



NEWS RELEASE

SOCALGAS OFFERS SAFETY TIPS IN PREPARATION FOR NEXT BIG QUAKE

LOS ANGELES, Oct. 19, 2011 – As thousands of Californians prepare for the annual Great Shakeout drill on Thursday, Oct. 20 at 10:20 a.m., Southern California Gas Co. (SoCalGas) is reminding customers that advance preparation is critical in getting ready for the next major earthquake.

SoCalGas offers these safety tips to help reduce the chance of injuries or property damage from the next quake:

Before an earthquake:

- Securely strap water heaters to prevent them from moving or toppling over. The water heater should be fastened securely to the wall studs in two places -- the upper and lower one-third of the tank -- with heavy bolts and metal straps.
- Replace semi-rigid (aluminum or copper) gas appliance connectors with approved connectors made of corrugated metal. These are less likely to crack during an earthquake. Connectors and water heater strapping kits are available at most hardware and home improvement stores.
- Know where the natural gas meter is located. Gas meters are commonly located above ground next to the home on the side, front or back, but may also be in a cabinet or underground.

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- Have a 12-inch or larger adjustable wrench handy to manually turn off the gas meter should it be necessary if a gas leak is suspected after an emergency.

After an earthquake:

- Do not turn off the gas meter after an earthquake unless you smell gas, hear the sound of gas escaping or see other signs of a gas leak and only if it is safe to do so. Once the gas has been turned off, it may take SoCalGas several days to restore service, depending on the magnitude of the emergency. Do not attempt to turn the gas back on yourself.
- If there is an apparent gas leak, remain calm. Do not light a match, candle or cigarette, and do not turn electrical devices – not even a light switch -- on or off, or use any other device or equipment that may cause a spark. Note that gas leaking from a plastic pipe can cause static electricity which can ignite the gas. From a safe location, call SoCalGas at **1-800-427-2200** or **1-800-342-4545** in Spanish, 24 hours a day, seven days a week; or call **911**.
- If a gas leak is suspected and it is safe to do so, turn the gas off at the meter. Using an adjustable wrench, make a quarter-turn of the valve, moving it from a vertical position to a horizontal position. This will shut off the flow of gas. (A diagram and instructions for turning off the gas meter are printed in the “Survival Guide” section of most telephone directory white pages and is also available at socalgas.com).
- If the gas is shut off at the meter, **do not turn it back on** without the help of SoCalGas. Gas service should not be restored until SoCalGas determines that the customer’s facilities, appliances or other gas equipment are safe.

For more natural gas safety information, visit SoCalGas’ website at socalgas.com/safety.

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About Southern California Gas Co.

[Southern California Gas Co.](http://SouthernCaliforniaGasCo.com) has been delivering clean, safe and reliable natural gas to its customers for more than 140 years. It is the nation’s largest natural gas distribution utility, providing service to 20.9 million consumers connected through nearly 5.8 million meters in more than 500 communities. The company’s service territory encompasses approximately 20,000 square miles throughout central and Southern California, from Visalia to the Mexican border. SoCalGas is a regulated subsidiary of [Sempra Energy](http://SempraEnergy.com) (NYSE: SRE).