

Your Rights & Responsibilities as a Dominion East Ohio Customer

2011

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Your Rights & Responsibilities

as a Dominion East Ohio Customer

Fall 2010

As a Dominion East Ohio customer, you have many important rights and responsibilities to ensure fair dealings between you and the company. These rights and responsibilities are afforded to you by the Ohio Minimum Gas Service Standards contained within Chapter 4901:1-13 of the Ohio Administrative Code. You may obtain a copy of the standards by calling the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) toll-free at 1-800-686-7826 or TTD/TTY toll-free at 1-800-686-1570, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays or visit www.puco.ohio.gov.

You, the customer, have the responsibility to know your rights and obligations as they relate to your gas service.

These rights and responsibilities include:

- Your right to a clear and concise bill.
- Your right to check your Dominion East Ohio bill for accuracy.
- Your right to fair credit and deposit policies.
- Your responsibility to pay your bill.
- Your right to question or disagree with Dominion East Ohio.
- Your right to receive continuous Dominion East Ohio service if you meet your responsibilities.
- Your responsibility to provide access to the gas meter.
- Your right to be present at meter tests performed per your request.

Dominion East Ohio's rights and responsibilities include:

- Our right to access metering equipment for the purpose of reading, replacing, repairing or testing the meter, or determining that the installation of the metering equipment is in compliance with the company's requirements.
- Our responsibility to honor all of the rights of the customer.
- Our responsibility to protect customer privacy rights.
- Our responsibility to provide natural gas service in a safe and reliable manner.
- Our responsibility to respond to natural gas related emergency situations.
- Our responsibility to offer billing and customer service help.
- Our right to disconnect gas service that is used in an unsafe or fraudulent manner.

This pamphlet highlights questions you may have about Dominion East Ohio's meter reading, billing, credit, shutoff and dispute practices, as well as installation procedures, pipeline safety and responsibility.

DOMINION EAST OHIO: 1-800-362-7557 Customer Service Center hours: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday
Gas Emergencies: 1-877-542-2630 *Emergency number staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week*

HOW IS YOUR DOMINION EAST OHIO BILL FIGURED?

It all begins with a meter reading. Dominion East Ohio has the responsibility to present you with a bill for your natural gas service once every billing period. This bill will be based on either a meter reading (according to the meter reading schedule for your service location) or an estimate.

THE DOMINION EAST OHIO METER AND METER READINGS

When meter readers and field service employees visit your residence to obtain a meter reading, they will carry photo identification, which you may ask to see for your protection. Please call the company immediately if you have questions about the identity of an employee.

The meter is the property of Dominion East Ohio. You are legally prohibited from removing and/or tampering with the meter. You have the responsibility to keep the meter free from obstructions by restraining pets and by removing obstacles (for example, overgrown shrubs). You have the responsibility to provide access to the meter. Not granting access to the meter could result in a loss of service.

Dominion East Ohio must read the gas meter at least once every 12 months.

In addition:

- You may also request, without charge, two additional meter readings per calendar year if your natural gas usage has been estimated for two bills in a row or if you have reason to believe that the meter is malfunctioning.
- You may request a meter reading prior to transferring service to an Energy Choice supplier or community aggregator.
- If service is started or stopped and it has been more than 70 days since the last actual reading, the company must read the meter.
- You may request a special test of the gas meter. You or your representative have a right to witness the test. The test results will be provided in writing to you within 10 days of the test.
- If the results of the test fall within acceptable limits as set by the section 4933.09 of the Ohio Revised Code, you must pay a \$40 or \$270 fee based on the meter size. Dominion East Ohio will inform you of which fee will apply prior to performing the meter test. If the test results are outside of the acceptable limits, then the company will not charge a fee. Dominion East Ohio will also provide a replacement meter without charge to you.
- Upon completion of the test, the company will credit you for any overcharges or bill the customer for any undercharges. For undercharges, the company may charge you for up to 12 months of unbilled gas usage.

Your Rights & Responsibilities as a Dominion East Ohio Customer

Supply Your Own Meter Readings

Supplying your own meter readings is especially beneficial to customers still on a bi-monthly meter reading schedule. At the top of your billing statement, Dominion East Ohio provides the next scheduled dates that our meter reader will be working in your area. If your meter is read by an employee on foot, you will also find information at the top of your bill about the dates and times that you can report a meter reading. Reporting a meter reading avoids an estimated bill during the months we do not read your meter or in case our meter reader is unable to access the meter. To report a reading, your options include:

1. Report your meter reading on the Internet.

To enter a meter reading online, sign in or register in Manage Your Account at www.dom.com.

2. Report your meter reading by telephone.

Use our 24-hour automated messaging system to report your reading by calling toll-free 1-800-362-7557.

