# Chemical Release Investigation Kit & Template (CRIKT)
## For Local Health Departments

**Natural Gas Investigation Steps**

### September 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHEMICAL</th>
<th>TRADE NAME(S)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Gas</td>
<td>Natural gas (dry), Methane, Processed gas, Sweet natural gas, and Treated gas</td>
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## CHEMICAL TRADE NAME(S)

- Natural gas (dry), Methane, Processed gas, Sweet natural gas, and Treated gas

### PREPARING FOR THE INVESTIGATION

**Know the Agent**

- Natural gas is a colorless, flammable gas or liquid.
  - Read about natural gas in the Natural Gas Fact Sheet.
  - For additional information, visit: [www.piedmontng.com/files/pdfs/safety/MaterialSafetyDataSheet_92404.pdf](http://www.piedmontng.com/files/pdfs/safety/MaterialSafetyDataSheet_92404.pdf)
- Contact:
  - Public Health Preparedness & Response Branch (PHP&R): 888.820.0520.
- Print and review form:
  - Chemically Exposed Persons Line List.

### CONDUCTING THE INVESTIGATION

**Evaluate Release**

- Define scale/scope of release (work with N.C. Emergency Management, HazMat, an Environmental Health Specialist at the local or state level, N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources [N.C. DENR], and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [U.S. EPA] if applicable).
- Call 911 if a strong odor or sounds of gas escaping from pipe is reported. This could indicate a fire or explosion hazard.
| Identify Route of Human Chemical Exposure | - Identify route of exposure:  
  o Inhalation  
  o Ingestion  
  o Dermal (Skin)  
  o Injection  
- Interview responders and/or exposed individuals to obtain additional information about the natural gas release within 24-hours. |
| Describe Exposed Population | - Determine the following:  
  o Geographic area affected.  
  o Population affected (general population, employees, and residents).  
  o How population exposed (in vicinity, inhalation, or direct contact).  
  o Define cases within the exposed population.  
  o Contact OEEB (919.707.5900) to assist in developing a risk assessment to be shared with officials.  
  o Once completed, provide OEEB with the Chemical Exposed Person Line Listing. |
| Implement Control Measures to Prevent Additional Exposures | - Decide on measures to protect citizens and the surrounding communities.  
- The environmental health specialist will consult with OEEB to discuss next steps to ensure no additional individuals are exposed.  
- Inform residents/businesses of the natural gas release through local emergency notification system, local TV and radio. Important points to include:  
  o Location of release.  
  o Geographic area affected.  
  o Shelter-in-place instructions.  
  o Where to evacuate if needed.  
  o Where to find shelter.  
  o Where to seek medical care.  
  o For more information, please listen to your local radio station or watch your local news channel. |
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- Work with your local incident management team and local health director to determine steps to be taken to re-enter residences/businesses.
  - The local incident management team will determine when residences/businesses are acceptable for re-entry and alert the local health director, who will then participate in the final decision.
  - Your local health director will then communicate with the on-scene coordinator.
  - The on-scene coordinator will then communicate to the community when they are permitted to return home or to their place of employment.

### INVESTIGATION RESULTS

#### Case Finding
- During the course of the investigation, interview other exposed individuals for symptoms related to the natural gas release.
  - Work with your local medical facilities, local incident management team and/or the first responders to compile the exposed persons’ information.
  - Local hospitals to determine total number injured, hospitalized, ED visits, and deceased.
  - N.C. DETECT, North Carolina’s state syndromic surveillance system for additional information: 919.843.2361.
- Advise symptomatic individuals, especially children, to see their healthcare provider immediately for evaluation.

#### Routine Precautions
- Communicate the following control measures with residents/business owners.
  - Open all windows once residences/businesses are re-entered.
SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Risk Communication

- N.C. DHHS Communications Office 919. 855.4840 is available to assist local health departments as needed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATSDR</td>
<td>Agency for Toxic Substances &amp; Disease Registry</td>
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<tr>
<td>DENR</td>
<td>Department of Environment and Natural Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>Emergency Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>EHS</td>
<td>Environmental Health Specialist</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPA</td>
<td>Environmental Protection Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>OEEB</td>
<td>Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHP&amp;R</td>
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