



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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The 2022 OGA Annual Conference offers something for everyone

The 2022 OGA Annual Conference — the annual meeting of the Oklahoma Gas Association for natural gas professionals — will be held August 29-31 in Norman, OK.

Attendee registration is available at www.okgas.org.

The Conference provides attendees with a first-hand opportunity to discuss current, relevant issues with industry leaders; interact with your peers and learn what others are doing in our industry and what might make your operations more successful; and, see the latest technology, products, and services when you visit with sponsors.

(see OGA CONFERENCE page 7)

2022 OGA Annual Conference Sponsor Registration is open

Sponsorship registration for the 2022 OGA Annual Conference — The Oklahoma Gas Association annual meeting for natural gas professionals — is open at www.okgas.org.

The OGA Annual Conference is an opportunity for anyone wanting to network with natural gas professionals. And will be held August 29 - 31, 2022 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Norman, OK. The deadline to register as a sponsor is August 12.

The conference offers multiple sponsorship levels. To sponsor and exhibit at the event, organizations must be a member of the association. Complete details about the conference and sponsorship levels can be found by clicking here: [2022 OGA Annual Conference Sponsor Registration](#).

Also, sponsors can invest in various opportunities to enhance their networking. These choices include sponsoring the Cornhole Tournament, sponsoring individual holes at the golf tournament, and sponsoring a designated prize hole (long drive and closest to the pin) at the golf tournament. Sponsors are encouraged to invite customers or potential customers to join them at the annual sporting clay shooting event and annual golf tournament or team up for the Cornhole Tournament.

(see CONFERENCE SPONSOR REGISTRATION, page 3)

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.

Roger Eichelberger

Municipal Utility Board of the City of Pryor Creek

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

A: I started as a meter reader in the water department; an opening came up in the gas department: and, I applied for that job. Twenty-six years later, I’m proud I’ve been able to move up to become the Supervisor of the Natural Gas Department at the Municipal Utility Board Pryor Creek and to be able to serve the community where I’ve lived my entire life.

Q: What keeps you awake at night?

A: Making sure I have done my very best to train all my employees to do the job safely, and that they use their skills when they are out on their own, especially during late night and weekend emergency calls.

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

A: I tell them to “please follow our operating procedures.” If they do things the correct way, it will be most effective, efficient, and, most importantly, safe.

Q: What do you see as the biggest issues facing your organization and the natural gas industry today?

A: Rising gas prices. We worry about what this will do to our customers, especially our seniors. And we are seeing some of our new residential development in our community going “all-electric.”

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

A: Natural gas is a safe fuel. The industry — including my municipal utility — focuses on safe operations. For our customers, they can safely use natural gas in their homes for cooking, heating, etc. We have some customers who are scared of natural gas, so we regularly remind them that it is safe.

Q: Will you tell us something you think is cool about your hometown?

A: We have a famous, annual concert – ROCKLAHOMA. It draws people from around the world to our community. Also, Google has one of its largest data centers in the world in Pryor Creek and continues to invest in our area.

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

A: My wife, Mary, and I have been married for 35 years. We have two grown children — Rhett and Kelsey. Combined they have given us four grandchildren — Kate, Emma, Avery, and Ridley. And I have a miniature Schnauzer named Max.



Conference Sponsor Registration

(continued from page 1)

What can sponsors expect from the conference

The OGA Annual Conference provides sponsors with the opportunity to network with natural gas professionals at every level of member companies. The conference includes long breaks with sponsors — 30 minutes — and all meals are served in the same room where the sponsor exhibit. Also, sponsors may hold prize giveaways at their booth, and the winners will be announced by OGA staff.

New sponsorship benefit for 2022

In addition to traditional sponsorship benefits, signage at the event, recognition in the association's quarterly newsletter, etc., new for 2022 is that sponsors will be featured on the OGA's LinkedIn page. This will, in turn, allow sponsors to share this recognition to their LinkedIn network.

Announcing the 2022 OGA Challenge Games

New for 2022 is the OGA Challenge Games, an evening of competition and fun is in store for Tuesday, August 30. As participants compete in a series of games, they will win tickets for prizes drawn throughout the evening. Sponsors can host games including Ring Toss; Yard Darts; Axe Throwing (a non-limb-removing version); Golf Chipping Contest; and a modified version of Cornhole. Sponsors are encouraged to "host" a game.

