

Essex County Superior Court

If you lived, owned property or owned a business in Lawrence, Andover or North Andover on September 13, 2018, you could receive payment from a class action settlement.

This Notice is authorized by the Superior Court of Massachusetts.

This is not a solicitation from a lawyer.

- A number of residents, property owners and businesses – the “Plaintiffs” – in Lawrence, Andover and North Andover (the “Class Area”) sued, among others, NiSource, Inc. and Bay State Gas Co. d/b/a Columbia Gas of Massachusetts (collectively “Columbia Gas”) for losses they suffered from the natural gas over-pressurization event of September 13, 2018 (the “Incident”). Plaintiffs and Columbia Gas have reached a Class Action Settlement (the “Settlement”).
- The Settlement creates a \$143 million Settlement Fund. After Court-approved costs and fees, including attorneys’ fees, the remainder of the Settlement Fund will be used to compensate people and businesses covered by the Settlement, called “Class Members.”
- You are a Class Member if you lived, owned property or owned a business in the Class Area on September 13, 2018. As a Class Member, you may be entitled to compensation from the Settlement Fund. The terms of the Settlement are described more fully below.
- Your legal rights are affected whether you act or not. Please read this Notice carefully.

Your Legal Rights and Options in this Settlement	
File a Claim for Payment by January 9, 2020	Filing the Claim Form included with this Notice and available at www.ColumbiaGasExplosionSettlement.com will allow you to receive money under the Settlement if it is approved by the Court.
Object to the Settlement by December 10, 2019	If you do not think the Settlement is fair you may write to the Settlement Administrator to object.
Do Nothing	Get no payment, give up rights. If you do nothing, you will be bound by the terms of the Settlement, but will not receive any payment from the Settlement.

- These rights and options—and the deadlines to exercise them—are explained in this notice.
- The Court in charge of this case still has to decide whether to approve the Settlement. Payments will be made if the Court approves the settlement and after appeals are resolved. Please be patient.

Questions? Read on and visit www.ColumbiaGasExplosionSettlement.com

PARA UNA NOTIFICACIÓN ESPAÑOL, LLAMAR O VISITAR NUESTRO WEBSITE

ĐỂ ĐỌC THÔNG BÁO TẠI VIỆT NAM, GỌI HOẶC XEM TRANG WEB CỦA CHÚNG TÔI

Questions? Call Toll-Free 1-833-927-0819 or visit www.ColumbiaGasExplosionSettlement.com

General Information

1. What is this lawsuit about?

This class action lawsuit seeks to recover money for the people and businesses harmed by the Incident. Judge James F. Lang of the Essex County Superior Court of Massachusetts is overseeing this case, called *In re Columbia Gas Cases*, Civil Action No. 1877CV01343G. In the lawsuit, the Plaintiffs allege that Columbia Gas caused the Incident and, as a result, the Class suffered real property damage, personal property damage, displacement expenses, lost wages, loss of business income, diminution of property value, emotional distress, disruption, inconvenience, loss of use and enjoyment of property and loss of goodwill. Columbia Gas denies legal responsibility for these damages.

Who is in the Class

2. Am I part of the Class?

You are a Class Member if you resided, owned property or owned a business in the Class Area on September 13, 2018, unless you work for Columbia Gas or any of its subsidiaries, affiliates, or owners. If you are unsure whether you are part of the Class, a list of eligible addresses is available on the website www.ColumbiaGasExplosionSettlement.com.

The Settlement Benefits

3. What does the Settlement provide?

The Settlement creates a \$143 million Settlement Fund to make: (1) cash payments to Class Members; and (2) Court-approved payments for Settlement administration, attorneys' fees and expenses, and Class Representative Awards. Class Counsel will request attorneys' fees of up to 16.5% of the Settlement Fund (\$23,595,000), settlement notice and administration costs and attorneys' costs and expenses up to 3% of the Fund (\$4,290,000), and a \$5,000 award to each of the eight Class Representatives. These amounts were agreed to through the mediation process. The Court may award less than these amounts.

To be eligible for a monetary award from the Settlement, Class Members must submit a Claim Form (see Question 5 below). How much you get will be determined through a court-supervised claims process. Not all Class Members will receive the same amount. This Settlement is separate from Columbia Gas's \$80 million settlement with the communities of Lawrence, Andover and North Andover.

4. What payments can I get from the Settlement?

After deductions for approved attorneys' fees and costs, case Contribution Awards to Class Representatives, and Settlement Notice and Administration costs, the remaining funds will be distributed to Class Members in one of two ways: (1) Court-approved lump sum payments; or (2) itemized compensation of losses or expenses.

Lump Sum Payments

Individual Class Members can get a lump sum payment from the Settlement Fund based on a Court-approved formula, that takes into account a number of factors, including geographic location, household size, length of displacement and/or service disruption and the nature of property damage, if any. Your payment will be based on how severely your life was disrupted, as determined by the Settlement Administrator using these factors. These are the potential, estimated lump sum amounts based on the severity of disruption caused by the Incident:

Nominal Disruption	Up to \$50
Some Disruption	Up to \$250
Minor Disruption	Up to \$1,000
Moderate Disruption	Up to \$2,500
Significant Disruption	Up to \$5,000
Major Disruption	Up to \$15,000

To get a lump sum payment, you must submit a Claim Form. Lump sum payments will **not** be reduced by any payment you already received from Columbia Gas, but Itemized Claims may be so reduced. If, after everyone sends in Claim

Forms, the compensation claims total more than \$143 million net of costs, the payments will be reduced. If the compensation claims are less than that, the payments will be increased.

