



# How natural gas gets to consumers

**Getting natural gas from underground rock formations to your home or business is a long and complicated path.**

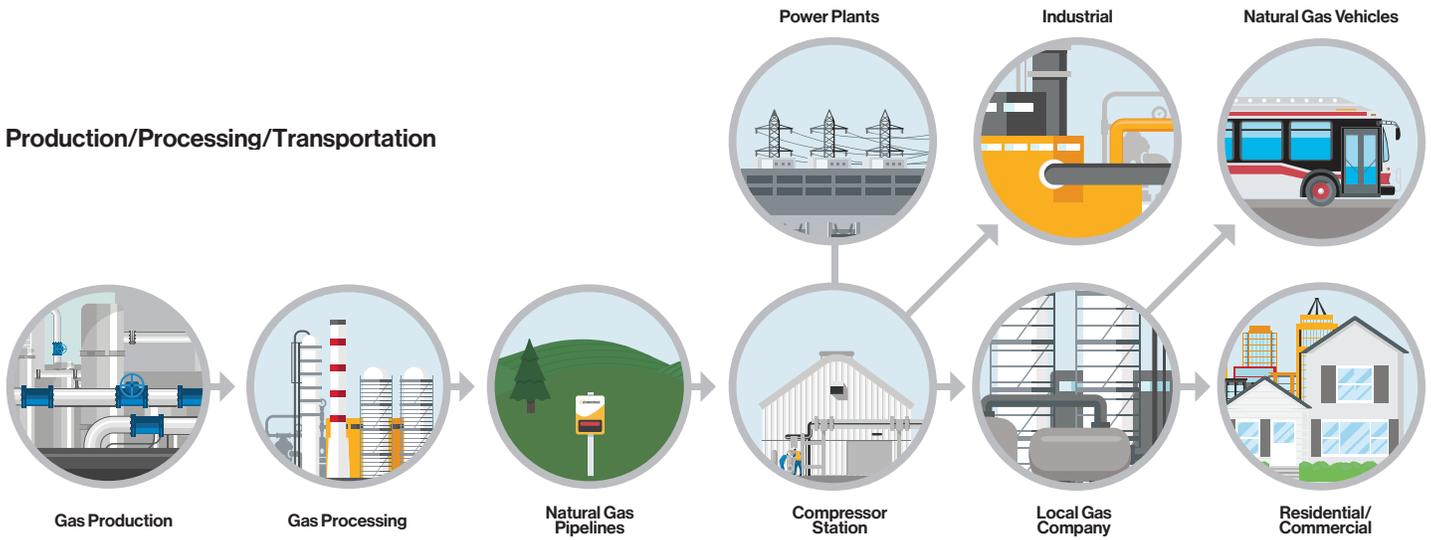
**It starts with drilling and production, continues with cleaning and processing, takes another step with transmission via large-diameter pipelines, and is ultimately delivered to businesses and homes by local distribution companies, and to large commercial and industrial customers directly.**

The United States has large supplies of natural gas with production occurring in more than 30 states. This gas is gathered by a number of methods depending on its geologic location and is transported across the nation by a complex system of underground pipelines. Natural gas is clean, safe and abundant, which is why its usage is growing. Common uses of natural gas include:

- **Homes:** About 70 percent of American homes use natural gas for heating, cooling and cooking.
- **Commercial:** Natural gas is used by small and large businesses for production and operation.

- **Power Plants:** Natural gas is used to generate electricity because of its clean environmental profile.
- **Natural Gas Vehicles:** Natural gas cars, trucks and busses can be found on our roadways.
- **Industrials:** Natural gas plays a large role in the production of fertilizers, chemicals and hundreds of products.

***See reverse to find out more about this abundant, safe, clean-burning fuel's step-by-step journey from deep in the earth to your door.***



## How natural gas gets to you

Natural gas takes a long and complicated journey — extracted from deep underground, processed to remove impurities and often traveling thousands of miles — before it’s available to residential, commercial and industrial end users.

These steps include:

### Drilling and production

Natural gas is typically found in underground beds of porous rock, and gathered from drilled wells through a series of collection pipes. Natural gas is typically a mixture of many hydrocarbons, primarily methane.

### Cleaning and processing

From wellhead collection points, natural gas is processed to separate valuable components like oil and natural gas liquids from impurities like water, carbon dioxide and sulfur that could cause pipeline corrosion. The result is pipeline quality gas. Natural gas companies can also choose to store the gas underground until it is needed during peak periods of high demand, such as winter.

### Pipeline transmission

Processed natural gas is pressurized and introduced into an interstate pipeline network for safe, reliable transport. Large underground steel pipes up to 48 inches in diameter carry natural gas from processing facilities to consumers — often for thousands of miles. Natural gas is moved through the

pipeline by pressure, which also reduces the volume of the gas so that it travels more efficiently. As the gas travels, friction and elevation differences gradually reduce the pressure, so compressor stations are staggered along the length of the pipelines to give the gas another “push” or “boost” to its destination.

### Distribution in your community

The pipeline network delivers natural gas directly to some large commercial and industrial consumers, like utilities. The remainder is delivered to local distribution companies which add odorant — to ease detection of even small leaks — before transporting the gas through smaller distribution pipes, or “mains,” to millions of businesses and homes throughout the United States.