

PIPELINE



Our Commitment to You: Safety and Service

“One step at a time...
That is how anyone
who's ever done any-
thing great did it.” A

quotation, **not** from one of the popular business or management subscriptions, but from the artist and author Ryan Kirby's *What a Deer Stand Taught Me About Business*. In the article, the author describes both life lessons and business lessons that he has learned during time spent afield.

As you receive this first edition of our newly revised quarterly newsletter, it is late January or early February 2020, and deer season in Alabama has either just ended or is quickly approaching its end. My hope is that you have had a successful season, and you were able to spend valuable time with your friends and family while enjoying God's creation. I consider it a blessing to be part of a family who celebrates time spent afield, and I encourage you also to enjoy the beauty of God's creation around us.

One of the primary reasons time spent in God's great outdoors is valued by my family and friends is the opportunity to momentar-

ily pause the rapid pace of life; to watch the sunrise on a still frosty morning

over Sand or Lookout Mountain or to experience the calm of Weiss or Gunter'sville Lake without so much as a ripple on the surface just after sunset. Additionally, as the opening of this article alludes, time spent in quiet seclusion, in a deer stand or otherwise, provides a great opportunity for reflection. I am fortunate to have been blessed with the opportunity to spend at least some time in the quiet seclusion of a deer stand for more than 30 years. As my colleagues at DC

Gas would tell you, seldom do I return from this time without at least one idea for change or improvement.

I digress but will return to the purpose of this article, one step at a time, related to DC Gas and the service it provides our current and future customers in Cherokee, DeKalb and Etowah Counties. Since 1953, both the distribution system and the number of customers served by DC Gas have increased incrementally each year. As I write this article, DC Gas owns and maintains approximately 800 miles of natural gas main, and we serve approximately 8,000 customers. These numbers change for us daily as we continue to grow our system.

Our goal is to bring cost-effective, clean, reliable natural gas to as many communities in our service area as possible. However, the process of growth for DC Gas is a gradual one that is limited by both construction cost and geography. The funds available to DC Gas for



Jayson Higdon
General Manager

funds to grow the network of our gas system each year. I earlier referred to the beauty of God's creation around us in North Alabama, and I contend that few places can compare to it. The beauty of the creeks, mountains and valleys around us, however, do create some barriers to overcome when constructing an underground utility. In

areas where a creek crossing and/or rock excavation is required, construction costs escalate exponentially. Unfortunately, there are few areas available for expansion where one, if not both conditions, is not present. We must conservatively manage our investment in growth to ensure the continued success in safety and service for the current and future customers of DC Gas and ensure that safety and service are our foremost commitments to you.

For more than 65 years DC Gas has served portions of rural Cherokee, DeKalb, and Etowah Counties with reliable, safe,

and cost-effective natural gas service. We have overcome many hurdles in bringing this service to you, and we are sure to encounter more mountains to climb and creeks to cross as we continue to expand. Nonetheless, DC Gas is committed to the continued growth of our system, one step at a time.

It is our pleasure to serve you.

Jayson Higdon

DC Gas General Manager

■ **“We are aggressively reinvesting funds from operations**
■ **and utilizing leveraged funds to grow the network**
■ **of our gas system each year.”**

construction are not without limits. We do not receive grants or aid to construction funds from governmental entities to assist with construction costs. Our funds are limited in ways much like family or other business funds are limited by what we generate through yearly operations and limited by what we may prudently and responsibly leverage and gradually repay.

We are aggressively reinvesting funds from operations and utilizing leveraged

4 Benefits of Gas Log Fireplaces

There's nothing quite like cozing up in front of a fireplace on a cold winter night. This year consider the advantages of installing natural gas logs in your traditional fireplace.

Natural gas logs are easier to maintain and are a relatively inexpensive way to heat your home.

They're eco-friendly. Natural gas produces fewer emissions than wood-burning fireplaces while giving out the same amount of heat.

They are simple to use. There's no hassle in starting a fire. Gas logs can be lit with a touch of a button or flip of a switch.

They are easy to maintain. There's no messy cleanup of ashes or sweeping the chimney. Most gas logs sets sold by DC Gas do not require a vent or chimney.

They have visual appeal. While gas logs won't crackle or give off the scent of burning wood, they do offer a realistic, natural wood look and come in a variety of styles.

DC Gas offers Robert H. Peterson vent-free, handcrafted logs from Real Fyre.

They have a charred wood look, lively flames and an ember bed. These logs are \$600 to \$700. We also have several products from Empire, from the Kennesaw Refractory Log Set that start at \$299 to the Sassafras burner with log set for \$599 to \$709.



Warm up your space on those chilly winter days with this Empire White Mantle and Vail 32-inch fireplace. It's on display in our showroom. Stop by and take a look.

And here's a plus: DC Gas customers are eligible for financing for new gas appliances such as fireplaces and gas logs.

Collinsville Couple Enjoys Convenience of Natural Gas

Tim and Regina Hawkins moved to Collinsville about 12 years ago, and now live in the old homeplace of Regina's grandparents, a former dairy farm on County Road 51.



Tim and Regina Hawkins

The empty nesters (they have a 22-year-old daughter) are seeing what life is like with just the two of them in the house. They enjoy traveling and spend most of each summer in a 5th wheel on the Tennessee River. "It's only about 45 minutes from home, so that's nice," Tim said.

They've been DC Gas customers for about eight years, and have a Rinnai

water heater, gas central heat, logs, gas range and a gas grill at their residence. Tim said he appreciates the consistent, reliable supply.

"It's always available," Hawkins said. "If we're ever out of power, we can keep warm, have hot water and cook."

They also enjoy putting their gas grill to use year 'round, "even when it's cold," he said.

Then there's the convenience and economic savings. Their gas logs heat the majority of the 2,000-square-foot downstairs of their home. "It will get most all the rooms," he said.

Both Tim and Regina are from the DeKalb and Cherokee counties area. Tim works for the Collinsville Water & Sewer Board, and Regina works for a Fort Payne accounting firm. The Hawkins attend Liberty Hill Missionary Baptist Church in Collinsville.

Tips for Buying

✓ Choose vented or vent-free logs depending on needs. Vented logs look more authentic, but operate with an open chimney flue so some heat goes up the chimney. Vent-free logs operate with the flue closed, so 100 percent of the heat stays in your home.

✓ Determine how many BTUs you need. It depends on the size of your room, and the height of your ceiling. It would take 14,580 BTUs to heat an 18- by 18-foot room with a 10-foot ceiling, for example. Our representatives can help you determine what's right for your home.

✓ Only use a state certified master gas fitter to install or make repairs.



Stay Warm this Winter without Breaking the Bank

When the temperatures drop, utility bills tend to rise. But that doesn't have to be the case. Use these handy tips to keep your home nice and toasty while keeping costs down this winter.

- Change your furnace filters about once a month to keep it running efficiently.
- Turn the air down at night and when you leave the house.
- Check for leaks around doors and windows. Seal with weather stripping or caulking to avoid a draft.
- Turning the water heater down to 120 degrees from 140 degrees saves three to five percent on your gas bill.
- Close off unused rooms.
- Open curtains during the day to allow in heat from the sun.
- Set ceiling fans to rotate clockwise, pushing heat down into rooms.