

Mid-Cape Main Replacement

Natural Gas Sales Moratorium: Frequently Asked Questions

What is the moratorium?

Following a series of inspections in early 2014, National Grid made the decision to lower the pressure in one of our natural gas distribution mains on Cape Cod and replace the main to maintain the reliability and safety of the system. While the gas main is safe, some of its welds and other features no longer meet our standards for operating at a higher pressure. Operating at a lower pressure puts less stress on the infrastructure, but it also reduces the amount of gas flowing through the system. As a result, we cannot connect new customers to our network or increase the amount of natural gas supplied to existing customers in the following communities: Dennis, Harwich, Brewster, Chatham, Orleans and Eastham. Barnstable and Yarmouth are also affected, but a limited number of new customers can connect in those towns following a review from National Grid.

Will National Grid be able to serve Cape Cod during the winter?

National Grid anticipated lower pressure as a potential issue and has planned for this contingency. We use portable liquefied natural gas (LNG) to supplement the natural gas supply at strategic locations on Cape Cod on the coldest days of the year, which is a plan we have had in place for many years. Both residential and commercial customers will continue to receive safe, reliable natural gas service throughout the winter.

Should I be concerned about living near this main?

The gas system on Cape Cod is operating safely. Safety is our number one priority at National Grid, and the pressure was lowered in this gas main as a precautionary measure. There is no reason for customers to be concerned about the safety of this main or other natural gas mains serving Cape Cod.

I am a current customer – does the moratorium affect me?

National Grid will continue to serve existing natural gas customers in the affected communities. However, the natural gas sales moratorium applies to any increase in natural gas demand, including certain types of new equipment added by existing customers. Operating at a lower pressure means less gas is flowing to the affected communities, so increases in demand could affect our ability to serve existing customers reliably. For this reason, we cannot connect new customers to the system or increase gas supply to our existing customers. For example, if you currently use natural gas only for cooking, we will not be able to upgrade you to a gas heating system at this time. The only exceptions to this rule are natural gas barbecues and natural gas-fired emergency generators, which existing residential customers may be able to add subject to application, review and approval by National Grid. Replacing an existing appliance with one that uses the same amount of natural gas is also allowed, so customers who need to replace a broken furnace, for example, are able to do so.

Will National Grid provide any compensation for those who cannot get new gas service?

We apologize for the inconvenience. We understand this creates challenges for local builders, municipalities, potential new customers and those who might be planning gas conversion projects, and we realize that customers may need to make decisions today and choose alternative fuels. We are not able to offer financial incentives or compensation for natural gas not being an available fuel choice.