

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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**Winter Heating Bills Forecasted to Remain Flat Compared to Last Year**

**MERRILLVILLE, Ind.** – Each year, NIPSCO and other energy providers across the nation provide a forecast for home heating bills during the upcoming five-month winter heating season. Based on current market price projections for natural gas and assuming normal winter weather, NIPSCO natural gas customers can expect relatively flat bills compared to last year during the same time.

There are two primary components of natural gas bills – the cost of the natural gas itself and the cost of delivering the natural gas to customers. For the cost of natural gas itself, NIPSCO passes it directly through to customers with no markup, and the company does not profit on that portion of the bill. Before billing, natural gas commodity costs must be reviewed and approved by the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC).

Over the course of the upcoming five-month winter heating season — Nov. 1 to March 31 — NIPSCO’s average natural gas residential customers using 622 therms could expect to pay approximately \$390 in total. This compares to about \$387 last winter.

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.

To help ensure customers receive the best price for natural gas, NIPSCO purchases gas in the market from a variety of supply sources throughout the year. Gas storage is also used 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.

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](#)).

The winter bill projections provided do not relate to NIPSCO’s recent request made with the IURC in September to increase its natural gas base rates – which would be the first time an increase would be seen in more than 25 years for that portion of customer bills. That request will go through a thorough regulatory review process and any changes wouldn’t take effect until after a decision is made – expected in mid-2018.

**NIPSCO Winter Bill Projections**

	<b>2017–2018 (projected)</b>	<b>2016–2017</b>	<b>Usage (therms)</b>
<b>Nov.</b>	\$41	\$42	58
<b>Dec.</b>	\$71	\$70	111
<b>Jan.</b>	\$97	\$96	160
<b>Feb.</b>	\$103	\$102	169
<b>Mar.</b>	\$78	\$77	124
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$390*</b>	<b>\$387</b>	<b>622</b>

*\* 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.*

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#### 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, Indiana, 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 820,000 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 4 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](https://www.nipSCO.com) and [NiSource.com](https://www.nisource.com).

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