

## SUMMER BILL ASSISTANCE

Struggling to keep up with the gas bill? Payment assistance grants are available for income-eligible customers. There are several billing programs open to all customers as well. Visit [ColumbiaGasOhio.com](http://ColumbiaGasOhio.com) or call the Customer Care Center at 1-800-344-4077 to find a plan that fits your needs.

Additionally, if you know someone who is struggling to pay or falling behind on their bill, please encourage them to reach out to Columbia Gas today. One phone call can help connect them with the assistance they need to get back on track.

## SUMMER SAFETY MESSAGES

### Work Zone Awareness

As summer progresses, motorists can expect to see a number of road construction projects. Columbia Gas reminds all motorists to follow good safety practices in work zones. These tips just might save a life:

- *Slow down* – Speeding is one of the major causes of work zone crashes.
- *Expect the unexpected* – Normal speed limits may be reduced; traffic lanes may change; and people may be working on or near the road.
- *Keep your distance* – Keep a safe distance between you and the car ahead of you, and do not tailgate.
- *Pay attention to signs* – Observe posted signs until you see the one that says you have left the zone.
- *Obey road crew flaggers* – A flagger has the same authority as a regulatory sign, so you can be cited for disobeying their directions.
- *Stay alert and minimize distractions* – Dedicate your full attention to the roadway and avoid changing radio stations or using cell phones while driving.



### 811

Columbia Gas reminds everyone to call 811 at least two business days prior to digging. The free service identifies the location of underground facilities and can help to prevent underground damages while ensuring homes stay fully connected with critical services. When a call is placed to 811, Columbia Gas and other utilities will visit the dig area and mark the facilities with flags and markings. It's free. It's easy. It's the law.

Keep in mind that calling 811 is only the first step. Once marked, try to avoid digging within five feet of a gas line. Pools, decks, fences, sheds, etc. constructed too close could create challenges when it comes time for maintenance on the gas line. Contact Columbia Gas at 1-800-344-4077 with any questions before beginning a large project.

### Cross-Bore Prevention

Cross-bores are inadvertent intersections of an existing underground utility by a second utility. This intersection may compromise the integrity of both utilities. A cross-bore can go undetected for months or even years. Eventually, if a sewer backup develops, a plumber or homeowner may attempt to clear the blockage with a mechanical rotary device. This practice can damage the utility line and create an unsafe situation allowing natural gas to migrate into homes and buildings.



Before attempting to clear a blocked sewer line, call 811 so that utility lines can be marked. It is the best way to ensure the sewer line is free of cross-bores and to avoid a potentially unsafe situation. For more information on cross-bores, visit [columbiagasohio.com/safety/natural-gas-safety/sewer-line-safety](http://columbiagasohio.com/safety/natural-gas-safety/sewer-line-safety) or email [cohcrossbore@nisource.com](mailto:cohcrossbore@nisource.com). If you believe you have a cross bore, call 1-800-344-4077.

## SAFETY PRESENTATIONS

Columbia Gas is proud to partner with firefighters, police officers and other emergency management officials in the community. Our instructors train hundreds of first responders each year so they know how to react during an emergency. If you are interested in a training, presentation or even just safety materials to keep on-hand, please reach out to Megan Hunyor at [MHunyor@nisource.com](mailto:MHunyor@nisource.com). Columbia is happy to present at schools and community/neighborhood groups as well.

## FREE HOME ENERGY AUDIT

Get a free home energy audit when you schedule by September 30 with promo code FALL. Your home energy audit includes a comprehensive evaluation of where your home may be losing energy and recommendations from trained technicians to help lower your natural gas usage. Visit [ColumbiaGasOhio.com/HomeEnergyAudit](http://ColumbiaGasOhio.com/HomeEnergyAudit) or call 877-644-6674 to schedule today.

## CHARITABLE GIVING

Through its Columbia Cares program, Columbia Gas contributes time, money, and resources each year to local programs and organizations. Key focus areas right now include organizations and initiatives operating in basic needs and hardship assistance (e.g., food insecurity). However, Columbia Gas will also consider grants in community and workforce development, energy education and environment/STEM. Any 501(c)(3) interested in learning more about the Columbia Gas grant process should visit [ColumbiaGasOhio.com/columbiacares](http://ColumbiaGasOhio.com/columbiacares)