

Universal response tactics for natural gas

When you arrive at a natural gas incident scene, follow these steps:

1. Approach cautiously. Stage apparatus upwind, out of the path of the leak and a safe distance away (typically 50 to 200 feet, depending on the situation).
2. Park safely out of the collapse zone of involved structures, and away from manhole covers and storm sewer grates.
3. Secure the area with caution tape. Reroute traffic if necessary.
4. Evacuate at least 100 meters (330 feet) in all directions. For larger leaks, consider initial downwind evacuation for at least 800 meters (1/2 mile). The incident commander will make the final determination of the extent of the evacuation.
5. Never enter a manhole, sewer or any other type of underground vault.
6. Eliminate any potential sources of ignition, such as vehicle engines, flame-producing devices and anything that could produce sparks. Use intrinsically safe radios and flashlights.
7. If you must approach the incident, do so with the minimum amount of personnel, each wearing full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).
8. Monitor the atmosphere, using multiple monitors.
9. If there is gas in a building, establish a safe standoff distance.