

# Energy *Lines*

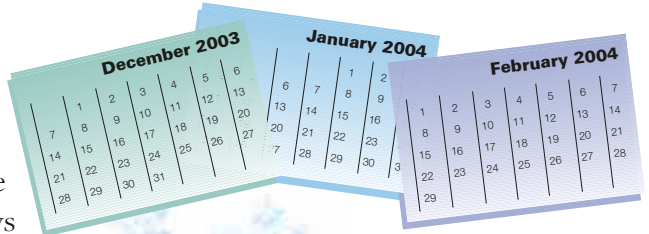
**March 2004**

**VALUABLE CUSTOMER INFORMATION**



*Dear Customer,*

January 2004 was one of the coldest Januaries in decades. In some corners of the state it was 15% colder than last year and more than 40% colder than the 10-year average. I, for one, am glad to have January behind us.



Extremely cold weather means an increase in energy use and higher seasonal energy bills. For our natural gas customers, the weather is not the only factor affecting energy bills – market-based natural gas supply costs are considerably higher than they have been historically.

We at NYSEG certainly understand how frustrating winter energy bills can be, and we hope this edition of *EnergyLines* helps you:

- **Use your NYSEG bill** to pinpoint some of the things that could be affecting your energy use and costs.
- **Take advantage of options and services** we offer to lessen the impact of winter bills.
- **Identify** big energy users in your home and some things you can do right now to control your energy costs.

And, if you're having trouble paying your NYSEG bill, please contact us at 1.800.572.1111. The sooner you do, the sooner we can work on a solution together.

James Laurito – President, NYSEG

## ENERGY USE IN THE TYPICAL HOUSEHOLD

**10% Other Appliances**

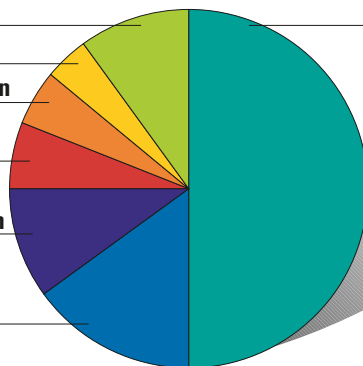
**4% Laundry**

**5% Cooking & Kitchen**

**6% Lighting**

**10% Food Preservation**

**15% Water Heating**

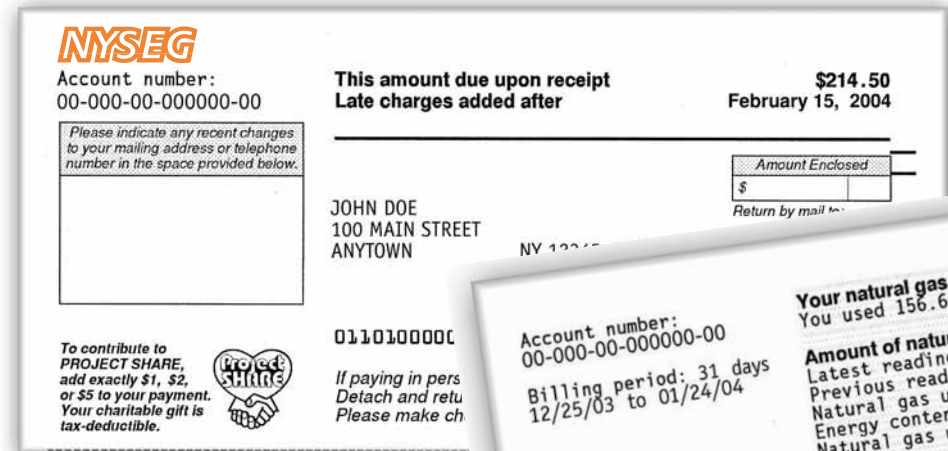


**50% Heating & Cooling**

▶ Space heating, cooling and water heating account for about two-thirds of the energy used in most homes. So, these are some of the best places to look first for energy savings.

# Your energy bill

## > a tool to manage your energy costs



### Your Electricity Rate

Our optional Day-Night Service rate helps some residential customers reduce their energy costs. To benefit, you must use at least 1,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity per month and shift about 30% of your total electricity use to nighttime hours. For more information, call 1.800.572.1111.

