



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

PEOPLES GAS®
NATURAL GAS DELIVERY

NORTH SHORE GAS®
NATURAL GAS DELIVERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 27, 2017

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

Vanessa Hall

Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas

773-391-1295

vhall@peoplesgasdelivery.com

Mayor Emanuel Joins Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas to Celebrate the Grand Opening of its New Training Center in Little Village

The new state-of-the-art facility will train current workers while preparing students for future jobs in the gas/energy field

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today joined Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas President and CEO Charles Matthews; Alderman Ricardo Munoz (22nd); Illinois Senator Martin Sandoval and other community leaders in celebrating the grand opening of Peoples Energy Training Center, a new utilities training center in the Little Village. The state-of-the-art facility will provide annual training to more than 1,600 utility workers and fire officials across the region, while also providing much-needed vocational programming to help prepare Chicago Public Schools (CPS) students for future jobs in the gas and energy field.

"Today we are opening more than a training center; we are opening the doors to future job opportunities for our youth," said Mayor Emanuel. "Training is a critical component that will ensure our workforce, both current and future, have the skills they need to compete for stable, well-paying jobs in the growing field of energy. And I want to commend Peoples Gas for working to bring this important resource to Chicago."

"Turning this once vacant piece of property into a state-of-the-art training center for generations of workers was only possible because so many people shared a vision of what could be accomplished together," Matthews said. "Our customers, CPS, the city of Chicago and the local community will all share in the benefits this facility."

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

The new facility will be home to the Peoples Gas Utility Training program, a vocational job training partnership with CPS. The program kicks-off this summer and will prepare students from Dunbar Vocational, Fenger, Little Village, Lawndale, and other area high schools for potential jobs as “Gas-Track” Workers following graduation.

“Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas have made a major investment in our vibrant Little Village community, one that will create jobs and provide educational and economic opportunities for our local businesses and primarily Mexican residents,” said Alderman Ricardo Muñoz (22nd Ward). “The CPS partnership is especially significant because it will provide our youth additional educational and career opportunities to help them succeed and make their families proud.”

The Peoples Gas Utility Training program includes:

- A six week summer internship for two cohorts of 15 to 20 juniors and/or seniors to experience the Natural Gas industry;
- Roughly five field trips to the training center and other experiential opportunities; and
- After school training courses for seniors to prepare for natural gas industry job opportunities.

The new 100,000 square-foot training center located at 4228 W. 35th Place features indoor and outdoor training areas, including a fully functioning natural gas delivery system that includes 20 structures for training in system maintenance, gas leak investigation, excavation and directional drilling. The campus also includes an area for fire prevention training with the Chicago Fire Department and an area for commercial driver’s license training.

“I’m excited the new \$20 million Peoples Energy Training Center is coming to the Little Village community, the 11th district of where I represent the people on the southwest side of Chicago,” said Senator Sandoval. “Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas along with the Illinois General Assembly have come together in partnership to invest in training the future workforce of the energy industry. The partnership with CPS and Mayor Rahm Emanuel are essential in getting our youth involved, and enabling students to receive the training necessary to compete for stable, well-paying jobs in the growing energy industry.”

Construction of the facility was led by Ujamaa Construction Inc., a Chicago-based, minority-owned general contractor. Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas also worked with two regional engineering firms to design the center.

“We are truly grateful to have been selected by Peoples Gas to complete this outstanding state-of-the-art facility, that represents so many opportunities and future possibilities for us, the community and for Peoples Gas,” said Jimmy Akintonde, CEO, Ujamaa Construction,

Inc. “Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas have a strong view of diversity and inclusion, which enabled Ujamaa to complete this magnificent project with a record of more than 90 percent minority contractor participation.”

###

Peoples Gas, a subsidiary of WEC Energy Group (NYSE: WEC), is a regulated natural gas delivery company that serves approximately 830,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in the city of Chicago. You can find more information about natural gas safety, energy efficiency and other energy-related topics at peoplesgasdelivery.com.

North Shore Gas, a subsidiary of WEC Energy Group (NYSE: WEC), is a regulated natural gas delivery company that serves approximately 159,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in 54 communities within the northern suburbs of Chicago, Illinois. You can find more information about natural gas safety, energy efficiency and other energy-related topics at northshoregasdelivery.com.