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Customer Service in the New Age

New technologies are giving utilities more options than ever to communicate with customers and exceed their expectations.
Industry leading 2 week lead time
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BY LIN GRENSING-POPHAL
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BY DAVID DODSON
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Courageous and dedicated—two NW Natural employees who are firefighters are honored as Volunteers of the Year.
I often hear natural gas utilities use the word “solutions,” a term that I believe sums up our role well. For our customers, we provide solutions for their home energy use that enable them to save money and reduce their carbon footprint. As a result, households with natural gas versus all-electric appliances save an average of $693 per year and produce 37 percent lower greenhouse gas emissions. In our communities, we have a seat at the table for long-range planning as we provide solutions for economic growth. For example, 50 communities throughout the United States have partnered with their natural gas utility in vying for the Georgetown University Energy Prize, a national $5 million competition to rethink the way American communities use energy.

Natural gas is the foundation of our nation’s clean and secure energy future, working alongside renewables and embracing energy efficiency to help achieve our national goals of boosting our economy, improving our environment and increasing our energy security.

We know this can work. Earlier this year, I had the privilege of participating in the launch of the third annual Sustainable Energy in America Factbook by Bloomberg New Energy Finance and the Business Council for Sustainable Energy. According to their analysis, the United States saw continued growth in renewable energy, natural gas and energy efficiency in 2014. The Factbook shows that while U.S. natural gas production rose 25 percent over the 2007–14 period, total U.S. investment in clean energy such as renewables, the advanced grid, storage and electrified transport technologies reached $386 billion. At the same time, U.S. carbon emissions from the energy sector dropped 9 percent. The percentage of energy that we get from wind and solar has more than tripled since 2008 while natural gas demand continues to grow. Anyone who says natural gas and renewables are in competition is reading from an old playbook.

In this issue of American Gas, we highlight the work that some natural gas utilities are doing to reinvent the concept of renewable energy through strategic partnerships and technological innovation. We are taking natural gas that is emitted from landfills and putting it into our pipelines to deliver to homes and businesses. We are partnering with developers to build efficient, environmentally friendly energy solutions by leveraging building codes and incorporating direct use of natural gas in ways that save money and reduce emissions.

A study published in Environmental Science & Technology led by a team from Washington State University found that emissions from local natural gas distribution systems in cities and towns throughout the U.S. have decreased in the past 20 years. The researchers found that upgrades in metering and regulating stations, changes in pipeline materials, and better instruments for detecting pipeline leaks have led to emissions that are 36 to 70 percent lower than current estimates.

Our 2.4 million miles of natural gas pipelines are the envy of the world, and they deliver essential energy to homes and businesses safely and reliably. We are reminding policymakers at every level that the direct use of natural gas will help drive economic growth while protecting the environment. We are part of a bright energy future, supporting alternative energy sources, inspiring the development of new technologies—and delivering solutions. 🌿
President's Message

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A Solution That Works

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Gas meets almost one-fourth of the United States’ energy needs. More than 68 million customers—more than 94 percent—industrial customers use natural gas; 94

energy companies that deliver clean natural gas throughout the United States. In 1918, represents more than 200 local energy companies that deliver clean natural gas throughout the United States. More than 72 million U.S. residential, commercial and industrial customers use natural gas; 94 percent—more than 68 million customers—receive their gas from AGA members. Natural gas meets almost one-fourth of the United States’ energy needs. Visit us at www.aga.org.

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pipeline

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A B-52 Stratofortress accelerates down the runway at Edwards Air Force Base, California, during a first-ever test with a synthetic fuel blend as the only fuel on board.

AIMING HIGH WITH NATURAL GAS

A technology nearly as old as aviation itself is being perfected for America’s military fleets

The “Fischer-Tropsch,” or F-T, process was developed in the 1920s by two German chemists and later used to power the Nazis’ war machine after the Third Reich lost control of its crude oil supplies. The process converts a mixture of carbon monoxide and hydrogen derived from nonpetroleum sources such as natural gas, coal and biomass into liquid fuels that can be used to power everything from tanks to Boeing jetliners.

It’s already being done in countries such as Qatar, which has relatively small petroleum reserves but massive amounts of natural gas. Royal Dutch Shell invested nearly $20 billion in Qatar’s Pearl GTL plant, which produces 140,000 barrels a day of gas-to-liquids, or GTL, products. It made its first commercial shipment of new fuel in 2011.

The U.S. Air Force—which uses about $10 billion worth of jet fuel each year—has been experimenting with the technology since 2005. The Air Force hopes it will be a less expensive and cleaner alternative to the kerosene blend, often called JP-8, which has been used since jets first took to the skies. Tests found that a 50 percent blend of the new fuel was acceptable as an alternative power source for B-52 bombers, according to Chris Stroh, the Air Force’s lead engineer on the project.

“Use of F-T Blend fuel resulted in no significant differences in engine operation or fuel system performance and results were comparable to operation with JP-8 fuel,” Stroh told American Gas.
—Adam Folk
County officials of Tazewell, Virginia, are petitioning state and federal lawmakers for help with funding a project that would extend natural gas service to Tazewell and Claypool Hill. Although Tazewell County is the third-largest producer of natural gas in Virginia, residents have limited access due to a lack of funding to develop the infrastructure to support natural gas. The county’s Public Service Authority is working with Appalachian Natural Gas Distribution Co., the State Corporation Commission’s certified natural gas distributor for Tazewell County, to reach an agreement for a public-private partnership to expand natural gas distribution.

Private equity firms such as Energy Investors Funds and Panda Power Funds are emerging as leaders in the U.S. energy sector as they plan to finance roughly 10 gigawatts of new gas-fired plants in the 13-state mid-Atlantic grid over the next five years. Gas plants will make up about 27 percent of U.S. power output this year—an increase from 21 percent in 2008.

Tri-State Energy Co. has begun converting gasoline vehicles to operate on natural gas and gasoline. The company, which for years has exported the resource to other locations, now has a site in Lebanon, Virginia, to...
Smart Shopping

More consumers are joining customer choice programs

Participation in 1990s-era state programs to increase competition in the retail natural gas market has surged in the last 12 years.

Customer choice programs allow customers to buy energy from someone other than their traditional supplier or from more than one seller. Since 2001, the number of eligible customers who have signed up for these programs has more than doubled, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

“Participation in a residential consumer choice program should give buyers the opportunity to shop around, which could lead to savings,” John Stephens, an industry economist for the EIA, told American Gas. “Doubling of participants in these programs means there is more competition, which, in theory, should drive down prices.”

This news comes as the EIA has found that the number of customers who are eligible to participate in the program has also doubled. Those eligible now total almost 10 percent more than those eligible in 2005. But in recent years, the growth in the number of eligible consumers who sign up for the programs has slowed to 18 percent, according to the EIA.

“Retail choice programs were popular in the early 2000s as gas prices were generally rising and customers were seeking ways to trim or control their expenses by locking in prices with marketers,” Stephens said. “As prices have fallen in more recent years, the opportunities for saving by locking in prices with marketers has been more limited and fewer customers have tended to go with marketers, hence the trend.”

According to the EIA, participation in the programs, which vary state to state, increased from 3.3 million in 2001 to 7 million in 2013. Currently, 24 states and the District of Columbia have programs that allow natural gas choice. Georgia, Florida and Nebraska have participation rates of more than 80 percent, according to EIA statistics. Together, Georgia, Ohio and New York constitute about 69 percent of participation in the programs.

Utilities are under regulations to seek the lowest price commodity for consumers, and most natural gas utilities don’t profit on the commodity cost of natural gas.

Eligible and participating customers in residential customer choice programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating customers (millions)</th>
<th>Percent of eligible participants</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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</table>

Note: Data not collected in 2009-11
crews, engineers and support teams throughout PG&E to complete this project safely and on schedule,” Cutler told American Gas.

The company replaced portions of its cast iron pipelines with more modern materials that have the added bonus of making them more flexible during earthquakes and other seismic events.

“These pipes are easier to repair and are not prone to small, nonhazardous leak issues,” Cutler said. “This infrastructure improvement improves the safety and reliability of our distribution system.”

The huge scope of the project and its ambitious timeline have earned PG&E two international safety-focused asset management certifications for its gas operations. It is one of the first utilities in the world to hold both the International Organization for Standardization and Publicly Available Specification, according to a company press release.

“Removing all the cast iron from our distribution system is a cornerstone of building a 21st century gas system to serve our customers for the long term,” Cutler said. “Completing this replacement project is another important milestone as we work toward our goal of building the safest, most reliable gas system in the nation.”

“Natural gas vehicle” has a whole new meaning with the introduction of the Intrepid 327 Center Console boat that runs on natural gas with a system designed by Blue Gas Marine Inc. The boat has a hybrid fuel system, allowing it to operate on natural gas or traditional oil-based fuel. This fuel option allows boaters to enjoy fuel costs from 50 to 70 percent lower. The ease of switching from one fuel to another at any point and at any speed is also a bonus. Intrepid Powerboats President Ken Clinton is optimistic about the future of natural gas-powered boats and their ability “to bring such a clean energy to a recreational industry that makes its living from a natural resource like water.”

