



### IT'S ELEMENTARY!

**Natural gas and electric safety are some of the most important lessons our kids can learn.**

- ★ According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 70 percent of child-related electrical accidents occur at home, when adult supervision is present.
- ★ More than half of American households cook or heat with natural gas, yet many children don't recognize the smell of mercaptan, the safety additive that BGE and other gas utilities use to make normally odorless natural gas detectable by scent.

BGE's first priority is to deliver energy safely and to show customers—especially children—how to use energy properly, avoid hazardous situations, and report dangers promptly to BGE by calling **800.685.0123**. By creating educational resources and contests targeting elementary school-aged children, we also reach educators and the children's families.

### The goals are ambitious.

- ★ Raise awareness of energy safety, especially among young people
- ★ Provide schools with resources on natural gas and electric safety
- ★ Provide schools with grant money for important school projects, equipment or educational initiatives
- ★ Start the social buzz, engaging educators and families in conversations about the contest and safety
- ★ Begin a partnership with schools for educational initiatives focused on safety



### THE DYNAMIC DUO.

**The BGE Wires Down Video Challenge** is an annual contest, run in the fall each school year, and open to elementary schools in the BGE service area. School groups are asked to create their own versions of BGE's iconic "Wires Down" TV commercial and submit them along with descriptions of school enrichment projects they would fund with the prize money.



BGE offers support and educational materials with a downloadable entry kit and provides teachers with corresponding lessons on basic electric safety. After voting and final judging periods, the overall winning school is awarded \$10,000. Awards are also given in specific categories and for county winners.

**The Adventures of Captain Mercaptan** contest is also an annual contest, run in the spring each school year. In 2014, students were first challenged to design BGE's new gas safety hero, Captain Mercaptan.



In 2015, the Captain was joined by his two super sidekicks, Sunny and Piper, in The Adventures of Captain Mercaptan, BGE Natural Gas Safety Hero Challenge. The contest asked classes to develop comic book covers and stories for these superhero characters. BGE offers support and educational materials with a downloadable entry kit and provides teachers with corresponding lessons on basic natural gas safety. The prize structure awards winners in each grade (K-5) \$5,000 and an overall winner with an additional \$5,000.



An Exelon Company

## THE RESULTS ARE IMPRESSIVE!

### Safety education

- ★ 94% of contest participants said the challenges were effective in educating students about natural gas and electric safety
- ★ More than 40% of Wires Down participants and all of the Captain Mercaptan participants used the free online educational materials provided by BGE
- ★ Requests for BGE in-school natural gas and electric safety presentations increased

### School enrichment funding

Between the two contests, BGE has awarded grant funding totaling \$150,000 to more than 30 schools in central Maryland. Here are just a few of the projects that were funded through these contests:

#### Captain Mercaptan, Year One:

The overall winner, School of the Incarnation, used \$10,000 to renovate/expand its music room so its band and choir would have a place to perform. Some of the funds are also being used to help transition the school's pre-K classes onto the main campus.



**Wires Down Video Challenge, Year One:** The overall winner, Vincent Farm Elementary School, purchased iPad tablets, which the administrators there say, "...provide students with a virtual Swiss army knife for more engaging and diverse learning."

**Wires Down Video Challenge, Year Two:** The overall winner, Immaculate Conception School, updated its antiquated auditorium to enrich its performing arts opportunities. The school also purchased new stage curtains, auditorium lighting and a sound system.

### Starting the social buzz

- ★ Facebook/Twitter posts promoting the submission and voting phases created a viral campaign
- ★ More than 50% of all website referrals came from social media
- ★ 19,652 Wires Down video views on YouTube
- ★ 184,000 total visits to both contest web sites
- ★ 1,040 views to school Flickr albums

### New partnerships for safety

With the success of the "Captain Mercaptan" and "Wires Down" contests, BGE has opened new channels with central Maryland school districts. In addition to making the contests annual competitions, BGE also plans on increasing the number of in-school safety demonstrations and exploring other avenues for communicating important safety lessons to young children.

For more information about the BGE Wires Down Video Challenge, visit [BGEVideoChallenge.COM](http://BGEVideoChallenge.COM) or email: [VideoChallengeInfo@BGE.COM](mailto:VideoChallengeInfo@BGE.COM).

For more information about the Captain Mercaptan contest, visit [BGEGasHero.COM](http://BGEGasHero.COM) or email: [GasHero@BGE.COM](mailto:GasHero@BGE.COM).

For media inquiries, call **888.232.1919**.

