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Southeast Gas

Natural Gas:

Helping to Make Our World Better

INSIDE

06

FEATURE

IN EVERY ISSUE


12

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PHOTO BY GARY BARNES ON PEXELS

Gas appliances are one of the best ways to increase energy efficiency for homeowners. Households that use natural gas for cooking, heating and clothes drying save more than $1,000 a year in energy costs compared to those who use electricity.

Energy savings

Simple changes can cut cost, increase efficiency

By Tonya McMurray

With inflation at record-high levels, consumers are looking for ways to reduce everyday expenses. Households using natural gas for heating, cooking and clothes drying are already recognizing significant savings – an average of $1,041 each year compared to homes using electricity for those applications, according to the American Gas Association (AGA). But a few simple changes can boost savings even more.

INCREASED HEATING EFFECTIVENESS

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), cooling and heating account for about half of energy costs in the average home. Along with the use of clean and energy-efficient natural gas, households can save money with the following strategies:

- Set thermostats to 78 degrees in the summer and 68 degrees in the winter. Every degree of extra heating or cooling will increase energy use by 6% to 8%, according to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).
- Install a programmable thermostat. The DOE advises that adjusting your thermostat by 10 to 15 degrees during the workday when no one is home will save between 5% and 15% on annual energy costs.
- Pay attention to humidity levels as higher humidity will make a home feel warmer, leading consumers to set thermostats to a lower temperature during hot weather. To reduce humidity, the DOE

recommends making sure clothes dryers, stove fans and bathroom fans are vented outside; venting them into an attic or basement only redistributes moisture and doesn't eliminate extra humidity.

- Improve insulation and seal any air leaks. Add weatherstripping to drafty windows or replace them with new energy-efficient windows.
- Add a storm door to provide an extra layer of protection from weather year-round. The DOE reports a storm door can reduce energy loss by up to 50%.
- During warmer months, close blinds, shades and curtains on the sunny side of the home and open them during cooler months to take advantage of the natural warmth of the sun.

AFFORDABLE ENERGY: DESPITE RISING FUEL COSTS, NATURAL GAS REMAINS A GOOD DEAL FOR CONSUMERS

Even as natural gas prices are higher than they have been over the past few years, natural gas remains one of the most affordable forms of energy for homeowners.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimates that the average family spent about $573 to heat their home with natural gas last year, with average prices for this year reaching about $709. Even with that increase, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) rates natural gas as 3.4 times more affordable than electricity and significantly more affordable than many other residential energy sources in the 2022 Representative Average Unit Costs of Five Residential Energy Sources.

The DOE's 2022 representative average unit costs for residential energy sources show natural gas at $12.09 per million British thermal unit (Btu) compared to $41.79 per million Btu for electricity. The report indicates propane averages $24.46 per million Btu, No. 2 heating oil averages $25.11 per million Btu and kerosene averages $29.73 per million Btu.

"Natural gas is reliable with unplanned outages affecting only one in 800 customers per year. In comparison, customers of electric distribution systems have an average of one outage per year. Without natural gas, that outage can mean no heat during winter storms, no warm water, and no ability to cook."

— Jake Rubin, senior director, public relations and executive communications, American Gas Association

"Natural gas is affordable," said Jake Rubin, senior director, public relations and executive communications for the American Gas Association (AGA). "Natural gas has saved commercial, industrial and residential customers more than $640 billion over the last decade."

The EIA projects that natural gas will be between one half and one-third the price of other fuels through 2050.

Current market dynamics resulted from a combination of factors, Rubin said. Unseasonably cold weather throughout the U.S. in April and May resulted in more consumption of natural gas during a time when underground storage is typically being filled; this led to lower storage inventories. Production was not able to keep pace with increased demand. The Russian invasion of Ukraine resulted in increased European demand for non-Russian gas and introduced market uncertainty abroad.

A recent AGA analysis also notes that other energy sources are also seeing significant increases. Coal has more than doubled in some regions over the last year. New solar panels and wind turbines are less available and more expensive because of supply chain issues. And battery storage for renewable energy has been impacted by a seven-fold increase in the price of lithium.

NATURAL GAS BENEFITS

In addition to being the most affordable fuel source,

BOOST APPLIANCE EFFICIENCY

Buy appliances with high Energy Star® ratings, which can reduce energy use by up to 50%. Other ways to boost the efficiency of appliances include:

- Opting for a tankless water heater, which is more efficient and tends to last longer than conventional storage water heaters.
- Washing clothes in cold water.
- Insulating water pipes. This will keep condensation from forming on cold water pipes, which contributes to extra humidity, and will prevent heat loss from hot water pipes to maximize hot water heating.