Southern Minnesota Energy Cooperative will gain almost 11,000 new customers after its acquisition of Alliant Energy Corp.’s territory. This new customer base is spread out over 15,000 square miles in southern Minnesota. Towns from Albert Lea on the west end to Wykoff in the east are included in the acquisition region. The new service area

From Golden Gate to the Space Needle

PG&E has replaced all known cast iron mains from California to Washington

Pacific Gas and Electric Co. recently met a major milestone with an overhaul of its pipeline capacity. During the project, which was originally announced in 1986, 847 miles of cast iron pipeline—enough to stretch from San Francisco to Seattle—was replaced throughout its 70,000 square-mile service area in northern and central California.

Donald Cutler, a PG&E spokesman, said the work is the fulfillment of a promise that Executive Vice President of Gas Operations Nick Stavropoulos made while attending a White House summit on greenhouse gas emissions and climate change in July 2014, when he pledged to complete the work by the new year. Crews finished the project in December.

“It took single-minded determination by the crews, engineers and support teams throughout PG&E to complete this project safely and on schedule,” Cutler told American Gas.

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FRESH IDEAS

One Call, That’s All

Common Ground Alliance asks utilities to remind customers about safe digging

For many customers, April is a time to dig a garden, put up a fence or get started on much-needed yard work. With all of the digging that happens in the spring, Common Ground Alliance is asking utilities to remind their customers that April is National Safe Digging Month.

“As April marks the traditional start of digging season, we strongly encourage individuals and companies to call 811 before they begin digging as part of National Safe Digging Month,” Bob Kipp, president of CGA, told American Gas.

Every three minutes, someone in the United States damages a utility line by digging, according to CGA. One-third of the incidents are caused by a homeowner or worker failing to call 811 before plunging a spade into the dirt. These accidents often result in power outages, injuries to the digger and repair costs and fines.

By calling the alliance’s 811 line, diggers are routed to an operator who will ask for details on where they plan to dig and what type of work is being conducted. CGA will then notify the local utility company, who will send someone to mark the location of underground pipes, lines and cables.

Kipp said utilities play an important role in reducing excavation-related damages each year, 40 percent of which affect natural gas lines.

“We ask all of our member-stakeholders, whether it’s a gas utility, electric utility, whoever, to spread the word,” Kipp said.

Some utilities put the 811 number on their envelopes and account inserts, while others buy advertising time on TV and radio, he said. However they decide to do it, Kipp said, they should make people aware that 85,000 lines are damaged yearly because 811 wasn’t called.

According to the CGA’s most recent Damage Information Reporting Tool, 2013 saw a lower rate of incidents but greater construction activity, suggesting that 811 and its related education efforts could be leading to fewer damages. About 335,000 incidents were reported in 2013, compared with 350,000 in 2012.

Columbia Pipeline Partners LP, a NiSource Inc. company, made history in February with the largest initial public offering ever, selling 46.8 million common units and raising roughly $1.1 billion. During its first day, shares of CPPL opened at $28. NiSource announced in September 2014 that it would separate its natural gas pipeline and related businesses into a stand-alone publicly traded company, with NiSource retaining its natural gas and electric utilities. The separation of the two companies is expected to be complete this summer.
More Americans are using natural gas than ever before—and supporting expansion of natural gas infrastructure as a key driver of economic growth.

**NATURAL GAS? AMERICANS ARE INTERESTED**

With natural gas prices continuing to fall from a July 2008 peak, more than six out of 10 American homes now use natural gas, according to a Honeywell survey. Fifty-seven percent of users said natural gas is the most cost-effective way to heat homes, eclipsing electricity, wood stoves and fuel oil combined. Americans also love natural gas for cooking (58 percent), while nearly half (46 percent) reported interest in acquiring a natural gas clothes dryer, and more than one-third indicated interest in natural gas for a barbecue hook-up (40 percent) or to power a vehicle (36 percent).

**NATURAL GAS HAS THE SUPPORT TO GROW**

Most Americans recognize the importance of natural gas to the U.S. economy and support investment needed to expand its use. Fifty-six percent support expanded development of infrastructure, including processing facilities to clean natural gas and transportation pipelines in order to bring that gas to consumers. A supermajority of 75 percent believes that natural gas exploration and development in the U.S. is driving economic resurgence, specifically in sectors including manufacturing.

**NATURAL GAS HAS MANY BENEFITS**

Americans understand the environmental and economic benefits of natural gas and support greater access to this domestic resource, according to the survey. Americans enjoy the fact that natural gas provides us with energy security (48 percent), is cost effective (35 percent), is a clean-burning fuel (30 percent), is readily available thanks to America’s rich stores (23 percent) and builds our economy (19 percent).

Source: The poll of 2,000 adults was conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs for UOP, a Honeywell company.
Donald Heim, board chairman for the American Gas Association from 1989 to 1990, died at his home in Vienna, Virginia, on Feb. 3. Heim had a 42-year career at The Washington Gas Light Co., culminating in his role as president, CEO and chairman of the board. He also served on several AGA committees, was board chairman for the Institute of Gas Technology from 1990 to 1991 and was named Financial World Magazine’s CEO of the Year for the natural gas industry in 1986, 1990 and 1991 before he retired in 1992. Heim is survived by his wife, Jean, as well as his children, grandchildren and a great-grandson.

Kinder Morgan President and COO Steven Kean has been named CEO, replacing Richard Kinder.

NW Natural has announced several leadership changes, including MardiLyn Saathoff to senior vice president and general counsel; Shawn Filippi to vice president and corporate secretary; and Kim Heiting to vice president of communications and chief marketing officer. Saathoff will assume the general counsel functions performed by Margaret Kirkpatrick, who becomes senior vice president of environmental policy until her planned retirement at the end of 2015.

Edward Graham, chairman and CEO of South Jersey Industries, will retire effective April 30.

MDU Resources Group Inc. has promoted Nicole Kivisto to president and CEO of the corporation’s utility group companies, including Montana-Dakota Utilities Co., Great Plains Natural Gas Co., Cascade Natural Gas Corp. and Intermountain Gas Co. Kivisto replaces K. Frank Morehouse, who resigned. Kivisto joined MDU in 1995 and most recently was vice president of operations for Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. and Great Plains Natural Gas Co. Pat Darras has also been named vice president of operations for Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. and Great Plains Natural Gas Co. Darras most recently was director of the company’s Dakota Heartland Region, based in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Brent Archer has been named president of Columbia Gas of Virginia. Archer has served in a variety of leadership positions at the Columbia Gas companies, most recently as director of business policy. He replaces Carl Levander, president of Columbia Gas of Virginia since 2006, who has accepted the role of chief regulatory officer for NiSource Gas Distribution, based in Columbus, Ohio.

CISBOT: ROBOTIC CAST IRON JOINT SEALING

REPAIR AND PREVENT LEAKS IN YOUR LARGE DIAMETER CAST IRON GAS MAINS FOR 50-YEARS.

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APRIL

1–2: AGA Cyber Threat Analysis Workshop, New Orleans, LA. Contact Kimberly Denbow, 202/824-7334, kdenbow@aga.org

6–9: EEI/AGA Customer Service Conference and Expo, Washington, DC. Contact Jim Linn, 202/824-7272, jlinn@aga.org

27–28: AGA/DCA Utility Contractor Management Workshop, Chicago, IL. Contact Andrew Lu, 202/824-7341, alu@aga.org

MAY

17–19: Financial Forum, Palm Desert, CA. Contact Liliana Fonoll, 202/824-7021, lfonoll@aga.org

17–20: AGA/EEI Spring Accounting Conference, AGA Accounting Services Committee/EEI Budgeting & Financial Forecasting Committee/EEI Corporate Accounting Committee/EEI Property Accounting & Valuation Committee Meeting, Boston, MA. Contact Doug Allen, 202/824-7261, dallen@aga.org

18–19: AGA Operations Section Spring Committee Meetings, Grapevine, TX. Contact Debbie Ellis, 202/824-7338, dells@aga.org

19–22: AGA Operations Conference and Biennial Exhibition, Grapevine, TX. Contact Debbie Ellis, 202/824-7338, dells@aga.org

20–21: AGA/EEI Property Accounting and Depreciation Training Seminar, Boston, MA. Contact Doug Allen, 202/824-7261, dallen@aga.org

31–June 3: 2015 Policy Forum, Pittsburgh, PA. Contact Allison Cunningham, 202/824-7209, acunningham@aga.org

JUNE

1–2: Revenue Recognition Training Seminar, Chicago, IL. Contact Joe Martin, 202/824-7255, jmartin@aga.org

10–12: AGA Taxation Committee Meeting, Austin, TX. Contact Joe Martin, 202/824-7255, jmartin@aga.org

15–16: AGA/EEI Labor and Employee Relations Conference, Charleston, SC. Contact Linda Nahin, 202/824-7012, lnahin@aga.org

15–17: AGA/EEI Accounting Leadership Conference, Austin, TX. Contact Joe Martin, 202/824-7255, jmartin@aga.org

15–17: AGA/EEI Chief Audit Executives Conference, Austin, TX. Contact Joe Martin, 202/824-7255, jmartin@aga.org

15–17: AGA Gas Utility Operations Best Practices Follow-Up Meeting, Atlanta, GA. Contact Mike Bellman, 202/824-7183, mbellman@aga.org


JULY

19–21: AGA Annual Legal Forum, Carlsbad, CA. Contact Theresa Thoman, 202/824-7072, tthoman@aga.org

20: AGA Risk Management Committee Meeting, Nashville, TN. Contact Cindy Johnson, 202/824-7264, cjohnson@aga.org

GAS TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE EVENTS

APRIL 28–30
Understanding LNG Terminals and Terminal Operations. Industrial Marine Training & Applied Research Centre, Victoria, BC. Susan Robertson, GTI, 847/768-0783; education@gastechnology.org; www.gastechnology.org/training

JUNE 22–26
Gas Distribution Operations. Hampton Inn & Suites—Chicago Downtown, Chicago, IL. Susan Robertson, GTI, 847/768-0783; education@gastechnology.org; www.gastechnology.org/training

JULY 13–15
Advanced Marketing for the Energy Industry. Hampton Inn & Suites—Chicago Downtown, Chicago, IL. Susan Robertson, GTI, 847/768-0783; education@gastechnology.org; www.gastechnology.org/training
**state watch**

**MICHTIAGAN**

**Take Back Detroit**

New Navitas House is part of DTE Energy Co.’s effort to rebuild Detroit

**DETROIT**—DTE Energy Co. is doing its part to revitalize downtown Detroit. The natural gas and diversified energy company recently renovated a long-vacant art deco building next to its headquarters as part of its investment in the neighborhood.

