

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TELEPHONE: 609-561-9000

Media Contacts: Lauren Hurtt x4181, Dan Lockwood x4108

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SJG Offers Safety Measures Before, During and After Hurricane Joaquin

Folsom, NJ – Although the track of Hurricane Joaquin remains uncertain, South Jersey Gas is diligently preparing our system and our workforce for a potentially significant weather event. At the same time, it is imperative that our customers and local residents take necessary safety precautions in advance of the storm. South Jersey Gas offers these tips to help you stay prepared.

Before the storm:

- Have a plan with your family as to what actions you'll take in the event of an emergency. Decide on an emergency evacuation location, keeping in mind those with special needs (young children, the elderly, and the disabled), and your pets.
- Gather emergency supplies such as water, food, flashlights and a battery-powered radio, all of which should be part of a well-stocked emergency kit.
- Check your yard for loose materials that could be blown around by strong winds. Place all lawn furniture, hoses, garden ornaments, etc., inside your house or garage. These loose items, if blown around, could damage your natural gas meter.
- Fuel your car, and turn your refrigerator and freezer to coldest settings.
- Even if a severe storm is imminent, it is not necessary to turn off gas service. If you are not required to evacuate your home or business, your natural gas service should operate safely throughout the storm.

If you are ever required to evacuate your home or business:

- If you are told to evacuate, don't hesitate.
- Do not turn off your gas supply at the main meter. That valve should be turned on or off by emergency utility personnel only.
- If you choose to do so, you may turn off gas to individual appliances at the supply valve near each unit. Locate the turnoff valve for each of your gas appliances and familiarize yourself with its operation before a storm occurs.

During and after the storm:

- If you smell an odor of natural gas inside a home or building, ventilate the area by opening windows or leaving a door open and immediately evacuate. Once away from the home or building, call 911 and then South Jersey Gas by dialing **1-800-582-7060**. Additionally do not light any matches, turn on any light switches, or use the telephone in the area where the strong odor exists. Any of these actions could ignite gas that may have accumulated.
- Stay tuned to local radio, television, web or social media for information from your local or state officials.

- If you turned off gas to an appliance and have any difficulty relighting the pilot light, call a licensed plumber, a licensed HVAC or appliance service contractor or South Jersey Gas for assistance.
- If your home was flooded, have a licensed plumber, licensed HVAC contractor, or qualified appliance service technician inspect your appliances prior to requesting a service reconnection.
- If you are required to be out of your home for an extended period of time, South Jersey Gas may have placed a red tag on your meter or other natural gas equipment. This means your equipment must be inspected and certified by a licensed plumber, or by a licensed HVAC contractor or gas appliance technician before SJG can restore service.
- Before removing fallen trees, always call **811** to get your yard marked for the location of underground utility lines. Gas, electric, telephone, water, sewer and cable lines may be entangled in the root system of any fallen trees. It's the law in New Jersey and the call and the location service are free.

Information on submerged gas meters, regulators or other natural gas equipment:

- Since Superstorm Sandy in 2012, SJG has worked with the support of the NJBPU to execute a Storm Regulator Upgrade Program in our shore and low lying coastal communities. This involves raising natural gas meters and regulators, allowing for proper regulator ventilation above the new FEMA floodplain. This program's aim is to better prepare our system to serve customers reliably in the event of significant flooding, and we continue working to its completion. In the meantime, whether your meter has been raised or not, it is important that you review and follow the proper protocol for natural gas safety before, during and after a flooding situation.
- If you live in a flood prone area and your meter has not yet been raised, there is no cause for concern or action required on your part. Your meter is designed to endure exposure to weather elements, and is durable enough to last many years. Even natural gas meters that have been submerged are not an immediate safety hazard and do not require immediate inspection or repair.
- However, natural gas fired appliances, such as heating systems, dryers, water heaters and cooking ranges, are not designed to endure flooding and submersion, and the safety elements that they are outfitted with to protect you and your home may have been damaged by water. Therefore, it is critical that these units be inspected and or repaired by a licensed plumber, licensed HVAC contractor, or qualified appliance service technician before they are placed back in service.
- As a safety reminder, if you smell natural gas or suspect a gas leak, evacuate the area immediately. Once a safe distance away, dial 911 followed by notification to the SJG gas leak hotline at **1-800-582-7060**. Additionally, do not light any matches, turn on any light switches, or use the telephone in the area where the strong odor exists. Any of these actions could ignite gas that may have accumulated.

Please remember:

- In cases of outages due to damaged lines, our primary responsibility is to make the affected area safe. After the area has been made safe, service to the affected customers will be restored as soon as possible.
- Refrain from calling South Jersey Gas for routine matters during this time, unless you have an emergency such as a smell of natural gas. Our leak line dispatchers are trained and prepared only to respond to emergencies and cannot provide you with account or status updates. Again, if you believe gas is leaking on or near your property, please leave the premises immediately and call 911 and then SJG at **1-800-582-7060**.
- For any updates throughout the storm, please visit www.southjerseygas.com or follow our social media pages – www.facebook.com/southjerseygas or www.twitter.com/southjerseygas.

South Jersey Gas, subsidiary of energy services holding company South Jersey Industries (NYSE:SJI) provides natural gas service to over 369,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Salem, and significant portions of Gloucester, Burlington and Camden counties in New Jersey. Visit www.southjerseygas.com to learn more.

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