights and check for the presence of dangerous carbon monoxide.

An improperly adjusted furnace can emit dangerous levels of carbon monoxide, an odorless, invisible gas that is one of the leading causes of accidental poisoning deaths in the United States. Carbon monoxide can come from any fuel-burning appliance that is inadequately vented, poorly-maintained, worn or improperly adjusted. Older furnaces are more likely to have carbon monoxide problems than newer furnaces.

“Having a heating professional inspect, adjust and light your furnace before each heating season is the best way to ensure it is functioning properly and safely,” said Richard Estes, NMGC’s director of delivery.

Estes said that an annual furnace light and safety check is the first line of defense against potential carbon monoxide problems. “The second line of protection from carbon monoxide is to properly install and maintain a carbon monoxide detector in your home,” he said, adding that carbon monoxide detectors should be tested once a month.

Carbon monoxide can also be emitted by fuel-burning devices not designed to be used indoors like grills and unvented kerosene or propane space heaters. Estes said such devices should never be used as sources of indoor heat.

NMGC’s website has additional information on [furnace light and safety checks](#) as well as on [carbon monoxide poisoning](#). The American Red Cross [website](#) also is a good source of information on carbon monoxide poisoning.

New Mexico Gas Co., the largest natural gas distribution utility in New Mexico, is part of the TECO Energy family of companies. New Mexico Gas serves more than 513,000 customers across New Mexico. TECO Energy Inc. (NYSE: TE) is an energy-related holding company with regulated electric and gas utilities in Florida and New Mexico, including Tampa Electric, Peoples Gas System and New Mexico Gas Co. Other TECO Energy subsidiaries include TECO Coal, which owns and operates coal-production facilities in Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia.