



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**April 7, 2010**

## **FLORIDA PUBLIC UTILITIES ANNOUNCES PROPOSED EXPANSION TO BRING NATURAL GAS TO NASSAU COUNTY**

**Fernandina Beach, Fla.** – In a move that could bring clean, environmentally friendly natural gas and enhanced economic development opportunities to Nassau County, Florida Public Utilities Company (FPU) today announced its proposed expansion to extend natural gas service to the county.

Pending regulatory and government approvals and demonstrated market interest, FPU anticipates the development of a more than 50-mile natural gas network to provide businesses and residents with access to a reliable, domestic source of clean-burning fuel. The intended project layout is designed to minimize construction impacts, with approximately 95 percent of the route along existing right-of-way corridors.

“There has long been a great deal of interest in this community for natural gas service, and we believe the demand is now there to make this project a reality,” said FPU’s Northeast Division General Manager, Mark Cutshaw. “The Nassau County Project is energy smart, environmentally smart and economically smart for the residents and business owners of this county.”

As proposed, a pipeline would be constructed primarily along Hwy. 200 from a connection point in southwestern Nassau County. FPU would serve as the distribution company, providing both commercial and residential natural gas service.

Cutshaw said that plans are dependent on the completion of service contracts that will make the project economically feasible. The company has already identified a significant number of potential commercial customers who could benefit from natural gas service, and a sales team will immediately begin scheduling meetings to gauge the level of interest.

“Our initial focus will be on identifying all commercial accounts that we can economically serve with natural gas,” said Cutshaw. “The project’s success depends on commercial demand. Once that demand is established and the natural gas extension constructed, we will begin marketing individual residential service.”

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The Nassau County Project could bring even more benefits in the form of short-term and long-term economic impacts. Over the short-term, the construction of the natural gas extension could create a number of jobs in the community. Long-term, FPU's tangible tax payments would provide a new source of funding for the County, and the diversification of Nassau County's energy portfolio could make it more attractive to businesses looking to expand or relocate.

"A diversified energy portfolio, including clean-burning and cost-efficient natural gas, would be a tremendous selling point as we look to attract new business opportunities in Nassau County," said Steve Rieck, executive director of the Nassau County Economic Development Board. "In the past, we have had to turn away major industrial projects representing hundreds of new jobs because commercial natural gas service was not available in Nassau County. Natural gas service from Florida Public Utilities could have a great impact on the economic future of our community."

FPU has extensive experience in Florida, having provided safe, reliable gas service in the state since 1924. The company currently provides natural gas service to approximately 52,000 customers in Palm Beach, Martin, Marion, Broward, Volusia and Seminole counties. Including FPU's Florida natural gas customers, Chesapeake Utilities Corporation, FPU's parent company, provides natural gas distribution service to approximately 117,900 customers, on both the Delmarva Peninsula and in Florida. In addition to natural gas, FPU provides electric distribution and propane distribution service to approximately 46,600 additional customers throughout Florida. In total, Chesapeake serves approximately 199,700 energy customers with natural gas, electric and propane distribution service throughout its Delmarva Peninsula and Florida service territories.

Natural gas is an abundant fuel source that currently supplies nearly a quarter of all the energy used in the United States, and the U.S. Department of Energy expects natural gas consumption to increase by 20 percent over the next 20 years, due mainly to the fuel's efficiency, cleanliness and reliability. The environmental benefits of clean burning natural gas are well-known, as are the economic benefits of a fuel source used for everything from cooking to space and water heating.

Natural gas is also a domestic fuel source, with 99 percent of the natural gas used in the United States produced in North America. Natural gas is currently delivered to about 69 million American customers through a safe, sound multimillion-mile system of underground pipelines.

*Since 1924, Florida Public Utilities Company has provided safe, reliable and competitively priced energy, as well as value added services, to approximately 100,000 customers in growing markets throughout Florida. In October of 2009, Florida Public Utilities Company merged with*

*Chesapeake Utilities Corporation. As a result of the merger, Chesapeake now serves approximately 199,700 energy customers with natural gas, electric and propane distribution service, on the Delmarva Peninsula and in Florida. Chesapeake Utilities Corporation is a diversified utility company engaged in natural gas distribution, transmission and marketing, electric distribution, propane gas distribution and wholesale marketing, advanced information services and other related services. Information about Chesapeake's businesses is available on the World Wide Web at [www.chpk.com](http://www.chpk.com).*

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