



## **EIA expects U.S. natural gas consumption in the first quarter of 2023 to be the lowest of any first quarter since 2018**

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A historically warm start to the year for most of the United States meant that U.S. homes and businesses ran their heating systems less, which, in turn, reduced domestic natural gas consumption for this time of year to the lowest since 2018.

In its March *Short-Term Energy Outlook*, EIA forecasts that less natural gas consumption will reduce natural gas prices this year. EIA expects wholesale natural gas prices to average about half of what they did in 2022.

Unlike the rest of the United States, California and much of the Pacific region has had a colder-than-usual start to 2023. That trend has led to higher regional natural gas prices to start the year, but EIA expects those prices to come down and ultimately average lower than last year.

This is Nate Washburn, for EIA, in Washington