

CenterPoint Energy urges customers to be prepared for potential flooding and issues important electric and natural gas safety tips

CenterPoint Energy has been closely monitoring and preparing for Harvey, which is expected to make landfall Friday afternoon. The company urges customers to follow important pre-and post-storm electric and natural gas safety tips.

#### Electric

- Stay away from downed power lines. Be especially mindful of downed lines that could be hidden in flood waters and treat all downed lines as if they are energized.
- If you experience flooding and water has risen above the electrical outlets in your home, contact a licensed electrician before turning on the main circuit breaker or trying to restore power.
- All electrical appliances and electronic equipment that have been submerged in water need to dry thoroughly for at least one week. Then, have them checked by a qualified repair person before turning them on. Attempting to repair a flood-damaged appliance could result in electrical shock or death. Attempting to restart it could result in further damage and costly repairs.
- If the outside unit of an air conditioning system has been under water, mud and water may have accumulated in the controls. Have the unit checked by a qualified air conditioning technician.

#### Natural Gas

- Do not turn off your natural gas service at the meter; doing so could allow water to enter the natural gas lines. Instead, turn off the natural gas at each appliance.
- Be alert for the smell of natural gas. If you smell gas, leave the area immediately on foot and tell others to leave, too.
- If you smell gas, do not turn the lights on or off, smoke, strike a match, use a cell phone or operate anything that might cause a spark, including a flashlight or a generator.
- Do not attempt to turn natural gas valves on or off. Once safely away from the area, call 888-876-5786 and CenterPoint Energy will send a trained service technician.
- If your home was flooded, call a licensed plumber or gas appliance technician to inspect your appliances and gas piping to make sure they are in good operating condition before calling CenterPoint Energy to reconnect service. This includes outdoor gas appliances including pool heaters, gas grills and gas lights.
- Before cleaning debris, digging on your property or to locate underground natural gas lines and other underground utility lines, call 811, the nationwide Call Before You Dig number.
- Be aware of where your natural gas meter is located. As debris is put out for heavy trash pickup, make sure it is placed away from the meter. In many areas the meter may be located near the curb. If debris is near a gas meter, the mechanized equipment used by trash collectors could pull up the meter, damaging it and causing a potentially hazardous situation. If this happens, leave the area immediately and call CenterPoint Energy at 888-876-5786.

For the latest information on power outages:

- Sign up for Power Alert Service for information on individual outages;
- Follow @cnpalerts and visit Outage Tracker for general outage locations; and
- Visit [CenterPointEnergy.com/StormCenter](https://www.CenterPointEnergy.com/StormCenter) for electric and natural gas safety tips and other resources