Midwest Energy, Inc.
Current Comments
May 2017 Making energy work for YOU

Safety Devices to be Installed on New Gas Service Lines

New federal regulations have expanded requirements for Excess Flow Valves (EFVs), mandating that they be installed on all new residential and most commercial gas installations. Here's what you need to know about EFVs.

What is an excess flow valve?

An EFV is a safety device designed to reduce the flow of natural gas to a trickle if there is a sudden break in your service line. Federal regulations 49 CFR Part 192.381 specify that EFVs will be installed on all new domestic service lines.

How does an EFV work?

An EFV functions similarly to an electrical circuit breaker that trips when electrical current exceeds a set limit. An EFV will activate when gas flow sharply increases, such as when a gas service line breaks. If your service line breaks between the location where the EFV has been installed and your gas meter, the EFV is designed to reduce the flow of gas to a very small amount.

Where and when would the EFV be installed?

In new construction, Midwest Energy will install an EFV in your gas service line, near the connection to the gas main. If your gas service line is being replaced or modified, Midwest Energy will also install an EFV in the service line.

Are there limitations to the protection an EFV can provide?

Yes. The EFV is not designed to close due to slow leaks in your service line, leaks or breaks in the gas main in the street, or leaks in your house piping. The EFV will only shut off the flow of gas due to a large break in your service line between the location the EFV was installed, and your gas meter.

Will all Midwest Energy gas customers have the option to have an EFV installed on their service line?

The federal requirement is for EFVs to be installed for new residential customers who have service lines that feed a total of less than 1000scfh (Standard cubic feet of gas per hour), and residential customers who are scheduled for service line modifications. EFVs or service isolation valves will also be fitted on new commercial services, depending on load and appliances installed (some restrictions apply). The EFV shall also be available to any existing residential or commercial customer upon request, though the customer is *(Continued on back)*

Safe on the Bus

Driver's quick thinking prevents downed line tragedy

On an April morning in 2016, Clint Shults was driving a school bus to take students to an FFA competition in Rangely, Colorado. The team's horse judging coach, Silvia Otabachian-Smith, followed the bus in her car. Heavy, wet snow had been accumulating, and the bus snagged a power line just as it was falling to the ground under the weight of the snow.

"I kind of saw a flash, noticing that the snow had fallen off of one of the power lines," explains Clint. "We started dragging power lines for 100 yards, and I knew we were in trouble." *(Continued on back)*

Colorado bus driver Clint Shults kept his students on board when his bus hit a downed power line, preventing a certain tragedy.

Excess Flow Valves

responsible for the cost of this optional device.

What will it cost to install and maintain an EFV?

If you are having a new gas service line installed, or modifying your existing line, the installation cost is included in the service cost you will be quoted. Under normal circumstances there should be no required maintenance on an EFV.

Are there other options that provide protection against service line breaks?

Yes. The most common cause of a service line break is from digging into gas service lines. If you need to dig for any reason, make sure you call Kansas OneCall by dialing 811 so that the gas lines can be marked with yellow paint or yellow markers.

As a home owner, Kansas law requires that you notify Kansas OneCall at least two business days prior to any excavation. Utility locating services through Kansas OneCall are free. Request OneCall location services by dialing 811, or by going online, at www.kansasonecall.com.

If you have additional questions about EFVs, please contact Midwest Energy's Gas Planning and Compliance Engineer, Steve Prue at 800-222-3121.

Safe on the Bus

Fortunately, Clint knew what to do. "I told my wife to call 911, and we had everyone remain on the bus," explains Clint. One of the students called Silvia and told her to stay in her car.

Everyone on the bus and first responders waited for a utility employee to arrive and ensure the downed power line was de-energized before anyone stepped off the bus or onto the accident scene.

Midwest Energy wants you to know the steps to take if your vehicle comes into contact with a downed line or power pole:

1. Stay calm, and stay inside the vehicle.
2. Call 911.
3. Warn others to stay away from the vehicle.
4. Stay seated, and do not exit the vehicle until utility personnel say it is okay to do so.
5. If you must exit the vehicle because it is on fire, jump clear of it with your feet together and without touching the vehicle and ground at the same time. Keeping your feet together, shuffle to safety.

Board of Directors Nominations Now Due

Now is the time to submit nominations for anyone interested in running for the Midwest Energy Board of Directors. All nominees should be informed before their names are submitted for consideration. Director positions and represented districts up for re-election include:

District 1 (1 position): Counties of Cheyenne, Greeley, Hamilton, Logan, Rawlins, Sherman, Thomas, Wallace and Wichita.

District 2 (1 position): Counties of Decatur, Gove, Norton and Sheridan.

District 4 (1 position): Counties of Ellis, Graham and Trego.

Nominees for these positions must be a resident in one of the counties in the district for which he or she is nominated. Nominations should be submitted online by July 7, 2017 at www.mwenergy.com by clicking "About" and the "Board of Directors Nominations" link, or in writing with name, address and phone number to:

Dale Unruh
c/o Midwest Energy, Inc.
1330 Canterbury Drive
Hays, KS 67601

The nominating committee will select nominees from the list of all names submitted. Winners of the election to the Board of Directors will be announced at the Annual Meeting, held Oct. 23, 2017 at the Robbins Center at Fort Hays State University in Hays.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Dishwasher Efficiency Tip: Air dry clean dishes to save energy. If your dishwasher does not have an automatic air-dry switch, turn off the dishwasher after the final rinse and prop the door open slightly so the dishes will dry faster.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy