



OGA News & Views

March 2022 — Volume 19, No. 1

A PUBLICATION OF THE OKLAHOMA GAS ASSOCIATION

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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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Register today for the 2022 OGA Leadership Conference

"Succeeding in Challenging Times" is the theme for the 2022 OGA Leadership Conference scheduled for May 5, 2022 in Norman, Oklahoma.

"We have gathered excellent speakers to tell their stories and to work with attendees on real-life scenarios," said Tom Rider, OGA Executive Director.

The OGA Leadership Conference is an opportunity for career-minded individuals to gather, learn from others, and develop personal action plans that will benefit them.

"Our goal is to provide learning opportunities for individuals who want to advance their careers," Rider added. "Working with like-minded people, learning from each other, helps participants identify how they may want to approach challenges they face in their work environment."

Within the conference format, participants will hear about the speaker's experiences as a beginning. Then, work with their group and develop possible courses of action should they face a similar event. All of this culminates with the small groups presenting their recommendations to the whole group.

"Same Seat on the New Bus" is the topic of the day's first session and will be presented by Summit's Steven Taylor. The conversation delves into a "first-person" point of view in a merger. How do you deal with the "shock factor," and then the "waiting period," followed by the relief factor of receiving some information but not all, and then the transition?

ONEOK's David McMullen will lead the second session titled, "Bridging the Gap Between the Front Line and the Ivory Tower." The discussion will address the challenges of being between the CEO and

(see REGISTER FOR THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE page 3)

Save the date!

2022 OGA Annual Conference

**August 29-31, 2022
Norman, Oklahoma**

Meet OGA Board of Directors

The Oklahoma Gas Association (OGA) Board members work tirelessly to serve and promote both the association and the industry. They are recognized industry leaders. All of the time and effort put into the OGA is on top of their "real" jobs and is greatly appreciated. We continue to introduce you to these dedicated professionals.



Aaron Slattery

City of Tuttle

How did you get your start in the natural gas industry?

I joined the City of Tuttle as their Director of Public Works in 2014. Tuttle owns and operates its own natural gas system and provides natural gas service to its citizens.

What is the biggest mistake you ever made and what did you learn from it?

Early in my career I struggled to delegate, I was convinced no one could do it better than I could. I learned quickly that it is an ineffective way to manage and does not create an environment where you are

tapping into the true potential of your employee's desire to contribute and excel.

Is there one thing that you tell every member of your team?

Do your very best. Each employee has a different level of "their very best." As long as that individual is doing "their very best" we are maximizing our capabilities as a team.

What do you see as the biggest issues facing the natural gas industry today?

Given our current political climate, I think market volatility needs a major focus and concern. We had specific supply issues last year due to a significant, historic winter weather event that caught many in the industry off guard. The event wreaked havoc that no one could have predicted. I am confident our industry is taking lessons learned from that event and implementing changes to avoid a similar event in the future.

What do you see as the biggest issue or challenge your organization is facing today?

Municipalities have a unique set of challenges vs. the private sector. Many people do not realize that cities are funded solely based on sales tax and utility fees. This makes it uniquely challenging to appropriately fund infrastructure and community needs.

Will you tell us a little about your family, kids, pets?

I have 2 sons and 1 daughter. One son is a firefighter, one works in the oil & gas industry and a 16-year-old daughter who is interested in the medical field. We live in Tuttle, Oklahoma, and my wife has served as a teacher at Tuttle High School for 20 years.

(see MEET TERRY LABLUE, page 3)

Register at www.okgas.org for the
2022 OGA Leadership Conference
May 5, 2022
Embassy Suites by Hilton Norman Hotel & Conference Center
2501 Conference Drive, Norman OK 73069

Meet OGA Board of Directors

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Terry Lablue

ONEOK

How did you get your start in the natural gas industry?

My father started working in the natural gas industry in 1980, so it has been a part of my life from the beginning. I started with Oklahoma Natural Gas in 2003, then transferred to ONEOK Gas Transportation in 2007, and now currently work in Gas Storage.

What keeps you awake at night?

In our industry, we move a lot of product through pipelines buried under ever-growing housing developments, and with more utilities being buried and 3rd party excavations, pipeline safety, and reliability keeps me up at night.

What is the biggest mistake you ever made and what did you learn from it?

When I first got into leadership I was eager, arrogant, and made several unrealistic promises to the folks on my team. I have learned to slow down, listen, support my team, take responsibility for opportunities to improve and praise the wins.

Is there one thing that you tell every member of your team?

We are in this together, everyone has a voice and opinion, let's work together to achieve the common goal.

What do you see as the biggest issues facing the natural gas industry today?

