

Lawrenceburg Gas Company

Founded: 1868

Location: Second and Shipping Streets, Lawrenceburg (1868–1943); 212 West Walnut Street (1943–50); 230 West High Street (1950–)

A group headed by George W. Ewing began operating a natural gas manufacturing plant after the Civil War. The group had a contract to supply streets in the city with light. At first the company provided gas for only seventy streetlamps in Newtown. After 1885 the company was sold to the Federated Utilities Corporation of Battle Creek, Michigan, which in turn traded it to the Central Public Service Company of Muncie.

In 1936 A. R. Stryker purchased the plant from Central Public Service. Stryker had been employed with Cincinnati Gas and Electric before he bought the Lawrenceburg Gas Company. One year later a devastating flood hit the town and the gas company took heavy losses. Stryker had the plant rebuilt in the same location, and gas was again flowing to city residents by 1939. The new factory employed a more efficient system of extracting gas from coal.

In the fall of 1941 the gas company completed construction of a pipeline to the city of Aurora. In partnership with the Indiana Gas & Water Company, the Lawrenceburg Gas Company supplied all the natural gas required by Aurora's residents. In order to meet the new needs of Lawrenceburg, Aurora, and the surrounding areas a second plant was built at 212 West Walnut Street.

By the late 1940s news of a natural gas pipeline, to be built by the Texas Gas Transmission Corporation, linking Carthage, Texas, and Lebanon, Ohio, reached the offices of the Lawrenceburg Gas Company. Company executives quickly requested

permission to join the pipeline and extend service to their customers. Authorities allowed the Lawrenceburg company to use the pipeline. On 6 March 1950 natural gas service to Lebanon, Ohio, and by extension to Lawrenceburg and Aurora, became a reality.

In 1964 A. W. Stryker sold the company to his father's old employer, Cincinnati Gas & Electric. The Cincinnati corporation continued to grow throughout the 1960s and 1970s by acquiring smaller electric and gas companies in surrounding towns. In the 1990s the Cincinnati company merged with Public Service Indiana Energy to form Cinergy. In 1998 Cinergy served more than 1.8 million customers in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana and expected profits of approximately \$362 million. Cinergy Foundation grants continued to support projects throughout the company's areas of operation.