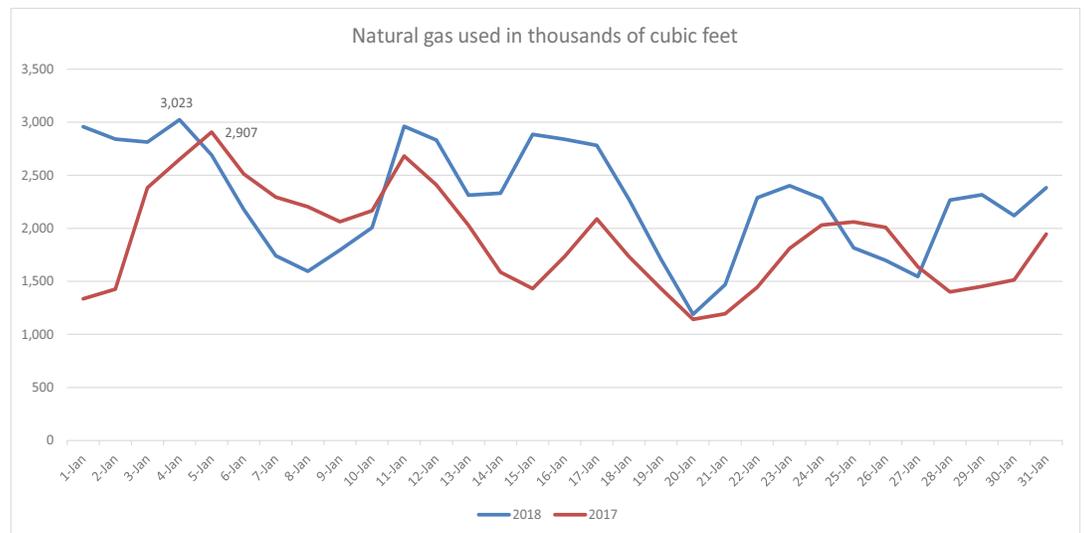


February 2018



Gas use up almost 20%

Spurred on by bone chilling temperatures as the calendar rolled from 2017 to 2018 and a mid-month deep freeze, HMU customers used almost 20% more natural gas in January as they did a year ago. Wind chills of 30 below on January first sent the demand for gas close to the 3,000 cubic feet mark only to be surpassed three days later on January 4th when demand broke through the 3,000 cubic feet barrier. Temperatures plunged again from the 11th through the 17th. Customer use on January 11th exceeded demand from the bitterly cold January first. Temperatures moderated toward the end of the month but seasonal to below average temperatures kept up demand.



The contracted price of gas was down compared to 2017 but when use goes up, heating bills go up too. Electric bills can go up also due to the amount of time furnace blowers run and the use of supplemental heat sources such as space heaters. If you think you are going to have trouble keeping up with your utility bill, please contact us as soon as possible to set up payment arrangements.

This winter reinforces a personal long term strategy is needed to help keep down heating bills. Some things to consider:

- Have your furnace, including furnace filters, serviced on a regular basis. This helps keep them efficient and safe.
- Install the most efficient gas furnace you can. Highly efficient furnaces maximize the heating potential of gas. Rebates are available for 95% and 96% efficient furnaces.
- Take the time in the Fall to winterize. Check doors and windows for leaks. Simply adjusting or replacing weather stripping around doors and windows takes little time or money but pays dividends in January. Seal cracks that allow cold air in.
- Set your own personal home energy policy. Who controls the thermostat? At what temperature will it be set? Will you allow space heaters or encourage money saving sweaters instead?
- Install and use a programmable thermostat. Set the temperatures to fit your lifestyle.
- Insulate attics and walls as much as possible to keep warm air in. Rebates are available for installing insulation.

Gas Connector Safety

Gas connectors are corrugated metal tubes used to connect gas appliances to gas sources. Older gas connectors made of uncoated brass are susceptible to cracking, breaking and deterioration due to moving, bending, corrosion or the way they were made. The connectors have a flaw in how the tubing was joined to the end pieces. Over time, the end pieces can separate and cause a gas leak, which could lead to property damage or injury if not replaced immediately.

To our knowledge, these brass connectors have not been manufactured for over 25 years, but many are still in use. Not all uncoated brass connectors have this flaw, but all should be inspected by a professional and replaced with stainless steel connectors. Gas appliances in your home that should be checked include: range, oven or cook top, clothes dryer, hot water heater or auxiliary area heaters.

Do NOT attempt to move the appliance yourself to check the connector. Contact a licensed plumber or qualified professional appliance repair service to inspect and replace connectors if necessary.

If an HMU employee finds a brass flex connector on an appliance in your home, the appliance will be red tagged and shut off at the appliance, if possible, or gas to the home will be shut off until the line is replaced. This is for your safety.



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Congratulations!

HMU Employees Recognized for Service

Three employees were recognized for their years of service at the January 20th HMU recognition banquet.

20 Years of Service:

Dar Gessert, Director of Electric, Gas and Water

5 Years of Service:

Jacob Jochims, Journeyman Lineman

Brian Lasher, Water Systems Operation Tech