YOUR MONTHLY BILLING STATEMENT

When Do You Estimate My Bill?

In those months when your gas meter is not scheduled to be read, Dominion East Ohio estimates your bill. Your bill may also be estimated when extreme weather conditions, emergencies, strikes, or other circumstances prevent the company from taking a meter reading. The estimate is based on previous usage history (past meter readings) at your location.

Another time your bill may be estimated is when the meter reader cannot gain access to your meter. When this happens, the company still has a responsibility to take an actual meter reading every 12 months. You have the responsibility to make arrangements for meter readings if the meter is in a locked place. If your bill has been estimated for several months, your actual bill may be more or less than the estimated bills according to the reading obtained.

HOW TO CHECK YOUR DOMINION EAST OHIO BILL FOR ACCURACY

If you think that your bill is incorrect, you can check it in the following way:

Read your meter if you question the amount of gas you have used. But remember that your usage will have increased between the time Dominion East Ohio read your meter and when you take the reading. For this reason, your reading may be somewhat higher than the reading listed on your bill.

Compare the bill to the one you received at the same time last year to see if there is any change in your usage. Remember to compare differences in usage rather than differences in the total dollar amount of the bills since changes in rates could cause a difference. Your bill may have a bar chart that shows your usage for the past 13 months. You should consider severe weather conditions and changes in living habits (such as additions to your house, a new gas appliance, additional family members, or more time spent at home) that could increase the amount of your usage. You have a right to request usage history on your account for up to 12 months.

Contact Dominion East Ohio with any additional questions about your bill.

Bill comparison information, rate information and alternative rate schedules, copies of bills, statement of account and usage history can be obtained online at www.dom.com or by calling 1-800-362-7557, Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Billing Errors & Adjusted Bills

Sometimes billing errors do occur. These mistakes could be caused by a Dominion East Ohio billing error, equipment failure or our inability to gain access to the meter to read it, resulting in a number of low or high estimated bills. When this happens, Dominion East Ohio must refund or credit your account with any over-collected amounts. Likewise, if you have used more gas than the amount you were billed, you must pay the additional charge to Dominion East Ohio. However, the company must offer you a reasonable payment agreement for the additional amount owed. You do not have to pay this amount in a lump sum; rather, you can pay it back over 12 months.

In cases where we are unable to access the meter, the company will continue to make attempts to read it. However, your actions that prevent us from reading the meter could result in large billing adjustments that require you to pay large sums for gas used but not billed and/or properly metered.

RATES

Rate information and alternative rate schedules may be obtained online at www.DominionGasChoice.com, www.dom.com or by calling 1-800-362-7557, Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Energy Choice and Aggregation Programs

Dominion East Ohio offers *Energy Choice*, a program that provides potential savings, as well as expanded energy options, to eligible customers. It allows customers to buy natural gas from another supplier. Regardless of the customer's choice, Dominion East Ohio continues to deliver the gas, respond to natural gas related emergency situations and provide quality customer service - just as it does today. Some suppliers permit their customers to transfer their natural gas supply agreement to a new location when they move. Customers should check with their supplier to learn if this option is available.

To participate in *Energy Choice*, you must be current on your account or have not broken a payment plan more than once in the last 12 months. If you are current on your *Budget Billing* plan, you may enroll in *Energy Choice* as well. When you enroll in *Energy Choice*, it may take up to 60 days before you will see your new supplier's charges on your bill. Before Dominion East Ohio changes your supplier, however, the company will send you a confirmation letter. You then have until the stated deadline to rescind the supplier change.

Today, most of our customers purchase their natural gas supply from one of the many suppliers participating in the program. Many customers may even be able to buy natural gas as part of a buying group sponsored by their local government.

In Ohio, buying natural gas in such a group is called a *Community Buying Program* or aggregation. To aggregate, cities, counties and townships can form buying groups and choose an outside supplier for all members in the group.

Your Rights & Responsibilities as a Dominion East Ohio Customer

Not every gas customer in a locality has to participate in an aggregated group. The law allows individuals to either “opt-out” or “opt-in,” depending on the group.

PIPP Plus and *Graduate PIPP Plus* customers are unable to participate in *Energy Choice*. They receive their natural gas at Dominion East Ohio’s *Standard Service Offer (SSO)* rate.

The *Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO)* must certify suppliers and governmental aggregators. *PUCO* certification means the supplier or aggregator has met the *PUCO*’s requirements for doing business in Ohio. Therefore, customers can participate with confidence. Customers who have questions about their community’s aggregation plans can call their local government office.

