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Press Release

Record-breaking Cold Driving Up MG&E Bills

Department alerts customers to expect high bills due to frigid blasts.

Middleborough, MA, March 9, 2007: The Middleborough Gas & Electric Department is alerting all customers that their electric and natural gas bills could be significantly higher this month due to the record cold in February which had everyone's furnaces working overtime.

"Night and Day. The difference between January's warmth and February's frigid cold was phenomenal," said Sandy Richter, Public Communications Manager for the Department. "We need customers to know that their bills are correct. They used much more natural gas and electricity this month."

In fact, the National Weather Service is reporting that the first half of the winter from December first to mid-January was the warmest on record. Temperatures averaged 41.4 degrees Fahrenheit which includes night time low readings. By stark contrast, the second half of winter – mid-January through February – had a daily average of 26.9 degrees, and 19 days that never broke the freezing mark.

As a result, MG&E natural gas customers recorded a 30% increase in use for February compared to January, according to Department records. For the typical residential heating customer, this could mean an increase of 60 ccf or hundred cubic feet which would add about \$90 to their bill. Electric customers also used more because electricity is needed to run pumps and motors on any heating system and more heat requires more electricity.

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“If we are lucky, the pattern will break in early March and single digit temperatures will be a distant memory soon,” said Richter. But, just before 6 AM today, the National Weather Service recorded a record low of five degrees and another record is broken.

The Middleborough Gas & Electric Department is owned by the town of Middleborough, serving 4,600 natural gas customers in Middleborough and over 14,000 electric customers in Middleborough and neighboring Lakeville. Customers can visit the Department’s website at MGandEonline.com to check the weather reports from the National Weather Service for this area.