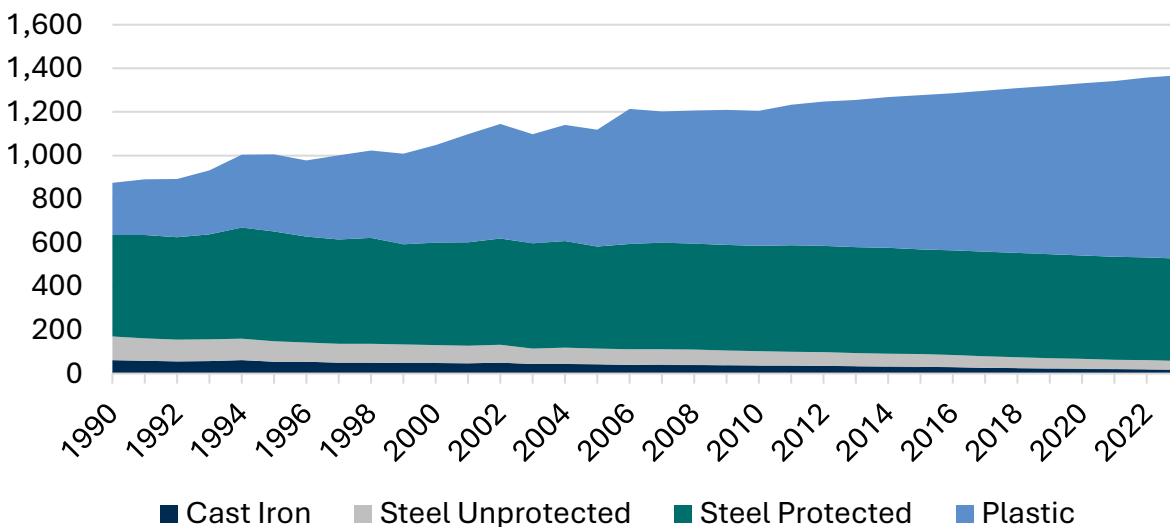


Growth in Natural Gas Mains by Material

3/7/2025

Growth in Natural Gas Mains by Material

Thousands of Miles



- The total mileage of natural gas mains in the U.S. has steadily increased since 1990. At that time, there were 874,000 miles of mains. By 2023, this figure had grown to over 1.37 million miles, representing a 56% increase. This expansion averaged about 15,000 miles of new mains added annually, totaling 494,000 miles since 1990.
- Natural gas main pipelines supply energy to 72 million homes and businesses. Each meter is linked to a smaller service line, which connects to the larger main pipe managed by local natural gas distribution companies. Since 1990, the total length of service lines has increased from 595,000 miles to 982,000 miles, marking a 65% growth over 33 years.
- The growth in service lines equates to an average of 11,725 miles added each year. Over the same period, 23.4 million new homes and businesses have been connected to the system, averaging 710,000 new natural gas customers annually with an average length of 87 feet.
- In 1990, plastic pipes made up only 27% of all gas main pipelines. Since then, efforts to replace older leak-prone pipes and install new ones have significantly expanded their presence. Today, plastic pipes account for over 250% more miles than in 1990, representing 62% of the total 1.37 million miles of mains in operation.
- Replacement programs have primarily targeted cast iron and unprotected steel pipes. In 1990, these materials comprised 7% and 13% of the system, respectively. Now, they collectively account for just 4% of the total system. The total mileage of these pipes has dropped from 168,500 miles to under 28,000 miles, an 83% reduction since 1990.

Total Miles of Main Installed by Material 1990-2023

Year	Steel Protected	Steel Unprotected	Cast Iron	Plastic
1990	465,538	108,941	59,556	239,386
1991	473,727	102,816	57,460	255,681
1992	469,106	99,619	54,191	267,283
1993	481,702	99,335	55,847	293,547
1994	509,301	99,224	59,473	333,689
1995	503,288	94,058	51,783	353,735
1996	484,526	88,412	52,667	350,699
1997	479,278	85,166	48,765	385,373
1998	484,963	86,639	48,657	400,627
1999	459,298	84,534	46,983	415,210
2000	469,306	82,855	46,007	447,586
2001	473,278	81,226	45,252	496,504
2002	487,490	82,610	47,395	525,815
2003	481,890	71,481	41,526	501,278
2004	489,100	75,850	41,493	531,365
2005	467,775	72,370	40,627	535,338
2006	482,825	71,795	37,826	619,427
2007	488,575	70,792	38,574	601,947
2008	485,917	70,324	37,645	610,832
2009	483,960	67,268	36,247	620,610
2010	483,135	65,844	35,246	619,360
2011	488,178	64,092	34,336	644,749
2012	487,192	63,729	33,148	661,139
2013	486,234	60,616	31,560	674,207
2014	486,584	58,520	29,984	690,416
2015	479,776	59,741	28,360	706,395
2016	479,176	56,882	26,769	721,577
2017	479,890	51,716	25,030	739,243
2018	478,800	48,882	23,394	755,834
2019	476,750	46,742	21,794	772,875
2020	474,220	45,031	20,447	788,865
2021	472,530	42,975	18,814	805,752
2022	471,324	41,541	17,491	824,930
2023	469,671	39,320	16,337	841,161

Source: Based on data from the US Department of Transportation

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