

# COVID-19

## National Grid Service and Billing Updates

As conditions evolve, we are taking precautionary action to mitigate exposure and reduce the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) on our customers and employees. We remain committed to providing safe and reliable service and we are doing our part to protect the communities where we live and serve.

We are closely monitoring the situation with local, state and federal health agencies, as well as reinforcing guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

Ensuring the health and safety of our customers and employees is our first and most important priority.

### Current Conditions – Services Continuing

- **Emergency response** – As always, please contact us for all natural gas-related emergencies, such as gas leaks. If you smell natural gas, please leave the area immediately and call us from a safe location.  
In New York City, call **911** or **1-718-643-4050**  
On Long Island/Rockaway Peninsula, call **1-800-490-0045** or **911**
- **Regular natural gas service** – We do not anticipate any service disruption to our customers. We have a comprehensive emergency response plan in place to keep natural gas flowing.
- **Customer-requested essential service** – We will continue to respond as usual to essential customer needs, such as turning on or off services (i.e. for a customer move.), subject to municipal permitting and work restrictions.
- **Regular billing and ability to make payments** – Our regular billing process will continue and we encourage you to manage your National Grid accounts online. We offer a variety of payment and billing options at [ngrid.com/billpay](#) designed to make transactions easy and convenient. Our call center representatives remain at the ready to assist customers, however you may experience longer than usual wait times.
- **Payment assistance** – We encourage customers who are struggling to pay their National Grid bill to contact us as soon as possible for assistance. Please [click here](#) for more information or call to speak with one of our customer advocates. *Note: Call wait times may be longer than usual.*

### Current Conditions – Services Temporarily Paused

- **Collections activities and disconnections** – We have temporarily suspended collections-related activities, including service disconnections, to lessen any financial hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. These policies will remain in effect at least until the end of April, when we will evaluate their continued need. More information on payment assistance programs in general can be [found here](#).
- **Non-essential customer services** – Planned maintenance and services such as manual meter reads, new gas service lines, main replacement, gas service upgrades, and meter changes, may decrease our ability to maintain social distancing guidelines. Therefore, these activities will be paused. In the case of manual meter reads, this could result in estimated bills for some customers.
- **Energy efficiency on-premise services** – We are temporarily suspending all energy efficiency service activities, provided by our valued partners, that require home or business visits, such as energy audits.
- **New York City and Long Island walk-in payment offices** – Our National Grid downstate New York payment offices are temporarily closed. Payment options for customers include:
  - **Online:** Visit [ngrid.com/billpay](#) to pay online via bank account or credit card, or sign up for convenient bill pay options, such as paperless billing, automated payments, the budget plan or assistance programs.
  - **Pay by phone** – Have your account number ready, and you can pay over the phone with a credit or debit card or bank account. Fees may apply. In New York City, call **1-718-643-4050**.  
On Long Island, call **1-800-930-5003**.

- **Pay by mail** – Use the convenient return envelope included with your bill.
- **Pay by bank website** – Contact your bank to see if they offer this service.
- **Pay at a local Western Union** – A location listing is available at [ngrid.com/billpay](https://ngrid.com/billpay).

### **What to Know About Your Bill**

To conveniently manage your account, you can do so online and avoid longer than usual wait times in the call center. You can also continue to pay your bill or find assistance through a variety of online tools. Please visit [ngrid.com/billpay](https://ngrid.com/billpay) to explore convenient options including:

- Paperless Billing
- Pay by Bank Account
- Pay by Credit Card (fees apply)
- Automated Payments
- Budget Plan
- Assistance Programs

### **Help Us Reach You Faster – Please Ensure We Have Your Email**

To help us communicate more quickly with you, please ensure your email address is up-to-date and that you are enrolled in an online account. To enroll, you will need your account number – which can be found on your printed bill. Visit [ngrid.com/account](https://ngrid.com/account) to update your email address or create an online account for the first time.