DON'T FORGET YOUR GAS UTILITY

Homeowners can often get help with many of these strategies through their local gas utility, said Jake Rubin, senior director of public relations and executive communications for AGA.

"Gas utilities invest $4.5 million every day in energy efficiency programs to help customers install tighter-fitting windows and doors, upgrade insulation and purchase increasingly more efficient natural gas appliances," he said. "Contact your utility or go to their website to see how you can take advantage of these programs to help you save money by conserving energy." ■

natural gas offers consumers many other benefits.

"Natural gas is reliable with unplanned outages affecting only one in 800 customers per year," Rubin said. "In comparison, customers of electric distribution systems have an average of one outage per year. Without natural gas, that outage can mean no heat during winter storms, no warm water, and no ability to cook."

Natural gas is also an efficient fuel source and creates jobs across multiple industries, said Abigail Miller, director of communications for the Interstate Natural Gas Association of America.

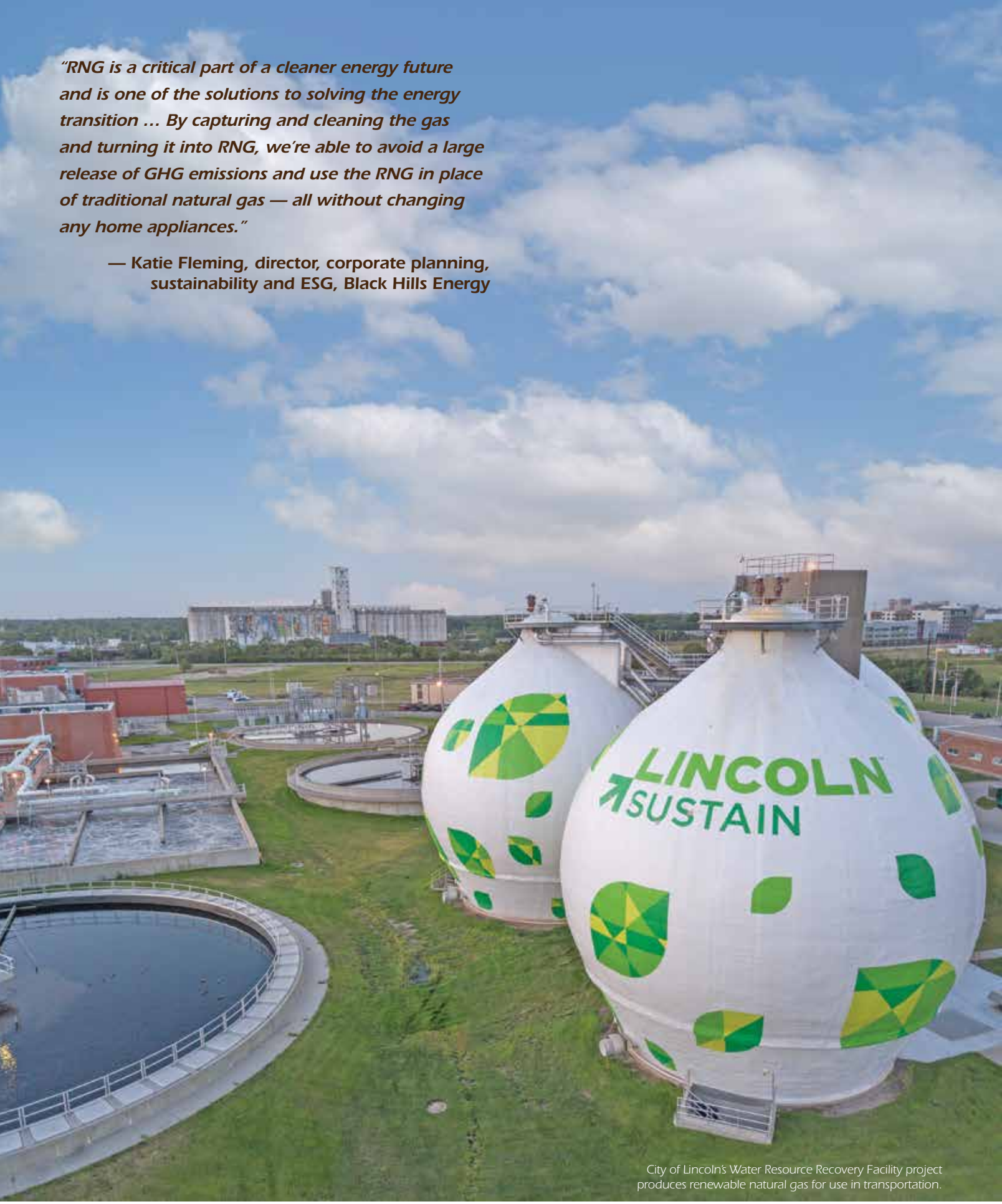
"Natural gas has helped create thousands of American jobs in the energy production and pipeline sectors as well as the manufacturing industry," she said. "Natural gas is vital to our economy and its increased use has contributed to historic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. In short, natural gas is an economic and environmental winner." ■

