



COMMUNITY

WHY A COMMUNITY OWNS ITS GAS UTILITY

A public natural gas system is directly accountable to the citizens it serves

1000+
PUBLIC GAS
UTILITIES

IN
37
STATES

More than 1000 cities, counties, and towns across the nation have incorporated their community's natural gas utility into their municipal services, making it a public natural gas system.

Public natural gas systems are overseen by their community through locally elected governing boards or appointed officials, and their customers are able to interact with their gas system leadership at public forums like city council and board meetings, public hearings, and citizen advisory committees.

Even though each public natural gas system is unique, they all provide their communities with the benefits of better accountability, local ownership, reasonable rates, and a focus on customer service.

Did you know...

during most of the 19th century, natural gas was used almost exclusively as a source of light?

Now, the use of natural gas has expanded to home heating and cooking, appliances such as water heaters and oven ranges, manufacturing and processing plants, boilers to generate electricity, and more.



LOCAL CONTROL

Decisions are made locally through citizen participation instead of being made in a distant city by people who do not understand local issues and who are primarily focused on profits, not service.

Public gas systems are regulated by the citizens they serve through locally elected governing boards or appointed officials that are elected by their community to oversee the day-to-day operations.

They also make decisions on rates, the utility's budget, labor contracts, salaries of key utility officials, municipal bonds, financial investments, and the right of eminent domain.



COMPETITIVE COSTS

The very nature of a public gas system's not-for-profit, locally controlled operations ensures that rates will be competitive. They do not face pressure to pay dividends to often distant stockholders.

Local ownership creates greater local scrutiny. The rates of public gas systems are set locally by citizen-controlled boards that operate with more transparency.

Since they are municipally-owned, public gas systems do not pay federal income tax and are eligible to issue tax-exempt revenue bonds that for capital expenses.



ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Public gas systems help ensure that local dollars stay at home. Public gas utilities often do business with local financial institutions and make purchases from local businesses.

Salaries earned by local utility employees are likely to be spent in the community for housing, groceries and other supplies.

Those payroll dollars multiply in value to the community as they are spent locally by businesses and their employees.



CUSTOMER SERVICE

Local control promotes outstanding customer service since the focus is always on service to the community, rather than profits or mandates from a company headquartered hundreds of miles away.

Since they are part of the community, public gas systems maintain a close relationship with their customers and as a result are very successful in meeting their customers' needs.

Public gas systems can respond quickly to emergencies because local crews live in the community and are accountable to local officials.

