



November 1, 2023

With winter just around the corner, BGE continues to plan for the coming cold weather. I would like to provide you with information about BGE's preparations for winter and customer resources to help customers during the 2023-2024 heating season. BGE completed several major infrastructure enhancement projects, on its natural gas and electric systems. BGE invested nearly \$2.1 billion in infrastructure improvements and operations and maintenance of the company's gas and electric system in 2022. Since 2014, BGE has invested \$15.9 billion in improving, operating, and maintaining both the gas and electric systems serving our customers.

These system upgrades, inspections and maintenance activities will help to ensure the safe, reliable delivery of natural gas and electric service for BGE's 1.3 million electric and nearly 700,000 natural gas customers throughout the heating season. BGE has dedicated \$15.9 billion towards enhancing, managing, and sustaining the gas and electric systems that cater to our customers since 2014. As a result of continued investments in electric system upgrades and new innovative technologies, BGE's ability to provide quality electric power and promptly restore power after an outage is stronger now than ever before. Since 2011, the number of electric outages has decreased 40 percent and outage length has been reduced by 36 percent. Despite these overall improvements, some areas of our service area experienced extended outages during severe weather this past summer and we are focused on continuously improving our ability to respond to these events.

BGE actively explores innovative technologies to help improve system reliability and avoid lengthy outages. Examples include [using drones](#) to enable more efficient and safer equipment inspections, installing specialized equipment that can [automatically restore](#) service or isolate damage, and providing storm restoration staff with mobile apps that help them identify and get to jobs faster. One major component of our winter preparations is helping customers who may be challenged by winter energy costs. Assistance is available for BGE customers, including those with limited household incomes who need help in paying their energy bills.

For your information, we have included links to several helpful resources for customers:

- [bge.com/BillHelp](https://www.bge.com/BillHelp). BGE works closely with customers to offer flexible payment arrangements and direct customers to energy assistance resources. The key is contacting BGE as soon as possible. BGE encourages customers not to wait until they are in crisis to ask for help but rather to contact their local [Office of Home Energy Programs](#) online or

by calling 1-800-332-6347 to learn about programs available to them.

- [BGENow](#), BGE’s content hub which features information and tips on saving energy and money, even on the coldest days.
- [BGE's 2023-2024 Community Resource Guide](#) which is a collection of resources and information about assistance programs of all kinds – federal, state, and local, as well as programs from BGE and non-profit providers. Click [here](#) for a Spanish language version of this resource.
- The [BGE Smart Energy Savers Program®](#) website at [bgesmartenergy.com](http://bgesmartenergy.com) lists the energy efficiency and conservation programs available to BGE customers.

During the colder months, heating systems typically account for more than 40% of customers’ energy bills because extreme weather triggers significant increases in energy use at home. Even when the thermostat is kept at the same temperature, heating units work harder to maintain the set temperature. Without taking steps to save energy during these times, energy bills will reflect additional usage and will likely be higher than in months when temperatures are more moderate. BGE encourages customers to practice these simple steps:

- **Maintain Your Heating Systems and Gas and Electric Appliances** – Most of your cold weather energy expenses are related to heating your home. Schedule service for your heating system to find out what maintenance is required to keep your system operating safely and efficiently. Use only licensed appliance technicians and plumbers to inspect and service natural gas appliances such as stoves, water heaters, furnaces, dryers, gas fireplaces and other gas equipment. Home electric equipment and wiring should also be routinely inspected and maintained by licensed electricians and appliance technicians.
- **Lower Your Water Heating Costs** – Water heating accounts for about 18% of the energy consumed in your home. Turn down the temperature of your water heater to the warm setting (120°F) and save.
- **Manage your thermostat** – Keep thermostats set at a comfortable level. You can save about two percent on your heating bill for every degree you lower your thermostat. When you are asleep or out of the house, try turning your thermostat back 10 to 15 degrees for eight hours to save approximately 10 percent on your heating bill. Consider investing in a smart thermostat that can connect to your mobile devices, helping you stay on top of your energy usage.
- **My Account Online Tools** – Your BGE online account contains tools and detailed energy usage information. By viewing your energy usage right after you use it, comparing usage trends, and discovering the results of energy-saving practices, you can manage your energy more efficiently. Log onto [bge.com/MyAccount](http://bge.com/MyAccount) to get started.

- **Budget Billing Options** - Customers may also consider BGE's [\*Budget Billing\*](#) program, which evens out payments over a 12-month period so customers are not as affected by increases in usage triggered by extreme weather conditions.
- **Sign up for High Usage Alerts** - Receive a notification by text, email, phone, or mobile app alerts (To receive mobile app alerts, sign up through the BGE mobile app) if your energy usage is trending higher than usual so you can take steps to reduce your use before your bill arrives. You can also set a budget threshold to alert you when your bill is projected to be higher than a specific amount each month. Login to My Account [\*bge.com/MyNotifications\*](http://bge.com/MyNotifications).
- **Keep Your Natural Gas Appliances Vents Clear** – Know where your natural gas appliances vent to the exterior and [\*ensure the vents are clear\*](#). If these vents become blocked by snow or ice, exhaust may back up resulting in carbon monoxide build-up or a release of natural gas. If you smell natural gas or suspect a gas leak, get to a safe location (at least 100 feet away) and immediately call 9-1-1 or BGE at 1-877-778-7798.

I hope that you and your constituents find this information helpful. If you would like to discuss these issues further or would like additional information on any of the above resources, please call me at 410-470-2497.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D.A. Wright". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David A. Wright  
External Affairs Manager