Even with increased gas prices, natural gas remains 3.4 times more affordable than electricity for homeowners, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

PHOTO BY KWON JUNHO ON UNSPLASH

"RNG is a critical part of a cleaner energy future and is one of the solutions to solving the energy transition … By capturing and cleaning the gas and turning it into RNG, we're able to avoid a large release of GHG emissions and use the RNG in place of traditional natural gas — all without changing any home appliances."

— Katie Fleming, director, corporate planning, sustainability and ESG, Black Hills Energy



City of Lincoln's Water Resource Recovery Facility project produces renewable natural gas for use in transportation.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BLACK HILLS ENERGY

Trash to treasure

Turning natural gas into a renewable asset is happening now

By Drew Robb

Imagine if you could transform trash into clean energy that could heat households and serve all household appliances. That is exactly what is being done to produce renewable natural gas (RNG). In essence, RNG is natural gas produced by the decomposition and burning of organic matter from sources such as plants, manure, and food waste. This "biogas" just needs to be captured and purified before being used by consumers or as a transportation fuel.

Black Hills Energy, for example, is an enthusiastic advocate of RNG. Based in Rapid City, South Dakota, this utility serves 1.3 million natural gas and electric utility customers in eight states. It has been building interconnections to move RNG produced by wastewater treatment facilities, landfills and food waste, into its natural gas distribution system. In total, the company has six RNG projects in service, with numerous other projects under development, said Katie Fleming, director of corporate planning, sustainability and ESG for Black Hills Energy.

One example is a partnership with Blue Source and The City of Lincoln, Nebraska, to produce RNG for transportation from the city's municipal wastewater treatment plant, which recovers about 20 million gallons of water daily. Biogas from the facility has been producing electricity for many years. But in 2017, city officials upgraded the system to begin producing RNG for transportation, including powering Lincoln's growing fleet of city transit buses. Fleming said the six projects on the Black Hills Energy system produce up to 3.3 million cubic feet of RNG per day. That's the equivalent of displacing 178,000 barrels of oil. As each barrel of oil holds 42 gallons, switching to RNG for transportation or blending with natural gas results in a significant reduction in carbon and other emissions.

"RNG is a critical part of a cleaner energy future and is one of the solutions to solving the energy transition," Fleming said. "The organic waste used to produce RNG is abundant; there are landfills, animal manure, wastewater treatment facilities and many other sources that are emitting greenhouse gas (GHG). By capturing and cleaning the gas and turning it into RNG, we're able to avoid a large release of GHG emissions and use the RNG in place of traditional natural gas — all without changing any home appliances."

RNG IN OHIO

Chesapeake Utilities Corp. is another firm believer in RNG for several reasons: It provides multiple environmental benefits, is fully interchangeable with conventional natural gas, and can be produced from landfills and other waste material. One of its many projects is the Noble Road Landfill RNG pipeline project. Aspire Energy of Ohio constructed the 33.1-mile pipeline, which takes RNG from the landfill in Shiloh, Ohio, to the Aspire Energy pipeline system.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHESAPEAKE UTILITY CORP.

Economic Devistar RNG storage units at the Noble Road Landfill project

Other partners in the project include OPAL Fuels and Rumpke Waste & Recycling. Rumpke extracts and captures waste gas from the landfill, which OPAL Fuels purifies of carbon dioxide and other components to achieve pipeline quality standards. In addition to supplying Aspire Energy's customers, RNG is available to be dispensed into fueling stations to fuel compressed natural gas (CNG) vehicles.

