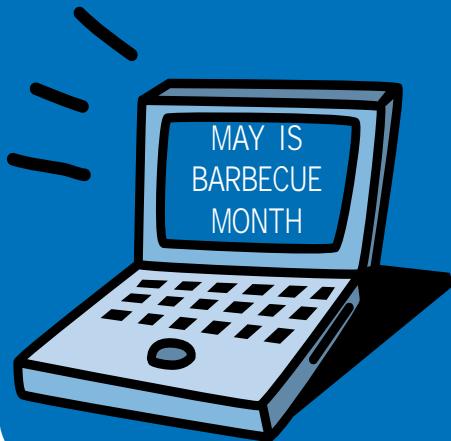


# the Pilot

A newsletter for customers  
of Clearwater Gas System **SPRING 2006**

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# Public Awareness Campaign Enforces Pipeline Safety

What is one of the safest, most reliable and environmentally friendly fuels in use today? If you guessed natural gas, you're in the know. Underground pipelines bring natural gas to millions of homes, businesses and industries throughout the United States. Some two million miles of underground pipelines form an extensive interstate network that safely and reliably transports natural gas throughout the United States. Clearwater Gas is proud to be a part of that system.

To promote safety awareness, Clearwater Gas has joined forces with natural gas pipeline operators to launch a nationwide natural gas awareness campaign designed to educate the public about precautions and actions to take when natural gas odors are detected in the home, workplace, or in the environment. The awareness campaign, mandated by the Office of Pipeline Safety, provides a guidance to be used by operators of petroleum liquids and natural gas pipelines to develop and actively manage a local public awareness campaign.

Clearwater Gas is participating in the national awareness campaign to help educate consumers on how to protect themselves if a natural gas leak occurs. That's why we encourage consumers to learn about natural gas pipelines and the products they carry, as well as a few simple steps to take that will help us ensure pipeline safety in the community:

- o **Look:** Near a gas leak, you may notice blowing dirt, bubbling creeks or ponds, dry spots in moist areas or dead plants surrounded by green, live plants.

- o **Listen:** An unusual hissing sound near gas lines or appliances may indicate a natural gas leak.
- o **Smell:** In it's raw state, natural gas is odorless. Natural gas utilities, like Clearwater Gas, adds a harmless substance called mercaptan to create a rotten-egg-like smell. You should contact Clearwater Gas even if the odor is faint.
- o **Leave:** If you notice any of the above signs, leave the area immediately and contact Clearwater Gas at our emergency number, (727) 462-6633.
- o Watch for markers indicating where natural gas pipelines are located. Pipeline markers include the phone number you should call in case of an emergency.
- o The pipeline route can take twists and turns between markers. Never assume the pipeline lies in a straight line. Always call Sunshine State One Call before you dig.

Clearwater Gas is dedicated to maintaining the safety and well being of the community, and we take seriously our commitment to help educate the public regarding natural gas safety.

*For more information or to request a natural gas safety kit, please call the Clearwater Gas Communication Department at (727) 669-1958, x225.*

# Dolphins and Sea Turtles and Otters - Oh My

## *Special care for special creatures*

What looks like a small whale, has a beak like a snout and lives in warmer climate waters? This sea mammal is also kin to Flipper and lives at the Clearwater Marine Aquarium - it's Nicholas, the bottle nosed dolphin.

Nicholas is one of three dolphins that call the Clearwater Marine Aquarium home. Often called the "window to the sea," the Clearwater Marine Aquarium also serves as a temporary shelter to several other injured mammals and creatures from the sea.

The Clearwater Marine Aquarium, incorporated in 1972, is a non-profit aquarium dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of injured marine life. Unlike most aquariums, the Clearwater Marine Aquarium is a working aquarium providing medical treatment for sick or injured marine animals - - yes, it's a real live animal hospital that you can visit for an up close and personal look at marine life. Although many of these injured or sick animals are subsequently released, some have become permanent residents due to the extent of their injuries or permanent disabilities.

