

# **RESIDENTIAL**

## Natural Gas Market Survey

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**December 2006  
(2005 Data)**

# RESIDENTIAL NATURAL GAS MARKET SURVEY

2005 DATA

58th Annual Survey of the  
U.S. Natural Gas Utility Industry

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## Introduction

This year's report is the 58<sup>th</sup> annual *Residential Natural Gas Market Survey* conducted by the American Gas Association (AGA). The data collected for 2005 provide a unique and comprehensive portrait of the residential natural gas market. Detailed information is presented by state and region, including customers, market share, inventory additions from new homes, and conversions from alternative fuels. Company-specific data are reported in Appendices A, B and C. Appendix D presents natural gas market shares data for the metropolitan statistical areas.

A total of 61 natural gas utility companies responded to this year's survey. This is an increase from the 54 utilities that responded to last year's survey. Company-specific data were derived from the Energy Information Administration's Form 176 database.

Incorporated in the survey results are data regarding new private housing completions as well as existing homes from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The source of these data is different from the statistics compiled from the survey respondents and should be evaluated separately.

Our thanks go to those companies participating in this *Residential Natural Gas Market Survey* information-gathering effort. Their cooperation and support are essential to making this publication a primary source of natural gas utility industry data and an important industry reference.

## Executive Summary

In 2005, 61 percent of U.S. households, or 63 million customers, had natural gas service. Eighty-four percent of these natural gas customers used natural gas for house heating purposes.

- Natural gas remained the United States' most popular energy source for home heating, with a 51 percent residential market share. Put another way, natural gas heated more homes in this country than all other energy sources combined – electricity was 33 percent, heating oil eight percent, propane six percent, and other two percent.
- In 2005, two-thirds of every newly built single-family homes (66 percent) featured gas heat – down three percentage points from the 69 percent gas-heat share in 2004. The gas space-heating share of new single-family housing completions exceeded the electric share in all but one region of the country. New gas single-family home completions have exceeded all other energy sources for at least eleven years (see Figure 1).
- In the new multi-family housing arena, gas market share for space heating declined three percentage points, from 46 percent in 2004 to 43 percent in 2005. When both single and multi-family units are considered, the gas heating share of new housing completions fell to 63 percent, compared to 65 percent the previous year. The overall electric share increased by two percentage points to 35 percent in 2005.
- Net additions to the number of residential natural gas customers totaled 1.1 million in 2005. This represents a 1.8 percent increase in total customer compared to 2004.
- The 2005 survey results showed that roughly 12 percent of all new natural gas customers came from homes converted from another energy source. The respondents were asked to provide a breakdown of conversions by fuel type. Based on these data, fuel oil conversions to natural gas accounted for 52 percent of all conversions. Approximately 19 percent of conversion customers had previously heated with electricity. The respondents were unable to identify the previous heating fuel for 29 percent of the homes.
- Natural gas water heaters have maintained a 52 percent market share, while shares for gas cooking and clothes drying dropped one percentage point to 35 percent and 21 percent, respectively.
- During 2005, almost \$4.2 billion went to assist low-income households pay their energy bills or weatherize their homes. Most of the funding came from the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), with \$2.1 billion in normal appropriations and emergency funds. Utilities, both electric and natural gas, accounted for 32 percent (\$1.3 billion) of the total in the form of discounts, waivers, forgiveness of arrearages, and weatherization programs.