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Customers Thankful for Gas South's 'Pay-As-You-Go' Program; Report Nearly 90 Percent Satisfaction Rate

Originally Published Nov 25, 2009, 11:59am (Updated Nov 25, 2009, 3:45pm)

With the holidays approaching, thousands of households experiencing financial hardship are thankful for Gas South's innovative Pay-As-You-Go program. Nearly 90 percent of surveyed respondents report being very satisfied (60%) or satisfied (28%) with the voluntary program, and 92 percent said they would recommend it to a friend, according to a recent survey of Pay-As-You-Go customers who have received service through the program for at least 12 months.

"We recognized that some customers are often underserved by natural gas providers and worked to develop a program that would meet their needs," said Kevin Greiner, CEO of Gas South. "We were very pleased to learn that customers are overwhelmingly satisfied with Pay-As-You-Go."

The Pay-As-You-Go program was developed by Gas South specifically for households that lack a credit history or are dealing with financial challenges that prevent them from qualifying for service or paying the deposits required by other natural gas providers. Nearly 12,000 customers currently receive natural gas service through the Pay-As-You-Go program.

The company recently surveyed Pay-As-You-Go customers to gauge their satisfaction with the program and which aspects are most important to them. More than one-third of respondents (37%) cited the fact that the program requires no deposit as the leading reason for enrolling, followed by 23 percent who cited the program's low rates, and 21 percent who became Gas South Pay-As-You-Go customers after being declined for service by another natural gas provider in the Georgia market.

"The facts that Pay-As-You-Go requires no deposit and offers competitive rates are clearly very important for customers who also may have had difficulty qualifying for service or are required to pay a large deposit by other providers," said Greiner.

Although the state's Regulated Provider is required to provide natural gas service to anyone regardless of credit history or ability to pay, the Regulated Provider can require large deposits for customers with poor credit histories, or no credit history. By contrast, customers who qualify for Gas South's Pay-As-You-Go Program are not required to pay any deposit. In addition, according to natural gas rates published by the Georgia Public Service Commission, Gas South's Pay-As-You-Go rates have usually been lower than those offered by the Regulated Provider.

Greiner said customers who establish a good payment record with Pay-As-You-Go for 12 consecutive months become eligible to transfer to one of Gas South's standard plans, which feature rates that are among the most affordable in Georgia .

This summer, the first group of eligible participants received this offer in the mail and many accepted it. However, many of those eligible to switch instead opted to remain with Pay-As-you-Go, something Gas South sees as an endorsement of the program from those whose opinions matter most – customers.

The value of Pay-As-You-Go is also recognized by several community service agencies that see it as an important option for the people they serve.

“Community service agencies have embraced Pay-As-You-Go because it allows them to maximize their home heating assistance dollars while simultaneously helping to lower the out-of-pocket costs for consumers.” Greiner said.

“Value, affordability and convenience – these are the reasons Pay-As-You-Go has proven to be an attractive and valuable option for thousands of credit-challenged customers throughout Georgia ,” he added.

What are customers saying about Gas South' Pay-As-You-Go program?

Actual comments from Pay-As-You-Go customer survey participants:

- I appreciate being given the opportunity to prove myself with no deposit. I especially appreciate having my good payment history acknowledged and rewarded with the option to switch to a normal plan. Thank you!
- My experience with Gas South and the Pay-As-You-Go program is great, it's hassle free and the service is amazing. When speaking to any of the workers they are friendly and very helpful when answering any of my questions. Thanks.
- I'm glad that the Pay-As-You-Go program was available. It helped me to establish myself in my current home. Thank you very much.
- I was worried till I came across Gas South. I saw that there was a Pay-As-You-Go program. I was relieved especially since there was no deposit. Wow! The bills were reasonable. I am 100 percent happy with Gas South. Thanks for everything.
- Given the fact that my credit was not the greatest and this being my first time on my own away from my parents...I found your company. The program is exactly what first timers like me (need). Please continue to offer this plan, it has been great.
- I would like to thank Gas South for providing service when no other gas company would....I am so glad that Gas South had the Pay As You Go program.