

If You Smell Natural Gas, Acting Fast Can Save Lives

On December 30 near Ann Arbor, MI, a couple and their adult children were killed when the house they were visiting exploded. The explosion was caused by a natural gas leak.

Closer to home, last March a home in Huntsville was destroyed after a contractor accidentally struck a natural gas line. But fortunately, in the Huntsville explosion, no one was injured.

What made the difference? While we don't know what happened just before the Ann Arbor house exploded, when the Huntsville homeowner smelled natural gas, her first instinct was to get her family out. She was only 25 feet away from the house when it exploded.

About half the homes in the U.S. use natural gas for heating and cooking, and most of the time, it is safe. However, accidents happen. Inside a home, faulty or damaged appliances or pipes can cause a gas leak.

Just as with fire safety, it's up to residents to be vigilant about natural gas safety. Natural gas is odorless. For this reason, Hartselle Utilities

SMELL GAS?  **ACT FAST!**
256-773-2533 or 256-773-2588 or 911

adds a harmless chemical to give natural gas a distinctive smell that's similar to rotten eggs.

"If you smell natural gas, leave the building immediately, and get at least 50 feet away," urges Customer Service Manager Jeremy Dorrance. "Don't flip any light switches, or turn anything that uses electricity on or off. As soon as you are safely away from your house, call Hartselle Utilities. But never call from inside your house – using your phone could create a spark, and that single spark could cause an explosion."

HU crews will come out and investigate, he says. If the problem is internal to the house – whether it's a faulty pipe or an appliance –

they'll turn off the gas until it can be fixed.

Covid can affect someone's sense of smell, and some people, particularly men, lose their sense of smell with age. If you have natural gas and suspect that you might not be able to smell a leak, here are other signs to watch for:

- A hissing sound near a gas line or appliance
- Dying plants in your home
- Physical symptoms, like nausea, fatigue, headaches, and constant ringing in your ears
- An unusually high gas bill

Residents who use natural gas can also buy a natural gas or carbon monoxide detector.

HU General Manager Bob Sittason says that several times, customers have put off calling HU for a suspected gas leak because they don't want to be a bother, especially after hours or on weekends.

"That's what we're here for, no matter what time of day it is," Sittason explains. "And, there's no cost for us to come check it out. It's always better to be safe than sorry."

Hartselle Utilities Board of Directors Changes

Hartselle Utilities gratefully recognizes two long-serving members of the Hartselle Utilities Board of Directors, Ferrell Vest and Terry Phillips, who stepped down from the Board in December.



Terry Phillips

Phillips, owner of Phillips Accounting & Tax Service, served on our board for 18 years; Vest served for six.

"When the City Council chose me to go back on the board, five years after I retired as general manager, I was happy to reengage," Vest said.

"Hartselle Utilities has some challenges ahead, particularly with the sewer system," he continued. "Bob Sittason and his staff are staying ahead of the curve, making sure they've got the people and the equipment in place to get the job done. There's no doubt in my mind that they're headed in the right direction."



Ferrell Vest

We are thrilled to announce two additions to the Hartselle Utilities Board of Directors, Johnnie Howell and Ben Peck.

Howell brings a wealth of experience from his career in the finance and banking industry. His commitment to financial stewardship and strategic planning will undoubtedly contribute to the continued success of Hartselle Utilities.



Members of the Board of Directors of Hartselle Utilities: Left to right (front) Barry Hampton, Mike Gunter, Jimmy Moore; (back) Ben Peck, Johnnie Howell

Peck is a professional engineer with Southern Company who has an extensive background in civil engineering. We anticipate that his engineering prowess will be instrumental in addressing the evolving challenges and opportunities in the utility sector.

Both Howell and Peck share a common thread – their deep-rooted connection to Hartselle. As we welcome them, we look forward to a future marked by collaborative leadership, strategic vision, and a continued commitment to providing exceptional utility services for the residents of Hartselle.