For more information about the *Energy Choice* program, you can:

- Call the *Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) Consumer Hotline* at 1-800-686-PUCO (7826) or visit the *PUCO* Website at www.puco.ohio.gov. To receive free information by mail, such as an “Apples to Apples” chart that compares suppliers’ offers, you can call the *PUCO*’s toll-free Gas Choice Infoline at 1-800-299-7271, or visit its website.
- Call the office of the *Ohio Consumers’ Counsel (OCC)* at 1-877-PICKOCC (1-877-742-5622), or visit its website at www.pickocc.org. The *OCC* can provide price comparison information as well.
- Visit www.DominionGasChoice.com. This website will help you make informed choices concerning natural gas purchase and consumption. It contains helpful links for residential and business users and community leaders.

Customers can contact Dominion East Ohio, the *PUCO* or *OCC* if they suspect a supplier has enrolled them without their authorization.

Standard Choice Offer (SCO)

The Standard Choice Offer is a regulated monthly rate set according to the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX). All *Energy Choice*-eligible customers who have not selected a supplier or joined an aggregation program are assigned a supplier and billed at the *SCO* rate. Customers who were enrolled in an *Energy Choice* aggregation program with an opt-out option and cancelled their contract, or the aggregation contract expired, will receive the Standard Service Offer (*SSO*) for 2 months. With the third bill, they will move to *SCO* unless they have enrolled with a new supplier.

Every customer assigned to a supplier will pay the same monthly *SCO* rate regardless of supplier. This rate is based on the results of an auction approved by the *PUCO*. Your supplier name will show on your bill to let you know who is supplying your gas.

All *Energy Choice*-eligible customers can request this rate schedule at anytime by contacting Dominion East Ohio at 1-800-362-7557, Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Monthly Variable Rate (MVR)

Monthly Variable Rate (*MVR*) is an unregulated rate which cannot be predetermined. *Energy Choice*-eligible and Aggregation Opt-In customers are first placed on the Standard Service Offer (*SSO*) for two billing periods or about 60 days after their former contracts have expired or were canceled by the customer. During this time,

if the customer does not make a choice and remains choice eligible, the customer will be moved to the *MVR* with their third bill. A bill message will tell *MVR* customers what their options are.

To avoid going to the *MVR*, former *Energy Choice*-eligible and Aggregation Opt-In customers can request to go straight to the *SCO* during the two billing periods they are placed on *SSO* after their previous offer expires.

As an eligible *Energy Choice* customer, you can select a supplier or join an aggregation program at any time. Dominion East Ohio will continue to deliver natural gas to all customers as well as offer payment plans and provide other customer service, including emergency calls.

Dominion East Ohio recommends all eligible customers consider their *Energy Choice* options. Because new offers come out from time to time, customers should continue to review information available on www.DominionGasChoice.com.

Separate Charges

Dominion East Ohio may charge for a non-basic service on your gas bill. However, the company must present this charge clearly and separately on your bill. Some examples of these non-basic charges are: meter testing fees, investigation fee, returned payment fee, line extension costs, and special construction or repair charges as well as a Late Payment Charge (*LPC*) on the past-due balance or past-due payment plan amount.

Budget Billing - Plan Your Expenses

Residential and small commercial customers may participate in *Budget Billing* from Dominion East Ohio. *Budget Billing* is an agreement you make with the company to have your bills averaged throughout the year. The company will periodically review and adjust the amount of your budget bill based on your usage and the price you are paying for natural gas. You will be billed for approximately the same amount each month even though your usage may vary from season to season. You can join at any time, providing that you do not have any past-due charges. *PIPP Plus* and *Graduate PIPP Plus* customers are not eligible to participate in *Budget Billing*.

The *Budget Billing* program may make it easier for you to plan your natural gas expenses. For more information about *Budget Billing*, visit www.dom.com or call the company.

If You Move

If you plan to move, you have the responsibility to notify Dominion East Ohio at least seven days before your moving date. You also have the responsibility of giving the company access to your meter for a final reading and shut-off. If you fail to do either of these things, you may have to pay for service at your old address even after you move.

If You Will Be Away From Home

If you plan to be away from home for a long period of time, you have the responsibility to make arrangements for paying your bills and for granting company representatives access to metering equipment. Remember, your Dominion East Ohio service continues even while you are away and you will be billed during your absence. Your failure to make arrangements for payment of these bills could result in the shut-off (disconnection) of your service.

Your Rights & Responsibilities as a Dominion East Ohio Customer

Third-Party Notification - Extra Protection

Third-Party Notification allows you to choose another person to receive copies of shut-off notices that are sent to you for nonpayment of overdue Dominion East Ohio bills. *Third-Party Notification* provides additional protection against natural gas service shut-off. This option protects individuals who may either be away from home for an extended time period or those who may not understand the company's practices.