Silent Auction benefitting the OGA Scholarship Fund

For more than twenty years, OGA has awarded \$1,000 college scholarships. This year will be no

exception. To raise the funds necessary for these scholarships, the association will be conducting its annual Silent Auction in conjunction with the Annual Conference. Sponsors are asked to donate items valued at \$100 or more to the auction. The more items donated to the auction; the more scholarships can be awarded.

What can attendees expect from the conference

The OGA Board has put together a strong agenda. Featured sessions and speakers include:

- "I am Their Leader – Which Way did They Go?" — Dr. Chuck Jackson, Motivational Speaker
- Understanding the Supply Chain Process: Current Challenges, Opportunities & Planning — Angela Burnett, ONE Gas
- Kickstarting Your Culture — James Cross, Energy WorldNet
- You've lost that blowdown feelin' — how to reduce emissions using cross compression — Chris Smith, TPE Midstream
- Being a Natural Gas Champion — Steve Taylor, Summit Utilities — Oklahoma
- AGA's Role in the Natural Gas Conversation - Sue Forrester, AGA

To download a copy of all Sponsorship Details for the 2022 OGA Annual Conference, click here: [2022 OGA Annual Conference Sponsor Registration Information](#).

Please direct any questions about registration to Jeff Kaufmann at jeffk@okgas.org or Michelle Danner at michelle@okgas.org.

Make plans to attend the
2022 OGA Annual Conference!

August 29-31, 2022
Norman, Oklahoma

Register today at www.okgas.org

The conference features a great lineup of speakers, introductions to new technologies, and networking with industry peers.

2022 OGA Leadership Conference well received

The theme for the 2022 OGA Leadership Conference recently held in Norman, OK was “Succeeding in Challenging Times.”

“We gave our career-minded members an opportunity to gather, learn from others, and develop personal action plans,” said Tom Rider, OGA Executive Director. “We believe working with like-minded people helps participants identify how they may want to approach challenges they face in their own work environment.”

The conference included remarks from two industry veterans followed by carefully crafted group exercises. And during the third session attendees worked through a workbook during the presentation.

Steve Taylor from Summit Utilities – Oklahoma’s session was titled “Same Seat on the New Bus.” During his conversation, he provided a “first-person” point of view following the merger purchase of the CenterPoint assets in Oklahoma and Arkansas by Summit Utilities.

According to Taylor, during any transaction of this nature, for employees there is a “shock factor;” then the “waiting period;” followed by the “relief factor” of receiving some information but not all; and, then the transition.

ONEOK’s David McMullen has served in countless roles as he has moved up the ladder to become Director of Operations. His experience allowed him to discuss “Bridging the Gap Between the Front Line and the Ivory Tower.”

Recognizing the challenges of communicating between the CEO and frontline employees, McMullen covered a list of challenges leaders in the middle of an organization may face including what they may or may not be able to tell their teams and how to try to take care of their teams and themselves especially if the information is limited or unclear.

In her session titled “Taking Control of Your Mindset,” Lori Mueller from the Oklahoma Municipal Assurance Group (OMAG) offered tools designed to help leaders shift their thinking from things outside their control to things they have the power to change. This shift in thinking can help leaders facilitate conversations with their teams or individual team members.

“The conference provided great take-aways for everyone,” Rider added.

Planning for the 2023 OGA Leadership Conference begins soon. If you have any suggestions, please email them to Jeff Kaufmann at jeffk@okgas.org.



*Steve Taylor
Summit Utilities*



*David McMullen
ONEOK*

From the American Public Gas Association

PHMSA Grant Now Open for Applications

Publicly-owned and community-owned natural gas operators [can now apply](#) for the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration's (PHMSA) [Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant](#). As a state and/or regional municipal association, you may have municipal natural gas utility members that are interested in applying to this program.

The application can be found at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=340638> and you must have a Grants.Gov login to apply. Please see the pre-application checklist section in

this email for the recommended steps a utility should take before applying.

The program will fund the repair, replacement, and rehabilitation of existing pipeline infrastructure, in addition to certain equipment purchases. Operators have 60 days to apply for this program, and the application period will close on July 25.

APGA has a publicly available resource page with information on the Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant Program including past APGA webinar recordings, pre-application requirements, and information about the grant at www.apga.org/resources/phmsa-grant.

