

## Natural Gas: Fueling America

(NAPSA)—When it comes to finding a fuel to rely on, an increasing number of home buyers and builders say the answer is a natural: natural gas. In fact, more than 70 percent of new homes built in the U.S. each year use natural gas.

Nearly half of all the energy used for cooking, heating and fueling other home appliances comes from clean-burning natural gas. This may be because it requires so much less maintenance than home heating oil.

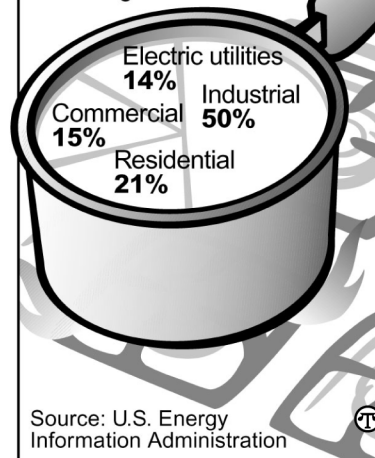
In recent years, industrial demand for natural gas has risen to unforeseen levels. In fact, industrial consumption in August 2000 was 15 percent higher than in August 1999. Much of this increased demand can be traced to industry's effort to meet new environmental requirements. For example, new gas-fueled plants now produce a significant portion of our country's electricity. In all, industry accounts for about 66 percent of U.S. natural gas consumption, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Natural gas is attractive to industry for the same reasons it's popular with homeowners. Gas furnaces need little maintenance, saving companies millions of dollars a year in labor costs. In addition, corporations are drawn to gas because of its environmentally-friendly reputation.

Natural gas was first used in this country in the 1800s, mostly to light street lamps. The Bunsen burner showed gas could be used for cooking and heating as early as 1885 but it wasn't until after World War II that pipeline construction became economically attractive. Today, natural

### An Energy Staple

Demand for clean-burning natural gas is growing.  
Natural gas users:



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

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**Natural gas is a simple chemical compound that burns almost completely, with no ash and practically no air pollution.**

gas is available to homeowners and businesses in almost every region of the country through more than 1.3 million miles of pipeline.

While current U.S. reserves would provide enough natural gas to satisfy domestic demand for more than 60 years, for the first time in history, our demand for natural gas is nearly outpacing production. As U.S. energy companies continue to develop exploration and production technology, however, they expect to easily meet future demand.

For more information about oil and gas pricing and supply, visit [www.oil360.org](http://www.oil360.org).

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*Note to Editors: This is the first in a series of 12 articles.*