

Universal response tactics for natural gas

When you arrive at a natural gas incident scene, follow these steps:

1. **Approach cautiously.** Stage apparatus upwind, out of the path of the leak and a safe distance away (typically 50 to 200 feet, depending on the situation).
2. **Park safely out of the collapse zone of involved structures,** and away from manhole covers and storm sewer grates.
3. **Secure the area with caution tape.** Reroute traffic if necessary.
4. **Evacuate at least 100 meters (330 feet) in all directions.** For larger leaks, consider initial downwind evacuation for at least 800 meters (1/2 mile). The incident commander will consult with a National Grid emergency representative and make the final determination of the extent of the evacuation.
5. **Never enter a manhole, sewer or any other type of underground vault.**
6. **Eliminate any potential sources of ignition,** such as vehicle engines, flame-producing devices and anything that could produce sparks. Use intrinsically safe radios and flashlights.
7. **If you must approach the incident,** do so with the minimum amount of personnel, each wearing full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).
8. **Monitor the atmosphere,** using multiple monitors.