"The Noble Road pipeline represents the first of many RNG projects under development that will deliver energy that contributes to a sustainable future," said Jeff Householder, president and CEO of Chesapeake Utilities. "Transporting RNG from the landfill through our pipeline system provides a path to markets that supports the economics of the biogas production and significantly reduces total carbon emissions. The outcome of this collaborative project is a win for customers, the local community, and the environment."

The Noble Road project will capture and transport quantities of renewable natural gas equivalent to 6.9 million gasoline gas equivalents

(continued on page 15)

Indoor heating 101

Turn chilly into comfy with reliable heating options

By Monica Stavish Skaggs

When chilly days arrive, there's nothing like being able to relax and enjoy a warm and cozy home, knowing the heat will be on and stay on. Homeowners today can choose from a variety of reliable heating options, including forced air furnaces, hot water (radiant or hydronic) systems and space heaters.

With all systems, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) advises consumers to regularly maintain their equipment. That, together with proper insulation, sealing and thermostat settings, will help save money while reducing environmental emissions.

FORCED AIR HEATING

Forced air or central heating is the most common heating system in new homes. A forced air heating system pulls in air from inside your home, heats it, and then sends it back into your home using a blower fan via ducts.

A forced air heating system is energy efficient. With forced air furnaces, natural gas is often used as the heat source. A gas flame warms a heat exchanger that air passes through. A forced air heating system is affordable and quickly sends warm air through the home via ducts that can also be used to provide air conditioning.

This type of heating system can be easily installed. Forced air systems are reliable because the ducts are durable and there are fewer working parts than other systems. Forced air systems utilize air filters. These filters should be replaced or cleaned according to the manufacturer's instructions. You should also have the unit serviced on an annual basis to keep the system running as efficiently as possible.

With all systems, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) advises consumers to regularly maintain their equipment. That, together with proper insulation, sealing and thermostat settings, will help save money while reducing environmental emissions.

HOT WATER HEATING SYSTEMS

Hot water heating systems, often called hydronic systems, are less common today and are generally found in colder climates. Instead of a furnace, these systems feature boilers. The boiler heats water, which is pumped through radiators or baseboards, carrying heat throughout the house.

Hydronic systems provide several advantages, such as consistent heat in a cost-effective manner, according to DOE. These systems tend to be preferred by those with allergies because it doesn't distribute allergens, the DOE reports.

On the downside, hot water heating systems are more expensive and complicated to install, making upfront costs higher. Also, an air conditioner cannot be connected or added to a boiler, as opposed to forced air furnaces which can share the same ductwork. Like other heaters, hot water systems require regular maintenance to prevent leakage and damage.

SPACE HEATING SYSTEMS

Space heating systems are sometimes used in addition to central heating systems in add-on rooms, garages and basements.

Space heaters generally are intended to heat only the room in which they are placed. However, in warmer climates, a larger unit could serve as a home's sole heating source. Some small space heaters may be vent-free, but most use either conventional or direct venting. Most are mounted to either the floor or a wall.

Vent-free systems draw in room air to support combustion. With efficiency ratings of up to 99.9%, they release almost all the generated heat into the area to be heated. Used for supplemental heat only, vent-free units come with oxygen depletion sensors that automatically shut the unit down if there is an inadequate oxygen supply. Direct-vent room heaters vent directly outside and don't need a chimney or flue and are self-contained sealed combustion heating appliances. These heaters are highly efficient as they draw outside air to support combustion rather than taking air from the space you are trying to heat. Direct-vent heaters are typically compact and easy to install.

As with any large-scale home improvement, consumers should first speak with a reliable heating contractor before selecting a heating system. A knowledgeable professional can discuss the different aspects of each system and help make an informed investment in comfort. ■

A zero net energy home was recently constructed in Taylor, Texas. The home produces the same amount of energy that it consumes in a year by using high-efficiency natural gas space and water heating, high-performance building materials, and solar technology to provide comfort, affordability and sustainability.

Healthy living

Habitat for Humanity chooses natural gas to build affordable, energy-efficient homes

By Monica Stavish Skaggs

Dreams really can come true. Case in point: Habitat for Humanity and Atmos Energy Corp. are partnering to help lower-income families move into affordable, energy-efficient homes that feature reliable natural gas and renewable energy.