Itemized Compensation

Class Members that are businesses may only submit an itemized compensation claim. Individual Class Members may choose to submit a claim for itemized compensation of losses in addition to the lump sum payment described above if, as of August 30, 2019, they have:

- (1) an existing, unresolved claim pending in Columbia Gas's claims process supported by all documentation supporting the unreimbursed losses (documentation **must be dated**);
- (2) or an otherwise extraordinary claim for uncompensated losses or damages supported by such dated documentation.

The Settlement Administrator will conduct a detailed review of itemized compensation claims. This detailed review may significantly delay the payment of both the lump sum payment and itemized compensation, if any. Itemized compensation claimants may also have their potential award, if any, reduced by the amount of any payment already received from Columbia Gas through its original natural gas event claims process.

Whether you submit a lump sum claim, an itemized claim or do nothing, if the Settlement is approved you will not be able to sue, continue to sue, or be part of any other lawsuit against Columbia Gas about the legal issues in **this** case.

How to Receive a Payment

5. How can I receive a payment?

To qualify for payment, you must timely submit a Claim Form. Read the instructions carefully. You can submit the completed Claim Form by mail to In re Columbia Gas Settlement, c/o Settlement Administrator, PO Box 58729, Philadelphia, PA 19102-8729, or online at www.ColumbiaGasExplosionSettlement.com. The completed Claim Form must be submitted by no later than January 9, 2020. If the Court approves the Settlement, checks should go out by March 2020. But there may be appeals. It's always uncertain whether these appeals can be resolved, and resolving them can take time, perhaps more than a year. Everyone who sends in a claim form will be informed of the progress of the Settlement. Please be patient.

Objecting to the Settlement

6. How do I object to the Settlement?

If you are a Class Member who wishes to participate in the Settlement but believes the Settlement Terms are unfair, you can object to the Settlement. To object, you must send a letter to the Settlement Administrator explaining why you think the Court should not approve the Settlement. This letter must say that you object to the Columbia Gas Settlement, and include: (1) your name; (2) address at which you lived on September 13, 2018, and, if different, your current address, and your email address; (3) telephone number; (4) signature; (5) documentation establishing your status as a Class Member; (6) the specific factual or legal reasons why the Settlement should not be approved; (7) whether you will appear or testify at the Final Approval Hearing; and (8) if you are represented by an attorney, any class action settlements your attorney objected to in the last three years. This letter must be mailed to the Settlement Administrator at In re Columbia Gas Settlement, c/o Settlement Administrator, PO Box 58729, Philadelphia, PA 19102-8729, postmarked by no later than December 10, 2019.

You do not need to hire an attorney to submit an objection on your behalf; however, if you choose to do so at your own expense, that attorney must: (1) file a notice of appearance with the Court by no later than December 10, 2019; (2) file a sworn declaration attesting to their representation of the Class Member on whose behalf the objection is being filed; and (3) satisfy on behalf of the Class Member all substantive requirements for objection described in this Question. Objections cannot be made on behalf of multiple Class Members, each Class Member who wishes to object must submit an individual objection as described above. While the Court will consider your views, you cannot ask

the Court to order a different settlement; the Court can only approve or reject the Settlement. If the Court denies approval, no settlement payments will be sent out and the lawsuit will continue.

Unless the Court directs otherwise, any Class Member who fails to comply with the requirements for objecting will not be able to object to the Settlement, will not be heard on any such objection and/or will not be able to appeal from the Court's disposition of this Settlement. Objectors must still comply with the deadlines for filing claims if they wish to participate in the Settlement.

The Final Approval Hearing

7. When will the Court approve the Settlement?

The Court will hold a Final Approval Hearing on February 27, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. at the Essex County Superior Court, 56 Federal Street, Salem, Massachusetts 01970. At this hearing, the Court will consider whether the Settlement Agreement and proposed Settlement is a fair, reasonable and adequate resolution of the lawsuit. If there are timely and properly submitted objections, the Court will consider them and any response Plaintiffs and Columbia Gas may have to those objections. The Court may listen to people who have asked to speak at the hearing. Unless you have objected to the Settlement and asked to speak at the Final Approval Hearing, it is not necessary for you to attend to receive a Settlement payment. At or after the hearing, the Court will decide whether to approve the Settlement. The Court will also decide how much Class Counsel and Named Plaintiffs will be paid from the Settlement Fund, and will make an award for approved litigation, notice and settlement administration costs. If the Court ultimately does not approve the Settlement, or if the Court's approval is reversed on appeal or the Settlement Agreement is terminated, then the Settlement will become null and void. If the Settlement becomes null and void, the case will proceed as though the Settlement Agreement was never entered into.

Getting More Information

8. How do I obtain more information about the Settlement?

If you have any questions or want to review documents that been filed in this case, you may visit www.ColumbiaGasExplosionSettlement.com. All current dates and deadlines are available on the website, although dates may be subject to change with approval of the Court. You may also contact the Settlement Administrator by phone at 1-833-927-0819 or email at info@ColumbiaGasExplosionSettlement.com. Do not contact Class Counsel or the Court to request any additional information.