With the ever-changing world we live in and the demand for fossil fuels changing to more renewable resources, I see a shift to more electrification, solar, and wind energy on the road and in our homes and everyday life. Natural Gas isn't going anywhere, however, how it is used will change with the times.

Consumers may not always understand the natural gas industry, if you could teach them one thing, what would that be?

Natural gas is part of everyday life used for heating our homes, cooking, producing various household items, and generating electricity. We have made great strides to reduce methane emissions and make an already clean-burning fuel even cleaner.

What is your biggest accomplishment?

I have a beautiful and supporting wife, three amazing kids, and have been with ONEOK for 18 years. I started out running a shovel for Oklahoma Natural Gas and now manage our Underground Storage Operations in Oklahoma.

Register for the Leadership Conference

(continued from page 1)

frontline employees. These challenges may include what they may or may not be able to tell their teams and how do they take care of their team and themselves especially when you're getting an unclear picture.

Lori Mueller from the Oklahoma Municipal Assurance Group will present the final session of the conference – "Taking Control of Your Mindset." This conversation provides a tool to help leaders shift their thinking from the things outside their control to the

things they have the power to change. Leaders will learn to use this tool to facilitate conversations with their teams or individual team members.

The registration fee for the conference is \$149 and detailed information may be found at www.okgas.org or by clicking here: [2022 OGA Leadership Conference](#).

For more information, contact Jeff Kaufmann at jeffk@okgas.org.

AGA Sets the Facts Straight

The State of America's Natural Gas Utilities is Strong

From the American Gas Association

Published March 01, 2022

The American Gas Association released its [2022 Playbook](#) today, bringing much needed clarity to the debate about our energy future in the U.S. Nearly 187 million Americans and 5.5 million businesses use natural gas because it is affordable, reliable, safe and essential to improving our environment. America's natural gas utilities are innovative and committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through new and modernized infrastructure and advanced technologies that maintain reliable, resilient and affordable energy service choices for consumers.

"There is a critical conversation taking place in the United States about our energy future and we owe it to the American people, more than half of whom use natural gas in their homes, to have an honest, fact-based discussion," said AGA President and CEO Karen Harbert. "With the devastating war underway in Ukraine and disruption to Europe's energy markets, natural gas prices for America's homeowners and businesses remain stable. We see gasoline prices jumping, continued inflation looming and cold weather bearing down, but our domestic supply of natural gas is keeping Americans warm and bills affordable. Our nation's domestic supply of natural gas and reliable delivery system provide stability and certainty for Americans and insulate us from chaos and volatility across the globe."

Natural Gas is Affordable: Households that use natural gas for heating, cooking and clothes drying save an average of [\\$1,041 per year](#) compared to homes using electricity for those applications, an 18% increase since the publication of the 2021 AGA Playbook.

Natural Gas is Reliable: Unplanned outages affect about [1 in 800](#) natural gas customers per year while electric distribution systems have an average of one outage per year per customer.

Natural Gas is Essential to Improving Our Environment: Emissions from the natural gas distribution system have declined [69 percent](#) since 1990. Natural gas efficiency and the growth of

renewable energy have led to energy related carbon dioxide emissions hitting 30-year lows.

America's Natural Gas Utilities are Innovative, investing [\\$125 million](#) to advance low- and zero carbon energy technologies and reduce emissions. There are nearly 500 RNG facilities in operation or planned in North America today, most of which are connected to the natural gas delivery system. There are more than 25 states or provinces where utilities are actively engaged in hydrogen research, testing or projects.

On February 8, AGA [released](#) a bold vision for the future along with a seminal analysis detailing how America's natural gas, natural gas utilities and delivery infrastructure will be essential to meeting our nation's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals, including achieving net-zero emissions.

"We are seeing, in real time, the disastrous alternative to not investing in natural gas," Harbert said. "Natural gas customers in Europe have paid as high as the equivalent of \$43 per MMBtu because they turned their backs on natural gas and the delivery infrastructure. As outlined in the 2022 AGA Playbook, natural gas is projected to be [1/2 to 1/3 the price](#) of other fuels through 2050. That is a foundation we can build on to double-down on our shared goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and making sure our customers and communities have safe and affordable energy every single day."

"As President Biden prepares to make his State of the Union remarks tonight, there is no question that energy security for our nation and across the globe is something that cannot go without mention. This industry stands ready to work with the President, his Administration, and the U.S. Congress to continue to advance our strong energy position at home and help ensure the benefits of our robust natural gas supplies can expand and support global stability."

You can read the entire 2022 AGA Playbook at playbook.aga.org.

America's Natural Gas Industry Will be Essential to Achieve a Net-Zero Emissions Future

From the American Gas Association
Published February 8, 2022

At a recent media event, American Gas Association (AGA) Chair, and Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer at Southern Company Gas, Kim Greene, joined AGA President and CEO Karen Harbert to release a bold vision for the future along with a seminal analysis detailing how America's natural gas, natural gas utilities and delivery infrastructure will be essential to meeting our nation's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals, including achieving net-zero emissions.

