

PIPELINE SCAVENGER HUNT: Find Pipelines Near Your Home

Have you ever seen a pipeline? They are all around you. Grab your shoes, a pen and an adult to search inside your home and around the neighborhood for pipelines. When you find them, check the circle and ask questions.

WHAT ARE PIPELINES?

Pipelines are like roads that move energy from one place to another and to our homes. Many pipelines are underground and others are in the walls of houses. The energy they move cooks our food, washes and dries our clothes, and warms and cools our homes.

I FOUND IT!

I FOUND IT!

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ACTIVITY GUIDE FOR PARENTS:

This activity is designed to familiarize your family with pipeline safety tips and the signs of a pipeline problem. If you have gas appliances, you will “search” for these appliances during the activity. If you live near a gathering or transmission pipeline right-of-way, you will “search” for the markers that identify these pipelines. Even if you are blocks away from a transmission pipeline, it is good to know where it is located. You can use the National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS) to find the location of transmission pipelines near you. Visit NPMS at www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov.

This activity is intended for children 5-7 years of age but can be modified for older children. Use the drawing to help your kids find the following items related to pipelines in and near your home. Once you’ve located the item, read the information below and review the key safety tip.

We recommend that all families have a family emergency plan for responding to a possible gas leak, pipeline problem, natural disaster or other emergency situation. If you do not have a family emergency plan, you can download a template provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at www.ready.gov.



TELL YOUR KIDS: There is a pipeline behind the wall or under the floor that connects to the oven and range. You probably can’t see the pipeline, but you may be able to see where it connects to the wall. The pipeline brings natural gas to the range and oven to cook our food. If you smell “rotten eggs” there may be a gas leak. Tell an adult immediately and follow our family’s plan for responding to a gas leak.

Safety Note For Parents: Do not use your oven or range to heat the house. This can cause carbon monoxide to build up and can cause serious illness and even death.



TELL YOUR KIDS: Because we have gas appliances in our house, somewhere outside we will find a gas meter. The meter tracks the gas we use and connects the pipelines in our yard to the pipelines under our house and between the walls. Sometimes you can see a little piece of the pipeline that connects to the meter and goes into our house.

Never stand on or play near a meter box. And don’t tie anything to it or place anything on it.

Safety Note For Parents: Never allow your family to stand on or play near a meter box. Damage to the meter can cause a natural gas leak.



TELL YOUR KIDS: There is a pipeline behind the wall that connects to gas dryers, water heaters and furnaces. You probably can’t see the pipeline, but you may be able to see where it connects to the wall. The pipeline brings natural gas that dries our clothes, heats our home and makes our bath water warm. If you smell “rotten eggs” there may be a gas leak. Tell an adult immediately and follow our family’s plan for responding to a gas leak in our home.

Safety Note For Parents: Periodically check the connections to your gas appliances. A licensed plumber can help. Some gas companies also offer this service. In Texas, homeowners are responsible for maintaining the portion of pipelines from the meter to appliances.



TELL YOUR KIDS: There is a pipeline at the bottom of our gas fireplace. It brings natural gas to make the flame and heat our home. When the fireplace is off, you can look at the bottom. You may see where the pipeline connects, or it may be hidden under the fire log.

Safety Note For Parents: Before lighting the fireplace, be sure the chimney vent is open. You should also have the chimney cleaned or inspected regularly.



TELL YOUR KIDS: A carbon monoxide detector helps keep us safe by telling us if this poisonous gas is in our house. Carbon monoxide is invisible and mixes in the air. It is colorless, odorless and tasteless, but it can make you very sick.

Safety Note For Parents: To prevent carbon monoxide from collecting inside your house, do not use your gas stove to heat your home. Make sure fireplace chimneys are open when using your fireplace. And check the batteries in your monitor regularly.



TELL YOUR KIDS: Pipeline markers are signs that tell us the general location of underground pipelines. Whenever you see a marker, you know that a pipeline is very close even though you can’t see it.

If you are near a pipeline sign and the grass looks funny in one spot or you see liquid on the ground, there may be a problem with the pipeline. There may be a problem if you hear a hissing, gurgle or whistle sound that you don’t hear when you are away from the pipeline marker. Sometimes there will also be a strong scent that smells like chemicals. If you see, hear or smell any of these, leave the area immediately and tell an adult.

Safety Note For Parents: Unlike inside your home or near a gas meter, pipelines outside of your home may not smell like chemicals or rotten eggs when there is a problem. Use your ears and your eyes to watch for signs of a pipeline problem.