

## Emergency Preparedness & Priority to Protect Life

Decatur Utilities is committed to public safety and to environmental protection. If you are a public or emergency official, you know to take whatever steps you deem necessary to safeguard the public in the event of a pipeline emergency.

The following suggestions are offered as a guide:

- Secure the area around the leak to a safe distance. This could include evacuation of nearby homes and businesses as well as erecting barricades to control access to the site.
- If the pipeline leak is not burning, take steps to prevent ignition. Prohibit smoking, re-route traffic and shut-off electricity.
- If the pipeline leak is burning, try to prevent the spread of fire but DO NOT attempt to extinguish it. Gas vapors could explode when reignited by secondary fires.

## Emergency Response Plans

Decatur Utilities works closely with emergency responders and state and local agencies to prevent and prepare for emergencies. We maintain up-to-date operations and maintenance protocols as well as emergency response procedures which are made available to local and state authorities.

## Security

Decatur Utilities gate stations are fenced and remain locked at all times. We maintain around-the-clock surveillance of key pipeline operations through the use of SCADA systems that transmit pipeline pressures and other information to our Dispatch Center, which is staffed with qualified operators and supervisors. Decatur Utilities also performs routine patrols of pipeline right-of-ways to maintain safe operation of the pipeline.

## Facility Purpose

Decatur Utilities gate stations provide a natural gas point of entry from our transmission pipeline suppliers. An odorant is added to the natural gas at these locations for safety and leak detection. These stations also monitor the amount of incoming natural gas as well as adjust and regulate the pressures for distribution to our customers. Please report any suspicious activities at these facilities to Decatur Utilities at 256-552-1400.

## BEFORE EXCAVATING - CALL 811!

Call at least 48 hrs before you plan to dig.

Alabama 811 (or 1-800-292-8525)

It's a smart call. And it's the LAW!

[www.al811.com](http://www.al811.com) [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com)



## Pipeline Location Information

### Recognizing Pipeline Markers

Natural gas pipelines will sometimes be marked with signs. Since pipelines are buried underground, the markers are used to indicate the pipeline's approximate location. The signs generally will be located at major roadway and railroad crossings and at intervals along major roadways.

Information on the sign includes the telephone number for reporting pipeline emergencies to the Decatur Utilities Dispatch Center, which is staffed around the clock. It also includes the toll free telephone number for the Alabama One Call Center (Alabama 811).

Are pipeline markers and signs always placed on top of the pipeline? Not always. Markers indicate the general location of the pipeline. They cannot be relied upon to indicate the exact location of the pipeline they mark, the depth of the pipeline or the number of pipelines in the vicinity. **ALWAYS call 811 for line locates.**



## Content on Operator Websites

Information on the Decatur Utilities Pipeline Public Awareness Plan can be found by visiting [www.decaturutilities.com](http://www.decaturutilities.com).

## Right-of-Way Encroachment Prevention

Pipeline right-of-ways enable workers to gain access for inspection, maintenance, testing or emergencies. Pipeline right-of-ways must be kept free from structures and other obstructions.

If a pipeline crosses your property, please do not plant trees or high shrubs on the right-of-ways. Also, do not dig, store or place anything on or near the right-of-ways without first having Decatur Utilities personnel mark the pipeline, stake the right-of-way and explain utility construction guidelines.

## Contact Information

Decatur Utilities  
1002 Central Parkway SW  
Decatur, AL 35601

Mailing address:  
P.O. Box 2232  
Decatur, AL 35609-2232

Phone: 256-552-1400  
Fax: 256-552-1412



## AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE - GAS PIPELINE SAFETY

The U.S. relies on clean, efficient natural gas for almost one-fourth of its energy needs. Each day, underground pipelines operated by Decatur Utilities deliver natural gas safely and efficiently to thousands of homes, businesses, schools and companies for heating, cooking, producing hot water and fueling industrial processes.

Decatur Utilities purchases natural gas from major transportation pipeline companies and takes delivery at one of three gate stations. Once pressure is lowered at regulating stations throughout the Decatur Utilities service area, natural gas is then distributed through main and service lines to homes and businesses where it is metered as used.

