

Energy Watch Customer Action Plan

During the cold snap Southcentral Alaska experienced at the end of January and early February, you likely heard about the “Energy Watch Customer Action Plan” or “Energy Watch.” Here are the answers to some common questions we’ve received.

■ What is the Energy Watch Customer Action Plan?

This plan was developed in 2009-2010 when Southcentral Alaska was facing a potential natural gas shortage. Utilities and local officials worked together to develop a plan and communicate with residents in Southcentral Alaska about how and when they might be asked to help in the event of a natural gas delivery concern.

■ I’ve heard about current gas supply issues – has this happened before?

Yes. In 2009, major gas users were leaving Cook Inlet due to concerns about declining production. At its peak, Cook Inlet produced more than 200 billion cubic feet (bcf) a year. By 2009, that production dropped below 150 bcf, with further declines projected. By the time Hilcorp, a Texas-based oil and gas producer, began operations in the region in 2012, the production dropped to about 100 bcf. Hilcorp heavily invested in Cook Inlet to rework existing wells, formerly owned by Marathon and Chevron, and drilling new wells in established gas production fields, which stabilized production. Thanks to those efforts, Hilcorp has provided regional utilities with most of the gas required since that time.

■ How is 2024 different from 2010?

Today, Cook Inlet production hovers around 70 bcf, which is enough gas to provide heat and generate electricity in the Municipality of Anchorage, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Matanuska-Susitna Valley, Marathon Refinery in Kenai, and even a portion of electricity for Golden Valley Electric in Fairbanks – but nothing more. There are no other large industrial users or natural gas exporters who could send natural gas our way in an emergency, such as an extreme weather event like the one we experienced just last month. Unlike 2009, when it was possible to continue to produce natural gas out of existing wells in Cook Inlet, future production will require exploration for new production fields.

Energy Watch Customer Action Plan

GREEN	STABLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use energy wisely; be conservation minded • Your utilities can provide tips on saving energy
YELLOW	CAUTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set thermostat to 65 degrees in living areas, and 40 in the garage • Lower water heater setting to “warm” or “vacation” • Minimize usage of natural gas range • Postpone doing laundry and dishes • Turn off unnecessary lights and electronics
RED	ALERT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set thermostat at 60 degrees in living areas (55 if away) • Turn water heater gas valve to “pilot” • Do not use natural gas fireplaces, decorative heaters or gas grills • Consolidate household activities into as few rooms as possible

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■ What is the plan?

ENSTAR, along with Railbelt electric utilities, are looking into options to make sure we have a reliable supply of gas and continue to meet customer needs well into the future. Options include expanded Cook Inlet exploration and production as well as natural gas imports. We strongly support development of Alaska's resources, including an in-state pipeline that could bring gas to Southcentral from the North Slope.

■ How does Energy Watch work?

If ENSTAR anticipates a challenge with delivering natural gas, we will work closely with local officials, fellow utilities and producers to make sure we have the resources needed to continue to serve our customers. One of those resources might be reaching out to the public for support. Just as we experienced last month, Energy Watch will begin in the Green/Stable phase. Each phase of Energy Watch corresponds to certain actions the public will be requested to take to conserve gas use and make sure that all customers continue to receive gas service.

■ How will I know what status we're at?

If conditions change, and ENSTAR requires customer support through conservation efforts, ENSTAR will contact customers directly and through local officials and the media to alert everyone about the situation and what to do.

For more information, visit: <https://www.enstarnaturalgas.com/energy-watch-update/>



ENSTAR was once again a proud sponsor of United Way's annual Walk for Warmth event this past February. Walk for Warmth aims to raise awareness and funds for families and individuals who are struggling to meet expenses such as utility bills. This event is free to join and a great way to support people in your community.



For more information on this event or other ways to help your neighbors, visit United Way of Anchorage website:

<https://www.liveunitedanc.org/walk-4-warmth>