About 140 employees from DTE’s information technology department have moved into the 32,000 square-foot building, which the company has named Navitas House after the Latin word for “energy.”

The company kept many of the art deco details, including historic features in the lobby and terrazzo floors in the bathrooms. It installed a rain garden outside to filter runoff and provide a habitat for birds and butterflies.

DTE Energy also has cleaned up nearby streets and helped police beef up security in the neighborhood. Ron May, DTE executive vice president of Major Enterprise Projects, said DTE has made a commitment to helping rebuild Detroit, which declared bankruptcy in 2013 and has since seen a surge in grassroots revitalization efforts.

“One of the keys to urban revitalization is to bring vacant buildings back to life, which helps a street feel more alive, makes it safer and improves the overall stability of the neighborhood,” May said in a press release. “This beautiful building stands now as a symbol of our work to help energize Detroit.”

DTE also plans to break ground this spring on a new green space near its headquarters and turn it into a gathering space for employees, residents and visitors. —Monica von Dobeneck

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**PHOTO PROVIDED BY DTE ENERGY**

DTE Energy rehabbed an art deco structure in Detroit’s downtown district.
Marcellus Moves

Statewide projects will grow in 2015

READING—The natural gas industry in Pennsylvania is predicted to continue its upward climb in 2015, according to a story in Marcellus Business Central.

Proposals for the commonwealth include continuing efforts to bring natural gas to underserved areas, 10 new large pipeline projects and two liquefied natural gas facilities:

• Reading-based UGI Energy Services LLC is one of the companies expanding natural gas pipelines to underserved areas. It has completed its Union Dale Pipeline project, which can transport up to 100 million cubic feet of gas per day, enough to serve 500,000 homes. UGI also made upgrades to its Manning Compressor Station in Washington Township, Wyoming County, to increase capacity.

• Peoples Natural Gas of Pittsburgh hopes to start a cost-share program to serve customers in small towns in Cambria County. It would impose a surcharge called a service expansion tariff to customers to allow for payments over a longer time instead of seeking a paid-off upfront cost of connecting a natural gas pipeline.

• Among the larger natural gas pipelines proposed in the state are the Atlantic Sunrise, Constitution, PennEast, Diamond East and Laurel Mountain.

• REV LNG, based in Ulysses in north-central Pennsylvania, plans to build two liquefaction plants to serve its fleet of tractor-trailers and other companies’ LNG-powered 18-wheeler trucks. These will be smaller liquefied natural gas facilities specifically designed to be closer to the fleets that need it and will help the company stay competitive with diesel fuel suppliers. The plants will deliver directly to the distribution market. One of the LNG plants will be built in Herrick Township, Bradford County, and could produce 50,000 gallons of LNG a day. The second will be south of Pittsburgh. Both should be in operation by the fall. REV LNG also provides a mobile LNG fuel tank and dispensing unit. Its business model targets truck fleets that return to base every day after traveling up to 700 miles.

• Also still in the planning stages is the $3 billion ethane cracker plant to be built by Shell in Beaver County. It would convert ethane, a by-product of natural gas, to ethylene, which is used to make plastics, antifreeze and detergents.

TEXAS

Gas Support

Kinder Morgan will supply natural gas to Texas LNG plant

CORPUS CHRISTI—Kinder Morgan, an energy infrastructure company with 80,000 miles of pipeline countrywide, will deliver natural gas to a new liquefied natural gas export terminal in Corpus Christi.

The company signed a 15-year agreement with Houston-based Cheniere Energy Inc., which focuses on liquefied natural gas-related businesses. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission granted a construction permit in December for the $14.5 billion plant and related pipeline. Kinder Morgan will deliver natural gas to create the LNG, power equipment and also will provide facilities to store the liquefied natural gas.

Kinder Morgan will expand its intrastate pipeline system in South Texas and extend...
pipes from Tennessee to accommodate the project. It has agreed to transport 550,000 dekatherms of natural gas a day, with the possibility of expanding to 800,000 dekatherms. It also will provide 3 billion cubic feet of storage.

Its companies Kinder Morgan Texas Pipeline LLC, Kinder Morgan Tejas Pipeline LLC and Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co. LLC are involved in the transaction. Kinder Morgan expects to invest about $187 million in the project. The company will build the new pipelines and storage in time for the startup of the export terminal, targeted for completion in 2018 or 2019.

“We are pleased to provide transportation and storage services that access diverse supply basins to Corpus Christi Liquefaction for this LNG export opportunity,” Tom Martin, Kinder Morgan’s president of Natural Gas Pipelines, said in a press release. “The need for additional natural gas transportation services continues to increase, and Kinder Morgan’s portfolio of natural gas assets across the United States is well positioned to serve infrastructure expansion opportunities and meet increasing market demand.”

The company also services a portion of Cheniere’s Sabine Pass liquefaction plant under construction in Louisiana.

Corey Grindal, vice president of supply and marketing for Cheniere, said the agreement builds on the company’s existing relationship with Kinder Morgan.

It “moves us closer to securing the supply infrastructure needed to provide natural gas to our Corpus Christi LNG export facility. Access to multiple and diverse supply basins and an extensive pipeline network are both important factors for securing the natural gas required to meet our customers’ needs,” he said.

A Pipeline Boom

State sees most activity since World War II

DUBLIN—More pipelines are being built in Ohio than at any time since shortly after World War II because “the source of natural gas has changed so dramatically,” according to Jimmy Stewart, spokesman for the Ohio Gas Association.

Now, instead of coming from the Gulf States, natural gas is originating in the shale beds of the Midwest and Northeast. “So much is coming from Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio, there is less need for natural gas from the Rockies or the Gulf of Mexico,” Stewart said.

In 2009, the 1,689-mile Rockies Express Pipeline took cheap natural gas from the Rocky Mountains and West Texas to the East. Now the pipeline has reversed its flow to take cheap natural gas from the Marcellus and Utica shale regions west, Stewart said. At least a half-dozen proposed major pipelines that will run through Ohio are being reviewed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Smaller lateral lines that feed off the main transmission lines are also under construction or proposed.

Spectra Energy alone has several new pipeline projects going through Ohio that are in various stages of awaiting approval from FERC, according to Spectra spokesman Arthur Diestel.

Among them are the Access South Project, which will transmit natural gas from the Appalachian region to the southeast U.S.; Adair Southwest Project, which will deliver to the Midwest; Appalachia to Market Project, delivering gas throughout the Northeast; NEXUS, which originates in Ohio and will deliver to Ohio, Chicago, Michigan and Ontario; and the Ohio Pipeline Energy Network, which is due to come in service by the end of 2015.
Other proposed pipeline projects include Energy Transfer Partner LP’s $4.3 billion Rover Pipeline and Columbia Pipeline Group’s Leach Xpress. Major pipelines that went into service in the past couple of years include Enterprise Products Partners LP’s ATEX pipeline and Sunoco Logistics Partners LP’s Mariner West Pipeline.

Stewart said the new pipelines will help relieve the bottleneck between the abundant supplies and the markets.

NEBRASKA

Work From Home

Mobile technician pilot program aims to cut costs, improve productivity

OMAHA—Metropolitan Utilities District technicians have started reporting to work at their homes, which provides more efficient service, according to a press release from the district. Customers in the greater Omaha area should see quicker response times if they are having problems with their natural gas service, according to the company.

Senior Vice President and Chief Finance Officer Debra Schneider said the pilot program will offer quicker response times, increased productivity and overall improved customer service during a natural gas outage. The district can also expand its fleet without adding more garage space at its headquarters.

The pilot program initially involves seven field service technicians who will begin and end their workdays at their homes. There will be less daily start-up time, because they will receive their assignments over their wireless networks at home, Schneider said. Fuel costs for the district should also be lower, she said. Scheduling will revolve around the technician’s home base.

If the pilot program is successful, Metropolitan Utilities District will implement the program divisionwide, including up to 40 vehicles.

The district also recently installed GPS systems on its fleet of more than 400 vehicles, including service vans, pickup trucks, crew trucks and other vehicles.

“GPS allows us to identify the location of our vehicles and employees at any time, which results in more efficient dispatching and emergency response,” Schneider said.
Tongue River Valley project could provide natural gas to rural area

CHEYENNE—The Tongue River Valley Joint Powers Board hopes to build a 14-mile pipeline and create its own municipal natural gas distribution system.

Tongue River Board Chairman Peter Clark told American Gas that area residents have been trying since 2008 to bring natural gas to the unserved communities of Dayton and Ranchester, where many homeowners are paying high prices for propane and electricity and want a less expensive alternative.