With fewer safety incidents than any other transportation mode, the pipeline system in the U.S. is safe and reliable. Safety is the number one priority of America's natural gas industry and the same is true at Decatur Utilities. Our main goal is to deliver natural gas reliably and safely to every customer, every day.

To maintain that safety, we want you to understand how to avoid dangerous damage to the underground utility pipeline system AND what to do if you smell gas or experience a natural gas emergency at home or work.



## HAZARD AWARENESS & PREVENTION MEASURES:

Like all forms of energy, natural gas must be handled properly. A gas leak caused by damage to a natural gas pipeline may pose a public hazard and has the potential to ignite. Decatur Utilities works diligently to ensure pipeline safety through:

- Coordination with 811 (1-800-292-8525 or 811) to locate underground utility lines prior to digging
- Ongoing inspection programs and stringent workforce qualifications for employees
- 24-hour surveillance of key pipeline operations - Decatur Utilities Dispatch 256-552-1400
- Industry-standard design and construction practices
- Alabama Public Service Commission oversight

Decatur Utilities maintains an ongoing relationship with local emergency response officials in order to prepare for and respond to any pipeline emergency. In an emergency situation, **always call 911 immediately.**



**Please report ANY suspicious activities to:  
Decatur Utilities - Dispatch Center  
256-552-1400**



**Pipeline Public Awareness**  
www.decaturutilities.com

## POTENTIAL HAZARDS:

1. Potential hazards of products transported:

- Pipelines carry gaseous materials under high pressure
- Natural gas is colorless and lighter than air
- Natural gas is flammable
- Any pipeline leak can be potentially hazardous

## HOW TO RECOGNIZE A PIPELINE LEAK:

How can you recognize a possible pipeline leak?  
Use your senses: Sight, smell and sound:

- **Sight**  
Look for dirt being blown into the air, mist, fog, bubbling in standing water, fire coming from the ground or dying vegetation
- **Smell**  
Notice any unusual odor; Natural gas is odorless but an odorant is added to the natural gas to give it a distinct "rotten egg" smell
- **Sound**  
Listen for any unusual noises like roaring, blowing, hissing or whistling







## DAMAGE PREVENTION:

The greatest risk to underground utilities is excavation. Even minor damage like a dent, scrape, crease or gouge to a pipeline's coating can cause a leak or failure. **Call Before You Dig.** It's a smart call **AND it's the law!**

Call Alabama 811 (1-800-292-8525 or 811) **48 HOURS BEFORE** you plan to dig on public or private property. The Alabama 811 Center will notify Decatur Utilities so we can mark the location of all underground utility services, including natural gas lines.

We ask all persons planning excavations to give prior notification to Decatur Utilities of their intent to excavate any area, including public and private property where underground utilities may exist. Decatur Utilities will mark the location of underground facilities in that area.

## COLOR KEY TO UNDERGROUND MARKINGS:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|  <b>Red:</b> Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit and Lighting Cables |  <b>Orange:</b> Communication, Alarm or Signal Lines, Cables or Conduit |  <b>Green:</b> Sewers and Drain Lines    |
|  <b>Yellow:</b> Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum or other Gaseous Materials  |  <b>Blue:</b> Water, Irrigation and Slurry Lines                        |  <b>White:</b> Proposed Excavation Lines |

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU DETECT A GAS LEAK:

In the event of a gas leak, it is very important that you understand and follow these procedures and guidelines to remain safe and protect others.

- Turn off and abandon any motorized equipment you are operating and advise those around you to do the same
- If in a building, exit immediately; If outside a building, evacuate everyone from the building
- Move to a safe environment immediately
- Immediately report the leak to Dispatch at 256-552-1440
- If fire or explosion, call 911; DO NOT assume someone else will report the condition
- Provide the exact location - including any cross streets
- Avoid flames; Do not smoke or light matches
- Do not operate electrical appliances and/or equipment
- Do not use cell or land-line phones, flashlights or other items that can produce a spark
- Warn others in the vicinity to stay clear
- Do not attempt to correct the problem yourself

We ask for your cooperation and participation in this program to help prevent damage to underground utilities and promote public safety.

- Call Alabama 811 (or dial 1-800-292-8525) at least 48 hours before you plan to dig
- Visit [www.al1call.com](http://www.al1call.com) or [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com) for more info
- Wait for the site to be marked
- Respect the marks
- Dig with care!



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**