



OGA News & Views

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We want to hear from you! Ideas, concerns, ways to make the association more effective for you.

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OGA 2017 Legislative Forum Scheduled for January 26

The annual OGA Legislative Forum will offer members a preview of the 2017 Oklahoma Legislative session.

“Our annual Legislative Forum is designed to give members an opportunity to hear what the legislative session might hold and the potential impact to our industry,” said Tom Rider, OGA Executive Director. “Attendees also will hear a preview on other issues facing the state, including what we expect to be yet another troubling budget year.”

Todd Lamb, Oklahoma Lieutenant Governor, along with legislative leaders State Senator Mike Schultz and State Representative Charles McCall, have been invited to speak at the forum. Schultz is expected to lead the Oklahoma State Senate as President Pro Tempore, and McCall is expected to serve as the Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives.

Executive Director of the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission, Victor Bird (or his designee), will discuss how the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission views the future of pipeline inspections with aircraft and drones.

Highly regarded industry lobbyist, Bill Phelps, will review filed legislation and the upcoming legislative session.

The OGA 2017 Legislative Forum will begin at 9 a.m. Thursday, January 26, 2017 at the Reed Conference Center in Midwest City, Oklahoma. The registration fee is \$99.

2017 OGA Leadership Conference Will Be May 4

One of the OGA’s most popular annual events, the Leadership Conference, has been scheduled for May 4, 2017 in Oklahoma City.

“We are proud of the conferences we have presented the past few years,” said Tom Rider, OGA Executive Director. “We are working on the conference for 2017, and we are confident we will deliver another session that delivers tremendous value to attendees.”

The goal of the annual conference is to provide insight and knowledge to participants as they work to become their organization's future leaders. The conference brings together industry leaders and speakers focusing on key aspects of leadership.

(see LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, page 4)

OGA Continues Call for Member Involvement, Input

At the 2016 OGA Annual Conference, Tom Rider, OGA Executive Director, laid out plans for the association to use several task groups as a way to provide greater member input into association activities and programs.

“We had a great response to our call at the Annual Conference,” Rider said. “While we are working with the board on plans for 2017, we again call for you, our members, to volunteer to help guide our association.”

The OGA Board of Directors will next discuss plans for the task groups and 2017 at their annual planning retreat November 30 and December 1.

The four OGA Task Groups are:

1. Scholarship Task Group — charged with developing programs and processes to promote the OGA scholarship to include funding mechanisms, information to potential recipients, and support from members.

2. Member Development Task Group — charged with developing programs and processes to improve communication between member and potential members; improve the active involvement of members in association programs and future programs; and, to act as a sounding board between members and the Board of Directors.

3. Program Development Task Group — charged with identifying, developing and improving programs and services to benefit members and potential members.

4. Communications Task Group — charged with developing processes, resources and technologies enabling the association to be an effective communicator with members, between members, interested parties, and the public on issues relating to natural gas.

For more information on participating on a task group, contact Rider at tom@meso.org.

2017 OGA Annual Conference Planning Is Underway – Submit Your Ideas

The 2017 OGA Annual Conference has been scheduled for August 28 through August 30, and the OGA Board of Directors and staff have begun the planning process.

“The most important thing we can offer members at our annual conference is a wide discussion of relevant, meaningful and timely issues,” said Tom Rider, OGA Executive Director. “We hope our members take this opportunity to offer ideas and topics which will provide value to them.”

The Board at a recent meeting developed a short list of topics and will continue to work on the list at their annual retreat at the end of November.

“At this point in our planning process, we encourage all of our members and associate members to offer suggestions as to how we can build the best conference,” Rider added.

Suggestions can be sent to Jeff Kaufmann, OGA Director of Communications, at jeffk@meso.org.

OGA 2017 Legislative Forum

A one-day prep session for the 2017 Oklahoma Legislative Session

Thursday, January 26, 2017 • 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Reed Conference Center • Midwest City, Oklahoma

Registration Fee: \$99 per person (includes lunch)

[Click here](#) to register online.

Thank you,
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Natural Gas Delivers Greater Value and Lower Emissions for the 2016-17 Winter Heating Season

The direct use of natural gas continues to be the most affordable energy option for home heating and offers lower greenhouse gas emissions than other home energy sources. The American Gas Association (AGA) held its annual winter outlook event recently where the Association explored expectations for the 2016-17 winter heating season.

After an extraordinarily warm winter last year, normal conditions would mean that residential customers this year would use more gas on average and, therefore, see slightly higher bills. AGA consumers could experience a nine to eleven percent increase in overall heating bills this winter compared to the 2015-16 winter heating season.

“Abundant supplies have moderated natural gas price increases, but more consumption and colder temperatures compared to last year may result in a moderate increase in overall bills,” said Brendan O’Brien, senior energy analyst at AGA. “Even with increases in consumption this winter, low-cost natural gas may mean that many Americans on average can expect to see one of the lowest bills in the past decade.”



