

Messiah University
Natural Gas Emergency and Accident Prevention Policy and Procedure
August 2025

Policy: The emergency procedures for natural gas emergencies are similar to that for fire emergencies. The Messiah University Safety Officer at the scene will be in charge until the arrival of the Fire Department. Upon their arrival, the Fire Department commanding officer will be in charge of the emergency and the building.

Equipment: UGI Emergency 24/7 number: 1-800-276-2722
Attachment A

Definitions: Upper Allen Fire Department (UAFD)

Procedure:

I. Natural Gas Leak/Smell Inside Buildings

General Guidelines if you smell natural gas:

Responsibility and Action

Facility Maintenance Staff and Department of Safety Staff

Only trained Messiah Staff should close the main gas valves. Upper Allen Fire Department or UGI may request the closing of gas valves as noted on Attachment A.

Do not turn electrical switches on or off.

Do not use electronic equipment inside the building. (phones, radios, etc.)

Do not use any potential ignition sources or open flames.

Use common sense and never take risks that may endanger you or others. Do not return to the building unless advised to do so by the Admin Staff or Fire Department.

If it is possible, open the doors and windows to ventilate the building. However, do not spend additional time opening doors or windows if there is an imminent danger of explosion or fire that would jeopardize your safety.

Always leave the building quickly by the fastest possible route.

Follow the emergency procedures listed below.

Emergency Procedures

When you suspect or detect a natural gas leak or observe a flammable material spill, follow the emergency procedures listed below regardless of intensity of odor or size of spill.

If you detect or suspect a natural gas leak:

Leave the area.

Sound the fire alarm. (Note: because of its low odor threshold, natural gas is sensed far in advance of high concentrations and pulling the fire alarm will not add to the fire risk already present by static electricity and electrical and mechanical equipment in the building.)

Immediately evacuate the building via the shortest and safest exit route. If possible to accomplish within seconds, leave windows and exterior doors open to ventilate the area.

Do not use elevators; always use the stairs.

Go to a safe area or to a pre-assigned exterior assembly area for your building.

Call 911 from the nearest phone in a safe area.

Call UGI Emergency 24/7 number: 1-800-276-2722.

Await emergency response personnel at safe location.

If you know or suspect that someone is missing or trapped, contact the emergency personnel outside the building.

If you are trapped during a gas release/emergency, close all doors between you and the gas leak. Stuff the cracks around the doors. Open windows or other exterior openings for fresh air and ventilation. Wait at a safe window and signal or call for help. If there is a phone in the room, call 911 and tell them exactly where you are.

Dispatch Services

If there is a possible life safety issue, e.g. gas odor, Dispatch Services is to have the caller hang up and immediately call 911. Interviewing the caller to determine more in-depth information would only delay the emergency response. It is appropriate for the dispatcher to verify with Cumberland County 911 Center that they received the transferred 911 call. County dispatchers are trained to interview individuals to determine the relative threat to life safety and to initiate a notification to appropriate agencies who will then proceed promptly to the scene to assess the situation.

Dispatch is to call UGI Emergency 24/7 number: 1-800-276- 2722

Dispatch is to contact Facility Services at ext. 6011 during normal business hours. After business hours, radio the second shift employee if scheduled, or call the on call maintenance technician as soon as possible to avoid delays.

Dispatch is to contact Messiah University's Crisis Controller.

Other Agencies

UAFD or other fire companies will take control of the incident and work with the Messiah Crisis Team to set up an incident command post and determine what actions are necessary to protect the life safety of responders, building occupants, and all other personnel adjacent to the facility.

II. Natural Gas Leak/Smell Outside Buildings

If gas is sensed outside any building, the fire department or UGI may request trained Messiah employees to close the gas valve as shown on Attachment A. Otherwise, move to an area outside the natural gas odor area, call 911 and notify them of the situation. Do not use any potential ignition sources or open flames, use common sense and never take risks that may endanger you or others.

Emergency Procedures

Move away from the area suspected of gas leak and follow the directions given by the UAFD or the Department of Safety. If you are the person who detected the gas smell, call Dispatch and follow the directions given by the dispatcher.

Responsibility and Action

Dispatch Services

If there is a possible life safety issue, e.g. gas odor, Dispatch is to promptly call 911. Interviewing the caller to determine more in depth information would only delay the emergency response. It is appropriate for the dispatcher to verify with Cumberland County 911 Center that they received the transferred 911 call. County dispatchers are trained to interview individuals to determine the relative threat to life safety and to initiate a notification to appropriate agencies who will then proceed promptly to the scene to assess the situation.

Dispatch is to call UGI Emergency 24/7 number: 1-800-276- 2722

Dispatch is to contact Facility Services at ext. 6011 during normal business hours. After business hours, radio the second shift employee if scheduled, or call the on call maintenance technician as soon as possible to avoid delays.

Dispatch is to contact Messiah University's Crisis Controller.

Facility Maintenance Staff and Department of Safety Staff

Trained Safety and/or Facilities Maintenance personnel should close the main gas valve to the building noted on Attachment A.

Other Agencies

UAFD or other fire companies will take command and work with the Messiah University Crisis Team to set up an incident command post and determine what actions are necessary to protect the life safety of responders, building occupants, and all other personnel adjacent to the facility.

III. Natural Gas Accident Prevention

The following safety guidelines are to be considered:

Investigate other buildings in the immediate area to determine the presence of escaping gas therein.

Have trained Facility Maintenance staff handle gas-related repair and installation jobs.

Make sure the flues of automatically controlled appliances are corrosion-free, securely attached, and correctly vented.

If the pilot flame on a gas appliance goes out, shut off the gas supply at the appliance's valve and allow time for accumulated gas to escape.

When the gas supply is to be turned off, it is the duty of the qualified agency to notify all affected users.

Before the gas is turned off to the premises or section of piping to be serviced, all equipment shutoff valves are to be turned off.

Exception: In case of emergency, this requirement does not apply.

A leak test is to be performed to determine that all equipment is turned off in the piping section affected.

Exception: In case of emergency, this requirement does not apply.

Shut off the supply of gas to the areas involved. Lock-out/tag-out any closed valves where necessary.

All gas piping installations, equipment installations, and modifications to existing systems are to be performed with the gas turned off and the piping purged in accordance with the National Fuel Gas Code (NFGC), NFPA-54 and the International Fuel Gas Code (IFGC). Hot taps are not allowed on campus. This practice is acceptable when approved by plumbing code official and only for large gas mains in large open fields; it is not allowed for any gas piping inside a building.

When interruptions in work occur while repairs or alterations are being made to an existing piping system, the system is to be left in a safe condition.

Where work is being performed on piping that contains or has contained gas, the following is to apply:
Provisions for electrical continuity are to be made before alterations are made on a metallic piping system.

Note - The signed copy of this procedure is filed in the Facility Service Department. By signing this policy you have agreed to enforce the contents, share with your staff and adhere to standards.

Scott Zeigler, Form creator	Electronically signed by Scott Zeigler on 09/15/2025 3:12:06 PM
Vice President for Operations	Electronically signed by Kathie Shafer on 09/15/2025 3:13:37 PM
Director of Facility Services	Electronically signed by Brian Miller on 09/16/2025 7:55:50 AM
Director of Safety	Electronically signed by Maranda Hogue on 09/21/2025 8:28:40 PM
Fire and Safety Systems Coordinator	Electronically signed by John Naccarato on 09/15/2025 4:16:47 PM
Supervisor of Dispatch	Electronically signed by Stephen Smith on 10/05/2025 11:47:38 PM