Board members had been in talks with Montana-Dakota Utilities Co., and in December met with Wyoming Gov. Matt Mead to talk about challenges.

More recently, board members decided to build the pipeline, Clark said. The board has received a $100,000 grant from the state for planning and design work and is applying to the state for infrastructure grants and low-interest loans.

According to a January 2014 survey, 97 percent of area residents said they favored the pipeline and most said they would convert to natural gas given the opportunity.

If successful, the project will be the first in the state to receive an infrastructure grant for a natural gas utility, Clark said. The grants are more commonly given for sewer and water projects.

A 2014 bill allowed natural gas boards to apply. The Tongue River board applied for a $2.5 million grant and a $3.5 million loan last year, but was denied due to limited funds. The board is trying again, Clark said.

He said other communities hope the Tongue River venture is successful. “There are 99 municipalities in Wyoming, and 33 of them have no natural gas,” Clark said. “Not all will qualify, but there is a lot of potential.”

Wyoming is a major producer of natural gas, and Clark thinks its residents should have access to the abundant resource. The municipal utility would serve customers in Dayton, Ranchester and points in-between, Clark said. A school being built would also use natural gas, which school officials have estimated will save $40,000 a month, or almost $500,000 a year, over propane.

The Wyoming legislature created a task force in 2014 to find ways to expand natural gas service to rural areas and underserved cities and towns.
With the energy industry changing rapidly, natural gas utilities are increasingly looking to new technologies to drive customer service’s digital future—and exceed customer expectations. **BY LIN GRENSING-POPHAL**

Keeping customer satisfaction high isn’t easy in an era of increasing customer demand, environmental and economic challenges, and ever-emerging technology. But natural gas utilities have been able to consistently do just that.

J.D. Power’s 2014 Gas Utility Residential Customer Service Study indicated that customer satisfaction with residential gas utilities improved for a third consecutive year. Overall satisfaction averaged 644 on a 1,000-point scale in 2014, up from 627 in 2011.

Business customer satisfaction is also improving, according to J.D. Power’s 2015 Gas Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Survey, up to 695 in 2015 compared with 687 in 2014.

As utilities strive to maintain—and grow—levels of satisfaction among all customers, they are finding opportunities and challenges. Chief among them, both from a gas operations and communication standpoint, are significantly elevated customer service concerns throughout the industry.

**New Technology, New Opportunities, New Expectations**

The American Gas Association has always been ahead of the curve in advancing best practices in customer service. For example, AGA’s annual Customer Service Conference & Exposition, held in partnership with the Edison Electric Institute, is a major undertaking that focuses on programs and services to support a better future in customer service. This event also maximizes the opportunity to gain value from a much broader range of insights and interactions, which is especially critical in today’s evolving customer service environment.

The energy industry is changing rapidly, requiring new approaches to addressing customer needs while still meeting regulatory requirements—approaches that can be fueled by technology, from cloud-based services and...
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IN THE NEW AGE CUSTOMER SERVICE COVER STORY

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analytics to social media and mobility.

“With the explosion of social media, renewable energy, cheap and abundant natural gas and customer demands for perfect reliability, the successful professional needs to be educated and engaged,” said Joseph Forline, vice president of customer solutions at Public Service Electric and Gas Co.

According to Forline, one of the most pressing issues facing the industry is customer technology and integration of customer communication channels. The tools are out there, but now utilities must ask themselves how they can move from simply communicating with the customer to meeting the needs and interests of each one while providing this service in a cost-effective way and across their entire demographic profile.

Penni McLean-Conner, chief customer officer and senior vice president of customer group for Eversource Energy (formerly Northeast Utilities), points to these same issues, noting the significant impact of technology. “The movement to digital communications is growing exponentially,” she said. “This growth brings both opportunities and challenges to meet the customer demands efficiently, reliably and securely.”

One key trend is consumers moving to online or digital channels to conduct business with their utilities. McLean-Conner noted that, for her utility, online transactions have gone from 5 percent of all transactions in 2002 to 60 percent today. Continuing to develop these opportunities across the entire customer experience is a focus, along with mining the information from their online actions to better serve their needs.

“Wouldn’t it be great if our customer service reps in the call center actually knew the customer had tried to complete their payment arrangement online and couldn’t do so and that’s why they’re calling?” she said.

The growth of distributed generation presents two areas of opportunity—serving customers who are interested as well as serving providers in the space. Identifying the systems needed to provide this support is top-of-mind for utility executives, McLean-Conner said.

Natural gas utilities are also already developing best practices in the use of new technology, both to better serve business customers and use this technology to aid those in the field. “There is a lot of discussion on how we can enhance our processes and field operations to create a better customer experience,” she said.

These are the types of issues, according to McLean-Conner, where she and other utility executives look to organizations such as AGA/EEI to keep them up-to-date, “bringing together the best of breed” in vendors and speakers.

**Best Practice Insights: Web Chat**

Vectren Corp. is a prime example. Based in Evansville, Indiana, Vectren was an early adopter of opportunities made available by new technology to connect with customers. The utility implemented Web chat in February 2013 and hasn’t missed a beat since then, Performance Assurance Manager Cindy Dossett said. Dossett will be speaking about Vectren’s experiences with Web chat at the AGA/EEI conference.

Using a soft launch as a test before widely promoting the service, Vectren placed a chat icon on its “Contact Us” Web page and immediately began receiving chat requests from customers—39 on the first day, Dossett said. During the next few months, Vectren expanded the chat function, putting the icon on more pages that represented content likely to prompt a question or customer inquiry. Soon, volume reached about 2,000 chats a month. Today, “We are currently seeing volumes around 4,500 per month,” she said.

Vectren has found that just about any type of customer inquiry can be handled through chat, with the exception of bill payment. The highest Web chat volume is for general questions; move-ins are the next most common. That’s somewhat surprising, she said, given that move-ins can take some time to complete. But, “I think people like the ability to multitask while they’re providing us with information.”

Customers who call speak to trained agents, who are in a high-demand role. “Agents look at it as a perk to be on the Web chat team,” Dossett said. Agents must undergo a rigorous selection process that involves an assessment of their written communication skills and ability to multitask—and they’re also tested with a series of “simulated chats” to see how they might perform in real-time situations.

The learning experience is ongoing for Vectren. At the close of each chat, visitors are presented with an option to take a brief online survey. About 60 percent take advantage of it, and feedback has been consistently positive. “We’ve had a really positive reaction to our Web chat process,” Dossett said. “We’re providing the experience the customers expect and allowing them an opportunity to contact us through the channel of their choice.”

**Best Practice Insights: Outage Communications**

That kind of positive experience is also much needed in the often stressful situa-
tion when outages occur. Jack Hierholzer, an electric distribution technology specialist with Gulf Power Co. in Pensacola, Florida, will speak at the 2015 AGA/EEI conference about his company’s use of an outage communications system that provides customers with access to maps, automated alerts and mobile apps to track and learn about outages in their areas.

It’s a great example of how utilities are leveraging technology to improve service—something that consumers are increasingly demanding. The options have been rolled out over the past 18 months, beginning with the online outage maps.

“What we’re finding is that, overwhelmingly, customers are going to the outage map when they have a problem,” Hierholzer said. “We’re [also] finding a small amount of customers taking us up on the proactive notifications and the app.”

While it’s too early to tell what impact these tools could have on call center demand, according to Hierholzer, the goal is more about boosting customer satisfaction. “[Reducing call center demand] is always the hope, but I think in practice it’s rarely the reality. What you do is you’re able to provide customers more information when they want it and hopefully increase satisfaction.”

For instance, he said, during an ice storm last January, the call center received 40,000 to 50,000 calls while the outage map had 160,000 page views, giving a majority of their customers the ability to find the information they wanted when they wanted it.

These types of options are becoming increasingly popular and increasingly in demand, and that demand is likely to continue, Hierholzer said, as the overall utility customer base comes to represent more of the millennial audience. He recommends that utilities draw upon their own personal experiences when considering how they might use technology to serve their customers.

“Do you use Amazon? Do you use your bank’s app? Do you use any sort of airline app? You start to get a feel for where things are going in general.” While utilities aren’t likely to become “the next Amazon,” he said, “our customers may be comparing us to airlines and banks—and their expectations are increasing.”

In addition to considering their own experiences, Hierholzer recommends that utilities take the time to listen to their customers to find out what they value. And, he cautions, don’t think you can develop a tool or app and your work is done.

“These are things that require care and feeding and constant evolution,” he said. “Customers expect to see changes over time and continual improvement.” That means, he said, that utilities can’t build something and then stop development. It also means that they shouldn’t strive for perfection when they introduce these options.

“It’s OK to put it out there in a less than perfect state as long as the essential function is there,” he said. Doing that, and providing a path for feedback, can help you learn from the voice of the customer to find opportunities for future upgrades and improvements.

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- **Customer service in a vulnerable world.**
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- **Expanding customer contact through Web chat.**
  As the role of the call center continues to change significantly to encompass other modes of communication, most notably online forms, how to incorporate chat into your service model.

- **Removing barriers to house the homeless.**
  A community-based model to help those struggling to pay their energy bills and afford housing.

- **Using various social media channels.**
  How to interact with, listen and learn from customers through social media through one utility’s successful practices.

