

# ENERGY INSIGHTS

NOVEMBER 2024

A newsletter for residential customers of Holyoke Gas & Electric

For a Spanish version of this piece, please visit [www.hged.com/newsletter](http://www.hged.com/newsletter).  
Para obtener una versión en español de este artículo, visite [www.hged.com/newsletter](http://www.hged.com/newsletter).

## What to Expect for Energy Prices This Winter

In an effort to help our customers prepare for winter, we want to provide current estimates for winter heating costs and information on how to reduce energy consumption and bills.

The United States Energy Information Administration (EIA) projects that natural gas prices will increase by approximately 35% in 2025 compared to average 2024 prices. This projected increase is due to increased global demand for natural gas while production remains relatively flat. Since we and other local natural gas distribution companies do not manufacture natural gas and must purchase it wholesale from pipelines, our local rates are subject to wholesale price volatility.

Based on these EIA projections, HG&E is estimating that winter natural gas bills will be approximately 15% higher than last winter. This amounts to an increase of approximately \$41 per month for the average residential customer. HG&E's fuel procurement hedging strategy for natural gas allows HG&E to strategically manage costs and insulate HG&E customers, to a degree, from some of the most volatile market conditions.

Although New England depends on natural gas to generate almost 50% of the region's electricity, HG&E is less exposed to price volatility thanks to its diverse electric portfolio. This portfolio includes local hydropower, nuclear entitlements, and other generating assets that don't depend on natural gas for production. As a result, HG&E currently projects no electric rate increases for commercial or residential customers in 2025.

HG&E is proud to offer some of the lowest utility rates in the region and we understand that with inflation and the rising cost of everyday expenses, even the slightest increase in energy rates can have a significant impact on our customers.

Please note that in the winter of 2023/2024, HG&E's residential gas rate was approximately 27% less expensive than peer utilities for the average heating customer within the region, and HG&E's electricity rates were approximately 104% lower; saving the average residential customer approximately \$103/month on natural gas and \$85/month on electricity compared to other utilities. For more information, please visit [www.hged.com/rates](http://www.hged.com/rates).

### WAYS TO OFFSET THE ENERGY COSTS

There are simple steps that customers can take to conserve energy and reduce their energy bills. HG&E is urging you to explore our list of energy efficiency rebates and incentives, free energy audits, and energy conservation tips ([hged.com/rebates](http://hged.com/rebates)). In addition, there are a variety of programs available to help customers manage energy expenses, including fuel assistance, payment plans, and HG&E discounts ([hged.com/payments](http://hged.com/payments)). Visit [hged.com/save](http://hged.com/save) or contact Customer Service by calling (413) 536-9300 for additional information.

## RATE COMPARISONS

### LOWEST ELECTRIC RATE



**October 2024:** Residential customer consuming 500 kWh/month. Amounts shown include all discounts and use the fixed default generation supply price.

### LOWEST NATURAL GAS RATE



**October 2024:** Residential customer consuming 45 CCF/month. Amounts shown include all discounts.

# Natural Gas Moratorium

Due to supply constraints during periods of high demand, HG&E issued a natural gas moratorium on all requests for new or increased natural gas service in 2019.

Regionally, the demand for natural gas has outpaced supply, leading to several area utility moratoriums. **If you are doing any work that involves natural gas equipment in your home or business, please ask your contractor to contact HG&E before starting any work in order to avoid any confusion.** At this time, customers cannot add new natural gas equipment or activate an old or abandoned service.



HG&E continues to evaluate options that would alleviate the local natural gas capacity issue and will continue to review new service interest. For more information call **(413) 536-9300** or visit [hged.com/moratorium](http://hged.com/moratorium).

## Natural Gas Interest

If you are interested in natural gas service, please complete the Natural Gas Service Interest Form by visiting [hged.com/NGInterest](http://hged.com/NGInterest).

## Updating Previous Natural Gas Interest *(forms submitted before March 1, 2024)*

Since the moratorium was issued in 2019, HG&E has received several hundred requests for new or increased natural gas service. During this time, some customers have not been able to wait for service and decided to move forward with an alternative solution. If you completed the interest form before March 1, 2024 and are still seeking service, we are asking customers to update interest by visiting [www.hged.com/gasinterest2024](http://www.hged.com/gasinterest2024). HG&E is taking time to clean up our records in order to better understand the community's current interest in Natural Gas service.

## Heating & Cooling Alternative - Mini-Splits & Heat Pumps

Air source heat pumps (also known as mini-splits) are an energy efficient, electric heating and cooling option for homes and businesses. In cooling mode, air source heat pumps operate like a central air conditioner. In heating mode, this advanced technology reverses operation to provide efficient space heating. These systems can help significantly reduce emissions and costs compared to oil, propane or electric resistance heating systems, especially with HG&E's electric mix, which is largely carbon-free! HG&E offers rebates and incentives for qualifying, highly efficient heat pumps. Please visit [hged.com/heatpump](http://hged.com/heatpump) to learn more!



## Weatherization Assistance

Taking steps to air-seal and insulate your home will help reduce overall energy consumption. A tighter, more insulated home will not only save you money on operating costs and reduce your carbon emissions throughout the year -- it may also allow you to buy smaller, less expensive heating and/or cooling equipment in the first place. HG&E offers various incentives to help you weatherize your home including rebates and financial assistance at 0% interest through our Residential Energy Conservation Program. Customers may also be eligible for grants through the Low Income Weatherization Assistance Program. Please visit [hged.com/weatherization](http://hged.com/weatherization) to learn more!



EMPOWERING YOUR WORLD

**HG&E Main Office**  
99 Suffolk Street  
Holyoke, MA 01040  
(413) 536-9300  
[www.hged.com](http://www.hged.com)

**Customer Service Hours:**  
Monday - Friday  
8:30 am - 4:30 pm

**Contact Customer Service:**  
(413) 536-9300  
[customerservice@hged.com](mailto:customerservice@hged.com)

**Marketing/Communications:**  
Kate Sullivan Craven  
[ksullivan@hged.com](mailto:ksullivan@hged.com)

## Payment Options

**Online Payment**  
[www.hged.com/payonline](http://www.hged.com/payonline)

**Phone Payment**  
(413) 536-9300 (Option 5)

**Drive Thru/Walk In**  
99 Suffolk Street  
Holyoke, MA 01040  
(413) 536-9300

**Mail**  
P.O. Box 4165  
Woburn, MA 01888-4165

**Holyoke Drop Boxes**  
HG&E, 99 Suffolk Street  
C-Mart, 1500 Northampton Street  
DB Mart, 494 Westfield Road  
Stop & Shop, 28 Lincoln Street  
Stop & Shop, 2265 Northampton Street  
Holyoke Senior Center, 291 Pine Street

## Holiday Closings

**Veterans' Day**  
Monday, November 11

**Thanksgiving**  
Thursday, November 28  
Friday, November 29

**Christmas Day**  
Wednesday, December 25

**New Years Day**  
Wednesday, January 1

## Commissioners

Francis J. Hoey, III  
Marcos A. Marrero  
James A. Sutter

## Manager

James M. Lavelle

