

NEWS

Vol. 15 No. 3 Winter 2002

Dear M.U.D.

I have had M.U.D. water for more than 23 years. I want to know if I also may have M.U.D. as our natural gas supplier. We have a gas supplier who doesn't even belong to our state and area. I hate having to pay my gas bill to another state. I also don't like not being able to pay my gas bill at my bank.

When you live as long as I have, you get used to having some things staying the same no matter what. I can't believe my city has not come into the millennium as far as opting for the M.U.D. plan for gas and water like Omaha and the surrounding areas.

—A LaVista water customer

Reply: Zoning jurisdictions established by cities, such as LaVista, do not allow M.U.D. to supply natural gas to everyone who wants to enjoy the District's low rates and quality service.

Those decisions are made by your elected officials when they renew franchise contracts for natural gas service. Therefore, you have the option to choose your supplier through your elected officials.

Gas cost comparisons

The chart below compares M.U.D. gas bills with those of investor-owned utilities which serve communities surrounding Omaha (Actual bills: August 2001 to August 2002. Comparisons include flat and variable charges for natural gas and franchise fees. Sales tax not included.)

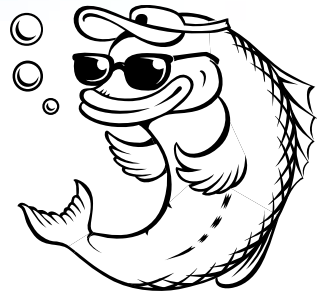
City	Therms used	Investor-owned Utility Bill	M.U.D. Bill	Savings with M.U.D.	% of Savings
LaVista commercial (inside city)	59,156	\$33,453	\$24,736	\$8,717	26%
Council Bluffs residential (inside city)	1,138	726	548	178	24%
Papillion residential (inside city)	895	583	448	135	23%
LaVista residential (inside city)	959	616	473	143	23%
Bellevue residential (outside city)	661	395	312	83	21%
Council Bluffs residential (inside city)	176	189	151	38	20%
Lincoln residential (inside city)	875	540	430	110	20%
Ralston residential (inside city)	285	217	176	41	19%
Elkhorn commercial (inside city)	732	548	443	105	19%
Glenwood, IA residential (inside city)	684	426	362	64	15%
Underwood, IA residential (inside city)	713	420	361	59	14%

Water treatment change coming in January

We will change our water disinfection process from chlorine to chloramines in January 2003. The change will provide better-tasting water and better position M.U.D. to meet future state and federal drinking water standards. We will notify you via the news media of the implementation date when it is confirmed.

Chloraminated water is safe for everyone to drink, including pregnant women, children and infants, people on kidney dialysis, people on low-sodium diets, people with diabetes and pets, because the digestive process neutralizes chloramines before they reach the blood stream.

People with fish may begin to treat their aquarium water prior to January by using products to neutralize chlorine and chloramines. Chloramines will not dissipate from boiling or holding water in open, standing containers. Even though untreated chloraminated water is deadly for fish in aquariums, it will not harm fish in rivers once the water flows into the sewer system as it is neutralized in the sewage before arriving at the wastewater treatment plant.



Approximately 20 percent of water suppliers in the U.S., including Council Bluffs and Lincoln, use chloramine as a disinfection agent. For more information on chloraminated water, visit our website, www.mudomaha.com.

What's yours? What's ours?

Water

Main: Large pipe laid in or along a street. The main usually is four inches or more in diameter with a fire hydrant attached to it. We are responsible for water mains.

Corporation: A valve connecting the main to the water service line. We are responsible for corporations.

Service Line: Most customers have a water service—the line a home builder laid from your house to our main. If the main is across the street, the service may run under the street. You own and maintain the water service line.

Private Line: Some customers have a private water line, usually of small diameter, less than four inches. A private water line may parallel a street, a main or both. Sometimes a private line is shared by several customers. Like a water service line, the property owner or owners own and maintain private water lines.

Meter: Measures the amount of water used. You own the water meter. However, we maintain it, and must have access to the meter for readings and maintenance. We will replace it if it is defective.

Stop Box: Provides access to the curb stop or valve. Usually located between the back of the curb and property line. If the stop box is too high, it may be a hazard for anyone walking over it and should be lowered. You are responsible for maintenance of the stop box.

