

The Facts About Choosing a Natural Gas Supplier



Brought to you by the Council for Utility Choice and the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.

The Council for Utility Choice is a not-for-profit organization created by the PUC to oversee the Utility Choice Program.

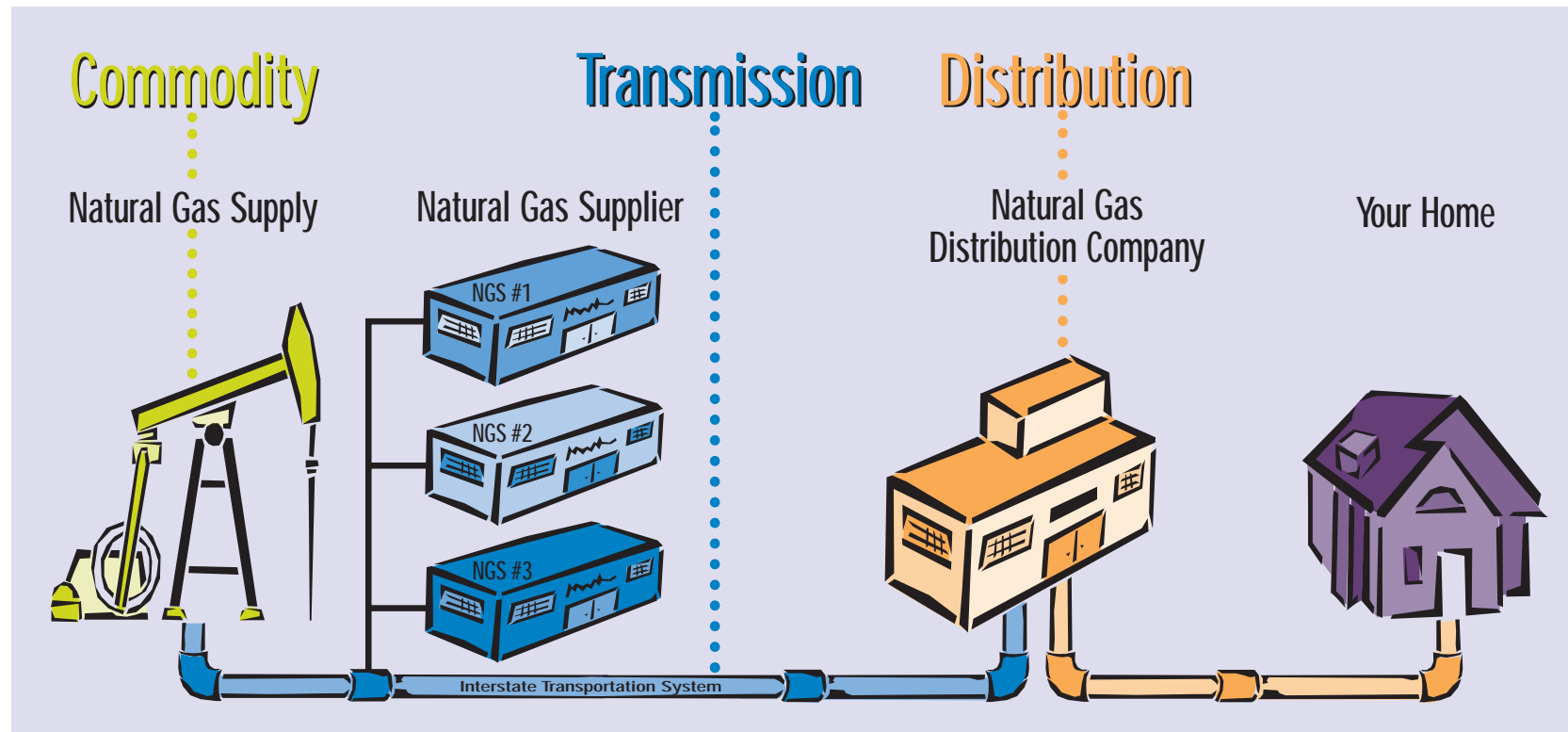
Parts of Natural Gas Service - Commodity, Transmission and Distribution



Commodity refers to the natural gas. It comes from the gas well.

Transmission involves moving the natural gas from the gas well through a series of underground pipelines called the interstate transportation system. The interstate transportation system delivers the natural gas to your natural gas distribution company (NGDC).

Distribution refers to the NGDC sending the natural gas to your home through underground pipelines.



Questions to ask when shopping for a Natural Gas Supplier



1. Is the natural gas supplier (NGS) licensed by the PUC?
2. What is the NGS's price?
3. What does the NGS's price per ccf, Mcf or Dth include?
(For example, does the price include transmission fees, delivery fees or distribution charges?)
4. Is the NGS's rate fixed or variable?
5. If variable, how will the NGS's rate be calculated each month?
6. Does the NGS offer any incentives or bonuses?
7. How many bills will I receive?
8. Is there an agreement to sign and what is the length of the agreement?
9. Are there any additional fees for switching or canceling your NGS?
10. Does the NGS have programs to assist customers with limited-incomes?

