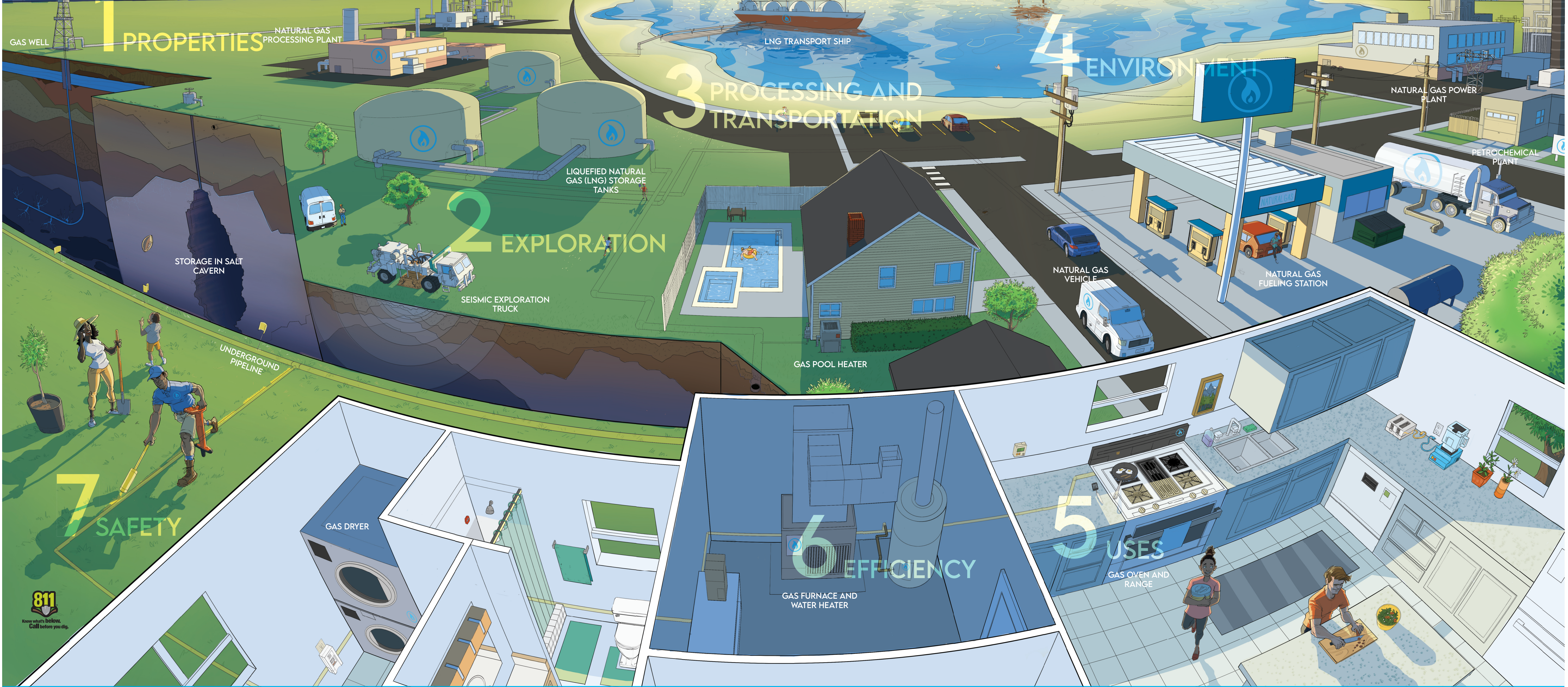


NATURAL GAS



1. PROPERTIES
 Natural gas is a fossil fuel that forms from the decay of once living things, like plankton in the oceans. It builds up in sedimentary rock. Natural gas is colorless, tasteless and odorless. It is mostly methane, CH₄. It burns to form carbon dioxide and water.

2. EXPLORATION
 Satellites and seismic imaging are often used to find natural gas pockets in sedimentary rock. Information from existing and new wells, magnetometers and gravimeters are also used to locate natural gas deposits. Natural gas is pulled from wells both on land and offshore. It is often pumped from a well along with oil. Other sources include coal bed methane, shale gas and landfill gas. The rock may need to be fractured to allow gas to flow through it.

3. PROCESSING AND TRANSPORTATION
 Before natural gas can be used it must be purified to separate liquids and other chemicals from the methane. Gathering pipelines carry raw natural gas to a processing plant. Interstate pipelines carry gas long distances to local distribution systems. Compressor stations keep gas flowing through over two million miles of pipe across the country.

4. ENVIRONMENT
 Natural gas is a cleaner and more efficient fossil fuel, creating less air pollution and carbon dioxide (CO₂) for the amount of energy produced than coal or oil products. Strict regulations and standards on natural gas production, transportation, distribution and storage help protect the environment.

5. USES
 Natural gas is used for heating air and water in a building, cooking, transportation and for generating electricity. Natural gas supplies about one-third of all the energy used in the United States. It is used in homes and also in industry, businesses and to fuel vehicles. Natural gas is the fuel of choice for new power plants. It is also a good source of hydrogen for fuel cells, which can power buildings and cars. Natural gas is used commercially in products and industry. For example, it can be an ingredient used to make fertilizer, antifreeze, plastic, medicine, fabric and many chemicals. It is also used as a heat source for making glass, steel, cement, ceramics and many other items.

6. EFFICIENCY
 Adjusting the temperature of thermostats for the season is the way to see the biggest impact on energy bills. Lowering the water heater temperature, taking shorter showers and using high efficiency shower heads and faucets to reduce hot water use will help conserve natural gas and reduce energy costs.

7. SAFETY
 Natural gas is an important part of our nation's energy portfolio and using it safely is very important. Mercaptan is added to natural gas to make it smell like rotten eggs. If you smell it, get out of the building immediately. To avoid hitting a natural gas pipe, always call 811 before any digging project so pipes can be located and marked.

