



Building for the future

Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas are constructing a new, \$20 million, state-of-the-art training center in Chicago. This training center will help meet the changing needs and requirements associated with training the utilities' current and future natural gas workforce. It also will be used by first responders, and prepare Chicago high school students for careers as utility/energy workers through a vocational training program with Chicago Public Schools (CPS). The 100,000-plus-square-foot training center will be located at 4228 W. 35th Place in the Little Village neighborhood and will bring dozens of jobs to the community.

Training center construction

- Construction for the training center began in July 2016 and is expected to take a year to complete.
- The companies anticipate the training center to open in the second half of 2017.
- Two regional engineering firms are working with the companies to design the center.
- Ujamaa Construction Inc., a Chicago minority-owned general contractor, was awarded the contract for the training center construction.
85 percent of sub-contractors will be minority-owned businesses; of those 85 percent, 40 percent will be Hispanic-owned businesses and 10 percent will be from the Little Village community.

Training center

Indoor training center

- Five classrooms and five practical training areas.
- Computer simulation lab.
- 75-seat meeting room available to local community groups.

Outdoor training areas

- Mock "Gas City" with a simulated natural gas delivery system pressurized by compressed air – the largest mock city training site in Illinois, providing the most extensive real-world training for natural gas workers available.
- 20 structures for training in system maintenance and natural gas leak investigation.
- Excavation and directional drilling training area.
- Commercial driver's license training area.

Training

- More than 1,600 company and contractor employees will receive training at the facility annually to help maintain safe and reliable service for customers of Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas.
- The center will train workers on natural gas leak investigation, emergency response, pipeline locating, pipeline installation, meter installation, corrosion activities and safety inspections.
- Annual classroom and simulation training for Chicago Fire Department and other municipal first responders will take place at the facility.

Chicago Public Schools partnership

The partnership with CPS will help prepare students from Dunbar Vocational, Little Village Lawndale and Fenger Academy high schools for potential jobs with Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas after graduation.

The program will include:

- Field trips to the training center and other experiential opportunities.
- Summer internships for sophomores and juniors to experience the utility industry.
- After school training courses for seniors to prepare for natural gas industry job opportunities.
- The Natural Gas Career and Technical Education program with CPS is expected to kick off in the 2016-2017 school year.