Two zero net energy (ZNE) homes were recently constructed in Taylor, Texas, and Evans, Colorado. A ZNE home produces the same amount of energy that it consumes in a year by using high-efficiency natural gas space and water heating, high-performance building materials, and solar technology to provide comfort, affordability and sustainability.

"Zero net energy homes demonstrate the value and vital role natural gas plays in helping customers reduce their energy bills while reducing their carbon footprint," said Jennifer Altieri, vice president, public

"Zero net energy homes demonstrate the value and vital role natural gas plays in helping customers reduce their energy bills while reducing their carbon footprint."

— Jennifer Altieri, vice president, public affairs, Colorado-Kansas division, Atmos Energy Corp

affairs, Colorado-Kansas division, Atmos Energy. "Utility costs can be a real burden for new homeowners, especially low-income families."

Habitat for Humanity is a global, nonprofit Christian housing organization that specializes in removing barriers to help qualified families gain self-reliance and lead financially stable lives. Through Habitat, homeowners help build their new houses along with volunteers and pay affordable mortgages. Since 1976, the organization has helped 29 million people around the world build or improve their homes.

Atmos Energy is the nation's largest natural gas-only distributor. Headquartered in Dallas, Texas, the S&P 500 company delivers natural gas to more than 3 million distribution customers in 1,400 communities in eight states.

In Taylor, Habitat for Humanity of Williamson County, Texas, and Atmos Energy partnered to build a three-bedroom, two-bath natural gas home. The 1,277-square-foot dwelling adheres to U.S. Department of Energy's Zero Energy Ready Home Program. The program requires a qualified third-party energy consultant to be involved in the house's design and to complete rigorous testing and certification.

A single mother with health issues and her four-year-old daughter now call the house their home. The owner spent 300 hours helping to construct the building and attended preparatory classes.

Energy-efficient features include air sealing of the house's existing frame, duct sealing and testing, and a high-efficiency tankless natural gas water heater. The walls and underside of the roof have spray foam insulation which provides a tight seal against air leaks.

"Basically, no air gets into the house except where it's designed to," said Linda Sloan, director of homeowner services, Habitat for Humanity of Williamson County.

Natural gas space and water heating keep energy bills low, and appliances are Energy Star® rated.

"Folks who live in Habitat homes are obviously concerned about their monthly cash flow. While most people will brace for $100 to $200 monthly electric bills in the summer, this family will see a $50 monthly bill for gas and electric service," said Matt Skains, marketing manager, Atmos Energy. "They will enjoy ease of living, the air will be warmer in the winter, food will cook faster, and they've even got a gas dryer. The home is going to be extremely comfortable."

The ZNE Habitat home in Evans combines rooftop solar, high-efficiency natural gas appliances and high-rated windows and insulation to produce more energy than it consumes in a year, Altieri said.

The 1,500-square-foot home has five bedrooms and two baths. It features a complete thermal enclosure system which includes comprehensive air sealing. In addition, the home features a 7.0-kilowatt roof-mounted solar system that supplies electricity. Renewable power will offset the home's energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

"Natural gas offers resiliency because residents are not dependent on just one energy source," said Cheri Witt-Brown, executive director, Greeley-Weld Habitat for Humanity. "Natural gas is also affordable in terms of monthly energy bills and it's very comfortable."

The house is home to a mother with four children, including an adult son with special needs and one grandchild. The family previously lived in a crowded apartment with upper-story windows that posed a hazard. Family members are grateful to live in a stable environment, according to Habitat for Humanity.

For the past 20 years, Habitat and Atmos Energy have partnered to build affordable and efficient homes in communities to achieve the goal to provide safe, cost-effective, energy-efficient housing so families can lead healthier, more financially stable lives. ■

A zero net energy Habitat to for Humanity home in Evans, Colorado, combines rooftop solar, high-efficiency natural gas appliances and high-rated windows and insulation to produce more energy than it consumes in a year.

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Dining out

Restaurants find new opportunities with outdoor options

By Tonya McMurray

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in the spring of 2020, the restaurant industry was one of the hardest hit. With initial shutdowns followed by stringent indoor capacity limitations, the ability to shift to outdoor dining provided a lifeline for many restaurants, according to the National Restaurant Association.

From simple tents to custom-built outdoor enclosures, restaurants found ways to move their dining spaces outdoors. By September 2021, 72% of full-service restaurants offered outdoor dining and 57% of limited-service restaurants offered outdoor seating, according to a survey by the National Restaurant Association.

