

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 13, 2016

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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**Increased Winter Heating Bills Forecasted, but Still Remain Below Recent Winters**  
*Result of higher natural gas costs; NIPSCO currently among state’s lowest-cost providers*

**MERRILLVILLE, Ind.** – Each year, NIPSCO provides a forecast for home heating bills to help customers plan for the upcoming winter heating season. Based on current market projections and assuming normal winter weather, bills for natural gas residential customers are estimated to be higher compared to last year during the same time.

Over the course of the upcoming five-month winter heating season — Nov. 1 to March 31 — NIPSCO’s average residential customers using a total of 626 therms could expect to pay approximately \$399. This compares to about \$321 last winter, which was the second lowest in 10 years. For the five total months, that translates to \$78 more this winter — or approximately \$15 more per month.

While this winter’s bills are projected to be higher than last winter by comparison, they are approximately \$100 less than two winters ago and still among the lowest in the last decade.

**NIPSCO Winter Bill Projections**

	<b>2016–2017 (projected)</b>	<b>2015–2016</b>	<b>Usage (therms)</b>
<b>Nov.</b>	\$44	\$39	62
<b>Dec.</b>	\$73	\$62	113
<b>Jan.</b>	\$101	\$81	164
<b>Feb.</b>	\$100	\$81	159
<b>Mar.</b>	\$81	\$58	128
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$399*</b>	\$321	626

*\* Note: Actual bills vary by customers depending on the home’s age and size, number in the household, number and age of gas appliances, thermostat settings and insulation levels.*

Additionally, NIPSCO continues to be among the lowest natural gas cost providers in Indiana (Source: [Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission \(IURC\), Residential Natural Gas Bill Surveys](#)).

“Providing affordable energy for customers is important, especially during the winter months when they’re using more to heat their homes,” said Violet Sistovaris, executive vice president for NIPSCO. “Although market prices have gone up over last year, they remain low overall, and natural gas continues to be one of the most cost-effective, reliable and abundant sources of energy.”

The projections take into account market forecasts, supply trends and storage levels, and are based on normal weather projections. If temperatures are colder or warmer than normal, usage amounts and bills could differ from what is projected.

The higher bills this winter are due to higher natural gas costs, as well as investments made by NIPSCO to modernize the natural gas infrastructure, which continue to improve safety and reliability for customers.

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## Higher Winter Natural Gas Bills Expected for NIPSCO Customers

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To help ensure customers receive the best price for natural gas, NIPSCO purchases gas in the market from a variety of supply sources at different times throughout the year, and uses gas storage also to help offset market price volatility. NIPSCO's gas distribution system consists of two on-system storage facilities and connects to seven interstate pipelines providing access to major North American supply basins.

The cost of natural gas represents a major component of customer bills. NIPSCO has no mark-up and makes no profit on the cost of natural gas billed to its customers. Before billing, natural gas commodity costs must be reviewed and approved by the IURC.

### Billing and Payment Options

Customers who are experiencing financial difficulties are encouraged to call NIPSCO's 24-hour Customer Care Center as soon as possible to determine what options might be available to offer help. Some of those solutions include:

- **Payment Assistance Programs:** Based on income levels, customers may qualify to receive state and federal utility assistance dollars as well as support funds from separate NIPSCO programs by visiting their local community action agency.
- **BudgetPlan:** A free service to all NIPSCO customers to help manage their monthly energy bills by spreading out gas costs over an entire year.
- **Payment Arrangements:** Allows customers to make an initial payment within four days of the agreement, then spread the remaining unpaid balance over three months, plus current bills as they are due.

For more information on billing options and payment assistance, visit [NIPSCO.com/BillingPayment](https://www.nipSCO.com/BillingPayment).

### Energy- and Money-Saving Programs

Usage makes up the largest portion of the average energy bill. Because of this, NIPSCO offers energy-efficiency programs to help manage usage and, in turn, bills. A full list of programs and tips available to NIPSCO customers can be found at [NIPSCO.com/SaveEnergy](https://www.nipSCO.com/SaveEnergy).

### About NIPSCO

*Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO), with headquarters in Merrillville, Ind., has proudly served the energy needs of northern Indiana for more than 100 years. As Indiana's largest natural gas distribution company and the second largest electric distribution company, NIPSCO serves approximately 810,000 natural gas and 460,000 electric customers across 32 counties. NIPSCO is part of NiSource's (NYSE: NI) seven regulated utility companies. NiSource is one of the largest fully regulated utility companies in the United States, serving approximately four million natural gas and electric customers through its local Columbia Gas and NIPSCO brands. More information about NIPSCO and NiSource is available at NIPSCO.com and [www.nisource.com](https://www.nisource.com).*

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