By filling out a form, you can instruct Dominion East Ohio to send these notices to a third party that you choose. In this way, another individual (e.g., family member or close friend) is made aware of an important problem. Perhaps this person can provide you with advice or assistance. Both yourself and the third party must sign the form; however, this third party does not have the responsibility for paying your bills!

You may obtain forms and further information concerning this option by visiting the company's website at www.dom.com or by calling the company.

LANDLORD AND TENANT INFORMATION

Tenants -

For Those Served by a Master Meter (a meter serving more than one unit or a common area) and Service is in Your Landlord's Name

If your landlord either fails to pay Dominion East Ohio bills for your residence or instructs Dominion East Ohio to shut off your service, you must be notified by Dominion East Ohio in writing. A notice is posted at the service address that states that the tenant, within 10 days of the notice or 14 days after service was shut off, may act as a representative or have another tenant act as a representative to resolve the issue. This representative may then collect from the tenants the amount owed by the landlord on his or her current bill while continuing to pay rent, or notify the landlord that you intend to pay your rent to the court (escrow your rent). If your landlord gave you written notice when you moved in that he or she owns fewer than four dwelling units, the option to escrow your rent is not available.

Landlords -

- You have the right to request that Dominion East Ohio transfer the service in to your name automatically whenever a tenant requests a turnoff of service. This option does not apply if service is turned off for nonpayment. To obtain a form, visit www.dom.com or call the company.
- All landlords with available contact information will be notified any time the tenant's service is turned off, regardless of the reason.
- When a tenant requests that the company turn off gas service, Dominion East Ohio will make every effort to do so. However, if the company cannot access the meter to turn it off and the tenant moves out, Dominion East Ohio will notify you that it needs access to the meter. If access is not granted, all future gas usage will be billed to the landlord after the landlord has been properly notified of the change.

PAYING YOUR DOMINION EAST OHIO BILL

When to Pay

You have a responsibility to pay the bill by the due date. After the bill is mailed to you, you have 14 days to pay it. All Dominion East Ohio customers will be assessed a Late Payment Charge (LPC) on the past due balance or past due payment plan amount.

Where to Pay

Dominion East Ohio offers a variety of options to make paying your bill quick and easy.

- **Dominion eBill:** Enroll in eBill at www.dom.com and make your payment from your bank account. Once you enroll in this free service, you may view and pay your monthly Dominion bill online.
- **Bank Draft:** Never write another check. Your bill payment is automatically deducted from your bank account. This is a free program. To enroll or obtain a form, visit www.dom.com or call the company.
- **Credit/Debit Card or Electronic Check:** When you need to make a payment immediately, you can do so by phone at 1-800-573-1153 or at www.dom.com. Fees apply.
- **MyCheckFree.com:** View and pay your bill with CheckFree™. Enroll at MyCheckFree.com or a participating provider's website. Providers may charge fees for this service.
- **Authorized Payment Centers:** When you want to make a payment in person, you can visit an authorized payment center. Some locations offer evening and weekend hours. The payment agents may charge a fee of up to two times the cost of a first class postage stamp per transaction. For payment locations, visit www.dom.com or call Dominion East Ohio.
- **U.S. Mail:** Mail a check or money order. Please include your account number for quick processing. If you choose to mail your payment, Dominion East Ohio and its depository bank may not return the original check. However, you can request an imaged copy of your check. Please allow 5-7 days for payments to be applied to your account.

CREDIT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As the customer of record, you are responsible for:

- payment of services rendered;
- granting Dominion access to company equipment located at your service address; and
- starting or stopping Dominion service.

We safeguard your personal information. For your protection, you can conduct transactions once you provide your account number and the last 4 digits of your Social Security Number, or a security password, if you establish one. Of course, at your option, you can provide your complete Social Security Number, your name and service address. Likewise, a co-applicant (another individual who has agreed to be jointly responsible for payment) can conduct full business transactions on your account.

Other people, including your spouse or adult child, can conduct limited business on your account, if they can provide your account number, your full name, and service address. This limited business would include your current bill amount, notice amount and due date. They can also request a short-term extension or a medical certificate. To perform transactions as an accountholder, this person would need a valid Power of Attorney.

Your Rights & Responsibilities as a Dominion East Ohio Customer

Security Deposits

If you are a new customer, the company may check your credit history and level of credit risk. New customers may be required to pay a security deposit, secure a credit-worthy guarantor, or provide a letter of credit from a similar utility.

