

Mark Your Calendar



PUBLIC NATURAL GAS WEEK

OCTOBER 7-13, 2018

The National Public Natural Gas Week will take place from Oct. 7 to 13, 2018. This annual nationwide event is intended to build public awareness about the value of having a community-owned natural gas utility. During this week, the American Public Gas Association (APGA) encourages systems to educate residents on the environmental and cost benefits of using clean, reliable, and affordable natural gas in addition to the cost benefits of natural gas appliances.

Make your customers aware that public natural gas utilities are not-for-profit retail distribution entities owned by and accountable to the residents that they serve. Help your community to understand that your public natural gas utility is good for the local area for many reasons including:

◆ **Local Control:** Having a public natural gas system gives a community local control over how gas is provided to homes and businesses. Decisions are made through citizen participation instead of being made in a distant city by people who do not understand local issues and who are primarily focused on profits instead of service.

◆ **Competitive Costs:** To offer fair and competitive rates, public natural gas systems operate as a not-for-profit entity. Public natural gas systems do not face pressure to pay dividends to stockholders.

◆ **Economic Benefits:** A public natural gas system plays a valuable role in helping communities broaden their tax base, and in turn improve the local economy and increase jobs. Public natural gas systems ensure that local dollars stay at home.

◆ **Customer Service:** As a not-for-profit entity, public natural gas systems focus on service, rather than profits. Public natural gas systems are an integral part of communities. They maintain close relationships with customers, and as a result, are successful in meeting customers' needs.

Check out these Public Natural Gas Week celebration ideas:

◆ **Hold a customer appreciation day.** Provide refreshments and a presentation by an employee who can explain the importance of having a public natural gas system in your community and why natural gas is a responsible and affordable choice.

◆ **Hold an open house for school groups.** Provide children with take-home materials. Some materials can be downloaded for free from the APGA website. These materials are almost always looked at by their parents who are your customers.

◆ **Put an announcement about PNGW on your website** using one of the APGA banner ads downloadable at www.apga.org/PNGW.

◆ **Consider speaking to local civic organizations** about energy efficiency with natural gas appliances and the benefits of public gas. Go to www.apga.org/videos to share APGA's video on the benefits of public gas systems.

◆ **Use your social-networking sites to publicize the week** and to promote your events. Offer natural gas-efficiency tips for your followers and prizes for those that interact with you online.

◆ **Pay a personal visit to each board or council member** to thank them in person.

◆ **Send a personal letter to each member of your board or city council** explaining public natural gas and its role in your community and ask your council or board to issue a proclamation for PNGW. A sample text of a proclamation is available on the APGA website at www.apga.org/PNGW and you can tailor it to fit your system's style.

◆ **Send a news release, place an ad or send a public service announcement** to your local newspaper, TV, and radio editors. A sample text available at www.apga.org/PNGW. Tailor the release to fit your system and add any timely news you have to announce such as figures on your system's growth, system expansion plans, the status of projects under way, new business procedures, new commercial or industrial customers, and employee recognitions.

◆ **Suggest that your local newspaper interview your mayor or board chairperson** about the benefits of a community-owned natural gas system.

◆ **Request a meeting with the newspaper's editorial board and local TV and radio editors** to discuss utility issues in your service area, and visit with reporters who cover your gas system regularly. 