Repairs

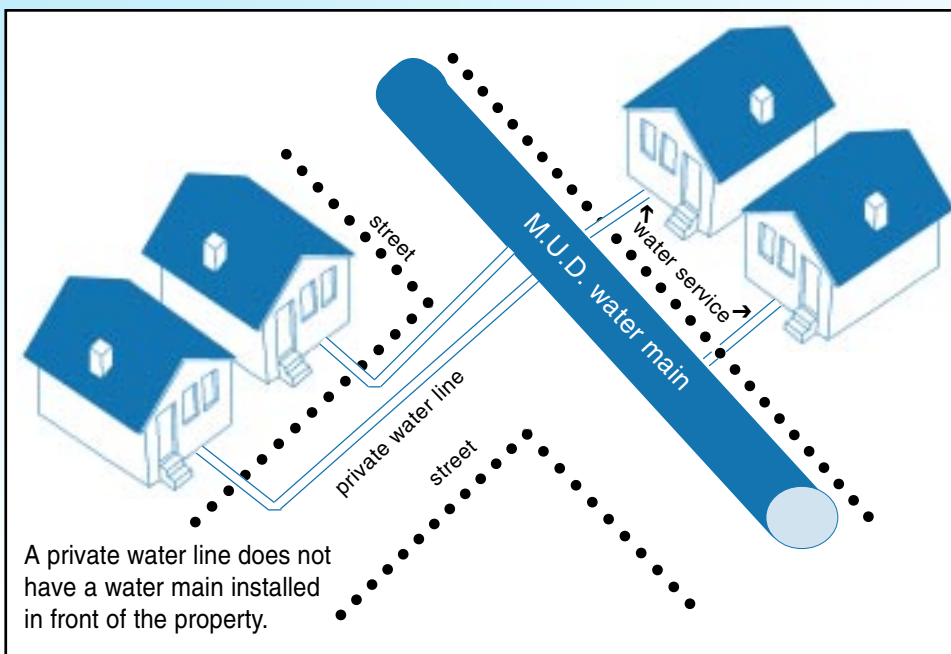
Mains: Buried water pipes can break or leak. We may find leaks on routine checks. However, if you are aware of a leak, call us at **554.6666**. When the leak is from a main, we repair it.

Service Lines: We issue notices for leaking or broken water services. Codes require that repairs be made by a master plumber, licensed by your city. You must get a permit from M.U.D. before any repair is done.

Your plumber determines if the water service can be repaired, or will advise you of options. You may call us to verify the type of repair needed. You are responsible for making sure repairs are made.

Water will be turned off when the leaking or broken service line causes damage, is a safety hazard, or if you fail to make arrangements for repair. The property owner is responsible for disconnect charges.

NOTE: Water service lines may not be relocated, repaired or modified without a permit from M.U.D. Any work must be inspected by the District.

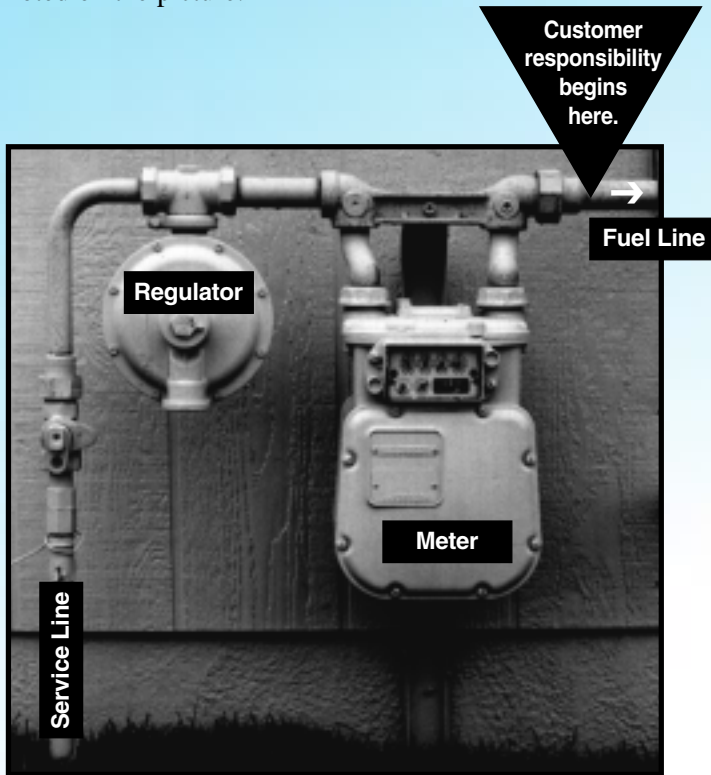


What's yours? What's ours?

Gas

Natural gas is delivered by an underground **service line**. The service line runs from the main in the street to the meter. M.U.D. is responsible for maintenance, repair and location of the service line, including the regulator and meter.

The customer is responsible for the **fuel line** on the “house side” of the meter. The fuel line begins after the meter as noted on the picture.