Dominion East Ohio may require a security deposit from you as a former or existing customer if:

- You have not paid your entire bill or payment plan amount by the due date, you may be subject to a deposit on your account, should the required payment include a previous balance.
- You have unpaid final balances from past accounts.
- You have not established a good credit history and have more than one disconnection notice for nonpayment within the past 12 months.
- You had service shut off for nonpayment.
- You are in bankruptcy.
- You have been involved with unauthorized usage of gas, theft of service or meter tampering.
- Your service has been shut off because of unpaid gas bills.

Security deposits are billed in three, equal, consecutive monthly installments. When gas service is off, before service can be turned back on, you must pay any outstanding debt or payment plan arrears on that particular account for Dominion East Ohio gas service. If you fail to maintain a good payment record, the company may request an additional security deposit amount.

Security deposits for customers are set at 1.3 times the current budget amount, and are applied to residential account balances following one year of in full timely consecutive payments, in addition to 3% interest. The minimum residential security deposit amount is \$25. Commercial security deposits may be applied to account balances following two years of full timely consecutive payments, in addition to 3% interest. The minimum commercial security deposit is \$200.

In addition, before providing service, Dominion East Ohio may require that you pay any past-due balances you owe the company on any Dominion East Ohio account that has not been final billed or that was final billed less than six years ago.

When applying for service at a location where there is an unpaid balance owed to Dominion, even if you were not the customer of record when the unpaid bills accumulated, if you resided at the premise during that time and the former customer of record continues to reside at that location, Dominion East Ohio may refuse to provide service to you until those bills are paid.

If you are a *PIPP Plus* or *Graduate PIPP Plus* customer, you will not be required to pay a security deposit unless you have been involved with unauthorized use of gas, fraud, theft of service or meter tampering.

Supplying a Third-Party Guarantor

Instead of paying a cash deposit, residential customers can secure another credit-worthy customer to sign a form guaranteeing that your bills will be paid. This person must be a Dominion East Ohio customer in good standing. Upon Dominion East Ohio's approval of a guarantor, this person will then become responsible for paying the default amount which will not be more than the amount of the bill for 60 days of service or two monthly bills.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Contact Dominion East Ohio as soon as you get a delinquent notice. The sooner you call, the more opportunities there are to help you. We can discuss a variety of special payment plans and other payment assistance options. Here are a few:

Medical Certification

Medical Certification delays a shutoff for 30 days when it would be especially dangerous to the health of a permanent member of your household. It allows you time to get financial help or make payment arrangements. **It does not reduce the amount you owe.** You can get a Medical Certification form by calling the company. A licensed physician, physician assistant, clinical nurse specialist, certified nurse practitioner, certified nurse, midwife or local board of health physician must sign the form. If one of these medical professionals notifies Dominion East Ohio of the Medical Certification by phone, they must provide a written form within seven days. If gas service is off, return the signed form within 21 days of the shut off date to restore service. Be sure to give your health care provider permission to release your medical condition to us. The total certification period cannot exceed 90 days per household in any 12-month period. **All returned payment items must be paid before a medical certification will be accepted.**

EnergyShare

EnergyShare is a Dominion East Ohio sponsored fuel assistance program of last resort designed to help eligible customers pay their winter heating bill. To be eligible for *EnergyShare*, the applicant must meet *HEAP* and *PIPP Plus* Guidelines, live within the company's service area, have a termination notice and must have exhausted all other state and federal fuel assistance resources. Seniors, age 60 and older, do not have to have a termination notice. Contact your local Salvation Army office to apply after January 2.

Housewarming Program

Funded by Dominion East Ohio, the *Housewarming Program* provides weatherization assistance to help income eligible customers reduce their energy usage. The program provides free weather-stripping, attic and sidewall insulation, door sweeps and other insulation devices. Client education is also part of the *Housewarming Program* to educate consumers on ways to reduce consumption effectively. For information, call Cleveland Housing Network (CHN) at 1-888-377-3774.

PIPP Plus*

PIPP Plus helps income-eligible customers maintain gas service by paying 6 percent of their total monthly household income or \$10 monthly, whichever amount is greater. To be eligible, the total household income must be at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level. Customers can apply for *PIPP Plus* by calling the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) at 1-800-282-0880 or by visiting a local Home Energy Assistance Provider. *PIPP Plus* replaces the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP).

Important PIPP Plus Terms

- **Anniversary date** - the date you signed up for *PIPP Plus*. Your arrearage credits are calculated at this time and you must be current on any missed *PIPP Plus* payments. You will have one billing cycle to make up any missed payments or be removed from *PIPP Plus* and your entire balance will become due.

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Re-verification date - the actual date you submit documentation of your household income. Since you are required to reverify any change in household size and income, your re-verification date may change from year to year (in other words, you must re-verify whenever any change in household size or income occurs).