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A RENEWABLE FUTURE FOR NATURAL GAS

Promising technologies and new partnerships assure a sustainable role for North America’s cleanest fossil fuel

BY DAVID DODSON
It is perhaps tempting for some to depict natural gas as unavoidably in competition with other forms of energy, particularly renewables such as solar, wind and geothermal. But the reality is that natural gas utilities are embracing other energy sources—especially renewables—to ensure the industry’s business model remains viable over the very long term.

Today’s natural gas utilities are pursuing strategies that could prove to be important to customers and the environment in the years ahead. They are showing developers how to build efficient, environmentally friendly energy solutions into their projects from the ground up. Their assistance is helping builders decipher changing building codes and uncover opportunities for incorporating direct use of natural gas in ways that save money and reduce emissions.

And in some parts of the country, natural gas utilities are taking methane that would otherwise benefit no one and converting it into pipeline-quality gas that can be used to make electricity or, even better, used directly in heating, cooling and other applications.

Still others are taking the bold step of asking policymakers and regulators to view some forms of natural gas as renewable resources in themselves. As the benefits of carbon-neutral forms of natural gas such as biogas and landfill methane are demonstrated, the role of natural gas in reducing emissions will take on even greater dimensions.

**Building It In**

The cleanest, cheapest and most abundant energy is the energy that doesn’t get consumed. Laclede Gas Co. in St. Louis has been around a very long time (its stock first traded in 1889, making it the eighth-oldest listed stock on the New York Stock Exchange), and it has taken an early lead in what has become known as the “green building” movement.

“Green building” can mean many things. The International Code Council has its 2015 International Green Construction Code. The American National Standards Institute offers several certifications for construction that improve energy efficiency and reduce overall emissions. Then there is the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design designation. And Home Innovation Research Labs (formerly The National Association of Home Builders Research Center) serves as the secretariat for the ICC-700 National Green Building Standard, a residential green building rating system that received ANSI approval.

The list goes on, but these standards all point in one direction: Conservation and energy efficiency are low-cost, high-impact contributors to overall reduction in emissions. And natural gas figures prominently.

Laclede was a catalyst for broad acceptance of the Green Building Standard in its service territory, advising its customers on how they could dramatically increase energy efficiency through building technology and incorporating better direct-use appliances, according to Jim Hearing, director of sales and customer accounts.

“A lot of builders didn’t really understand green building and sustainability. What they do understand very well is building codes,” Hearing said.

So Laclede reached out to builders and conducted an ongoing series of seminars and workshops to help builders and developers understand how the direct use of natural gas in homes and businesses is extremely efficient and will meet green building certification. Laclede also helped builders achieve NAHB’s Green Building Certification, important third-party validation that going green saves money and helps the environment, Hearing said. Certification is also a must-have for developments to qualify for certain federal funding programs.

Laclede Gas has also been a long-time advocate for the development and preservation of affordable and sustainable low-income housing; however, promoting natural gas in this market had been a challenge. But then state requirements were modified to mandate that low-income projects adhere to sustainable green building protocols.
This was the breakthrough that Laclede Gas needed. By investing in natural gas appliances on the front end, owners were able to offer tenants a home that was energy efficient while providing lower monthly utility costs compared to all-electric housing. “These lower monthly costs helped keep tenants in their homes longer and reduced rehab and re-inspection costs for vacancies,” said Hearing.

These programs have worked so well for Laclede and Missouri home builders that the NAHB named Laclede its Utility Partner of the Year in 2013. The company was also recognized as one of the 2013-14 Home Innovation NGBS Green Partners of Excellence for its dedication and success in advancing green home building and for providing leadership and commitment to high-performance homes.

“[I]f I help the developer—and the local public agencies and municipal authorities—understand how everybody benefits from direct use, then we’re raising everybody’s comfort that from a cost perspective and from an environmental perspective, [green building techniques] work,” Hearing said. “We work closely with AGA’s Sustainable Growth Committee to work with that message, and it’s always good to have like-minded people work together to further this cause.”

Unlocking Landfill Methane

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that municipal solid waste facilities—landfills—contribute 18.2 percent of human-related natural gas emissions in the United States each year. As a result, the EPA is encouraging entrepreneurs and natural gas utilities to capture that methane before it reaches the atmosphere.

Renewco, a landfill methane project developer and operator and a subsidiary of AGL Resources in Atlanta, needs little encouragement in that regard. “Like most utilities, AGL places emphasis on sustainability,” said Michael Ellis, Renewco vice president and director of AGL Energy Services.

Renewco has operated one landfill methane installation in Athens, Tennessee, since 2011 and is in negotiations to develop a second site. These facilities extract methane from landfill gas, and through controlled processes, refine the methane to the point that it meets established industry standards for pipeline-quality gas. Once that is achieved, it can be injected into the pipeline system and used like any other natural gas.

“It’s a very niche market,” Ellis said, and for a variety of reasons. “The energy content of the landfill gas has to be high enough to justify your development costs. In addition, there can’t be too much atmospheric intrusion into the landfill gas or the nitrogen and oxygen levels will get...
“WE DON’T HAVE TO GENERATE ELECTRICITY FIRST AND ELECTRIFY EVERYTHING. WHAT OTHER ALTERNATIVES ARE OUT THERE? WHAT ARE THE MIXED ALTERNATIVES THAT CALL FOR US TO CONTINUE TO USE NATURAL GAS AND RENEWABLES? WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES WITH SYNTHETIC NATURAL GAS?”

—Patrick Lee, senior vice president for customer service, innovation and business strategy at Southern California Gas Co.

“Farming” Natural Gas
As is often the case, California is a leader in renewable technologies. Part of that comes naturally in the Golden State, some is driven by customer expectations and a good portion is required by Assembly Bill 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. That legislation commits the state to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2050.

“I think the challenge of natural gas in California is quite different than the rest of the country,” said Patrick Lee, senior vice president for customer service, innovation and business strategy at Southern California Gas Co. While Lee believes California’s aggressive greenhouse gas reduction targets “put a shadow over natural gas as the cleanest fossil fuel,” SoCalGas is confident there is a path to meet the act’s requirements.

SoCalGas has invested broadly in strategies to meet emission reduction standards, Lee said, and that includes “both investments in energy efficiency and technology development, including new combustion technologies, low-emission vehicles, fuel cells—a number of things that are either derived from or complementary with natural gas.”

One big step SoCalGas is taking is in the direction of biogas, or biomethane—the production of renewable natural gas from existing sources such as dairies, food processing plants, wastewater treatment facilities and biomass. That effort has been facilitated by SoCalGas’ success at getting a Biogas Conditioning and Upgrading Services Tariff approved by the California Public Utilities Commission.

SoCalGas sees the tariff as vital in encouraging potential customers “to actually get into the biogas market and take the steps to enable getting this gas injected into the pipeline,” Lee said. SoCalGas would build, own and operate the biogas filtering system, and the customer would own the biogas. “If there is a need to extend the pipeline, we will make the necessary investment in our infrastructure.”

The technology is there now, Lee said, but there are still many considerations for anyone thinking about getting into the biogas business.

Building and operating a biogas facility requires a major investment and expertise. “In most cases, the dairy owner or farmer doesn’t really have the capital or the know-how,” Lee said, because that’s not their primary business. But with the tariff in place and with support and guidance from SoCalGas, potential operators can connect the dots between the methane their operations produce but don’t monetize and its conversion to a useful fuel that can be injected into the grid and sold downstream, he said.

“It is important for them to have that comfort that they will be able to market this biogas. We are now making it possible for them to inject it, contract with someone downstream and create situations in which that fuel qualifies as a renewable resource,” Lee said, all for the purpose of meeting emission reduction targets.

The potential is huge. SoCalGas estimates that 16 percent of current natural gas supply in California could be replaced with renewable biogas. But maybe that’s conservative, Lee said. There’s huge

“too high and the processing equipment can’t achieve the gas quality spec.” Also, a viable site must be physically close to a pipeline that provides an injection point to transport the gas to the end user.

Then there are other difficulties.

“Landfills are dynamic. The quality of the landfill gas changes depending on what’s placed in the landfill. Landfill operators are constantly putting a changing variety and quantity of materials into the landfill, and the resulting constituents in the landfill gas change. What’s in the landfill really matters. One such example is gypsum board. Too much of it results in higher levels of sulfur compounds that may require an investment in additional equipment to meet natural gas pipeline specs,” Ellis said. “A lot of times, you don’t know exactly what you have as to quality and quality of the gas until the plant is actually operational. There’s a lot of engineering involved both prior to and after the commissioning of a landfill gas facility…[But] the goal is to achieve pipeline-quality gas with a heat value of 1,000 to 1,050 Btus per cubic foot and, of course, to be cost-effective while meeting our sustainability goals.”

Renewco is focused on demonstrating that landfills are a viable source of pipeline-quality methane and that they provide a carbon-neutral source of renewable natural gas. “With limited landfills meeting the criteria for a cost-effective site, landfill gas is not going to substantially move the needle in the near future,” Ellis said. “But there’s no doubt it works, and I feel it is our moral obligation to capture this often wasted resource.”
potential to maximize production: For example, perhaps farmers could plan for purpose-grown biomass crops to increase the amount of biogas going to market.

SoCal Gas acknowledges that biogas is three to four times more expensive than indexed natural gas.

“If people remember, when the renewable portfolio standards first came out, solar and wind were six to eight times the cost [of electricity produced by combined-cycle natural gas-fired generation],” Lee said. “Now, with more applications and with mass production, the price has come down to probably no more than one to two times. We expect that as we move into mass production and we see continued technological improvements, [biogas] prices will come down to very competitive levels.”