The organization reported that the inclusion of outdoor dining spaces was important even more than a year into the pandemic as the delta variant spread in the fall 2021. The association's survey showed that 78% of restaurants experienced a decline in customer demand for indoor dining while 61% saw an increase in demand for outdoor seating because of increased COVID cases.

STAYING WARM

As restaurants opened outdoor spaces, one challenge was finding a way to keep outdoor dining open as many months as possible. And for most restaurants, that meant finding ways to heat their outdoor spaces.

Lily Ning, vice president of marketing for Superior Radiant Products, which markets the Superior Radiant line of infrared heaters, said that prior to the pandemic, outdoor space heating represented less than 10% of the company's business. That has steadily increased over the last two years in part because restaurants and other industries with outdoor spaces are looking to keep those spaces open as long as possible.

She said one of the biggest concerns for restaurant owners was

"Natural gas provides flexibility for large or small spaces. It is also historically much cheaper in the long term to use natural gas compared to electricity."

— Justin Merritt, business development manager, Superior Radiant Products Ltd. and IR Energy Inc.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SPR GROUP

Restaurant owners turned to outdoor heaters to expand their dining spaces during the COVID pandemic.

how to make the outdoor dining space profitable. Those with access to natural gas were able to take advantage of the cost and energy efficiency of natural gas heaters to expand their outdoor dining season.

"When you are looking into outdoor heating, it's all about coverage," Ning said. "Even in places where it gets very cold in the winter, if you have enough heaters, you should be able to stay open all the way to November. An infrared product like ours operates on the same principle as sitting under the sun. Even on a very cold winter day, if you are sitting under the sun, you feel really warm. So, you can have an open wall, but if you're under the heater, you'll be warm and toasty."

USHERING IN A TREND

While restaurants may have added outdoor dining options because of the pandemic, many industry experts expect that outdoor dining will remain an important feature for restaurants. According to the National Restaurant Association's 2022 State of the Industry Report, about 50% of restaurant operators expect outdoor dining will become more common this year. And, in a diner survey conducted by online restaurant reservation service OpenTable, 82% of diners said they want restaurants to continue to expand outdoor seating.

"There's been a real change in people's habits," Ning said. "Some people are more comfortable sitting outside because they don't have to worry as much about the virus. Some people have found they like it. If you go to Europe, most cafes and small restaurants have outdoor seating and they put a blanket on the chair. They all have heaters, you put a blanket over your shoulders, and you can sit outside almost all winter. Now people here are realizing they can sit outdoors even in September, October and November."

The realization that outdoor dining can be enjoyable even into the late fall has led some homeowners to take another look at their own backyards.

Homeowners have many options when it comes to natural gas patio heaters. Heaters can be permanently installed in-ground, deck mounted or hung from a roofline or on a wall. Other heaters are freestanding and portable to allow for greater flexibility in use. Smaller heaters can provide spot heating for an outdoor grilling space while larger heaters can create a cozy outdoor dining and gathering spot.

Ning said homeowners looking to expand their outdoor spaces can take a lesson from restaurants by making sure they invest in quality heating equipment. A commercial-grade natural gas heater will provide better heating coverage and is designed to withstand the demands of frequent use.

"In the last two years, we are seeing people invest a lot in the outdoor space, including landscaping, barbecues, furniture and outdoor heating equipment," she said. "They are more willing to spend the money because they can create a nice space and be able to enjoy the outdoors even into early winter." ■

PHOTO COURTESY OF SPR GROUP

Overhead radiant heaters can extend the use of outdoor spaces into the fall and early winter.

(continued from page 07)

(GGE) per year, enough to fuel 725 biofuel trucks. When operating at full volume, RNG represents nearly 10% of Aspire Energy's entire system.

Meanwhile, Chesapeake Utilities has formed another partnership with Bioenergy DevCo (BDC), a developer that creates renewable energy and healthy soil products from organic material. Chesapeake Utilities, along with Eastern Shore Natural Gas Co. and Marlin Gas Services, will collaborate with BDC on project sites where organic waste can be converted into a carbon-negative energy source. This will bring RNG to service territories on the Delmarva Peninsula to help fuel homes and businesses, increasing environmental benefits and supporting a more sustainable future. ■

RUNNING ON H_20: HYDROGEN HELPS FUEL THE HOME OF THE FUTURE

Everyone wants a cleaner environment that is free from harmful emissions. And the natural gas industry is doing its part. As well as efforts to greatly reduce emissions at natural gas facilities and major investment in the development of renewable natural gas (RNG) infrastructure, utilities such as SoCalGas are involved in cutting-edge projects like Hydrogen Home.