Shopping Worksheet

Shopping instructions:

1. Write in the natural gas supplier (NGS) name.
2. Write in the natural gas distribution company (NGDC) **Price to Compare**.
Ask the NGS for their price in dollars per Mcf, ccf or Dth. Write the price and the unit of measurement on the **NGS Price** line.
3. Subtract the NGS Price from the NGDC **Price to Compare**. Write the difference on the **Savings** line.
4. To find how much you'll save, find the average monthly gas used on your bill and write it on the **Average Monthly Gas Used** line.
5. Multiply the Savings times the Average Monthly Gas Used. This gives your **Total Average Monthly Savings**.

Try It Yourself

	Supplier 1	Supplier 2	Supplier 3
1. NGS Name	_____	_____	_____
2. NGDC Price to Compare	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
3. NGS Price	- \$ _____	- \$ _____	- \$ _____
4. Savings	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
5. Average Monthly Gas Used	X _____	X _____	X _____
6. Total Average Monthly Savings*	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

*Actual savings may vary.

Frequently Asked Questions



- **Who can take part in Natural Gas Choice?** Most Pennsylvania natural gas customers can take part now. Natural Gas Choice for Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW) customers will begin in Fall 2003. The law does not require smaller NGDCs to offer Natural Gas Choice.
- **If I choose to purchase my natural gas from an NGS, who will I call if I have problems with distribution?** You should continue to call your NGDC, not your NGS. The NGDC owns and maintains the natural gas pipelines that deliver your gas.
- **Will I receive one bill or two?** In most cases, you should be able to receive one monthly bill from your NGDC. However, an NGS may want to bill you separately. This is an important question you should ask the NGS when you shop.
- **Do I have to do anything if I want to keep buying my natural gas from my NGDC?**
No.
- **I am on a special payment plan through my NGDC, can I take part in this plan through my new NGS?** Each NGS is different. Before switching, call the NGS you are considering and ask about the programs they have to meet your payment needs.
- **If I choose a new NGS, can I change my mind and choose another NGS to replace the first one?** Yes. However, you should carefully check the terms of the agreement, especially for any penalty clauses. Also, you should contact your NGDC to find out when your NGS will begin providing service.

Definition of Terms:

- **ccf** – 100 cubic feet of gas. This is a measure of gas usage.
- **City gate** – The point where interstate pipelines deliver gas into NGDC facilities.
- **Commodity** – Basic natural gas supply service which is sold either by volume (ccf or Mcf) or heating value (dekatherms).
- **Dth (Dekatherm)** – A measure of the heat content value of gas. Gas usage is determined by multiplying the Mcf used by the heat content value of the gas. One Dth equals approximately 970 cubic feet.
- **Distribution** – The delivery of natural gas from the city gate to the consumer.
- **Mcf** – 1,000 cubic feet of gas. This is a measure of gas usage.
- **NGDC** – *Natural gas distribution company* – A state regulated natural gas utility which owns the gas lines and equipment necessary to deliver natural gas to the consumer (Formerly called local distribution company).

NGS – *Natural gas supplier* – An entity that sells or arranges to sell natural gas to customers that is delivered through the distribution lines of an NGDC.

OCA – *Office of Consumer Advocate* - The state agency that represents the interests of Pennsylvania utility customers before the PUC, federal regulatory agencies and state and federal courts. The OCA was created by the Pennsylvania General Assembly in 1976 and is an independent office within the Office of Attorney General.

PUC – *Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission* – The State regulatory agency that provides oversight, policy guidance and direction to public utilities and suppliers.

Price to compare - The dollar amount charged by the NGDC used by consumers to compare prices and potential savings with other natural gas suppliers.

Storage – Placing natural gas into an underground facility for removal and use at a later date.

Transmission – The moving of natural gas through the interstate pipeline system for delivery to the NGDC.

NGDC contact information for Natural Gas Choice:

- **Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc.**
1-888-275-4674 • www.columbiagas.com

- **Dominion Peoples**
1-800-PNG-0111 • www.dom.com

- **Equitable Gas Company**
1-800-249-6064 • www.eqt.com

- **National Fuel Gas Distribution, Pennsylvania Division**
1-800-365-3234 • www.nationalfuelgas.com

- **NUI Valley Cities Gas**
570-888-9664 • www.nui.com

- **PECO Energy**
1-800-494-4000 • www.peco.com

- **PGW (Philadelphia Gas Works)**
Choice is not available until Fall 2003
215-235-1000 • www.pgworks.com

- **PPL Gas Utilities**
1-800-652-0550 • www.pplweb.com

- **PG Energy**
1-888-876-4FYI • www.pgenenergy.com

- **T.W. Phillips**
1-800-222-5101 • www.twphillips.com

- **UGI Utilities, Inc.**
1-800-242-7270 • www.ugi.com/gas

23,000 - 8/01



Council for Utility Choice
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
P.O. Box 3265
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265