SoCal Gas is looking for supportive policies at the state level. “Given our state’s aggressive goals, we will be getting a lot of support for our gas renewables program,” Lee predicted. And that could mean, for one example, requiring that a certain percentage of the state’s renewable portfolio be supplied by gas renewables.

“California needs to give notice to the market that there is a priority here, and it needs to recognize that there is market support [for gas renewables],” Lee said. For its part, SoCal Gas needs to continue to demonstrate “that we are continuing to evolve new technologies and we are focused on how natural gas can complement other technologies.”

There are sound environmental reasons to pursue technologies such as biogas. “Take internal combustion engines, for
example,” Lee said. “Previously, if we
looked at burning natural gas in an engine,
we achieved a 15 percent to 18 percent
reduction in carbon dioxide. But if you use
renewable natural gas in that application,
you are achieving a 70 percent greenhouse
gas reduction.”

And, of course, gas renewables support
direct use of a clean fuel. “If you look at the
long term for California, renewable natural
gas will play a major role in direct-use appli-
cations that will help us attain the greenhouse
gas [reduction targets],” Lee said.

Renewables: A Growing Future
These efforts by natural gas utilities demon-
strate a commitment to the environment
and sustainability that doesn’t impose nega-
tive impacts on ratepayers or shareholders.

Across the United States, utilities are
also working day-by-day in small but
impactful ways to benefit the environ-
ment. For example, most utilities long ago
accepted the notion that conservation of
natural gas at the burner tip in direct-use
applications is good for customers, com-
commercial interests and utilities, not to men-
tion the environment. Virtually all natural
gas utilities offer programs to builders
and homeowners to help reduce energy
consumption with better, more efficient
appliances and wiser construction methods
and materials.

And natural gas has amply demon-
strated its value in applications where heat
generated by its combustion can create
electricity and serve other thermal purposes
at the same time. Arguably the greatest
synergies among natural gas and renewable
technologies are at the bulk energy level,
where natural gas serves as a backup fuel
to solve the intermittency issue inherent in
making electricity from the sun and wind.

While teaming natural gas with renew-
able technologies to make electricity seems an
obvious choice, it doesn’t tell the whole story.

SoCal’s Lee cautioned that generation
electricity—by natural gas, renewables
or any combination of energy portfolios—is
not the answer to every energy question.

“We don’t have to generate electric-
ity first and electrify everything,” he said.
“What other alternatives are out there?
What are the mixed alternatives that call

for us to continue to use natural gas and
renewables? What are the opportunities
with synthetic natural gas?”

Lee suggested that what is needed is
appropriate signals from policymakers,
regulators, end users and natural gas utili-
ties that investment in new approaches and
new technologies will pay off in overall
conservation, environmental protection
and meeting demand. “We need to really
focus on what makes sense for the cus-
tomer,” Lee said. “In the end, that is what’s
going to help us sustain our business and
venture into new markets.”

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Commissioner and Chairman Norman C. Bay of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission talks about his priorities and why he thinks America’s energy future is “the brightest it has been in decades.”

Norman C. Bay brings an impressive resume to his new role as commissioner and chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission: former director of FERC’s Office of Enforcement, U.S. attorney for the District of New Mexico and a law professor. A self-described career public servant who likes to operate in a “low-key fashion,” Bay is fueled by a conviction that the work of FERC is important to Americans because energy impacts their daily lives and brightens their future in exciting ways. American Gas talked to Bay about his priorities, objectives and his commitment to public service.

AG: In your testimony before the Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources on your nomination to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, you named your priorities as chairman, which included infrastructure, competitive markets and reliability. What would you identify as your objectives to achieve improvements in these areas?

NB: One key objective is to work in a fair, thoughtful, consensus-oriented basis with my colleagues on the commission. The commission is at its most effective when it speaks with one voice, and the most enduring policies are the ones grounded in consensus. It is also important for the commission to provide as much regulatory certainty as it can while using the tools it has to incent or certificate infrastructure, improve the efficiency of the markets and promote reliability. In many respects, these goals are complementary. Infrastructure can enhance reliability and resiliency while making markets more efficient and competitive. Efficient markets send price signals that incent the development of infrastructure while ensuring that load is met and reliability maintained. And without reliability, it would be difficult to sustain markets or infrastructure.

With respect to more specific objectives, I welcome the views of my colleagues on the commission. They bring a wealth of experience and expertise to FERC, and I look forward to collaborating with them. There are a number of objectives on which I hope we can all agree.

AG: Other pressing needs in the industry include cybersecurity, gas-electric coordination, pipeline expansion and LNG exports. Can you speak to your objectives in each of these areas?

NB: One of the biggest challenges for every industry in America is cybersecurity. It is particularly important for the gas and electric industries because of the vital services they provide. My objectives are to promote better information sharing and collaboration among federal authorities, state officials and industry, and to encourage the development and implementation of best practices. We’re all in this together, and we can better protect the public if we have a strong working relationship.

On gas-electric coordination, the overall objective must be to promote reliability for both gas and electric customers. I believe that significant progress has been made to date, and I appreciate the efforts of the gas industry. Order No. 787 allows for better information sharing between the gas and electric industries, which is particularly important during times of stress. As a result of the
NORMAN C. BAY

• Takes over as FERC chairman on April 15. Sworn in as a commissioner in August 2014.
• Director of FERC’s Office of Enforcement, 2009–14.
• Former law professor, former U.S. attorney and assistant U.S. attorney, former attorney-adviser for the U.S. State Department.
• Graduate of Dartmouth College and Harvard Law School.
• New Mexico native.

North American Energy Standards Board process, consensus was also reached with respect to the timely evening and intraday nomination cycles. No consensus was reached with respect to the start of the gas day, however, and many commenters have raised concerns with a 4 a.m. Central start time. I share a number of those concerns but believe that we must continue to look for ways to enhance coordination. With the increased use of gas for power generation—it’s responsible for more than 27 percent of generation—it is more important than ever that we get this right, and I am open to suggestions stakeholders might have.

On pipelines and LNG, FERC has siting authority. Each project is different and must be evaluated on its own merits. FERC needs to do its review in a thorough and timely manner, and we work hard to do so. Thoroughness is important because if we issue a certificate, our order must withstand potential legal challenge. A reversal on appeal could result in costly delay and uncertainty for a project, so that time spent on the front end to resolve issues and create a strong record can be very helpful on the back end. Timeliness is important because projects are capital intensive and the developer needs to know whether or not a project will be approved. While a number of timing issues are out of our hands because they involve other authorities, we should always look for ways to streamline our own processes and do our work more efficiently.

AG: Sen. Dianne Feinstein, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, applauded your leadership of FERC’s Office of Enforcement. Following your experience as head of enforcement, do you think the industry has cleaned up its act and taken the necessary steps to reduce manipulation?

NB: The great majority of market participants play by the rules. But when someone doesn’t, it’s important to detect the manipulation, investigate it and hold the wrongdoer accountable. Only then can you achieve deterrence, protect consumers and ensure that there is a level playing field for all market participants. FERC has worked hard to implement the anti-manipulation authority that Congress provided in the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Among other things, FERC has built up its market oversight and surveillance as well as its ability to investigate complex market manipulation schemes. We have seen industry respond with enhanced compliance and monitoring. In several instances, market participants have detected suspicious trading by their own employees, conducted internal investigations, implemented corrective measures and self-reported the activity. This prompt detection, investigation, mitigation and self-reporting, which are all indicative of a culture of compliance, minimized the participant’s legal exposure and resulted in a substantially lower penalty.

AG: In this age of social media and transparency in government, how have these two factors impacted the agency’s ability to perform its mission? And how will you deal with protesters and their desire to participate in the FERC open meetings?

NB: Overall, social media and transparency help FERC perform its mission. I very much believe in the value of transparency in government, and social media can help the government provide that transparency. FERC has a website and a Twitter account; three commissioners also have Twitter accounts. I don’t because I’d probably have about seven followers, all siblings, and I can’t imagine having anything interesting enough to tweet on a recurring basis. I’m probably something of a fuddy-duddy in that regard.

But, as your question suggests, FERC has experienced demonstrations recently, and I have no doubt that protesters have relied on social media and FERC’s transparency to organize their opposition. FERC serves the public, and so, in a very real sense, everyone is a stakeholder in what we do. We welcome all views, including the views of protesters, and I respect their First Amendment rights. That being said, there are permissible and impermissible ways to exercise those rights. I would ask protesters to use the many processes available to them to make their views known to FERC and to respect the decorum of our open meetings. The law is clear that our open meetings are not a public forum, and FERC’s rules require the removal of people who are disruptive.
AG: SNL Financial named you one of the 10 most influential people in energy in December 2013. Those who made the list were called “risk takers, unafraid to upset the status quo.” Do you view yourself that way and how satisfied are you with the outcome of challenges that you have surmounted?

NB: No, I don't view myself as a “risk taker, unafraid to upset the status quo!” That sounds a bit dramatic and arrogant, doesn’t it? Instead, I view myself in a much more low-key fashion: as a career public servant who has tried to do his best to further the public interest. With respect to my work when I was the director of the Office of Enforcement, the commission and staff deserve all the credit. The commission supported the work of OE, adopted policies to make enforcement more transparent, authorized settlements (almost always unanimously) and issued orders to show cause. I’m proud of the work of the many dedicated and talented staff at FERC. They’re the heroes here, and it’s easy to look good when you work with them.