As part of the *PIPP Plus* program, the company will provide the following benefits when payments are made in full by the due date:

- You will be credited the difference between your monthly *PIPP Plus* payment and the current month's gas usage charges.
- You will be credited 1/24th of your previous account balance calculated at your *PIPP Plus* anniversary date.

If at any point you fail to make your *PIPP Plus* payment in full by the due date, you will not receive the on-time balance reduction or the 1/24th credit. If you skip a monthly *PIPP Plus* payment, your account becomes subject to the disconnection process. However, the company will not cancel any credits you have already received.

Remember, while on *PIPP Plus*, you are still legally responsible for your entire utility bill. However, the company cannot shut off service if you make all *PIPP Plus* payments in full by each due date and apply for the *Home Energy Assistance Program* and the *Home Weatherization Assistance Program*.

If you are no longer on *PIPP Plus*, *Graduate PIPP Plus* can help you gradually pay off your total account balance. This option is only available for the 12 months immediately following your removal from *PIPP Plus*.

Graduate PIPP Plus*

The *Graduate PIPP Plus* amount is calculated as the average of the most recent *PIPP Plus* amount and the utility calculated budget billing amount.

As part of the *Graduate PIPP Plus*, the company will provide the following benefits when payments are made in full by the due date:

- You will be credited the difference between your monthly *Graduate PIPP Plus* payment and the current month's gas usage charges.
- You will be credited 1/12th of your previous account balance calculated at your *Graduate PIPP Plus* enrollment date.

If at any point you fail to make your *Graduate PIPP Plus* payment in full by the due date, you will not receive the on-time balance reduction or the 1/12th credit. If you skip a monthly *Graduate PIPP Plus* payment, your account becomes subject to the disconnection process. However, the company will not cancel any credits you have already received.

Remember, while on *Graduate PIPP Plus*, you are still legally responsible for your entire utility bill. However, the company cannot shut off service if you make all *Graduate PIPP Plus* payments in full by each due date and apply for the *Home Energy Assistance Program*, if you are still income-eligible.

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)*

Available to qualified income-eligible customers, *HEAP* is a government program that provides a one-time credit for your heating bill. Although *HEAP* pays part of your gas bill, it is not a guarantee against shutoff. The filing deadline is usually May 31.

Winter Crisis Program (WCP)*/Emergency HEAP (E-HEAP)*

E-HEAP provides an emergency payment once each heating season to qualified income-eligible customers to help them avoid a shutoff or restore gas service. Program dates are normally November 1 through March 31.

Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP)*

Eligible customers may also receive *Weatherization Assistance* from the Ohio Department of Development. This federally funded program provides grants for weatherization repairs. For details, call the *HEAP* office at 1-800-282-0880.

***NOTE:** You can apply for *PIPP Plus*, *HEAP*, *WCP* and *HWAP* on the combined Energy Assistance Program application. The form is available at post offices, libraries, by calling the Ohio *HEAP* office at 1-800-282-0880 or by downloading the application from the ODO website at www.development.ohio.gov.

CAN YOUR DOMINION EAST OHIO SERVICE BE SHUT OFF WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT?

Yes. The company can shut off service for nonpayment, theft of service, tampering, safety violations and for denying company representatives access to company equipment. If you have difficulty in paying your bills or if you are not making payments for any other reason, contact Dominion East Ohio as soon as possible. By notifying the company immediately, you may avoid shut-off of your service. Also, company representatives must have clear access to metering equipment. The following information concerns both your rights and responsibilities regarding service shut-off.

PAYMENT PROGRAMS

A payment plan is an agreement you reach with Dominion East Ohio to make reasonable payments over a period of time for the amount of money that you owe.

If you join any of the following payment plans, you must make the required payments in full by the due date. If you fail to do so and are shut off, you must pay the plan arrears to restore service. A reconnection fee of \$33 will be billed to your account. In addition, a new or additional security deposit amount will be billed to your account in three equal, consecutive, monthly installments.

(The only exceptions are for *PIPP Plus* and *Graduate PIPP Plus* customers, who do not pay a security deposit, or for customers who move to a new location and have closed their previous account. They do not pay a reconnection fee.)

Instead of paying a security deposit, residential customers can secure another credit-worthy customer to sign a form guaranteeing that your bills will be paid. (For details, please see "Supplying a Third Party Guarantor" section on page 5).

PAYMENT PROGRAM OPTIONS

The following payment program options are only available if you are not a *PIPP Plus* or *Graduate PIPP Plus* customer.

- **Budget** - You can level your monthly payment amounts by paying a specific pre-determined amount every month. You will pay your average gas usage amount over the past 12 months, adjusted for current rates. This plan will be reviewed periodically based on significant changes in your gas usage or rates, so that you only pay for what you owe.

