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Issue

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REGULATORY COMMISSION OF ALASKA

# Consumer e-news



## SOUND THE ALARM:

*Save a Life*

## Don't be fooled

*by scammers pretending to be a utility bill collector.*

Scam artists are getting more sophisticated by sounding like they are legitimate calls and having the caller ID show a utility's phone number.

If you do pick up, hang up and call your utility company using the number listed on your utility bill. You can also help by reporting fraudulent calls to the

These scammers are deliberately falsifying the information transmitted to your caller ID display to disguise their identity. They are telling customers their accounts are delinquent and then threatening to turn off power unless



[Federal Trade Commission](#) (FTC) and your local law enforcement agency. The FTC officials take the phone numbers you report and release them to the public for awareness. This also helps phone companies and other partners that are working on call blocking solutions.

they receive an immediate payment via prepaid debit card. **Don't fall for these scams.** Utility companies do not call customers and threaten them. They also do not accept prepaid debit cards as bill payments. If you see a number on your caller ID that looks familiar, remember that it could be fake. Letting it go to voicemail is one option.

Your reports also help law enforcement identify the people behind illegal calls. In Anchorage, you can dial 3-1-1 for non-emergency calls to the Anchorage Police Department.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, the risk of dying in a home fire is cut in half when there are working smoke alarms.

We thank Alaskans who volunteered with the American Red Cross in Anchorage to help install hundreds of smoke detectors earlier this year.

*Thank You*

Visit:

Alaska Home Fire Safety Campaign

Regulatory Commission of Alaska  
Consumer Protection & Information Section  
701 W. 8th Avenue, Suite 300, Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3469  
Telephone: (907) 276-6222 Fax: (907) 276-0160 TTY/Alaska Relay: 7-1-1 or (800) 770-8973  
Website: <http://rca.alaska.gov>

# Energy Efficiency for Offices and Commercial Buildings



Open floor plans that situate conference rooms, file rooms, and private offices near the building core allow natural light to reach all staff workstations.



**Ask the experts >>>  
Get a Commercial Energy  
Assessment**

*An energy assessment will identify energy-saving opportunities, increase asset values, lower ownership costs, and promote environmental stewardship. Find a contractor or energy rater through the Alaska Energy Efficiency's Energy [Pro List](#).*

*According to Energy Star, small businesses in the U.S. spend more than \$60 billion a year on energy. Imagine what you can do with your savings if you can reduce your utility costs up to 30 percent!*

So stop dreaming and start savings with these top 10 energy efficiency tips for your business!

- Reduce or replace inefficient, outdated, or excessive lighting in your building.
- Install light emitting diode (LED) exit signs.
- Install lighting occupancy sensors in the right places.
- Use available sunlight to illuminate your workspaces.
- Tune up your heating systems regularly and change or clean filters.
- Check windows and doors for air leaks and caulk where necessary.
- Install programmable thermostats.
- Check the seal on breakroom refrigerator doors and replace the gasket if a dollar bill pulls out easily from between the seals.
- Use plug load controllers to control multiple loads like desktop computers, printers, task lights, and fans. Plug loads account for roughly 33% of electricity consumption in commercial buildings.
- Unplug. Don't give it juice if it's not in use. And it's easier to do this daily if you're using a plug load controller.



# First-Time Homebuyers

*Buying your home doesn't have to be a complicated, confusing process. Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) will provide you the tools you need to make good purchasing decisions for you and your family. Check out AHFC's free HomeChoice class!*



View a list of classes and register online:

<https://www.ahfc.us/events/>

HomeChoice is a six-hour class. You'll hear from experts on topics such as:

- How to shop for a lender and real estate professional
- Title insurance
- Energy efficient homes
- Purchase and sale contracts
- Home inspections
- Money management and budgeting
- AHFC loan programs

## Moving Soon?

### How to Transfer Your Utilities When Moving

*Moving can be stressful. With so much to do in little time, it can be difficult to remember everything. But before you begin packing boxes, take a look at these three simple steps for transferring your utilities, discontinuing, or requesting new service.*

1. Notify your utility a few weeks in advance.
2. Update your address.
3. Do a final meter reading. Before moving, have your utility company come to your house and conduct a final reading of the gas, electric, and water meters. Just in case you receive any unexpected bills after moving, keep a copy of the meter reading reports for your records.

Also, if you're moving to a multi-family unit or a condominium, verify that the meter is not crossed with another unit. This is not a common issue, but utilities come across it from time to time.



## Signing on the dotted line...



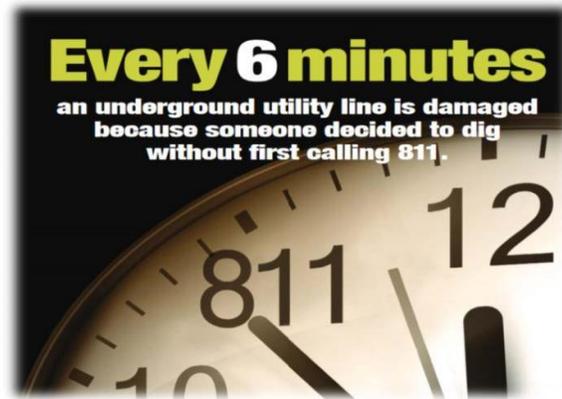
When applying for a utility service, you must agree to the terms and conditions of the public utility, including but not limited to:

- >> Paying your bill on time
- >> Providing the utility access to its meters, equipment, and facilities
- >> Preventing any hazards
- >> Giving the utility advance notice before you move or if you wish to have your service disconnected

To check the terms and conditions of your public utility, visit the [RCA](#) website and download the utility's tariff by typing the company name in the "Find an Entity" search box or the utility's [certificate number](#) in the "Find a Certificate" search box. The RCA's rules and regulations on the Operation of Public Utilities are outlined in 3 AAC [52.010-52.940](#).

