Gas Leak

General Info about Gas

- Natural gas, of the type piped into home heating and stove systems, is lighter than air and will rise.
- Natural gas is odorless. To make it detectable, an odorant similar to the odor of rotten eggs is added. The odorant is noticeable when there is as little as 1% gas in the air.
- Natural gas becomes flammable and will ignite if as little as between 5% and 15% gas is in the air and an ignition source is present. Ignition sources include pilot lights, sparks, matches, electrical switches, static electricity, and motors.
- Laboratory cylinders may contain a variety of gases, including toxic, explosive or asphyxiating gases, as well as non-hazardous materials, and should only be handled by trained personnel.
- Liquefied petroleum gases (e.g., bottled propane) are heavier than air and will travel along the ground.

Contact Authorities

- If a gas leak of any type is suspected, call the Department of Public Safety at (212) 854-5555 or campus phone extension 4-5555 from a safe unaffected area.

What to Do

- Remain calm. Shut off the source of the gas leak if immediately apparent, if it can be easily corrected (e.g., Bunsen burner, kitchen appliance), and if you have the knowledge and ability to do so without jeopardizing your personal safety.
- Evacuate the building/area.
- Identify persons with mobility related disabilities and provide assistance if possible.
- Leave ventilation systems operating.
  Ventilate the area.

Caution - What Not to Do

- Do not use the phone in the area of the leak.
- Do not turn light switches on or off.
- Do not activate the fire alarm system.
- Do not turn electrical equipment on or off.
- Do not use elevators in the area.
- Do not return to the evacuated area until advised to do so by the Department of Public Safety.