The Clearwater Marine Aquarium's resident animals include a wide variety of

marine life such as loggerhead sea turtles, North American river otters, stingrays, pelicans and a few other animals that are often left on their doorstep.

A team of 25 dedicated staff members and volunteers work around the clock to provide treatment and rehabilitation to the injured and sick marine animals that often become stranded or risk survival in their natural environment. In addition to caring for the fragile marine animals, they also monitor 26 miles of beach from Treasure Island to Caladesi Island.

As you can imagine, this team performs a wide variety of tasks from daily animal feedings to mending the broken wing of an injured pelican. Of course, the overall goal is to help ensure the survival of injured marine life, which is why the aquarium's life support system is so vitally important.

In years past, life support systems were synonymous with the equipment found in hospitals. However, today's life support systems extend far beyond the intensive care room. For instance, the Clearwater Marine Aquarium's 100-kilowatt natural gas generator serves as an emergency back-up during power outages to operate the numerous filters and pumps that marine life so desperately depend upon. The natural gas generator is also a valuable



Nicholas, the bottlenose dolphin, welcomes visitors during the Clearwater Marine Aquarium's Dolphin encounter show.

component to help power the 12 x 24 freezer that stores over 100 pounds of food for the aquarium's marine animals.

"During last year's Hurricane season, prior to the natural gas generator installation, we lost a few of our animals along with a freezer full of food due to power outages. So this season, thanks to our natural gas generator, we are better equipped to provide all of the sustainable needs required to house our animal residents during the upcoming hurricane season," explains Dana Zucker, Clearwater Marine Aquarium's Community Relations Specialist.

You might call the Clearwater Marine Aquarium one of Clearwater's little treasures that is dedicated to marine animal research, animal assisted therapy, conservation and preservation. So, the next time you're in the neighborhood, take a walk on the wet side and visit the Clearwater Marine Aquarium. You can guarantee that it will be a great day, swimming with possibilities of fun and marine education.

*The Clearwater Marine Aquarium offers a host of programs for all ages and volunteers are welcomed. For details contact the aquarium at (727) 441 -1790.*

# Rate Class Affects Annual Propane Customer Charge

Clearwater Gas recently introduced new rate classifications for all residential (LP) propane customers. The change affects the annual propane customer charge for Bulk Bill and Will Call customers as noted below:

**Bulk Bill** customers use several typical “daily use” appliances such as water heating, home heating, clothes drying and cooking. For **Bulk Bill** customers, Clearwater Gas monitors the usage and fills the LP tank as required. The first year’s rate is established based upon the estimated consumption of all gas appliances. Once usage history is established, we then calculate the actual appliance consumption to

determine the appropriate annual customer charge and fuel rate based upon the actual consumption. The new **Bulk Bill** usage classes and annual customer charges for propane are shown within the **Bulk Bill** rate chart.

**Will Call** customers monitor their own gas usage and call us directly for all tank refills. **Will Call** customers typically use propane gas for pool/spa heating, fireplace use, and outdoor grilling, typical “leisure living” appliances. The first year’s rate is established based upon the estimated consumption of the gas appliances. Once a usage history has been established, we then calculate the actual

BULK BILL - ANNUAL CUSTOMER CHARGE (new rate)	
0-60 gallons	\$180.00
60.1-120 gallons	\$144.00
120.1-300 gallons	\$ 72.00
Over 300 gallons	\$60.00

WILL CALL - ANNUAL CUSTOMER CHARGE (new rate)	
0-120 gallons	\$ 120.00
Over 120 gallons	\$ 60.00

appliance consumption to determine the appropriate annual customer charge and fuel rate based upon actual consumption (see new charges above).

At current rates propane gas is 27% cheaper than electricity for typical applications. As a public gas system we are mindful of our obligation to you, our customers, and our community.

*To inquire about your propane gas service, please call Clearwater Customer Service at (727) 562-4600, Monday - Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.*

# In Water Heater Years, She'd be 53 Years Old

That means it's time to upgrade -- your water heater that is, not your dog.

