

# NEW YORK'S NATURAL GAS OUTLOOK

WINTER 2013-2014

## This Year's Outlook

New York's utilities have made arrangements to have enough natural gas to satisfy expected customer demand for the upcoming 2013-14 heating season. They are also prepared to meet customer demand in the event of more severe winter weather conditions.

While bill impacts will vary by utility company, average residential customer bills are expected to increase roughly 4%, based on current market conditions.

## Factors That Affect the Cost of Natural Gas

### Usage

The weather—especially the temperature—plays a significant role in how much natural gas we use. For heating customers, the colder the weather, the more natural gas is used by the average household. In addition, if there is a widespread and prolonged cold spell, overall demand for natural gas increases, which puts upward pressure on prices.

Since last year's heating season temperatures were, on average, somewhat warmer than usual, gas usage may have been slightly lower than average.

Assuming average temperatures this heating season, usage would be somewhat higher than last year.

### Price

The commodity price of natural gas rises and falls based on many factors, including the weather, the balance between supply and demand, the amount and cost of natural gas in storage, and the extent and success of natural gas exploration and drilling. Last year's average commodity price was at an historic low, largely due to storage inventory levels reaching an all-time high. The average price for natural gas this winter is expected to be higher than last year's average price.

## Controlling Your Winter Heating Bills

Your gas bill has two main parts: *supply* (the cost of the gas itself) and *delivery* (the cost of delivering the gas throughout the utility's system). On average, supply costs make up about 25-45% of your bill, depending on your local utility. Therefore any change in the cost of the gas itself can have a significant impact on your overall natural gas bill.

## Shop Around

You can shop for the best price of natural gas: you can purchase natural gas from your local utility or you can purchase it from a number of other suppliers. Regardless of your natural gas supplier, your local utility will deliver it to you and maintain service for you. To see the offers available from both your utility and the other suppliers, visit [www.NewYorkPowerToChoose.com](http://www.NewYorkPowerToChoose.com).

## Reduce Your Use

You can reduce your home heating cost by making energy efficiency improvements that pay for themselves with increased comfort and energy savings. Call 1-888-Ask-PSC1 or visit [www.AskPSC.com](http://www.AskPSC.com) for energy saving tips and information on energy efficiency programs in your area.



## Assistance or Questions

If you have questions about your heating bill or need assistance with paying your utility bill, contact the New York State Public Service Commission's Helpline at 1-800-342-3377. If you are facing an electric or gas shutoff, call the PSC Hotline at 1-800-342-3355.



# HELP YOUR HOME HEAT BETTER



**Insulate** attics, foundations, heating ducts and hot water pipes



**Caulk** around windows and doors



Take advantage of financial assistance or **energy efficiency programs**



**Open your shades** on sunny days and close them at night



Install a **programmable thermostat**

This heating season, don't let winter waste your home's energy. To learn about waste busting tips, energy efficiency programs and financial incentives, or to get help managing your heating bill, visit the New York State Public Service Commission's website, [AskPSC.com](http://AskPSC.com) or call **1 (888) Ask-PSC 1**.