



Disaster Readiness



Utility Control

The first step when developing an emergency response plan is to conduct a risk assessment to identify potential emergency scenarios. An understanding of what can happen will enable you to determine resource requirements and to develop plans and procedures to prepare your home.

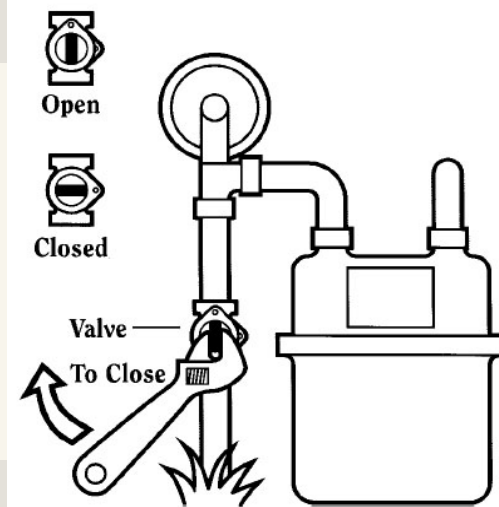
When an emergency occurs, the first priority is always life safety. The second priority is the stabilization of the incident. This includes utility control. There are many actions that can be taken to stabilize an incident and minimize potential dangers.

BEFORE

Natural Gas



- Everyone should know how to turn off the main valve.
- If you smell gas or hear it leaking, open a window and get out.
- Only turn off gas if it is safe to do so.
- Shutoff is typically the first valve on the pipe.
- Most gas appliances have shut-off valves.
- If you are unsure of the leak's origin, turn off the gas using the outside main valve and call the gas company.
- If you turn off the gas, a qualified professional must turn it back on.
- NEVER attempt to turn the gas back on yourself. Call the Gas Company.



Electricity



- Electrical sparks and power surges during and after a disaster have the potential to ignite natural gas fumes.
- Teach all responsible household members where your circuit box is and how to shut off the electricity.
- Always shut off all the individual circuits before shutting off the main circuit breaker.
- When turning power on, reverse the order - main circuit breaker on then individual circuits one at a time.

Water



- Know where the main water valve is for your home and learn how to turn it off.
- Make sure the valve is free from rust and can be shut off completely.
- Label the valve with a tag for easy identification.
- Most valves can be found outside under a small manhole cover.

DURING

Natural Gas



- All utilities should be shut down and monitored.
- It is especially critical to get the gas line to your property shut off as soon as possible.
- Natural gas is lighter than air and the vapors will pool in low areas. Lighting candles can be an ignition source for these vapors.

Electricity



- Monitor your meter to see if electricity is being used.
- If you have solar panels, make sure the shunt from the panel to the meter is off so the entire system is not back-fed.

Water



- During and after a disaster, cracked lines may pollute the water supply to your home.
- It may be wise to shut off your water until you hear from authorities that it is safe for drinking.
- You may also need to preserve water by filling up your bathtub or temporary containers.
- Ensure water meter has been turned off.
- Monitor the system.
- A spinning red star indicates water is being used or there is a leak in the system.

AFTER

Natural Gas



- Only Southern California Gas, or a certified representative should turn your gas back on.
- Many fires have occurred due to the public turning their gas back on not knowing they had a gas leak in the system.

Electricity



- Electricity should be turned on by a PG&E representative. Restoring power to your home is very dangerous. Sparking wires may cause a fire or may electrocute someone.
- Solar panel shunts should only be reset by an authorized representative.

Water



- Have a City water representative turn your water on.
- Water may be diverted to areas of the city to support firefighting activities.
- Having a major break in the water service could disrupt firefighting efforts.