### **Protect Yourself from Scammers**

Scams related to the COVID-19 outbreak are on the rise. Imposters claiming to be National Grid employees may contact you to collect past due balances, even promising a savings on your next bill or threatening to disconnect your service. National Grid never demands direct payment through the use of a prepaid debit card and never accepts payment through these cards. For additional tips on how to protect yourself against utility scams, [click here](#).

## **Q&A**

### **What precautions are your field employees following to avoid sickness?**

Our field employees are required to strictly follow CDC recommendations intended to protect themselves and our customers from Coronavirus (COVID-19).

When visiting your home or business, our field employees WILL:

- Avoid handshakes
- Ask that every person on your premises maintains a personal distance of 6 feet or more at all times
- Ask that anyone on your premises who is or may be ill remains in a separate room apart from the area where our representative will be performing service work.
- Wear disposable latex or nitrile gloves to prevent contact with possible contaminated surfaces.

If someone in your home is ill or quarantined:

- Please advise our field representative BEFORE allowing entry. *Please note: To protect our workers and our other customers, your service visit may be delayed or rescheduled.* We appreciate your cooperation.

### **Are you suspending collections for ALL customers, or just residential customers?**

Effective March 13, 2020, National Grid has temporarily suspended collections-related activities, including service disconnections, to lessen any financial hardship the COVID-19 pandemic may have on all of our customers – whether residential, commercial or industrial. This includes temporarily suspending interest and penalties for late payments. These policies will remain in effect at least until the end of April, when we will evaluate their continued need in consultation with state regulators.

### **Is National Grid prepared for how this pandemic may impact operations due to illnesses and other workforce and material shortages?**

We have a comprehensive emergency response plan in place to keep the natural gas flowing. Our pandemic team is meeting daily and we're closely monitoring all developments associated with this evolving and complex virus. We're also sharing our preparedness plans with regulators, federal, state and local officials, emergency response organizations, customers and other key stakeholders.

### **Why has work been temporarily paused on some National Grid projects?**

- On March 18 we announced additional steps to temporarily stop non-essential work that required customer interaction and entry into customer premises.
- Given the continued escalation of COVID-19, particularly in our densely populated downstate NY service area, we also are reducing the number of employees we have working in the streets, even if they are not directly interacting with our customers.
- Additionally, out of an abundance of caution, we are ramping down and temporarily suspending our capital programs in downstate NY: specifically, proactive main replacement, gas system reinforcement, and new gas main installations and service connections.
- This suspension will be in effect until the end of April, and we will re-evaluate every two weeks thereafter, based on the status of the pandemic as well as government guidance.
- We will continue with our public works/city state construction work, but we are working closely with our cities and towns, many of whom are also ramping down their own projects, to understand what their plans are in the near term so that we plan our work accordingly.
- Our workplan will continue to be updated as necessary as the situation evolves.
- Our priorities of maintaining and operating a safe and reliable gas system, and keeping our employees and the public safe, will remain the same.
- As always, our employees are adhering to CDC guidelines, including social distancing protocols.

### **Can I apply for a new gas service?**

Given the continued escalation of COVID-19, to comply with social distancing guidelines, we are delaying new gas service line work until the end of April, and will re-evaluate every two weeks thereafter, based on the status of the pandemic as well as government guidance. This reduces the number of employees we have working in public, lowering the risk to both you and our employees as much as possible. We encourage you to apply, so that you are in the queue when work resumes.

### **What else is National Grid doing to help in the pandemic?**

To support customers who have been affected with health issues, financial hardships and/or disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, National Grid has committed \$500,000 to provide immediate relief to families and individuals in need and to bolster efforts by local organizations to assist communities across Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island.

The following represent some of the programs and funds that will be targeted:

- [Island Harvest, Long Island](#)
- [United Way NYC](#)
- [United Way of Long Island](#)
- [United Way of the Greater Capital Region](#)
- [United Way of Greater Niagara](#)
- [Central New York Community Foundation](#)
- [YMCA of Long Island](#)

**Thank you for your cooperation as we work through this unprecedented situation.**