HU Recognizes Employees for Years of Service

These are our employees who achieved five-year anniversaries in 2022. Thank you for your dedication.

20 years of service: Bo Cowart, Gas System Controller; Brian Kelsoe, Warehouse Coordinator; Matthew Reeves, Serviceman

15 years of Service: Greg Knighten, Field Operations Equipment Operator

10 years of service: Jonathan Kilpatric, Field Operations Equipment Operator; Brian Hill, Field Operations Installer

5 years of service: Kody Turner, Meter Reader

PHOTOS BY RACHEL HOWARD,
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Bo Cowart



Brian Kelsoe



Matthew Reeves



Greg Knighten



Jonathan Kilpatric



Brian Hill



Kody Turner

Fond Farewells & Congratulations

It is with mixed emotions that we bid farewell to two outstanding members of the Hartselle Utilities family, each of whom has left an indelible mark on our organization through years of dedicated service and unwavering commitment.

Tim Mitchell recently retired from his role as Customer Service Manager. Tim's expertise and leadership have been instrumental in the smooth functioning of our financial and customer service operations. His 11 years of service have been marked by a tireless commitment to excellence, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude for his invaluable contributions to Hartselle Utilities.



Tim Mitchell

We also bid a fond farewell to Rex Higgins, who dedicated an impressive 20 years to Hartselle Utilities. Rex served in the Field Operations department as an installer for water, sewer, and natural gas services. His two decades of hard work and expertise have played a crucial role in ensuring the reliability and efficiency of our utility services. We thank Rex for his years of service and wish him a well-deserved retirement filled with joy and relaxation.



Rex Higgins

In light of Tim's retirement, we are delighted to share that Jeremy Dorrance, a seasoned professional with 13 years of invaluable experience at Hartselle Utilities, has been promoted to the position of Customer Service Manager. Jeremy's wealth of knowledge and proven leadership make him the perfect candidate to steer our Customer Service team to new heights.



Jeremy Dorrance

Additionally, we are excited to introduce Raegon Sanders, who has been promoted to the role of Customer Service Assistant Manager. Raegon has demonstrated exceptional dedication and proficiency during her time with us, and we have full confidence in her ability to support Jeremy in the continued success of our Customer Service department.

Please join us in congratulating Jeremy and Raegon. We are confident that their leadership will contribute to HU's continued success and excellence.



Raegon Sanders



A group of dedicated HU employees participated in the Hartselle Christmas Parade, spreading joy and holiday cheer throughout the community. Their hard work and creativity paid off, as the HU float clinched 2nd place in the parade! A special shoutout goes to David Taylor, whose leadership and tireless efforts played a crucial role in bringing the float to life. His creativity and dedication, along with the collaborative spirit of everyone involved, resulted in a stunning display that captured the magic of the season. Thank you to all the team members who contributed their time, energy, and talent to make this achievement possible. It's heartening to see our HU family come together to celebrate the holidays and bring smiles to the faces of those in our community.

2024 Calendars Still Available!



Hartselle Utilities calendars feature art from local 4th grade students for each month. Calendars are available in our lobby.

Manage Your Account Online



CUSTOMER PORTAL



MOBILE APP

Scan the above codes with your smartphone to access Hartselle Utilities' Customer Portal or to install our Mobile App.

Hartselle Recycling Calendar

March '24						
Sun	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

April '24						
Sun	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May '24						
Sun	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June '24						
Sun	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29



For the full Recycling Pickup Calendar and Zone Map, visit hartselle.org or call (256) 773-2643

Have a non-emergency question or a question about your bill? Email us at inquiries@hartselleutilities.org. We try to respond to billing and general questions within 24 hours; service issues that need investigation may take up to 48 hours. **To report a gas leak, sewer backup or power outage, call our office.** Our phones are answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During business hours (M-F, 7:30 am - 4:30 pm), call (256) 773-3340. After hours, call (256) 773-2533 or (256) 773-2588.



256-773-2533 or 256-773-2588
or 911



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