From the American Gas Association

The Natural Gas Industry is Investing in a Cleaner Energy Future

We often talk about investing in a cleaner energy future, but what do we really mean? The natural gas industry plays a vital role in meeting our nation's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals, and we're taking a deep dive into just four ways that investment comes to life:

1. **Technological Leadership:** America's natural gas utilities are investing \$125 million in low and zero-carbon energy technologies. Our industry is on track to achieve net-zero emissions thanks to a wide range of technologies helping us reach emissions reduction targets, including the adoption and expansion of highly efficient gas heat pumps, utility efficiency programs, and hybrid heating technologies.
2. **We're Enhancing Infrastructure:** Smart innovation is key to our shared success in improving the natural gas delivery system. Natural gas utilities invest more than \$95 million every day in infrastructure upgrades and energy efficiency innovations! This increased efficiency helps consumers, businesses, and the environment. Thanks to these investments, Co2 emissions are at 30-year lows. Our infrastructure improvements are necessary to accomplish our goal of reaching net-zero emissions.
3. **Committed to Customers:** Delivering safe and affordable natural gas to customers across the country is a top priority. Our utilities invest \$4.3 million per day in energy efficiency programs to help customers upgrade insulation and purchase more efficient natural gas appliances. Natural gas utilities are working toward a cleaner future while delivering reliable and affordable energy to the 187 million Americans who rely on us.
4. **We're Investing in Innovation:** We're leading the way with investments in innovative, carbon-neutral energy sources. Ongoing investments in clean hydrogen expedite emissions reductions by removing carbon from the atmosphere. Hydrogen does not emit carbon emissions when used for energy, making it a critical component in achieving greenhouse gas reduction goals. Using renewable energy to produce hydrogen through electrolysis is an ideal energy storage solution because it does not require lithium or other expensive rare earth minerals. Our industry also invests in other energy products of tomorrow, including renewable natural gas (RNG). RNG can help decrease agricultural greenhouse gas emissions while providing an inexhaustible source of energy. We're increasing RNG operations with more than 500 projects already in progress or planned in North America to offer carbon-neutral energy to customers using existing infrastructure. Our sustainable energy offers viable pathways to net-zero emissions.

The American Gas Association, natural gas utilities, and industry partners are resolute in our commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We believe in building a brighter future and recognize natural gas is a key component in maintaining clean, safe, reliable, and affordable energy.

To learn more about the industry's contributions toward a cleaner energy future, visit playbook.aga.org.

OGA Board of Directors

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From the American Gas Association The Other First Responders

We all know firefighters, police officers, and EMTs are trained to help save lives during emergencies. However, most don't realize that there is another group of trained first responders — natural gas utility workers. Because of the nature of their work, they're highly trained to respond to emergencies and are regularly the first on the scene to help save lives in their community.

In recognition of this fact, AGA offers an annual Meritorious Service Award at our Operations Conference. This year's Meritorious Service Award recipients have a particularly inspiring story. The following account was written by Jen Ellis at Spire Inc. where the recipients are employed.

"On Monday, Aug. 23, Construction Supervisor John Long was completing his timesheets from the cab of his work truck while his crew hooked up gas service to an apartment complex in south St. Louis. Suddenly, his crew called out behind him. They spotted smoke coming from a different apartment building nearby.

John got up to look. There wasn't much smoke coming from the U-shaped apartment building at the corner of Keokuk Street and Bamberger Avenue. He thought perhaps a dumpster was on fire, as this had happened in the area recently. He got out his cell phone to call 911.

As he walked over, a woman opened the window on the second floor of the building and screamed out to the crew that her apartment door was stuck and that she couldn't get her children out. When she opened the window, smoke came billowing out.

John tried to open the front door to the apartment building, but it was locked or stuck. Realizing the urgency of the situation, he kicked open the door. He couldn't find the stairwell — there was simply too much smoke. He couldn't see his hand in front of his

face and could feel intense heat radiating from the walls. He couldn't breathe. So he went back outside.

Meanwhile, a service and installation department (SAID) crew nearby spotted the smoke and came running with shut-off keys and wrenches in hand. Senior Laborer Eric Eggelston dug up the curb valve as the crew approached and then they promptly shut off gas to the building from the curb box.

