
City, County and MLGW Help Citizens during Record Low Temps

A historic collaborative effort in early January allowed residents whose utilities had been cut off to have them restored during the brutal deep freeze that gripped Memphis and Shelby County. During the cold snap, dangerously low temperatures plummeted below 10 degrees, putting lives in jeopardy.

Memphis Mayor A C Wharton Jr., Interim Shelby County Mayor Joe Ford and MLGW President Jerry Collins Jr. made the announcement and put the plan into action, restoring power to more than 990 residents across the community whose utilities had previously been cut off for lack of payment. On Tuesday evening, Jan. 5, MLGW personnel began to reconnect those customers who agreed to have their power turned back on. MLGW prioritized restoring power to senior customers during this effort, which garnered national media attention that included CNN.

“Working with the city and the county, MLGW did everything in its power to make sure that no customer went without heat during this bitterly cold weather,” said MLGW President and CEO Jerry Collins Jr. “I want to express my sincere appreciation to the MLGW employees who were involved with this process, especially those in Customer Care and those field workers who worked 16-hour shifts every day in the freezing cold to bring warmth back to hundreds of MLGW customers.”



Feb. 10 & Mar. 3: Community Conservation Days. MLGW Community Offices, 10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Free Energy Kits and conservation tips. For more information, visit www.mlgw.com.

Feb. 13 - June 13: Harry's Big Adventure: My Bug World! Get up close and personal with insects. World premiere of a blockbuster exhibition. Children's Museum of Memphis. Call 458-2678 or visit cmom.com.

Feb. 20: Soweto Gospel Choir. Direct from South Africa, awe-inspiring 26-member vocal ensemble. Germantown Performing Arts Centre. 8 p.m. Call 751-7500 or visit www.GPACweb.com.

Feb. 27: Census Awareness Day. Free event with information on 2010 Census, health fair & family activities. Presented by Shelby Co. Alumnae, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority at Hope Presbyterian Church, 8500 Walnut Grove Rd., Cordova, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Call 573 5205.

Feb. 27: IRIS Orchestra – Symphonic Quartet. Germantown Performing Arts Centre. 8 p.m. Call 751-7500 or visit www.GPACweb.com

Mar. 5-7: VESTA Best of Home Expressions (formerly Home Expo). Agricenter. For information, call 756-4500 or visit mahba.com.



Customer Reference Number: February 2010



North Community Office Reopens

MLGW's North Community Office at 2424 Summer Ave. has reopened for business after completion of renovations to better serve our customers and employees. Upgrades were made to the heating and air conditioning system and electrical wiring, the roof was re-tarred, the Credit Area was renovated for greater security, a lower ceiling and new light fixtures were added, bathrooms were made handicap-accessible, and the entire office has been repainted. MLGW's North Community Office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and until 6 p.m. on Friday.

Fitch Upgrades MLGW Bonds

In the midst of a challenged economy, Fitch Ratings has just upgraded several of MLGW's electric system bonds to 'AA+' status, including one series of revenue bonds and two outstanding bonds. The AA+ ratings indicate that MLGW's rating outlook is stable primarily because of utility's "ability to maintain strong financial and operational performance in line with comparably rated electric distribution systems," according to Fitch, which cited MLGW's electric prepay transaction with TVA as being one of the positive factors resulting in the upgrade. Higher bond ratings allow for savings on debt costs.

Heating Bills Compared to Last Winter

In light of a record-setting cold week in January that saw gas and electric consumption greatly increase, MLGW customers might expect astronomical heating bills. But most will be pleasantly surprised.

The good news is, thanks to much lower gas and electricity prices this winter, heating bills aren't expected to be much higher compared to last year. If a customer used 40 percent more gas than last winter, their gas bill will be about the same. Actual customer usage will determine the bill amounts.

This winter's average gas usage shows a 65 percent increase, but since gas costs are much lower than last year, the result is only a 14 percent increase in the bill. The 2009 average gas bill was \$139.81, while the 2010 average gas bill will be \$159.14 for the comparable period.

Though electric consumption increased by 17 percent for this period, TVA has had several decreases in the Fuel Cost Adjustment rate since last year, resulting in a four percent decrease in electric bills. The 2008 average electric bill was \$114.13, while the 2010 average electric bill would be \$110.10 for the comparable period.

In general, our rates are lower this year compared to last, so the cold snap is not going to have a severe impact on the average utility bill. Good news is always welcome.

Be Like Zach

In the aftermath of the recent bitterly cold winter weather and the efforts of the city, county and MLGW to restore power to residents who had been previously cut off, Memphians and celebrities alike came together to help pay the utility bills for those who have been restored.



Memphis Grizzlies star forward Zach Randolph stepped up to the line and donated funds through MLGW's Gift of Comfort program to pay utility bills for 15 MLGW families who had their power restored during the cold snap. "I feel blessed that I am able to help restore power for the people in my community," said Randolph. "Hopefully this will help give them the opportunity to get back on their feet and stay warm during these cold winter months."

You can be like Zach, too, and help someone by paying their utility bill through Gift of Comfort. Go to www.mlgw.com, click on "Payment Options" and "Assistance Programs" and look for "Gift of Comfort," or call 544-6549.

MLGW in Top Five

According to the 2009 Memphis Poll, a phone survey of about 1,000 people sponsored each year by city government, Memphians rank MLGW fifth in a list of the top five highest-rated city services.

Heat for the Cold

Through a partnership with MIFA, MLGW was able to donate space heaters to help cold Memphians. MLGW initially donated 70 space heaters to MIFA which were given away in just 90 minutes, thanks to publicity on local TV news. A MIFA waiting list quickly grew to 230 names within 24 hours. MLGW staff then located, purchased, delivered to MIFA and helped screen recipients for 230 additional heaters, so that those in need could have heat when temperatures were projected to reach record lows.

Darrell Cobbins, new Board Chair

Darrell T. Cobbins, a member of MLGW Board of Commissioners since March 2008, is the new MLGW Board Chairman for 2010, replacing former Board Chair V. Lynn Evans. Chairman Cobbins established Universal Commercial Real Estate, LLC in 2007, Memphis' first black-owned commercial real estate and community development services firm.

He has served as Vice President at Commercial Advisors, LLC, a commercial real estate firm, as Senior Resource Development Officer for Memphis Regional Chamber of Commerce and as Unit Manager at Guardsmark, Inc. Cobbins is a graduate of Rhodes College and holds an MBA from the University of Memphis' Fogelman College of Business and Economics.

