



## **News Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Columbia Gas of Kentucky urges customers to enroll in Budget Payment Plan**

LEXINGTON, Ky. – August 8, 2007 – It's hard to think about winter with temperatures soaring into the 90's, but that's just what officials at Columbia Gas of Kentucky want you to do. Columbia Gas of Kentucky today urged its customers to sign up for the company's Budget Payment Plan during the annual August enrollment period to help manage their winter heating costs.

The plan spreads the higher cost of winter heating more evenly throughout the year by allowing customers to pay the same amount every month. The budget payment amount is determined by the history of natural gas usage at the customer's service address, 30-year normal temperatures, and the current and projected cost of natural gas.

To enroll in the Budget Payment Plan, customers need only pay the budget amount shown on their August bill. Customers can enroll in the budget plan at any time, however, by calling Columbia's Customer Contact Center at 800-432-9345, Monday through Friday, 8am – 5pm. But waiting too long can result in higher budget payments, as there will be fewer months left in the "budget year" over which to spread the cost of winter heating.

Columbia Gas reviews budget accounts in March to determine the impact of unexpected weather conditions and swings in the market price of natural gas. During that review, the company may adjust budget payment amounts, if necessary, to keep them on track with actual account balances.

"The Budget Payment Plan allows customers predictability in their natural gas bills and greatly reduces the impact of large usage and price spikes that can occur during the heating season," said Chuck Shafer, head of Columbia's customer billing and payment operations. "Customers' budget amounts are based on their usage, and they never pay for more than they actually use. The program is a win for customers."

More information about the Budget Payment Plan is available under Billing Options from the Manage Your Home Account link on Columbia's web site at [www.columbiagasky.com](http://www.columbiagasky.com).

Columbia Gas of Kentucky, headquartered in Lexington, is one of the 10 energy distribution companies of NiSource Inc. (NYSE: NI). Columbia Gas of Kentucky serves approximately 140,000 customers in 31 Kentucky counties. NiSource distribution companies serve 3.8 million gas and electric customers primarily in nine states.

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