Building on the industry's bold Climate Change Position Statement from January 2020, this new study ["Net-Zero Emissions Opportunities for Gas Utilities."](#) presents a national-level approach that leverages the unique advantages of gas technologies and distribution infrastructure. Several modeled pathways are analyzed to underscore the range of scenarios and technology opportunities available as the nation, regions, states and communities develop and implement ambitious emissions reductions plans. The pair also outlined how the industry has contributed to a cleaner environment through innovation and emissions reductions while delivering value to 187 million Americans every day.

"Our industry is proud that we have made significant progress on the climate change commitments made two years ago," said Greene. "We knew then what we know now, climate change is a defining challenge across the globe and this industry and natural gas are part of the solution. That's why we're investing \$95 million every day in infrastructure upgrades. Gas infrastructure will continue to unlock innovative solutions to meet our environmental goals—we are living up to our commitments, and we have no plans on slowing down."

Greene and Harbert detailed the industry's efforts and progress to date, including:

- Reduction in methane emissions of 69% since 1990.
- Continued improvements in gas efficiency have reduced residential emissions per customer by 47% since 1971.
- Improvements in natural gas efficiency and the growth of renewable energy have led to energy-related carbon dioxide emissions hitting 30-year lows.
- Industry launched a \$125 million research initiative to drive innovation and deploy next generation technologies including renewable natural gas and hydrogen.
- There are nearly 500 RNG facilities in operation or planned in North America today: 200 in operation today the U.S., 155 under construction, and 103 more planned across the United States and Canada.
- The affordability of natural gas, saving homeowners more than \$1,000 each year, is adding one new customer every minute and 21,000 new business customers each year.
- The industry added nearly 900,000 new residential customers in the U.S. between 2019-2020, the largest increase since 2006.

(see AMERICA'S NATURAL GAS, page 6)

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America's Natural Gas

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“Policymakers at every level continue to wrestle with the questions of how we get to net-zero emissions, yet the natural gas industry is advancing practical solutions and making investments that are enabling our country’s energy and environmental goals today and into the future,” said Greene.

“This study demonstrates how natural gas and gas infrastructure are not only valuable, but essential for building pathways to achieve our ambitious environmental goals. The most practical, realistic way to achieve a sustainable future where energy is clean, as well as safe, reliable and affordable, is to ensure it includes natural gas and the infrastructure that transports it.”

“Americans want affordable, reliable energy and a clean environment, and this industry will be essential to meeting and exceeding those expectations.” said Harbert. “We are delivering cleaner energy every day and ensuring customers have affordable energy they can rely on, especially when storms hit and temperatures drop. These are the tenets on which this industry was built and no matter the day, we will continue to drive to do more.”

Key findings in the Net-Zero Emissions Opportunities for Gas Utilities Study include:

- Pathways that utilize natural gas and the vast utility delivery infrastructure offer opportunities to incorporate renewable and low-carbon gases, provide optionality for stakeholders, help minimize customer impacts, maintain high reliability, improve overall energy system resilience, and accelerate emissions reductions.
- The ability of natural gas infrastructure to store and transport large amounts of energy to meet seasonal and peak day energy use represents an important and valuable resource that needs to be considered when building pathways to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions goals.

- Continued utilization of natural gas and the vast utility delivery infrastructure can increase the likelihood of successfully reaching net-zero targets while minimizing customer impacts.
- The U.S. can achieve significant emissions reductions by accelerating the use of tools available today, including high-efficiency natural gas applications, renewable gases, and methane reduction technologies, and enhanced energy efficiency initiatives.
- Large amounts of renewable and low-carbon electricity and gases, and negative emissions technologies, will be required to meet an economy-wide 2050 net-zero target. Supportive policies and regulatory approaches will be essential for natural gas utilities to achieve net-zero emissions.

Harbert and Greene went on to detail the industry’s seven areas of focus as it works to enable and advance net-zero solutions: energy efficiency and improved energy management, methane mitigation technologies and strategies, advanced gas end-use technologies, renewable and low-carbon fuels, negative emissions technologies, infrastructure modernization and workforce development.

Harbert continued: “To meet our nation’s environmental goals, we must ensure we align rules and regulations with investment opportunities to accelerate innovative technologies and fuels. All sectors of the economy must play a role, and all emissions reduction options should be on the table to help ensure the broad availability of cost-effective and flexible solutions. We are keeping our eyes focused on the future, building on our progress to propel our nation to a cleaner energy future.”

The full study and accompanying resources can be accessed [HERE](#).