AG: You’ve openly discussed how your heritage as the child of immigrants who came from China in search of a better life has molded your desire to serve the country that made that possible. How does this new position build upon that personal desire?

NB: My parents came to the United States in search of freedom, higher education and a better life. They proceeded to have eight children here, and I’m glad that my parents had the foresight to come to the United States instead of some other country. I am grateful for the many opportunities my family has had in the United States. Being on the commission is a great honor and great responsibility. It is humbling. It gives me the opportunity to help make a difference and serve the people of this country. FERC’s work matters. It touches the life of every American because energy is what makes modern life possible.

AG: You obviously loved to teach law and were beloved by students—University of New Mexico students once voted you “Best Law Professor.” What would you tell students today about the direction and future of our country’s energy supply and industry?

NB: I would tell them to consider a career in energy. This is such an exciting time to do energy work. The shale revolution has resulted in an abundant and low-priced natural gas supply to the point where LNG import facilities are being converted into LNG export facilities. The United States has become the world’s leading oil producer, and United States crude is under $50 a barrel. Who would have thought that possible just a few months ago? Technological change is also driving down the cost of renewables, and wind, solar and hydropower now account for 13 percent of the electricity in the United States. Fifty million homes have smart meters, and they have the potential to incent demand-side management. Energy efficiency has contributed to flat or low-load growth over the last few years. State and federal environmental rules have also impacted industry and the generation of electricity. A great deal of change is occurring, but we’ll get through this. The optimist in me believes that the energy future of the United States is very bright indeed, perhaps the brightest it has been in decades.
CORROSION CONTROL TECHNOLOGIST

Kleinfelder is an employee-owned architectural, engineering and science-consulting firm providing solutions to meet our world’s complex infrastructure and natural resource challenges. Kleinfelder is currently seeking a Corrosion Control Technologist for its Pipeline Engineering and Integrity Management team to become a part of our multi-discipline project team located in Denver, Colorado. The project types are many and the expected work would be varied. The group has industry leaders and the office has various types of engineers and scientists to coordinate with and learn from on a daily basis.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Provide a high level of technical support on a regional or system basis relating to corrosion control and pipeline integrity. Design and maintain cathodic protection control facilities. Conduct internal and external specialized corrosion tests on steel structures.

Responsible for all activities related to corrosion control and pipeline integrity which includes:

• Design, install, operate and maintain cathodic protection facilities, power lines, galvanic anodes and corrosion control facilties.
• Monitor the condition of the pipeline through pipe-to-soil potentials, visual inspection, examination of coupons, data from in-line tools, etc.
• Monitor electrical isolation and identify points of electrical shorts.
• Conduct various tests, measurements and surveys to ensure efficient operation of cathodic protection facilities.
• Lead efforts to design and implement effective long term cathodic protection systems prepare drawings, job specifications and contract bid documents.
• Inspect 3rd party construction/work activities.
• Mentor fellow employees when the opportunity presents itself.
• Other duties as assigned.

Examples of project types that you would help on are:

• High voltage AC transmission line interference with buried pipelines; DC rail systems interference with buried pipelines; high voltage AC transmission line new installation; interference studies on proposed route selection; design cathodic protection for pipeline construction projects; and CP studies on DC rail installation. Projects are located throughout the United States.

The ideal candidate will meet the following qualifications:

REQUIRED:

• 5 to 10 years of related corrosion control inspection and investigation work including direct hands on field experience performing processes to include but not limited to: Close Interval Survey, DCVG, ACVG, current spans, rectifier inspection and troubleshooting, etc.

• Ability to work with both internal and external clients effectively and respectfully.

• Good writing skills.

• Be results-driven.

• Have the ability to communicate with people and clients who have a wide range of cultural and technical backgrounds.

• Computer skills: intermediate knowledge of MS Office, including Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

• Computer skills: operating systems, company software and technical systems.

• Basic math skills: addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, decimals, etc.

• Working knowledge of environmental and safety aspects of coating projects.

• Ability to complete work assignments with minimal supervision in an acceptable time frame.

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

Associate degree in a technical discipline from an accredited school or equivalent corrosion experience.

NACE CP III Cathodic Protection Technologist Certification

PREFERRED SKILLS:

• Working knowledge of AC and DC electrical systems, corrosion related portions of NEC and NACE standards.

• Knowledge and experience with safe handling practices of gases and liquids.

Kleinfelder is an Equal Opportunity Employer and offers an excellent compensation and benefits package, including: medical, dental, vision, life insurance, 401(k) plan, and paid holidays.

Please submit your resume via www.kleinfelder.com under Careers and Career Search, Req. No 28545

DISTRIBUTION INTEGRITY PROGRAM MANAGER

Seeking a Distribution Integrity Program Manager to be responsible for the development, implementation and oversight of the Pipeline Integrity Program and system integrity for distribution pipelines, pursuant with 49CFR192 Subpart P. For more information please visit: http://chj.theleakeo.net/chj01/sats/careers/ requisition.jsp?org=PIEDMONTNG&cws=1&rid=1920

INSTRUCTOR POSITION OPENINGS

ORGANIZATION: LEARNING AND INCLUSION DEPARTMENT: THE LEARNING CENTER

We have the privilege of lighting New York City’s five boroughs as well as the growing business centers of Westchester County. We illuminate operating rooms where medical miracles occur; bring up the lights on Broadway and energize one of the world’s largest mass transportation systems. We are the power behind Wall Street and the corner store. And, most importantly, we transmit and distribute the electricity and gas used in millions of homes. By focusing on what we do best—delivering energy over a reliable transmission and distribution system—Con Edison has grown into one of the nation’s leading utilities. We serve 3.3 million electric customers, 1.1 million gas customers, and 1,825 steam customers. Our service area includes the five boroughs of New York City and parts of neighboring Westchester County. Con Edison is a subsidiary of Consolidated Edison Inc., one of the nation’s largest investor-owned energy companies with $12 billion in annual revenues and approximately $41 billion in assets.

INSTRUCTOR (14-774)

QUALIFICATIONS

The Learning Center is seeking to hire a highly motivated professional to join its Gas Training Team. Candidate must demonstrate an understanding of the importance of personal accountability and commitment to excellence. Must be a team player with strong interpersonal skills. Must have the ability to promote a positive work ethic in support of our corporate values. Must be well organized, detail oriented and flexible with the ability to handle classroom instructional responsibilities, special assignments and meet deadlines. Must possess excellent oral and written communication skills and have the ability to prepare and deliver effective presentations. Candidate must possess the ability to facilitate training programs and group activities/training. Working knowledge of Microsoft Office is required. Must demonstrate the ability to sustain a high energy level and enthusiasm while conducting training sessions. Must be knowledgeable in corporate environmental and safety procedures as well as applicable gas specifications. Must have a high school diploma/GED. Must have a minimum of 5 years’ experience in gas construction and/or distribution services. DOT Operator qualifications should be current in these activities. A bachelor’s degree as well as supervisory and/or formal training experience is preferred. Candidate must be able to climb stairs and be able to stand on their feet for long periods of time. Driver’s license required.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Instruct students in gas construction and distribution services skills courses, safe work practices, procedures and equipment associated with specific areas of expertise. Design, develop, maintain and administer training programs including lesson plans, training materials, programs and simulations. Evaluate student performance for promotions and qualifications. Visit operating organizations to perform training on-site and/or to follow up on the effectiveness of training and to ensure alignment with new technology and procedures. Serve as an SME to the gas organization to support new initiatives as they arise. Ensure that career path training, operator qualifications and
promotional testing requirements are met. Shift work may be required.

Interested in applying to this position, please go to the below link and apply online: http://apps.coned.com/careers/careers/list.asp?category=LEARNING+AND+INCLUSION#20056061

INSTRUCTOR (15-083) QUALIFICATIONS
The Learning Center is seeking to hire a highly motivated professional to join its Gas Training Team. Candidate must demonstrate an understanding of the importance of personal accountability and commitment to excellence. Must be a team player with strong interpersonal skills. Must have the ability to promote a positive work ethic in support of our corporate values. Must be well organized, detail oriented and flexible with the ability to handle classroom instructional responsibilities, special assignments and meet deadlines. Must possess excellent oral and written communication skills and have the ability to prepare and deliver effective presentations. Candidate must possess the ability to facilitate training programs and group activities/training. Working knowledge of Microsoft Office is required. Must demonstrate the ability to sustain a high energy level and enthusiasm while conducting training sessions. Must be knowledgeable in corporate environmental and safety procedures as well as applicable gas specifications. Must have a high school diploma/GED.

Must have a minimum of 5 years of experience in gas construction. DOT operator qualifications should be current in these activities. A bachelor’s degree as well as supervisory and/or formal training experience is preferred.

Candidate must be able to climb stairs and be able to stand on their feet for long periods of time. Driver’s license required.

RESPONSIBILITIES
Instruct students in gas construction skills courses, safe work practices, procedures and equipment associated with specific area of expertise. Design, develop, maintain and administer training programs including lesson plans, training materials, programs and simulations. Evaluate student performance for promotions and qualifications. Visit operating organizations to perform training on-site and/or to follow up on the effectiveness of training and to ensure alignment with new technology and procedures. Serve as an SME to the gas organization to support new initiatives as they arise. Ensure that career path training, operator qualifications, and promotional testing requirements are met. Shift work may be required.