The first project of its kind in the United States, Hydrogen Home aim is to showcase how carbon-free gas made from renewable electricity can be used in pure form or as a blend with natural gas to fuel the clean energy systems of the future.

"Hydrogen is the one gas that when it combusts, makes no carbon," said Maryam Brown, president, SoCalGas.

The Hydrogen Home is currently under construction in the city of Downey, near Los Angeles, California. It consists of fully integrated solar panels, a battery for energy storage, an electrolyzer to convert solar energy to hydrogen, and a hydrogen-powered fuel cell to supply electricity for the home. Up to 20% hydrogen will also be blended with natural gas and used in the home's heat pump HVAC unit, tankless water heater, clothes dryer, gas stove, fireplace and BBQ grill. The home will function and feel just like a regular home. However, it will harness reliable, clean energy 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year.

The nearly 2,000-square-foot home will serve as a demonstration project for hydrogen-based heating and cooling to prove out the viability of this futuristic concept. It can then be scaled up to power entire residential neighborhoods and businesses.

"For the past decade, SoCalGas has invested in hydrogen research and development, recognizing it as a critical component of our transition to net-zero emissions," said Brown. "The Hydrogen Home will show how carbon-free gas made from renewable electricity can be used to fuel clean energy systems of the future."

Once completed the Hydrogen Home will function and feel exactly like a regular household. By drawing power from solar panels on sunny days and converting excess energy into green hydrogen, the fuel cells can utilize hydrogen stored on site to produce electricity at night or during periods when solar or batteries cannot provide enough energy. The home is also being built to the highest environmental standards.

While SoCalGas is well known as the largest gas distribution utility in North America, it is also leading the way in environmental stewardship. The company has set a net zero target for greenhouse gas emissions in its operations and delivery of energy by 2045 — and projects like Hydrogen Home will play a key role in achieving those goals.

The utility also plans to establish the nation's largest green hydrogen energy infrastructure. Known as Angeles Link, the system could displace up to 3 million gallons of diesel per day, helping to eliminate hazardous air pollutants, and could allow natural gas power plants in the region to convert to green hydrogen. ■

PHOTO COURTESY OF SOCALGAS

Hydrogen Home will be powered by 100% clean energy including hydrogen, batteries and solar power.

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BEER AND LIME MARINATED SALMON

INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup fresh lime juice

1/3 cup beer

3 tablespoons soy sauce

1/2 tablespoon minced fresh gingerroot

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 lb. fresh salmon fillet

2 tablespoons green bell peppers or 2 tablespoons yellow bell peppers (or combination)

2 tablespoons lime zest (2-3 limes)

Fresh ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine lime juice, beer, soy sauce, ginger, and garlic. Mix well.
2. Place salmon fillets in shallow glass dish and pour marinade over top. Turn pieces several times to coat; cover and refrigerate overnight.
3. Preheat oven, broiler or grill.
4. Remove salmon from marinade; discard marinade.
5. Broil, bake or grill for about 10 minutes (for 1" thick fillets) or until fish flakes in center.

6. Serve hot garnished with diced bell pepper, lime zest and pepper on top.

SOURCE: FOOD.COM

SOUTHWEST SPAGHETTI SQUASH

INGREDIENTS

1 spaghetti squash (3 pounds)

1 (14 ounce) can Mexican-style tomatoes, undrained

1 (14 ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed

3/4 cup monterey jack cheese, divided

1/4 cup cilantro, finely chopped

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1/4 teaspoon garlic salt

1/4teaspoon black pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Cut squash in half lengthwise. Remove and discard seeds.
3. Place squash, cut side down, in greased baking pan.
4. Bake 45 minutes to 1 hour or until just tender.
5. Using fork, remove spaghetti-like strands from hot squash and place strands in large bowl.
6. Add tomatoes with juice, beans, 1/2 cup cheese, cilantro, cumin, garlic salt and pepper; toss well.
7. Spray 1 1/2-quart casserole with nonstick cooking spray. Spoon mixture into casserole.
8. Sprinkle with remaining 1/4 cup cheese.
9. Bake uncovered, 30 to 35 minutes or until heated through. Serve immediately.

SOURCE: FOOD.COM