

Seneca Nation Utilities Department

Natural Gas Policies and Procedures

1. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

(a) Seneca Nation of Indians (SNI) Gas may only be received by enrolled members of the Seneca Nation upon meeting all of the requirements of subparagraph (b).

(b) In order to receive SNI Gas, (i) the enrolled Seneca/Customer must own the dwelling, as evidenced by a proper land deed and the absence of any land dispute pending before the Seneca Nation's courts, and (ii) Seneca Nation gas lines must be available for connection.

(c) Customers have the option of seeking gas from alternative suppliers if they do not wish to comply with the Natural Gas Policy.

2. ACCOUNT HOLDERS

(a) The landlord/owner of the domicile must maintain the account in his or her own name.

(b) If the owner of the eligible domicile chooses to rent their property they will maintain responsibility for any account balances or charges incurred during the tenants stay and that remain on the account.

(c) Account information must be updated immediately upon a change in residence occupancy or the death of current account holder.

(d) Account's will be periodically updated by SNI's Utilities Department. At a minimum, this will be done every twenty-four (24) months.

3. ADDITIONAL NATURAL GAS CUSTOMERS

(a) Utilities reserves the right to propose the addition of new customers once the SNI distribution system has been upgraded and/or expanded.

(b) Residents will be contacted if there is a possibility of being supplied through the SNI distribution system. All new services are contingent on the availability of structurally sound SNI natural gas pipeline and consent from the property owner.

4. NATURAL GAS PRICE DETERMINATION

The current cost for gas (price per CCF **) was set by a resolution of the Nation's Tribal Council in 1994.

Moving forward, every year the Utilities Commission and Utilities Department will propose a natural gas rate schedule to Tribal Council for adoption. The proposal will detail charges and allow for cost adjustments due to market rates and infrastructure requirements.

** The proposed rate of \$.85/CCF will take effect January 1, 2017 with a range between \$.80 - \$1.20/CCF for the year 2017.*

*** Rates will be evaluated and presented to Council on an annual basis for adjustment.*

**** Total cost includes a variable rate for supply and a fixed rate of \$.60/CCF for delivery.*

CCF - this is a standard unit of measurement that equals the volume of 100 cubic feet (CF) of natural gas.

5. REQUIREMENTS TO RECEIVE FREE GAS

By a Seneca Nation of Indians Council Resolution adopted on December 11, 1993, only land owners with a producing gas well receive free gas for the connection and use of one (1) domicile upon submitting proof of ownership of land surrounding the gas well.

6. PAYMENT OPTIONS

(a) Customers having difficulty paying their accounts in full on a monthly basis must contact the Utilities Department directly.

(b) Customers may request to take advantage of the Gas Budget Program. Under the Gas Budget Program, the customer and the Department will establish a set monthly payment that is based on the customer's gas usage during the preceding calendar year. While the Gas Budget Program does not reduce the overall cost for a customer's gas consumption, it does assist the customer in budgeting their gas expense over the course of a year.

(c) Customers with outstanding account balances should contact the Utilities Department directly to make arrangements for paying off the balance. If eligible, customers with outstanding account balances should consider submitting a HEAP application or otherwise contacting the Seneca Nation Area Office or the Tribal Advocate for assistance.

(d) All customers with an outstanding balance over ninety (90) days will be required to pledge their annuity checks towards said balance in order to avoid termination of service. Annuities will be held until the balance has been paid in full.

7. PAST DUE ACCOUNTS

(a) *First Past Due Notice (30 days)* will be enclosed in the customers next billing statement;

(b) *Second Past Due Notice (60 days)* will be delivered by certified mail, and such notice shall require customer to contact the Utilities Department directly to make arrangements for payment.

(c) *Third Past Due Notice (90 days)* will be delivered by the Seneca Nation Marshals (signature for receipt) or sent certified mail, and such notice shall indicate that gas service will be terminated if the customer fails to pay the outstanding balance in full. *The account holder's annuities will be withheld the month following the ninety (90) day notice.*

8. **TERMINATION OF SERVICES**

Seneca Nation Utilities may shutoff gas service when any of the following conditions are present:

- (a) The account is ninety (90) days delinquent; or
- (b) The past due amounts on the account exceed \$500.00.

However, Seneca Utilities will not shutoff gas service between **November 15 and April 15**. Also, Utilities will not shutoff any elder at least 60 years of age and older, provided that the elder is eligible and has submitted a HEAP application and has sought supplementary assistance from AOA and the Tribal Advocate.

9. **RESTORATION OF SERVICES**

To have service restored, the account must be paid in full and a reactivation fee of \$100.00 plus the cost of any necessary equipment (new meter, etc.) is required prior to the reactivation of service.

10. **DIG SAFE POLICY**

In order to prevent accidental damage to lines, which can jeopardize public safety, cause serious damage as well as personal injury.

Seneca Nation gas customers are required to notify the Utilities Department and Tribal Historic Preservation Office prior to:

- (a) Digging
- (b) Renovating
- (c) Pouring foundations for buildings or pools, or;
- (d) Otherwise altering areas located near Seneca Nation gas lines.

Residents may also be required to call #811 Dig Safe if there are National Fuel gas lines in the vicinity of the property.

***** Failure to comply with this policy will result in the termination of gas service.***