

QUICK QUIZ

How Much Do You Know About Heating Your Home?

(NAPSA)—Americans may face higher energy bills this year. Taking this quick quiz may help you understand what this could mean for you.

1. America's most popular heating fuel is a) oil, b) natural gas, c) electricity?

2. The average natural gas bill may increase by an average of a) 25 percent, b) 48 percent, c) 61 percent?

3. Natural gas prices go up and down because of a) heating demand, b) cooling demand, c) natural gas production?

4. Natural gas utilities are helping to stabilize prices through a) billing plans, b) storage, c) sales.

5. To help lower natural gas prices, Congress is promoting a) energy efficiency, b) a more diverse mix of fuels, c) construction of a pipeline from Alaska.

Answers.

1. b) Natural gas is America's most popular home heating fuel, heating 52 percent of the nation's homes (more than all other forms of energy combined).

2. b) Consumers who heat with fuel oil, propane and electricity will pay more this year too.

3. All of the above. Weather is the biggest factor in how much you pay for natural gas. It can affect production and supply (hurricanes can force workers to leave the rigs), and also affect how much energy customers use (demand).

4. a) and b) Customers can also use energy more efficiently,



There are several ways that natural gas utilities are working to stabilize gas prices.

such as replacing older furnaces, insulating their homes and installing programmable thermostats.

Natural gas utilities also use hedging in more than half the states. Hedging is a tool that allows utilities to use future contracts and weather risk insurance to stabilize prices.

5. All of the above. Congress passed a major energy law in 2005 to spur additional natural gas production while promoting energy efficiency and a more diverse mix of fuels to generate electric power.

To help further, experts at the American Gas Association say Congress should increase funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). They could also increase imports of liquefied natural gas and encourage more natural gas production.

For more information, visit www.aga.org.