Increased use of natural gas can achieve significant efficiency improvements and carbon emissions reductions. The production of natural gas through its delivery into buildings is more efficient than grid-delivered electricity, propane, or oil. Even as more renewable sources are added to our nation’s electric generation mix, the direct use of natural gas will remain an efficient, affordable and low-

carbon option for consumers. Encouraging direct use is therefore a valuable way to meet efficiency and emissions goals.

According to Chris McGill, vice president of Energy Analysis and Standards at AGA, the price of natural gas this winter is largely due to stable production and a strong underground storage position. Utilities work all year to prepare for the possibility of extreme temperatures and employ a portfolio approach to help ensure they can meet the needs of their customers at affordable prices on the coldest days of the year. Natural gas storage levels in the U.S. are nearing four trillion cubic feet and storage can provide as much as 20 percent of all gas consumed during a five-month winter heating season.

Leadership Conference

(continued from page 1)

The 2016 Conference included participants working through real-life circumstances and the decision-making process.

In 2016, topics included:

- “The Power of Influence”

- What It Takes to be a Leader
- Establishing Behavior Boundaries
- Understanding Responsibility, Accountability, and Authority
- Visioning — If You Don’t Know Where You Are Going, Any Road Will Do

Registration details will be available in early 2017.

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AGA Co-sponsors New Initiative to Provide Veterans with Jobs in the Energy Industry

The American Gas Association (AGA) is a proud co-sponsor of Veterans in Energy, a new national professional initiative providing transition, retention and professional development support to military veterans working in the energy industry. The group is currently holding its National Leadership Summit in Washington, DC to bring together veterans currently working in energy to hear from leaders in the industry and the federal government, all of whom will speak about the work being done around the country to support transitions from military life to successful careers in energy.

“For generations, natural gas utilities have served communities and supported families through good paying jobs and the opportunity for career advancement,” said AGA Chair Ralph LaRossa. “There are thousands of hard-working, dedicated men and women who have served their country on the battlefield and are now looking to begin a new stage of life. Utilities provide an incredible opportunity for them, working to upgrade and maintain the energy infrastructure of the 21st century. We are proud to support the Veterans in Energy initiative to connect with these heroes and build this future together.”

Veterans in Energy is a joint effort by the U.S. Departments of Energy, Labor, Defense, and Veterans Affairs; the Center for Energy Workforce Development and its members: the American Gas Association, the Edison Electric Institute, the Nuclear Energy Institute, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and the American Public Power Association; and labor unions, including the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the Utility Workers Union of America.

This is in addition to the robust workforce development programs for veterans that individual natural gas utilities throughout the country have had in place for many years.

When Ralph LaRossa became AGA Chair at the beginning of 2016, he outlined his mission for workforce development in the natural gas utility sector and a commitment to diversity and inclusion. The President & COO of Public Service Electric & Gas Co. in New Jersey championed a number of initiatives aimed at the development of a large and dynamic workforce that reflects the communities they serve.

Additionally, this year, AGA's #MyNatGasJob campaign has been telling the stories of natural gas utility employees throughout the country on mynatgasjob.tumblr.com, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

SAVE THE DATE
2017 OGA
Scholarship Classic
June 8, 2017 • Guthrie, OK

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National Campaign Launched to Help Protect Customers from Utility Scammers

On Nov. 14-18, the American Gas Association, in coordination with a number of natural gas utilities and industry trade associations, launched an inaugural campaign, titled “Utilities United Against Scams.”

This collaborative effort was geared toward promoting awareness and prevention of the increasing number of scamming incidents targeting utility customers across North America. As a result of this effort, the third Wednesday in November every year will be designated as Utilities United Against Scams Day.

“Our core value and top priority is, and always will be, safety,” said Dave McCurdy, AGA President and CEO. “The protection of our customers is our obligation and shared responsibility. AGA and its

member companies are committed to promoting awareness of the increasingly sophisticated and complex nature of utility scams across the nation, ultimately helping to protect customers from this fraudulent activity.”

This national campaign aims to address the wide-range of utility scams including telephone, mail, email, door-to-door and other scams that involve criminals posing as utility company representatives and demanding immediate payment or personal information from customers. AGA member companies across the nation will continue to work alongside law enforcement, industry stakeholders and political leaders at the local and national level to denounce these disruptive scams.

UPCOMING OGA EVENTS

Legislative Forum

January 26, 2017 • Oklahoma City, OK

Leadership Conference

May 4, 2017 • Oklahoma City, OK

Scholarship Classic

June 8, 2017 • Oklahoma City, OK

2017 Annual Conference

August 28 - 30, 2017 • Norman, OK

SAVE THE DATE

OGA Annual Leadership Conference
May 4, 2017 • Oklahoma City

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