

Little Blue Flame Serves Community

The little blue flame that jumps into action at the turn of a knob to cook our food is so familiar to most everyone that it's usually taken for granted. Natural gas cooks food; heats and cools homes; heats water; dries the laundry; and incinerates garbage and rubbish.

In business and industry it is a servant for hundreds of manufacturing processes and applications where heat is used.

Gas has been in use in Columbus longer than anyone living here today can remember. Actually it has been nearly a hundred years since the first gas works was put into operation here in 1869 to manufacture gas from coal. In the beginning, manufactured gas was used for lighting — first in the streets and later in homes. Gas stoves and gas water heaters came later.

Today the Columbus customers of Indiana Gas company total 10,325 (as of March 31, 1968), of which 9,395 are residential, and gas usage here has increased almost 11 times in a 23-year period.

Columbus is headquarters of the Columbus division of Indiana Gas company, one of five operating divisions. The districts in the division are Columbus, Seymour, Franklin, Shelbyville and Greensburg.

Natural gas was discovered in several central Indiana counties back in the 1860's, but none as far south as Bartholomew county. By 1886, 17 central Indiana counties, centered around Anderson and Muncie, composed the greatest known natural gas field in the world.

Natural gas was first brought to Columbus in 1940. In 1945, when Indiana Gas and Water company (now Indiana Gas company) took over gas operations in Columbus, there was a total of 3,123 gas customers, of whom 2,872 were residential, compared with the March 31, 1968, total of 10,325 customers. Gas usage in Columbus was 239 million cubic feet in 1946. In 1967 it was 2 billion, 637 million cubic feet, an increase of almost 11 times.

Natural gas is supplied to Columbus and other Indiana Gas communities in Southern Indiana through the interstate pipeline system of Texas Gas Transmission corporation. Most

in and Washington streets. 80,000 addition is being nt.

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