### Days in the Billing Period

Our billing periods are usually about 30 days. But they may be longer or shorter than that. Changes in the number of days in the billing period can noticeably affect your bill.

### Your Rate Choice

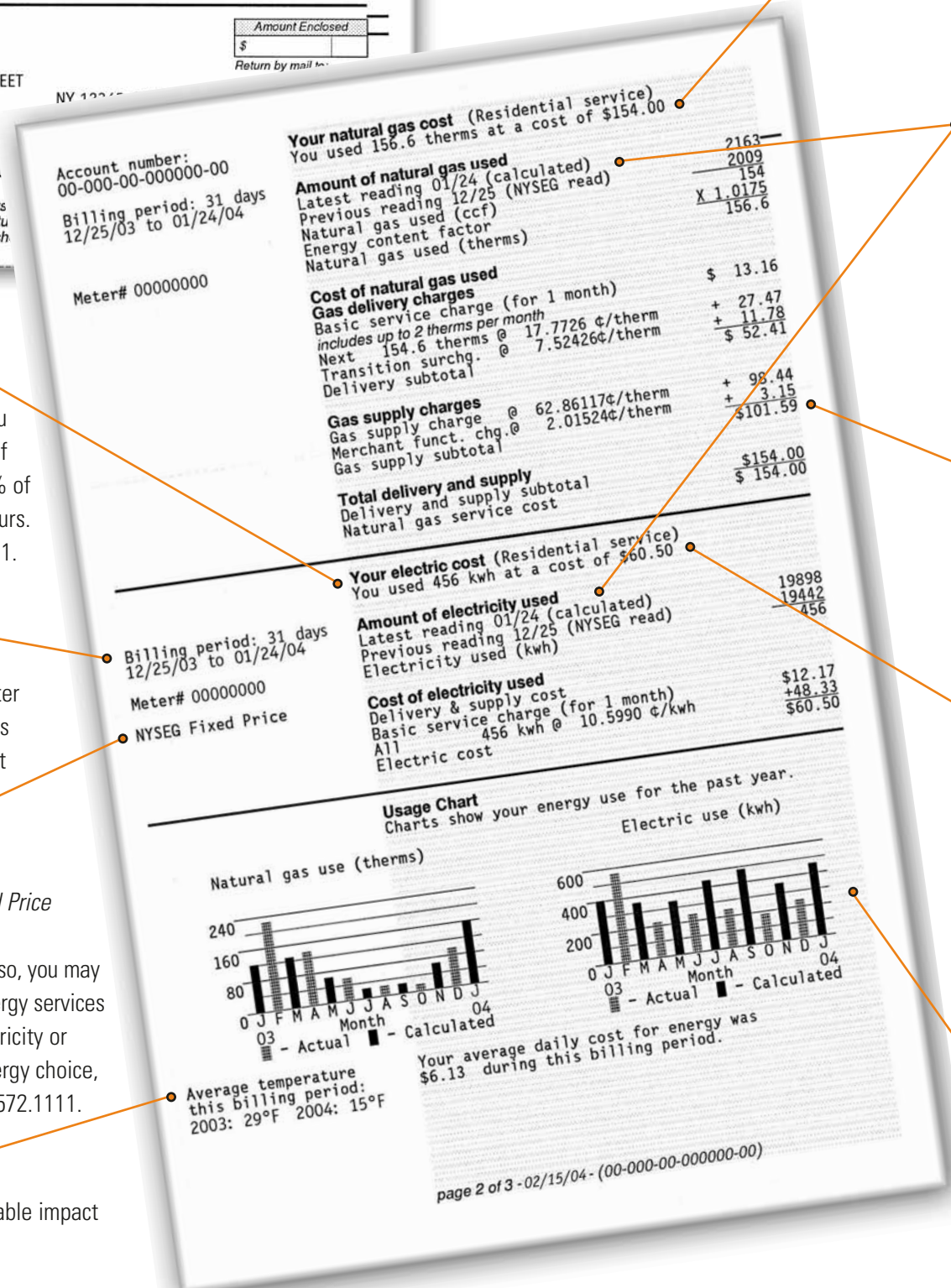
This sample bill shows the *NYSEG Fixed Price* choice for electricity supply.

