

Global Helium Shortage Hits Texas Small Businesses as Southwest Gases Steps In

Southwest Gases leverages inventory buffers to supply Texas labs and small businesses stranded by the national helium supply cuts.



FLOWER MOUND, TX, UNITED STATES,
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major geopolitical conflict in the Middle East has triggered an acute industrial gas crisis on Main Street, Texas, forcing national suppliers to slash helium allocations and turn away new clients. Following late-February Iranian missile strikes on Qatar's Ras Laffan Industrial City, which crippled roughly 30% of the world's helium supply, the largest U.S. industrial gas distributor, Airgas, declared force majeure on helium shipments on March 17.

The impacts are now hitting Texas businesses and institutions in real-time. Contracted commercial volumes have been arbitrarily cut to 50%, spot market prices have surged by 40% to 100%, and emergency surcharges of \$13.50 per hundred cubic feet have been levied across the board. While national majors have prioritized critical semiconductor manufacturing clients, secondary sectors, including research laboratories, universities, medical facilities, welding shops, and the event and balloon retail industry, are facing denied orders and indefinite waitlists across the Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, Austin, and San Antonio metros.

Amidst these widespread supply failures, Southwest Gases, a regional independent industrial gas distributor headquartered in Flower Mound, has emerged as one of the few [helium suppliers](#) in the state actively accepting new clients. Anticipating potential global supply chain vulnerabilities, the company proactively invested in diversified helium supply contracts and significant domestic inventory buffers prior to the current crisis.

The industry-wide squeeze has left smaller commercial operations, educational institutions, and event businesses largely vulnerable as national major distributors consolidate their limited supplies. By prioritizing localized supply chain resilience and establishing robust regional inventory reserves prior to the disruption, Southwest Gases has maintained the operational capacity to absorb these stranded accounts. This independent logistics strategy ensures that Texas small businesses and research facilities can secure necessary gas volumes and avoid halting critical operations during the peak summer event and graduation seasons.

The shortage introduces severe operational hurdles across multiple Texas sectors. Beyond the balloon and entertainment industries facing disruption during high-volume summer celebrations, technical operations are heavily impacted. Industrial facilities rely on helium for sensitive leak detection and specialized welding, while universities require ultra-high purity grades for advanced scientific research and cryogenic cooling.

To accommodate the influx of displaced customers, Southwest Gases has scaled up availability across its full distribution fleet, supplying small to large cylinders, manifolded cylinder packs, and bulk tube trailers. The distributor is guaranteeing priority allocation for its regular delivery routes alongside 24/7 emergency response services to eliminate operational interruptions across its statewide network.

About Southwest Gases

Southwest Gases is a leading independent industrial gas distributor headquartered in Flower Mound, TX, providing high-quality, grade-specific helium solutions to commercial, scientific, and retail operations across the state.

Specializing in everything from 99.9% balloon-grade to 99.9999% ultra-high purity scientific helium, the company serves the Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, Austin, and San Antonio metropolitan areas. Driven by a commitment to regional supply reliability, Southwest Gases utilizes custom-engineered storage systems, regular delivery routes, and local technical support to ensure Texas businesses maintain uninterrupted operations.

For more information, please refer to the contact details below.

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