Buried natural gas fuel line after the meter

If the underground fuel line is not maintained, it may be subject to potential hazards of corrosion (rust) and leaks.

1. Inspect the buried fuel line periodically for leaks.
2. If the buried fuel line is metal, inspect it periodically for corrosion.
3. Repair any unsafe condition.

Contact a qualified plumber or heating contractor to provide location, inspection and repair services for buried lines.

M.U.D. does not repair or locate customer-owned fuel lines.

The **service line** will be located at no charge when you call the Diggers Hotline, **344.3565**. However, Diggers Hotline does not locate buried fuel lines after the meter.

When excavating near a buried **fuel line**, locate the line in advance and excavate by hand. Questions? Call us at **554.6666** or e-mail: customer_service@mudnebr.com.

Flex connectors

Flex connectors are corrugated metal tubing used to attach appliances to the natural gas line in your home or apartment.

Some connectors in homes or apartments more than 15 years old have manufacturer defects and may deteriorate over time, causing gas leaks, fire or explosions.

We notified our customer-owners about defective flex connectors in 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1997 and 2001. If the connector was checked, we have a record.

There is no need for concern if:

- You have not installed any gas appliances since the check.
- New connectors were used when new appliances were installed.

However, if a “used” connector was installed with a new appliance or if the flex connectors were not checked, one of our service technicians will check the connections free of charge.

Call 554.6666 to schedule an appointment. Do not move the appliance. You run the risk of damaging a safe connector or making a faulty one worse.

If a connection is faulty, we will replace it for \$68. You also may call a qualified heating contractor to replace the connector.

Before you replace your heating system, think about...

- *Comfort level:* Conventional gas furnaces provide air from your registers at a range of 110 to 130 degrees. A standard electric heat pump provides air from registers in the range of 85 to 95 degrees.
- *Two heating systems:* A gas furnace will supply all your heating needs. An electric heat pump requires a back-up heating system.
- *Maintenance costs:* A gas furnace and air conditioner each operate four months per year, compared to an electric heat pump which will operate 12 months per year. Expect higher maintenance costs with a heat pump system.
- *Other:* Gas furnaces do not lose efficiency as outdoor air temperatures drop. Higher volumes of air typically are required with heat pumps. Existing duct systems are not designed to provide the higher air volumes.

If you're thinking about replacing your home's heating system, call us at 554.7983. We'll be happy to answer your questions and give you a gas and electric cost comparison.

Wise use of energy

1. Have your heating system and chimney inspected every year. Properly-operating appliances lower utility bills and help prevent carbon monoxide from escaping into your home.
2. Set your thermostat at 65 degrees in winter. You can lower it another five degrees or so at bedtime, or when you'll be away for any length of time. (*Note: Those with health problems may want to keep the thermostat at a higher setting.*)
3. Clean or replace furnace filters once a month or as needed.
4. Replace an older furnace with a high-efficiency natural gas model. It can lower heating costs 30 percent or more.
5. Keep the fireplace damper closed unless a fire is going. An open damper is like having a 48-inch window wide open during the winter; it allows warm air to go right up the chimney.
6. Clean warm-air registers. Make sure they are not blocked by furniture, carpeting or drapes.
7. Keep drapes and shades on south-facing windows open during the day to allow sunlight to enter your home. Close them at night.

For more tips to save energy and lower your utility bill, call us at 554.6666 for a free copy of "Energy Savers: Tips for Saving Energy and Money at Home." The booklet also is available on the Internet (www.eren.doe.gov/consumerinfo/energy_savers).

Also check out these websites:

American Gas Association (www.aga.org)

Nebraska Energy Office (www.nol.org)

Hy-Vee stores in the metro area accept M.U.D. bill payments.

Board Meetings

January 8, February 5

9 A.M., 1723 Harney St.

Call 449.8153 for agenda

Backflow prevention

In compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, Nebraska Health and Human Services requires M.U.D. to make sure backflow preventors are installed and tested every year. We keep records of these tests and issue notices when testing is due.

This requirement does not apply to lawn sprinkler systems unless they use booster pumps or chemical injection systems.

Also check your city's plumbing code for their regulations.

Meter tampering

Natural gas and water services are safe and reliable, however illegal tampering with pipes and meters can be hazardous and costly.

Tampering can lead to fires, explosions or water damage—endangering people and property.

If you know or suspect anyone of tampering with lines or meters, call 554.6666. You don't have to give your name. All information is confidential. Your tip could prevent injury or save a life.



1723 Harney St • Omaha NE 68102

website: www.mudomaha.com

e-mail: customer_service@mudnebr.com

Your customer-owned utility

Gas or Water Emergencies

554.7777

Carbon monoxide — 911

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