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- **Budget Plus** -You can pay a special budget amount, plus one of 12 equal payments of your past-due amount.
- **Current Plus (1/6th Payment Plan)** - The duration of this plan is 6 months. We divide your account arrears (account balance) by 6, and add that amount to the current month's charges.
- **1/3rd Winter Heating Plan** - For current charges during the winter heating period, November 1 through April 15, pay 1/3rd of the total account balance each month in order to avoid being shut off for nonpayment.
- **1/9th Payment Plan** - The duration of this plan is 9 months. We divide your account arrears (account balance) by 9, and add that amount to a specially calculated 9-month budget amount.

WHEN YOUR DOMINION EAST OHIO SERVICE CAN BE SHUT OFF

Dominion East Ohio may shut off your service Monday through Friday for any of the reasons shown below.

- Nonpayment of a bill for service, nonpayment of a payment agreement, nonpayment of a security deposit, or a returned item used to avoid a shutoff.
- Tampering with company meters or other company equipment, or stealing Dominion East Ohio service (shutoff for this reason may occur at any time).
- False statement or fraud in obtaining your Dominion East Ohio service.
- Failing to provide access for company employees to read your meter or to check company equipment.
 - Dominion East Ohio must perform a leak survey on residential inside meters at least once every three years, and on commercial accounts at least once every 12 months.
 - Dominion East Ohio must read every meter at least once per year, either at the meter or by using an automated meter reading device.
- Violations of rules, approved by the *PUCO*, which may cause harm to individuals or damage to Dominion East Ohio equipment.

WHEN YOUR DOMINION EAST OHIO SERVICE CANNOT BE SHUT OFF

Dominion East Ohio cannot shut off your service:

- On a Saturday, Sunday, holiday, after 12:30 p.m. on the day before a holiday or any day Dominion East Ohio is closed;
- For nonpayment of bills for which the account was final billed more than six years ago;
- For nonpayment of bills for either merchandise or service work;
- For nonpayment of bills in someone else's name.

Winter Disconnections

Your Dominion East Ohio service can be shut off during winter months (typically on or before November 1 through April 15) if you fail to meet your payment and other obligations to the company. Each Fall, the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (*PUCO*) issues special winter reconnection rules that provide additional customer

protections during the winter heating season. Those rules are issued before November 1 and can be found at the *PUCO*'s website at www.puco.ohio.gov.

The Shut-Off (Disconnection) Process

Shut-off or disconnection of Dominion East Ohio service is a very serious matter. Paying current bills or keeping up with payment agreements can help you to avoid a shut off. It is important to contact the company about an overdue bill as soon as you receive a notice. Notices may include bill reminders, shut-off notices, letters, phone calls and shut-off notices left at your door.

Before shutting off service for nonpayment, Dominion East Ohio will include a shut-off notice on your bill, which provides you 14 days to make the required payment. During the winter heating season (typically November 1 through April 15), Dominion East Ohio will also provide an extra 10-day notice by phone before shutting off service.

Dominion East Ohio has programs that can help income-eligible households maintain their service. The company will try to make a payment agreement with you if you have not defaulted on a prior arrangement so that you can pay what you owe and avoid the shut-off.

The company will bill a reconnection fee of \$33 to restore your service. At the same time, it may also require you to pay an applicable security deposit, which will be billed to your account in three equal, consecutive, monthly installments.

Instead of paying a security deposit, residential customers can secure another credit-worthy customer to sign a form guaranteeing that your bills will be paid. (For details, please see "Supplying a Third Party Guarantor" section on page 5).

If your service is shut off due to nonpayment:

- For less than 10 days, service will be restored the same day if you provide proof of payment and notify the company no later than 12:30 p.m. that reconnection of service is requested the same day; otherwise service will be restored by 11:59 p.m. of the next business day.
- For 10 days or more, you may have to wait up to five days for a reconnection of service, after providing proof of payment and contacting DEO for an appointment.

An adult 18 years of age or older must be on the premise to provide access to restore service. Please ensure access to our gas meter. Keep the meter free from obstructions by restraining pets and removing obstacles.

INSTALLATION OF SERVICE, PIPELINE SAFETY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Installation of Service

When you need to establish new natural gas service, contact Dominion East Ohio. The company will tell you what steps you must take to set up service. Be sure to call two to four weeks before you would like natural gas service to begin, to allow for any construction work or inspections to be completed in time for the service to be ready when needed. We will typically install your service within five business days if no new construction is required and within 20 business days if your residence requires the installation of a new service line or meter.

Your Rights & Responsibilities as a Dominion East Ohio Customer

Dominion East Ohio will notify you if the installation is expected to take longer than the usual five or 20 days. The company will explain the reasons for the delay, the steps being taken to complete the work and the date the installation will be complete.