# SAFE DIGGING PRACTICES

Since Alaska does not enforce its own Alaska One-Call law, the U.S. Department of Transportation, [Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration](#) (PHMSA), is empowered to act as a “backstop” authority in Alaska in the case of excavation damage to natural gas or hazardous liquid pipelines.

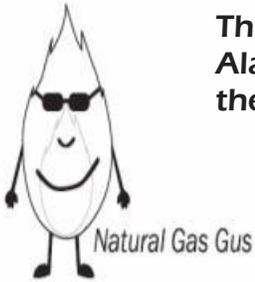


If you caused excavation damage to a natural gas or hazardous liquid pipelines, you may be subject to federal penalties of up to **\$200,000** for each day the violation continues with a maximum penalty of **\$2 million** in a related series of violations.

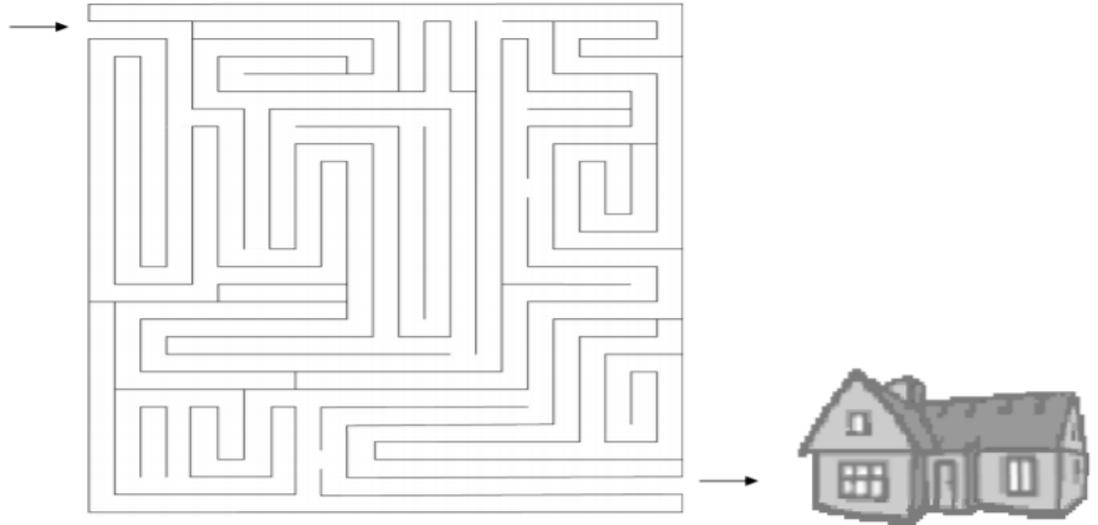


If you damaged a pipeline, immediately report the damage to the pipeline operator. If there is a release of natural gas or hazardous liquid from a damaged pipeline, immediately call 9-1-1.

# JUST FOR KIDS



This new house will need natural gas so the family can keep warm during cold Alaska winter! Can you help Natural Gas Gus find his way through the pipeline to the house?



Electric Ernie



The house also needs Electricity. Electricity is important because it gives things power to work. Can you imagine what life would be like without Electricity? Help me and Electric Ernie circle things on this page that are powered by electricity.



# JUST FOR KIDS



Water Wilma

This house also needs clean water so the family has safe water for drinking, cooking, and bathing. Water Wilma is here to tell us about some ways to save water!



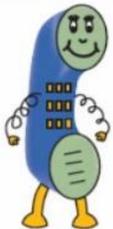
Only fill up the tub halfway when you are taking a bath, or take a short five-minute shower.



Turn off the water while brushing your teeth



Ask your parents to water the lawn in the morning or the evening so less water is lost to evaporation.



Telephone

Tina

Telephone Tina helps people stay in touch with your friends and family and call 9-1-1 when there's an emergency. Tina has some words for you to find.

H A N T D I A L I H W H S Q T  
 A E L A N H R I N G H D M J A  
 N J L Q U Y L H K L O C A L L  
 G T E L E P H O N E C I N C K  
 U Q K G O O D B Y E L J S H I  
 P I H I X K B F T H G H W C Z  
 L O N G D I S T A N C E E O L  
 W Z Q L A M H S R O H A R R I  
 R E C E I V E R H W E E H D E

|           |          |               |         |
|-----------|----------|---------------|---------|
| Telephone | Receiver | Dial          | Talk    |
| Hello     | Cord     | Local         | Answer  |
| Goodbye   | Ring     | Long Distance | Hang Up |