

Connections

Safely storing flammable liquids

One cause of household fires is improper storage of flammable liquids. Did you know that liquids such as paint thinner, gasoline, cleaning solvents and contact cement can produce invisible, explosive vapors?

These vapors can catch fire or explode if exposed to a flame or small spark—even at considerable distances from the flammable substances. Flammable liquids or combustible material need to be kept away from your furnace, water heater, vent pipe or any ignition source.



When you use flammable liquids, do so in open, well-ventilated areas, far away from any possible source of ignition.

Here are some tips for properly storing flammable liquids:

- Keep in accurately labeled, tightly closed, non-glass containers
- Store away from heaters, furnaces, water heaters, ranges and other gas appliances
- Keep out of reach of children
- Store outside the house when possible
- Keep flammables away from any item marked "oxidizer" (pool chlorine)
- Put flammables only in containers specifically designated for that purpose. The container will have a UL or CSA label.

Taking these extra precautions ensures everyone's safety. For more safety tips, visit myavista.com/safety.



Philanthropy, the Avista way

The Avista Foundation, established in 2002, serves as the official giving arm of Avista. The Foundation gifts over \$1 million annually to nonprofit organizations throughout the company's service area — including eastern Washington, north Idaho, western Montana, southern Oregon, and Juneau, Alaska.

"There is no part of our philanthropy that comes from customer rates. The Foundation is a separate, nonprofit organization established by Avista."

Kristi Meyer
Avista Foundation Executive Director

Forming the Foundation insulated Avista's philanthropy from the ups and downs of business cycles," said Avista Foundation Executive Director Kristi Meyer. "It ensures our charitable giving continues regardless of what had occurred or what would happen in the future." Funding for the Foundation comes strictly from the company's shareholders, and not from customers.

The Foundation's areas of focus are community and economic vitality, education, and vulnerable populations. It serves these needs by identifying and supporting local nonprofits doing significant work in the community. As Kristi is the only paid staff member, she relies heavily on employees to help raise awareness about organizations that meet Avista's criteria for giving.

Every quarter, the Foundation conducts a competitive grant cycle soliciting proposals on targeted areas: first quarter, health and human services; second quarter, education and youth development; third quarter, economic and community vitality; and fourth quarter, environmental, arts and culture.

"Typically, the larger percentage of our giving is directed toward vulnerable populations," said Kristi. "Applying is done online. Non-profit organizations can set up an account and submit a proposal."

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During a quarterly funding cycle, Kristi estimates receiving 60 applications; of those, the Foundation awards approximately 40 grants. "Our grants are often \$5,000 or less," said Kristi. "Because we are responding to needs and applications across five states."

Working closely with the communities it serves, the Foundation has had a meaningful impact over the last two decades. Since its inception, it's awarded over \$14 million to organizations. Along with charitable grantmaking, the Foundation created two internal programs to encourage employee giving. The Employee Matching Gift Program provides up to \$200 per employee per year to match personal giving, and Employee Dollars-for-Doers contributes \$10/hour for each hour volunteered, up to \$200.

"Our retirees are also eligible for both of the matching programs, which I think is unique," said Kristi. "We can match \$35,000 each for both programs annually."

The Avista Foundation began with \$2 million in stock from a spin-off company, Itron, Inc. It awarded \$10,000 to Spokane Youth Sports Association (SYSA), its first grant recipient the following year.

Today, the Foundation's assets have grown to over \$10 million. To submit a grant request, visit avistafoundation.com.



Know what's below: Excess flow valves

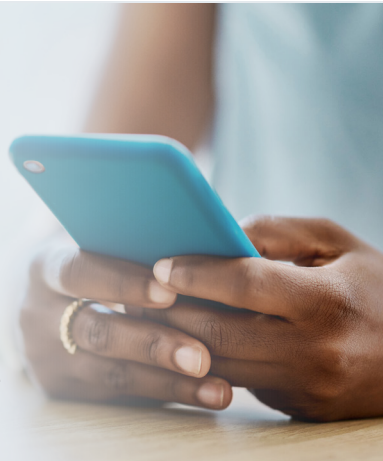
What is an Excess Flow Valve (EFV)? An excess flow valve (EFV) is a device that automatically restricts the flow of natural gas if an underground pipe is punctured or severed. Such damage may result from excavation. The EFV is installed underground on the service pipeline that runs between the natural gas main (usually located near the street, alley, or easement) and the Avista meter on the customer's property. Generally, the EFV is installed as close as possible to the natural gas main.

EFVs have been installed on most new and replaced natural gas customer services since 2008; however, since April 2017, existing natural gas customers without an EFV on their natural gas service may elect to have one installed at the customer's request and expense. Installation costs vary greatly due to different conditions within our service territory. Customers will be billed for actual labor and materials costs associated with the installation. Estimates for cost and timeframe for construction will be provided as requested on a case-by-case basis. There is no ongoing maintenance cost for the customer.

Whether you have an EFV installed or not on your service line, you need to call 811 to have all underground utility lines properly marked at least two business days before starting any projects that require digging. If you would like to pursue having an EFV installed in your service line or if you would like to find out if you already have an EFV, please call us at (800) 227-9187 or email us at ask@myavista.com.

Have you tried the Avista mobile app?

Download our easy-to-use mobile app to access billing and payment information, contact us, view customer news, report electric outages, and even receive alerts for billing or outages that impact you. It's everything you need from the convenience of your mobile device. Visit your app store and search for Avista.



Need help with your energy bill?

Avista partners with local community agencies to help customers with their energy costs. In Washington, income-eligible customers can now qualify for a new monthly bill discount program called My Energy Discount. In Idaho, financial assistance may be available through your local community action agency. Learn more about your options at myavista.com/assistance or by calling us at (800) 227-9187.

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