



## Green-e Certification for Gas Offset Products

In response to increasing customer demand, many utilities and competitive energy service providers have begun introducing “green” gas products and options. These products can complement renewable electricity products that are already widely available to customers across the country who are looking to reduce the environmental impact of their energy use. Green-e certification is available for both electricity and gas products.

### Gas Offset Products Explained

One option for greening the use of natural gas is bundling and selling it with high-quality carbon offsets—verified and credited greenhouse gas emission reductions—in order to neutralize the greenhouse gas emissions associated with that energy use. Also called gas offset products or programs, this is a popular option for gas utilities and independent natural gas marketers to offer their customers since it does not involve changing supply or sources of gas, unlike biogas or renewable natural gas.

### Green-e Certification for Gas Offset Products

For a gas offset product to be considered truly green, it should be certified by Green-e, the global retail standard for high-quality carbon offsets. Green-e is an independent, third-party certification for utility gas offset programs and competitive gas offset products. It ensures that carbon offsets delivered to gas customers are real, permanent, and verified, and that those offsets come from projects that are beyond business-as-usual and registered with high-quality project standards. Green-e verifies gas customers’ exclusive ownership of the reductions and correct delivery, and protects against double selling. It also checks for certain disclosures related to offsets for gas customers and truth in advertising.

The unique, third-party assurances that Green-e certification provides are critical to consumer confidence, since offsets are intangible and unregulated.

A program of Center for Resource Solutions, Green-e has certified utility and competitive energy products

### What Are Carbon Offsets?

Consuming natural gas emits carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), a greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. Carbon offsets are tradable greenhouse gas *reductions* (in units of metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent) that have been measured and verified at different projects and credited by one of many project standards, which also evaluate and register the projects and issue and track the credits. Gas customers can use carbon offsets to counterbalance the greenhouse gas emissions associated with consuming natural gas.

Carbon offsets are not a donation to a project or an investment in a future project. They represent real emissions reductions that have been independently verified at projects that would not have otherwise happened.

The carbon offset market is intended to make climate change mitigation (greenhouse gas reductions) cheaper and easier so that individuals and businesses can reduce global emissions faster. Carbon offsets can also help drive investments in projects that not only mitigate emissions, but also often have a variety of other co-benefits.

and provided consumer protection for commercial and residential energy customers for nearly two decades, and currently certifies products for over 600,000 customers across the country. Green-e's environmental and consumer standards are developed through a transparent and open stakeholder review process and are overseen by an independent governance board of industry experts representing diverse stakeholders.

Green-e certification of gas offset products is important not only for consumer protection, but as a way to demonstrate overall product quality. Consumers demand Green-e certification because they trust Green-e to enforce the highest quality standards on products that carry the logo. Certification also helps market products to consumers and businesses—certified products are listed on the Green-e website and promoted at conferences, tradeshow, and with consumer media. Green-e is also referenced as the standard for quality by environmental organizations and government agencies, and in leading environmental standards, including the LEED green building certification.

### **Getting Started**

There are two options for certifying a gas offset product or program with Green-e: 1) contact us to certify your utility gas offset program or competitive gas offset product, or 2) partner with a Green-e carbon offset retailer to sell a certified carbon offset product to your gas customers.

Please visit our website at [green-e.org](https://green-e.org), email us at [climate@green-e.org](mailto:climate@green-e.org), or call 415-561-2100 for more information.