

UNDERSTANDING METHANE

WHAT IS IT?

Methane (CH₄) is the primary component of natural gas. As organic waste decomposes, it releases methane. When released directly into the atmosphere, it becomes one of the greenhouse gases contributing to climate change.

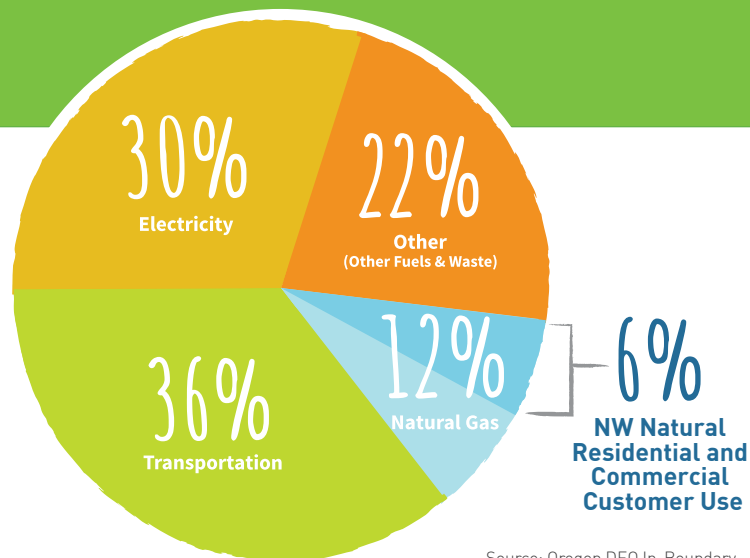
WHERE IT COMES FROM

There are many sources of greenhouse gases, such as transportation, electricity, food and waste. Natural gas is a modest part of the whole mix here in Oregon (see chart). We are doing our part to make that number even smaller.

OUR SYSTEM

NW Natural delivers natural gas produced in Canada or the Rockies sent to us via a pipeline system. Then we bring it into homes and businesses. According to the EPA, 1.3% of natural gas is lost or emitted along its way from production to customers.¹

As the operator of one of the most modern pipeline systems in the country, NW Natural has already replaced our older pipes with new materials. That makes our system tight. In fact, a 2013 Environmental Defense Fund study led by Washington State University found that our system emissions were 90% lower than EPA estimates, thanks in large part to pipeline modernization efforts. That's why to drive further savings, we are looking upstream of our pipeline system to production where the largest portion of emissions occur.



Source: Oregon DEQ In-Boundary GHG Inventory 2015 data.

HOW DO WE DRIVE REDUCTIONS?

We're working with many partners to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from natural gas along the entire supply chain. Here are a few examples:

- NATURAL GAS SUPPLY COLLABORATIVE**
 NW Natural is a founding member of this voluntary collaborative promoting safe and responsible practices through more robust reporting and engagement with producers.²
- SUPPLY CHAIN PILOT**
 Beginning in 2019, NW Natural is one of the first utilities to use a scorecard as a cost-neutral way to evaluate which producers have the best practices that result in low emissions, and purchase gas from those companies.
- PARTNERS FOR BEST PRACTICES**
 NW Natural worked with the Natural Resources Defense Council and global consultancy ICF International to develop a comprehensive list of best practices for reducing environmental impacts of gas production.³
- EPA NATURAL GAS STAR METHANE CHALLENGE**
 NW Natural is a founding member of the EPA Methane Challenge. In our first year of reporting, we calculated that our practices reduced emissions by more than 80% compared to business as usual.⁴



LEARN MORE—NW Natural and the natural gas system have an important role to play in helping lower greenhouse gas emissions. We are collaborating on effective solutions to dramatically reduce methane emissions while ensuring energy reliability, affordability and customer choice. Learn more at LessWeCan.com.

SOURCES

1 Environmental Protection Agency, "Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990–2017," 2019. Online at www.epa.gov.

2 Natural Gas Supply Collaborative, <https://www.mjbradley.com/content/natural-gas-supply-collaborative-0> Social performance indicators, October 2017: <https://www.mjbradley.com/sites/default/files/NGSCPressFinal.pdf>

3 NRDC Natural Gas Certification Program, Performance Standards Statement of Reasons, v. 1.0, Sept. 15, 2015

4 NW Natural Methane Challenge Partner Profile, <https://www.epa.gov/natural-gas-star-program/nw-natural-methane-challenge-partner-profile>



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