

'Don't Be Scared; Be Prepared'

Businesses, families urged to develop natural gas emergency plan

Families and businesses routinely talk about—and even practice—fire drills so everyone knows exactly what to do and where to go if a fire starts. But what about natural gas emergencies? Do you know what steps to take if a natural gas smell is detected?

Randy Gant, natural gas superintendent at Rock Energy Cooperative, believes that similar safety plans should be developed to deal with potential natural gas problems. Natural gas is completely safe when used properly. But because accidents happen it's important for everyone in your home and business to know how to recognize a natural gas leak and what to do if an emergency occurs.

"Don't be scared; be prepared," Gant told about 100 employees at Hanson Pressure Pipe in South Beloit during a recent safety meeting.

Natural gas is colorless and odorless, but Rock Energy and other gas providers add a chemical that makes it smell like rotten eggs so any leaks can be easily detected.

"The first and only priority when a natural gas leak is discovered is to protect life and then property," Gant said. "The source of the problem can be located and repaired after it is determined that everyone is out of harm's way."

Gant told Hanson employees that the co-op has a five-step procedure that must be followed in exact order during a natural gas emergency:

- Protect life and property.
- Locate source of the problem.



Randy Gant, natural gas superintendent for Rock Energy, tells employees of Hanson Pressure Pipe in South Beloit that every business and home needs a natural gas emergency plan.

- Gain control of the operating system.
- Make repairs.
- Return the system to normal operations.

A person's first reaction might be to try to fix the problem immediately, but repairs are actually the fourth step in the process, Gant emphasized.

If an indoors gas leak is suspected, evacuating the building must always be the first step. He reminded workers not to use a phone or turn on or off any light switches, flashlights, garage door openers, or other appliances until they are a safe distance from the


suspected gas leak because an electric arc might ignite the gas and cause an explosion.

Rock Energy gas technicians are available around the clock to respond to natural gas emergencies and can be reached by calling (866) 752-4550.

Gant urged businesses and families to formulate a natural gas emergency plan and then practice mock drills just like they would for a fire. If your business would like Rock Energy to provide a safety presentation at your workplace, please call him at (866) 752-4550.



Rock Energy Cooperative

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**If you smell natural gas,
call Rock Energy at (866) 752-4550.**