



# Natural Gas Meter Reading

Double-checking the numbers on your natural gas meter never hurts, especially when the benefits involve saving energy and money.

By learning how to read your gas meter, you can monitor your usage and avoid being overcharged or undercharged by the utility company.

## Locating your meter

Gas meters are located inside the home, usually in the basement utility closet, or outside the home. Your gas meter resembles a metal box with pipes extending from it. The meter's face has four round clock like dials with digits 0-9 displayed on each one.

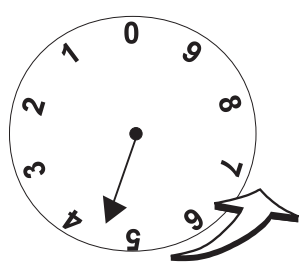
## How to read your meter

You can figure out how to read your gas meter by using the following steps:

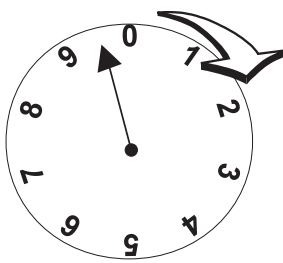
1. Locate the four dials in the row and always remember to read them from left to right. Also be aware that the pointer on the first dial of a gas meter circles counterclockwise, the second dial clockwise, the third counterclockwise and the fourth clockwise.
2. Notice the pointer in each dial and write down the number indicated by its position. When the pointer is between two numbers, the reading for the dial is the smaller of the two numbers.

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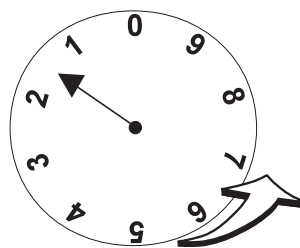
## Natural Gas Meter Reading Lesson



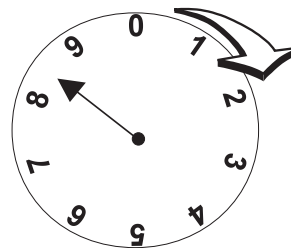
*Reading: 4*  
*Counterclockwise*



*Reading: 9*  
*Clockwise*



*Reading: 1*  
*Counterclockwise*



*Reading: 8*  
*Clockwise*

The meter above reads 4918. According to your most recent natural gas bill, it previously read 4818.

**The Current Reading (4918) minus the Previous Reading (4818) equals 100. So, in this example, you have used 100 Ccf of natural gas since your last natural gas meter reading.**

> *continued from other side*

3. If the pointer is directly on a number, that number is the reading. When you cannot tell if a pointer is directly on a number, look at the dial directly to the right. If the pointer on that dial has not passed zero, record the smaller number of the two.

4. To discover how much gas you have used since your last bill, subtract the reading indicated on your last utility bill from the reading you just took. After this first reading you will be able to keep track of your own readings and compare them with your monthly utility bill. Gas is measured in either hundreds (CCF) or thousands (MCF) of cubic feet.

5. Monitor your gas usage on a daily or weekly basis and take a reading to determine the amount you use in a single day or week. By following these steps, you will be better able to make changes in your lifestyle to keep your utility bills low and your energy savings high.

Gas meter readings are required to be taken once a year by utility companies, but are often taken more frequently.

If you know your meter has not been read in the last 12 months, contact the company to schedule a reading date and then remember to take your own reading on that day as well. If you discover a sizable difference when comparing the readings, this could result in an overcharge or undercharge on your next billing statement. In either case, report the discrepancy to the utility.

**NOTE:** Be aware that there are other components of a utility bill in addition to the basic rate which might affect the amount you are required to pay. Learning how to read your utility meters gives you a good indication of what your bill will be, rather than the precise amount you will pay.

## Types of reading devices

Many older homes, and some newer builds, have natural gas meters that are typically located in the basement. This can cause difficulties since the meter reader must gain access to the home in order to read the meter. To avoid having to estimate meter reads for several months in a row, many companies have installed either a remote meter or an automated meter reading device on the wall outside of the residence.

While there is some difference between the two, both are electronically connected to your natural gas meter, thus allowing the meter reader to electronically obtain the actual usage amount from outside the home. A remote meter is a device that allows the meter reader to view the usage as they walk from house to house. An automated meter reading device sends a signal to a computer that is in a vehicle or at a central office, and transmits the meter read. Either way, these methods assist the company in reducing the number of estimated meter reads it has to make, which are based on usage history rather than actual usage in a given month.

The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC), the residential utility consumer advocate, represents the interests of 4.5 million households in proceedings before state and federal regulators and in the courts. The state agency also educates consumers about electric, natural gas, telephone and water issues and resolves complaints from individuals. To receive utility information, brochures, schedule a presentation or file a utility complaint, residential consumers may call 1-877-PICKOCC (1-877-742-5622) toll free in Ohio or visit the OCC website at [www.pickocc.org](http://www.pickocc.org).

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**For additional information from the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel:**

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