Though there is no dog-to-water heater age ratio that we know of, we wanted to point out that if your water heater is more than 10 years old, it might be time for a replacement. Its true, water heaters are the second biggest energy users in a typical residential home,

ranking behind the heating/cooling system.

Today's high-performance gas water heaters are the most efficient, economical models on the market, and cost less to operate and use less energy than electric water heaters. Consider this, over an average unit's life span (approximately nine years) a gas water heater can save a five-member household up to \$1,400 when



compared with a similar sized electric unit. That means the natural gas water heater can pay for itself after just a few years and save a consumer

nearly \$1,400 in energy costs over the nine-year life of the appliance.

Best of all, as a Clearwater Gas customer you are eligible to receive a \$225 allowance when purchasing a standard tank type or tankless gas water heater from Clearwater Gas.

*For details, call Clearwater Gas at (727) 669-1958, certain restrictions apply.*

# New Tax Credits Encourage Energy Efficiency

New federal tax credits became available this year, on January 1, 2006 encouraging consumers to improve the energy efficiency in their homes.

A variety of tax incentives designed to help existing homes use less energy was part of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, which was signed into law by President Bush last August. Throughout 2006 and 2007, consumers are eligible for a 10% investment tax credit (up to certain maximums) for the money they spend on home energy efficiency improvements, such as new appliances or insulation.

Consumers can receive a one-time tax credit of up to \$500 for installing energy efficient windows, insulation, doors, roofs, and heating and cooling equipment between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2007. To be eligible for the federal tax credits all improvements (listed below) must be "placed in service" from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2007. Improvements include:

- o Gas water heaters.
- o Gas furnace or gas boiler.
- o Exterior windows (Including skylights).
- o Insulation, exterior doors, or pigmented metal roofs.



To qualify, all appliances must meet a specified efficiency rating as issued by the IRS.

Additionally, all improvements must be installed in or on the taxpayer's principal residence in the United States.

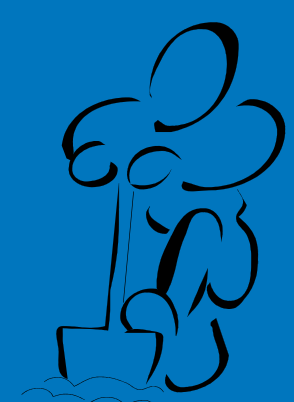
*For details, visit the Alliance to Save Energy's website at [www.energytaxincentives.com](http://www.energytaxincentives.com)*

## What's Under Your Shovel?

It could be the fiber optic system that links your home or business phone and computer to the rest of the world. Or it could be electrical wiring or the service line that brings natural gas into your home or business.

Whatever it is, you *don't* want to dig into it! So before you dig a hole for that fence post or that new fruit tree, find out what lies underneath your grass.

You can avoid a serious accident, or costly repairs, by calling Sunshine State One Call at (800) 432-4770 at least 48 hours prior to digging. The service is free of charge and applies to digging, ditching, drilling, leveling and plowing by hand or machine. It's not just a bright idea - it's the law.

