

# Natural Gas Facts

Natural gas is a combustible gaseous mixture of hydrocarbons, mostly methane. It is best known as the fuel that produces the blue flame that heats our food, our water, and our homes and buildings. It is also used to generate electricity, provide heat for industrial processes, and as a raw material to produce petrochemicals, plastics, paints, fertilizers, and a wide variety of other products.

## Natural gas has many uses

- It meets 22 percent of U.S. energy demand.
- It heats 62 percent of U.S. households. It also cools many homes and provides fuel for cooking.
- Since the late 1990s, it has been the fuel of choice for the majority of new electricity-generating facilities. Natural gas will fuel more than half of the new electricity capacity planned through 2011.

## Demand for natural gas

- Americans used 23.1 trillion cubic feet (tcf) in 2007, up 6.5 percent from 2006 (21.7 tcf).
- Natural gas supplied about 64.4 million residential customers and 5.3 million commercial and industrial customers in 2006.
- Because natural gas burns cleaner than gasoline or diesel, many companies and municipalities are deploying fleets of natural gas-powered cars, trucks and buses to reduce emissions. As of June 2007, there were nearly 150,000 natural gas vehicles operating on American roads.
- The U.S. government's Energy Information Administration projects that demand for natural gas will continue to rise over much of the next decade.

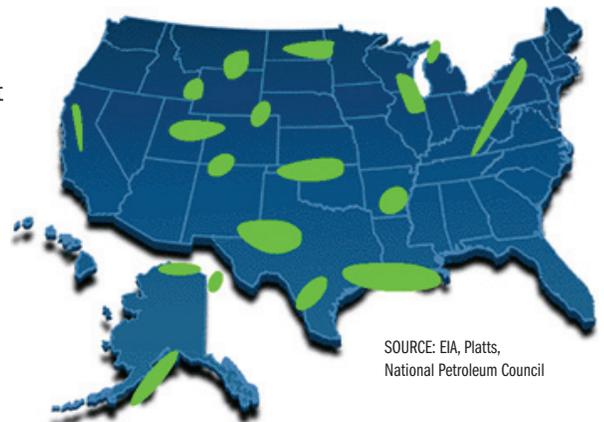
## Natural gas supplies

- Almost all of the natural gas used in the United States comes from North America.
  - Domestic resources produced more than 20.1 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of natural gas delivered to market in 2007. That's equal to more than 77 percent of U.S. consumption.
  - After 30 years of essentially flat production, improved technology has contributed to a 9 percent increase in U.S. natural gas production between 2007 and 2008.
  - Of the natural gas imported for U.S. consumption in 2007, 3.8 tcf arrived by pipeline (mostly from Canada).
- Liquefied natural gas (LNG) – natural gas stored at temperatures low enough to change it from vapor to liquid form – makes it economically viable to deliver natural gas by tanker. In 2007, the United States imported 0.8 tcf of LNG from countries including Trinidad, Egypt, Nigeria and Algeria.

U.S. Natural Gas Usage by Month (2007)



Natural gas is a popular home heating fuel, so demand increases significantly in colder months. Also, because natural gas is used to generate electricity, demand rises with summer air conditioning use.



This map shows the location of major natural gas resources across the United States.