

A flashlight beam illuminates a wall, creating a bright spot. The flashlight is visible on the left side of the frame.

**IT'S ABOUT TIME
SOMEONE SHED
SOME LIGHT ON THE
GAS UTILITIES.**

The Utilities Kept Millions of Customers in the Dark



In the past several months, when two major storms cut electricity to millions in the Northeast, the utilities were brought under fire for not restoring power fast enough. These are the same utilities who want you to convert to gas heat – and it's time to shed some light on how they service their customers.

THE UTILITIES THAT WANT YOU TO SWITCH TO GAS HEAT ARE THE SAME UTILITIES THAT LEFT MILLIONS WITHOUT POWER.

THE UTILITIES LEFT MILLIONS IN THE DARK DURING 2011'S STORMS.



Northeast Utilities, representing more than 2 million natural gas and electric customers in New England, failed to adequately prepare for a record October snowfall that cut electricity to 70 percent of its Connecticut customers (many for over a week) and lacked executive leadership during power restoration.¹ And, during the largest power outage on Long Island in over 25 years, after Hurricane Irene, National Grid and its subsidiary LIPA faced over 523,000 outages, advising customers that restoration would “take several days and perhaps longer.”²

MANY UTILITIES ARE HUGE FOREIGN-OWNED CORPORATIONS.

The gas utilities are often multi-state, multi-national, publicly held corporations that enjoy monopoly-type control and are largely shielded from competition.³ The management of these utilities involves many levels of corporate hierarchy leading up to a distant board of directors.⁴



MANY GAS UTILITIES DO NOT PROVIDE ROUTINE SERVICE ON HOME HEATING EQUIPMENT.

While some companies offer sub-contracted service work or provide lists of preferred technicians, many others assume, or even suggest, that the customer ask friends and neighbors for recommendations, or consult the local phone books.^{5,6,7}

GAS UTILITIES OFTEN PROVIDE NO EMERGENCY BURNER SERVICE.

The utility gas customer with an equipment failure generally needs to make separate arrangements with a private contractor.⁸ If a gas customer does not retain the services of a contractor in advance, he or she may have difficulty locating one to provide immediate emergency service, especially during evenings and weekends.



¹Northeast Utilities Wasn't Prepared for October Snow Storm, *Bloomberg.com* 12/2/11; ²LIPA press release 8/29/11; ³Pittsburgh Post Gazette, April 21, 2009, PUC: Effective natural gas competition doesn't exist; ⁴National Grid, *Our Management Team*; ⁵New Jersey Natural Gas; ⁶South Jersey Gas; ⁷National Grid; ⁸National Grid.

TO LEARN THE TRUTH ABOUT NATURAL GAS ...

1. SNAP



2. VISIT



3. WATCH



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