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER
Consolidated Edison is an equal opportunity employer and, as such, affirms in policy and practice its commitment to recruit, hire, train and promote, in all job classifications, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, gender, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, citizenship, eligible veteran status, disability or any other status protected by law.

Con Edison is a federal contractor subject to VEVRAA and desires to receive priority referrals of protected veterans. Visit www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/posters/pdf/eeo-post.pdf for the EEO is the Law Notice, to learn about your equal employment opportunity protections as part of the application process.

Con Edison does not accept resumes delivered by the us postal service or via email. Only online employment applications submitted to a specific job posting advertised on the company’s website are accepted. We will only contact candidates who are being considered for an interview.

LEAD PIPELINE ENGINEER
Candidate will perform responsible engineering work on a professional level in the design of engineering jobs, projects and parts accompanying. The Lead Engineer is responsible to ensure quality and compliance with all relevant codes and standards, as well as maintaining strong client relationships, both internal and external.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES:
• Provide technical and professional training, guidance, instruction and coaching to junior engineers.
• Prepare designs, calculations and drawings from field inspections, preliminary sketches and specifications.
• Ensure compliance with all codes, standards and design criteria
• Specify/design pipeline material selections

TECHNICAL SKILLS REQUIRED:
• Mechanical or civil engineer with EIT and ability to obtain PE within 2 years
• 2-8 years of pipeline engineering experience
• CAD, GIS software, MS Word Technical Writing
• Code Compliance: CFR, ASME, API, ANSI, NACE

Here’s the link to all GTS Career Opportunities: www.jobscore.com/jobs2/gts. To express your interest please click on Lead Engineer.

PRINCIPAL ENGINEER
Seeking a Principle Engineer to provide expert guidance and direction on all engineering related matters in support of the design, specification, fabrication, installation and maintenance of supplier custody transfer stations, city gate stations, transmission pipelines, compressor stations, LNG plant facilities as well as engineering business process improvements.

Please visit https://chj.the.taleo.net/chj01/cas/car reers/requisition.jsp?org=PIEDMONTNG&cws=1&rid=1925

SENIOR RESERVOIR/PRODUCTION ENGINEER
Dominion is hiring a Senior Reservoir/Production Engineer. Must have a Bachelor of Science in geology or a Bachelor of Science in petroleum or geological engineering with at least 5 years of experience along with well production operations and monitoring field storage performance experience.

TYPICAL DUTIES
• Provide leadership and on-site direction in the design and execution of workover procedures (well kill, coiled tubing, etc.) for existing wells and the development of well stimulation treatment program.
• Provide leadership in the development and implementation of formal daily production and pressure quality assurance process.
• Perform inventory verification, deliverability maintenance for existing storage field. Provide project management on other reservoir engineering projects.
• Perform analysis on existing wells to ensure optimal production performance and lead projects or programs to enhance performance as required.
• Communicate regularly with internal partners to ensure proper coordination of all storage related activity.
• Provide project scoping and assist in construction coordination for Storage Station projects

Ensure compliance is maintained with all regulatory requirements throughout DEO’s storage facilities.
• Management and coordination of well testing program for conventional underground reservoir.
• Provide direction to Storage Operations field personnel in daily tasks and resolution of operational issues.
• Provide financial and operational benefit analysis of capital investments in our infrastructure

For more information and to apply, visit www.dom.com/careers and search for job #2015–6336. Dominion will provide relocation benefits if eligible.
These days, for efficiency and decision-making, it is essential to know your assets’ condition and risk.

BY DANIEL BOWMAN AND CHRIS FYNN

ASSET MANAGEMENT

“POWERING YOUR JOURNEY TO SUCCESS”

Since 2000, the natural gas industry has undergone an evolution in managing physical assets. Buffeted by costly capital expenditures and under stricter regulatory scrutiny triggered by catastrophic events and near misses, the industry has embraced asset management as a tool for effective and efficient operations, particularly as the role of natural gas has become more prominent in the energy mix.

Effective asset management hinges on a triangle of key elements—a holistic approach, informed investment decisions and organizational buy-in to manage asset performance, cost and risk—agree North American power and utility executives. Twenty of these leaders convened in Chicago for a May 2014 roundtable, and their views appear in “Asset Management: Powering Your Journey to Success,” a discussion paper by PwC US.

The PwC report examines five key challenges in asset management: Where baseline of asset management capabilities is also essential to targeting initial steps and measuring progress.

LEVERAGE ASSET CONDITION TO MAKE BETTER DECISIONS

An accurate, real-time picture of asset condition is essential to asset management. Gauging condition has moved beyond age-based predictions and now calibrates asset health through an array of factors, including thermography, corrosion and soil conditions. This condition-based “health index” empowers utilities to pinpoint and resolve potential problems.

For example, a Chicago utility adopted a system to rank repair needs, significantly reducing cast/ductile iron main breaks. As a result, even the bitter winter of 2014 didn’t bite as badly as anticipated—a benefit that the utility’s GM attributed to their proactive approach to replacing problematic mains.

GET A HANDLE ON ASSET RISK

Managing asset performance while considering cost and risk in a way that satisfies stakeholders is a complex and continuous task. Regulators especially want authentication of risk management.

Using a matrix that intersects risk likelihood with the costs and consequences of failure, utilities can rank risks by score or color, such as the familiar red, yellow and green. This matrix guides decisions about which risks to mitigate first and how to deploy resources. An Ontario-based utility and its parent company developed a single set of metrics that directly informs the capital budget process. “Risk ranking has helped...”
optimize our spend, ensuring that we have the right priorities for resource allocation,” said its asset management manager.

**MAKE INFORMED ASSET INVESTMENT DECISIONS**

While utilities are handling immediate pressures such as cybersecurity and customer connections, they must also look to the future. The condition-based approach and health indices of asset management help justify investments, allowing companies in rate cases to communicate spending requirements based on a scientific and data-driven approach.

The risk matrix can be enfolded in asset investment planning for identifying investments and optimizing capital spending. One executive said his company’s discussions with regulators center around “risk placement” that details the risks each asset faces and associates rate case dollars with each risk category involved.

**BUILD SUSTAINABILITY**

Asset management’s success depends on changing cultures and engaging employees. When one utility realigned gas operations, it created three divisions. The Asset and Risk Management division identifies the right work, while Finance and Resource Management plans and prioritizes, and Engineering, Construction and Operations does the right work.

Effective asset management requires tearing down silos—as that utility did with cross-organizational committees—and engaging all asset-involved employees in mitigating risks and improving safety. It boils down to three concepts: Know your assets, prioritize what should be done to the assets, and then execute the work. When the work is done, the asset management team is notified so they know the asset has had remediation. In that way, the process pursues a virtuous circle that helps increase efficiency, heightens safety, strengthens customer service and positions gas utilities for the future.

Daniel Bowman is the U.S. Power & Utilities Operations leader, and Chris Fynn is the U.S. Power & Utilities EAM leader for PricewaterhouseCoopers. PwC released the power and utilities discussion paper “Asset Management: Powering Your Journey to Success” in September 2014. For the full report, visit http://pwc.to/1u7DXnV.

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MAKING A DIFFERENCE

FULLY INVOLVED FIREFIGHTERS

NW Natural employees Rob Marcoff (right) and Andrew Woolsey were called “courageous and dedicated volunteer firefighters” when they were honored at the company’s annual Spirit of Giving event with the Volunteers of the Year award for service to their communities. Marcoff is a battalion chief who has been volunteering for the Cornelius Fire Department for 15 years. Woolsey is a lieutenant, EMT, seven-year veteran with Dallas Fire & EMS and president of the Dallas Firefighters Association in Oregon. NW Natural Community Relations Manager Von Summers said they are “outstanding employees who put their hearts, souls and lives on the line for the communities they care about.” Marcoff is a field operations supervisor at NW Natural, while Woolsey is an emergency response specialist. Formerly, they were trainers who served as NW Natural’s fire department liaisons. ♦

Are your employees or company making a difference in your community? Contact Tracy Burleson at tburleson@aga.org to submit your ideas.
NW Natural employees Rob Marcoff (right) and Andrew Woolsey were called "courageous and dedicated volunteer firefighters" when they were honored at the company's annual Spirit of Giving event with the Volunteers of the Year award for service to their communities. Marcoff is a battalion chief who has been volunteering for the Cornelius Fire Department for 15 years. Woolsey is a lieutenant, EMT, seven-year veteran with Dallas Fire & EMS and president of the Dallas Firefighters Association in Oregon.

NW Natural Community Relations Manager Von Summers said they are "outstanding employees who put their hearts, souls and lives on the line for the communities they care about." Marcoff is a field operations supervisor at NW Natural, while Woolsey is an emergency response specialist. Formerly, they were trainers who served as NW Natural's fire department liaisons.

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FULLY INVOLVED FIREFIGHTERS
MAKING A DIFFERENCE

PHOTO PROVIDED BY NW NATURAL.
“The most important questions are the ones we haven’t asked yet.”
– Darby McKee, Analytics Manager

Darby and Fred are the architects for Itron Analytics. Their work has been invaluable – especially within the gas industry.

The key is actionable intelligence. With Itron Analytics, AMI data is proactively managed and interpreted, allowing gas utilities to identify more opportunities to streamline operations and enhance safety. Now, they can quickly act on that knowledge, saving time, money and resources.

According to Darby and Fred, there is no end to what data can do. We’re limited only by our own imagination. We find that pretty exciting, and it’s the perfect way to envision a more resourceful world.

itron.com/resourceful