What Pipelines Do You Own?

The property owner is responsible for the service line until such time that Dominion East Ohio is required to perform work on the line and test for leakage prior to restoration of service. The landlord owns, and is responsible for the piping after the gas meter, known as the house line, whether it is internal or external, buried or exposed. If you do not maintain any buried piping, it may be subject to the potential hazards of corrosion and leakage. The cost of repair or replacement of the house line is the responsibility of you or the property owner. You can find more information on qualifications at www.dom.com. Keyword: *installer*.

What Pipelines Does the Gas Company Own?

We own the main line that runs down the street. Effective October 16, 2008, your customer service line will become the responsibility and property of Dominion East Ohio if Dominion is required to perform work on your service line, and it is tested for leakage prior to restoration of service. Dominion East Ohio will cover the cost of repairs or replacements to the service line, unless the line must be repaired or replaced as a result of damage caused by the property owner, the customer or another party. Dominion East Ohio will also own all new service lines constructed after October 16, 2008.

Who Checks the Gas Piping?

For your safety, we conduct periodic leakage inspections of the main line and the service line to the meter or to the wall of your house (whichever is further). We will also check the meter for proper operation.

What Happens If the Gas Company Finds a Leak in My Pipeline?

If we find a leak or other unsafe condition in your pipeline, we will shut off that section of the line and leave a tag with an explanation of the problem and our phone number. If we cannot isolate the leak, the company will turn off service at the street or at the gas meter until repairs are made.

For house line leaks (piping after the meter), the property owner must arrange to have the unsafe condition corrected by a qualified contractor and pay for the costs.

For service line leaks (piping from the street to the meter), Dominion East Ohio or its contractor will repair or replace the line. The company will pay the cost, unless the leak is a result of damage caused by the property owner, the customer or another party.

If Dominion East Ohio left gas service on, but turned off the gas to one appliance, a qualified contractor can make repairs and restore service. However, if the company turned off your service at the meter, please call Dominion East Ohio after repairs are made so that we can inspect the work before restoring full service.

Can I Replace the Pipeline Myself?

No.

Should My Contractor or I Call Before Digging?

Yes. At least two business days prior to any excavation, you or your contractor should call the *Ohio Utility Protection Service (OUPS)* toll-free at 1-800-362-2764 to have any underground facilities located. This organization will contact us and other

member utilities of your plans to dig, then ask the utilities to mark any underground pipes or cables at your location. They will also tell you about any other companies that you must notify before you begin digging. This is a free service.

Your contractor should perform any excavation near buried gas pipelines by hand. Remember, you must use a contractor qualified under the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations to make the repair.

If you ever find utility flags in the ground, whether on your property or not - please do not move them. The flags mark underground lines nearby.

Do I Own the Meter?

No. Dominion East Ohio owns and maintains the meter. It is your responsibility to keep the meter clear at all times. Because our employees need access to the meter, we ask that you keep shrubbery around any outside meters trimmed. And during the winter, please keep the meter clear of snow and ice.

Who Should I Call If I Detect an Odor of Gas, Gas Fumes or Gas Leakage?

You should always notify us of any suspected hazardous situations, including but not limited to those involving an unexplained odor of natural gas. If you detect an odor of natural gas or a hazardous situation, for your safety please leave the premises before placing a call to Dominion East Ohio's 24-hour emergency line at 1-877-542-2630.

DISPUTES

What If You Disagree With Dominion East Ohio?

If you have a billing or service problem, please call Dominion East Ohio first. You have the right to question any billing or service action that the company takes. You should tell the company of the problem as soon as it occurs. Dominion East Ohio will make every attempt to address your concern with your first contact.

If your complaint is not resolved after you have called Dominion East Ohio (or your Energy Choice supplier or *governmental aggregator*) you may call the PUCO, toll-free at 1-800-686-7826 or for TTY toll-free at 1-800-686-1570, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, or visit www.puco.ohio.gov. The company will provide a status report within three business days of the date of the receipt of a complaint. If an investigation is not completed within 10 business days, the company will provide status reports in writing, at five-business-day intervals, unless otherwise agreed to, until the investigation is complete.

Residential customers may also call the Office of *Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC)* toll-free at 1-877-742-5622, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, or visit www.pickocc.org.

What About Additional Information Concerning Your Dominion East Ohio Service?

This booklet was prepared as a summary of the rights and responsibilities you have as a Dominion East Ohio customer based on the *Public Utilities Commission of Ohio Minimum Gas Service Standards*. If you still have questions about your Dominion East Ohio service, please call the company at 1-800-362-7557. It can provide you with additional information, or you can visit the company's website at www.dom.com.