

TIP #9: KNOW HOW TO TURN OFF YOUR UTILITIES!



WATER

Cracked lines may pollute the water supply to your house. In that case, you may need to shut off your water until authorities say it's safe to drink.

Learn how to shut off the water in an emergency:

First, find the shut-off valve for the main water line that enters your house and tag it for easy identification. Make sure you can shut the valve off completely. Your valve may be rusted open or it may not close all the way. If so, replace it.

NATURAL GAS

Natural gas leaks and explosions cause a significant number of fires after disasters. Don't wait for an emergency to learn how to shut off the gas. There are different procedures for different gas meter configurations, so it's important to call your gas company ahead of time to learn what to do. They can help you prepare for handling gas service and appliances in your home in the event of an emergency.

CAUTION:

If you turn off the gas for any reason, only a qualified professional can turn it back on. NEVER attempt to turn the gas back on yourself.

BE ALERT:

DOES YOUR HOME USE NATURAL GAS?

If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise coming from a gas line or appliance, open a window and get everyone out quickly. Turn off the gas and call the gas company from a neighbor's home.

SOURCE: ready.gov

We sometimes take water, electricity and natural gas utilities for granted because we use them every day.

But do you know how to shut them off in an emergency? In a flood, you may need to manually shut off your utilities without delay.



Don't wait for an emergency to learn how!

REASONS TO SHUT OFF UTILITIES

There are several reasons that might lead you to shut off your water, electricity, or natural gas utilities in an emergency such as a flood.

- If you have been asked to evacuate your area.
- If there are downed power lines or power outages.
- If there are broken or cracked water lines.
- If gas pipes have been compromised.
- If there is an active fire or a risk of fire.

When in doubt, call your utility to ask for guidance.

ELECTRICITY

Electrical sparks can pose a fire risk in an emergency and can even ignite natural gas. Make sure you can locate your home's electrical circuit box. For your safety, always shut off all the individual circuits before shutting off the main circuit. Consulting with an electrician or local electric utility for guidance is recommended.