>> **Options:** If you haven't already done so, you may want to consider shopping for an energy services company (ESCO) to supply your electricity or natural gas. To learn more about energy choice, visit [nyseg.com](http://nyseg.com) or call us at 1.800.572.1111.

### Average Temperature

Temperature changes can have a noticeable impact on your energy use.

Sample bill is for illustration only.



### Amount of Natural Gas Used

Space and water heating are two of the biggest energy users in your home. Extremely cold weather means your heating system must work even harder.

- >> **Option 1:** Set your thermostat to 65° in the daytime and 60° at night. (This may not be advisable if you have infants, elderly, frail or ill people at home.)
- >> **Option 2:** Follow manufacturer's instructions to lower your water heater setting to 120°.

### Calculated Bills

We read the meter every other month. On the months when we don't read the meter, we send you a "calculated" bill based on past energy use. The calculated use may be lower or higher than actual use. Any difference is made up when we obtain an actual meter reading.

- >> **Option:** Have all of your bills based on actual readings by enrolling in our **Customer Meter Reading** service. On the months we don't read the meter, you provide the readings. For more information or to enroll, visit [nyseg.com](http://nyseg.com) or call us at 1.800.572.1111.

### Your Natural Gas Supply Costs

Market prices for natural gas supply have been significantly higher this year resulting in winter heating bills that can be difficult to budget for.

- >> **Option:** Sign up for our **Balanced Billing** service that lets you spread your annual energy costs evenly over 12 months. For more information or to enroll, visit [nyseg.com](http://nyseg.com) or call us at 1.800.572.1111.

### Amount of Electricity Used

If your electricity use seems higher than expected, it could be due to:

- Electric space heaters
- Heating system motors or pumps
- Heat tapes, dehumidifiers, sump pumps or heated aquariums
- More people at home (new baby, visitors, or kids from college)
- Added appliances, such as electric blankets, waterbed heaters, or a second freezer or refrigerator

- >> **Options:** See the back page of *EnergyLines* or visit [nyseg.com](http://nyseg.com) and look for this symbol for great energy-saving suggestions.



### Usage Chart

The chart lets you quickly compare your most recent month's energy use to last month or last year. It also indicates which bills were based on actual or calculated meter readings.

Turn the page for more helpful tips on reducing your energy costs.



# *Have you tried these* **low-cost, no-cost ways** *to save energy?*

- Clean or replace furnace filters when they are dirty or once a month.
- Be sure heating supply and return registers are clean and not blocked by furniture or drapes.
- Set your thermostat to 65° in the daytime and 60° at night. (This may not be advisable if you have infants, elderly, frail or ill people at home.)
- Consider installing automatic set-back thermostats.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions to lower your water heater setting to 120°.
- Open blinds and drapes on south-facing windows during the day to let in heat from the sun. Close them at night and on cloudy days.
- Place small rugs at the bottom of drafty doors to keep cold air out.
- Install flow restrictors in showers and on faucets to reduce water use.
- Repair all leaky faucets.
- Take showers rather than baths. They typically use much less hot water.
- Run the dishwasher only when full. Let dishes air dry.
- Wash clothes in hot water only when necessary. Use cold water for rinsing.
- Operate washers and dryers with full loads.
- If you have an older water heater, wrap the sides with a specially-made insulation jacket.
- Use your kitchen and bath exhaust fans sparingly.
- Close heat registers in unused rooms, but be sure to protect any pipes from freezing.
- Use three-way bulbs where possible and choose only the amount of light you need.
- Clean your refrigerator condenser coils frequently to ensure peak efficiency.

► **For more energy-saving ideas, visit [nyseg.com](http://nyseg.com) and click on or call us at 1.800.572.1111.**



## *HEAP can help* **with heating bills**

Many households receive financial assistance from HEAP – the federal Home Energy Assistance Program. Grants can be used to pay heating bills or for other energy-related emergencies. Income-eligible customers should apply early, since funds are limited. For more information or to apply, contact your county's Department of Social Services or Office for Aging.

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**Reliable. Essential.**

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