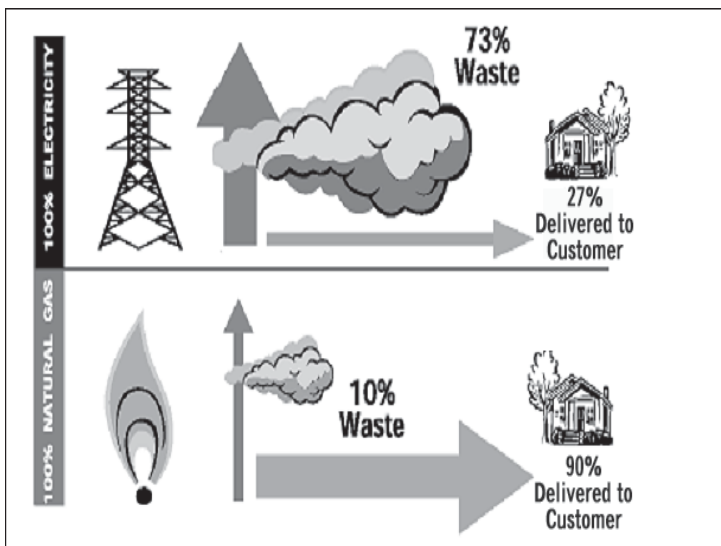


**CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!**

## Energy Efficiency Comparison Natural Gas vs. Electricity

Natural Gas is cleaner and much more efficient than coal-fired electric power.

Consider this, an all-gas 1,500 square foot home in mid-America emits 6,200 pounds of carbon dioxide over a year while the same size home in the same location run completely by electricity emits 19,300 pounds of carbon dioxide.



Source: American Gas Association

# Clearwater Gas names Employee of the Year

Brenda Patrick, Clearwater Gas System's Payroll Technician, was recently named the Clearwater Gas 2005 Employee of the Year.



Brenda, a veteran employee, has over 19 years of service and experience. In her current position, Brenda handles numerous complex payroll duties that require an eye for detail and the ability to juggle multiple tasks. On several occasions, Brenda has been recognized by her peers for her "can-do" attitude. She is always willing to lend a hand whenever and wherever she can. For example, Brenda took on an extra workload in March to assist the gas department during a staff vacancy. She quietly and

efficiently performed her regular duties while supporting the department on a temporary basis. In the words of her Supervisor, Barb Hagen: "Working with an employee of Brenda's caliber has been such a joy. Brenda was recently promoted to a new position, which supports a staff of

over 140 employees. Brenda is highly ethical and kind, living her life through spiritual guidance, which carries over to her daily work. She consistently contributes in all areas with a heart to help the team whenever needed and we are glad that she is apart of our staff."

Brenda's work ethic is a welcomed asset for the City of Clearwater and the Clearwater Gas team and we applaud her efforts. The goal of Clearwater Gas and the City of Clearwater is to appreciate, recognize and reward employees whose character reflects the values of the city and to motivate and encourage employees to strive for excellence.



The month of May not only brings good weather but it is also the kickoff to the grilling season. Stop by the Clearwater Gas Showroom at 2551 Drew Street and bring your coupon to shop for a few great deals on grills.

## contact US

Gas Sales Showroom  
(727) 669-1958, Clearwater  
(727) 816-1253, Pasco

Service and Repair  
(727) 562-4900, ext. 7419

Clearwater Customer  
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## industry news

### Wireless Broadband in Gas Line.

A California startup is testing a new technology that could deliver HDTV and other advanced broadband services over natural gas lines of which there are 63 million serving residences in the United States. The startup company plans to partner with broadband providers to deliver such services as high-speed internet access and high-definition TV through natural gas

lines using wireless technology. The first pilot test is slated for summer 2006.

### Energy use in Florida.

Citizens of the sunshine state spend less per person on energy than any other state in the country - about 20% less than the national average. Additionally, Florida is a testing ground for the hydrogen economy and is home to three nuclear power plants, and a

consortium-led effort to develop one of the cleanest coal-fired power plants in the world.

### Did you Know?

Most idle appliances - TVs, VCRs, cable boxes, CD players, cassette decks, cordless phones, burglar alarms, microwaves - continue to consume energy when switched off. This energy keeps display clocks lit and memory chips and remote controls working.

Research shows that these energy "leaks" account for 5% of total domestic energy consumption, cost more than \$3 billion annually, and spew 18 million tons of carbon into the atmosphere.

Sources: American Gas Association, Department of Energy, Alliance to Save Energy, Carrier Channel



**CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS APPLY.** Coupons are valid only at the Clearwater Gas Showroom and must be presented at time of purchase. This offer may not be combined with other promotional offers. Call Clearwater Gas at (727) 669-1958 for further details. Prior sales excluded.

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