John asked the crew to get the ladder from the work truck. Senior Laborer Will Sammet grabbed it and placed the ladder under the woman's window. Though it wasn't quite long enough, it worked in a pinch. The woman lowered both of her children down, one by one, to Gas Worker Jeremy Hermann. He handed each child to Crew Leader Jason Ficke and General Fitter John Viox.

As the woman started to lower herself down, the fire department arrived. They brought over a longer ladder and got her down to safety.

The crew helped the fire department in any way they could, dragging fire hoses over to the building. Then the fire department got to work extinguishing the fire and helped others exit the building.

When asked how the crew knew what to do, John replied, 'We did what needed to be done, one step after the next. Focus on that next step and get it done.'

And how were they able to stay calm in the situation? John said, 'The kids. They were crying for help, so you have to stay calm to make sure they know everything is OK and so the situation didn't escalate.'

AGA is proud to present John Long, Jason Ficke, Jeremy Hermann, Will Sammet, Eric Eggelston, John Viox, Dave Bollner, Roy Oberndorfer, and Sam Demsko with the Meritorious Service Award for their actions. Their bravery and intelligence in an exceptionally difficult situation doubtless saved three lives in their community.

Register today as a Sponsor for the
2022 OGA Annual Conference at www.okgas.org
August 29-31, 2022 • Norman, Oklahoma
Build your business by networking with industry leaders.

From the American Public Gas Association

APGA Participates in Hurricane Prep Webinar

On June 1, APGA staff and members participated in a webinar hosted by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). Hurricane season officially started this week, so this event provided awareness of CISA's role and resources in preparedness and response activities associated with systems that make landfall. There were also presentations from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Business Emergency Operations Center (NBEOC). All of these groups highlighted the resources available to public utilities should they need them during this hurricane season, which NOAA predicts will be above-normal, at least in the Atlantic.

History has proven that in past storms, natural gas

utilities have been able to maintain their operations with very limited outages, which is a testament to the reliability of public gas infrastructure. That same vigilance of the workforce will be needed this year to ensure all the customers of APGA members continue their service during this hurricane season.

Pertinent information from federal government partners will be shared with members by APGA staff, as it becomes available. Public gas utilities are encouraged to ensure steps are taken to prepare for this year's hurricane season, including joining APGA's Mutual Aid program. Information on that can be found at www.apga.org/programs/mutual-aid.

For questions on this article, please contact Stuart Saulters of APGA staff by phone at 202-544-1334 or by email at ssaulters@apga.org.

OGA Conference

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The OGA Board has put together a strong agenda. Featured sessions and speakers include:

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- Being a Natural Gas Champion – Steve Taylor, Summit Utilities – Oklahoma
- AGA's Role in the Natural Gas Conversation – Sue Forrester, AGA

The registration fee is \$265 per person and \$250 for additional attendees.

Members are encouraged to participate in pre-conference events Monday, August 29. The golf tournament will be at Westwood Golf Course in Norman, OK, and the sporting clays shoot will be held at Quail Ridge Sporting Clays in McLoud, OK. These are great opportunities for team building or networking.

New for are 2022 OGA Challenge Games — An evening of competition and fun in a series of games is in store for Tuesday, August 30. As you compete

in the games, you may win tickets for prizes drawn throughout the evening.

Plans are underway for the return of the People's Choice Awards — a friendly competition where participants show off their cooking skills. During lunch Tuesday, August 30th, participating cook teams dish out samples of their entries. Conference participants, after sampling, will vote on the entry they enjoyed the most. If your competitive juices are flowing, put together and cook your favorite dish as a competitor. For more information, contact Jeff Kaufmann at jeffk@okgas.org

For more than twenty years, OGA has awarded a \$1,000 college scholarship. This year will be no exception. Funding for scholarships comes from various sources including the annual Silent Auction in conjunction with the Annual Conference. Sponsors are asked to donate items valued at \$100 or more to the auction. The more items donated to the auction; the more scholarships can be awarded.

To download a copy of all Attendee Details for the 2022 OGA Annual Conference, click here: [2022 OGA Annual Conference Attendee Registration Information](#).

The deadline to register is August 12, 2022, and registrations are not complete until payment is received. Please direct any questions to Kaufmann at jeffk@okgas.org or Michelle Danner at michelle@okgas.org.