

Communications and Public Relations  
Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division  
P.O. Box 430  
Memphis, TN 38101-0430

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# Community OUTREACH

News to the Neighborhoods from Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division

September/October 2014



## Call for your pilot safety inspection

MLGW's Pilot Safety Inspection program began August 11 and will run through February 28, 2015. Appointments scheduled between September 2 and September 30 are free. Appointments scheduled between October 1 and December 31 will incur a \$55 fee. The fee will be billed to your account and covers up to three gas heating appliances. Each additional appliance over three will incur an additional \$17 fee.

The service is free to physically challenged customers or seniors (60 years and older). To schedule an appointment, please call 820-7878 to choose a date and time convenient for you. You may also use our Interactive Voice Response system (IVR) to schedule an appointment. You will need your 16-digit account number when using this system.

You may schedule an appointment for a Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Saturday for one of the following time slots:

- 8 a.m. - noon • noon - 4 p.m. • 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
- Saturday appointments are either 8 a.m. - noon or noon - 4 p.m.

For the best selection of dates and times, please call as soon as possible. MLGW's Customer Care Center is open from 7 a.m. - 7 p.m., Monday through Friday.



## MLGW supports Latino community

MLGW continues its support to the Latino community by constant participation in special events that cater to that segment of our community. MLGW is always present at such events with information on how to save energy for a lower monthly bill, how to stay safe around utilities, and how

During the recent Latino Festival at the Fairgrounds, a bilingual MLGW representative explains to a customer how to save energy while on vacation.

to avoid becoming a victim of utility fraud. This time around it was the Latino Festival, which celebrated local station Radio Ambiente's 20th year anniversary.

## MLGW in the Community

- **Sept. 1-7** - Delta Fair, AgriCenter; various days and times
- **Sept. 6** - Mid-South Convoy of Hope, Mid-South Fairgrounds, 10 a.m.
- **Sept. 19-20** - St. Jude Ride Memphis, Tom Lee Park, Fri., 6 p.m. - Sat., 6 p.m.
- **Sept. 24** - HUD/VASH Roundtable, Benjamin Hooks Library, 10:30 a.m. - noon
- **Oct. 1** - Senior Day at the Zoo, Memphis Zoo
- **Oct. 1** - Nike Health Fair, 5151 E. Shelby, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- **Oct. 4** - Woman's Day Out Extravaganza, Memphis Cook Convention Center, 11:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
- **Oct. 23** - Collierville Business Expo, Cox Community Center, 440 West Powell Road, 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- **Oct. 25** - City-Wide Crime Prevention and Community Safety Expo, Hickory Ridge Towne Centre
- **Oct. 31** - Meritan, Inc., 4700 Poplar Avenue. 2:30 p.m.



## Planning ahead will help you stay warm this winter

A little planning before the holidays will help you to stay warm this winter. MLGW's Winter Moratorium program ensures uninterrupted service to senior citizens at least 60 years of age and to disabled customers during the winter months. The program is set up to assist these customers — most of whom are on fixed incomes — during the coldest time of the year, when utility costs and usage are typically higher than usual.

The Winter Moratorium delays any pending cutoff of residential services for qualified customers during the months of December, January and February. MLGW will not disconnect any services due to non-payment during these months. However, participants will not be relieved of their obligation to pay their utility bill.

There are no income restrictions for the Winter Moratorium program; however, applicants cannot have an outstanding balance on their utility bill on November 30 when the program begins. All applicants who meet the program requirements will be approved to participate. Deadline for application is November 15. Applications are available at [www.mlgw.com](http://www.mlgw.com), at any MLGW Community Office, or by calling 544-MLGW (6549).



Community Outreach is produced by the Communications and Public Relations department of MLGW. If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions about this publication, please feel free to contact the Community Relations area of MLGW's Communications and Public Relations department at (901) 528-4820. Or call Tamara Nolen, Supervisor, Communications and Public Relations, at (901) 528-4557. Address all correspondence to:  
Communications and Public Relations, Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division  
P.O. Box 430, Memphis, TN 38101-0430

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Just visit [mlgw.com](http://mlgw.com) and click on the logos.





## You can help ‘scrap’ the copperheads

Copper thieves have been wreaking havoc in many of our neighborhoods. They steal air conditioner units to get to the copper coils, and they rip the copper from wiring, electric meters, plumbing and appliances, doing vast amounts of damage to homes, churches and apartment buildings. The problem has increased in recent years. Think of the criminals as **copperheads** — “any venomous critter, who sells, transports or buys stolen metal.” The results are harmful indeed. Everyone should know that when the copper thieves are allowed to do their illegal work untouched they are:

- Severely damaging homes and other structures
- Rendering new appliances useless
- Increasing neighborhood blight
- Stealing from the city’s tax base
- Driving investors from Memphis

Now many community groups, along with MLGW, have come together and launched CopperStoppers to put a stop to this problem of scrap metal theft. A campaign under the umbrella of CrimeStoppers of Memphis and Shelby County will provide enhanced awards up to \$1,000 for anonymous citizen tips about copper thefts at 528-CASH (2274).

## MLGW promotes National 811 Day

Some numbers you know by heart and 811 should be one of them. National 811 Day was August 11, 2014 (8/11) and reminded the public that calling before you dig prevents damage to underground utilities such as gas and electric lines and keeps residents safe. When residents call 811, underground utility lines will be located and marked free of charge.

Tennessee law requires that individuals give notice to the 811 center three business days before digging begins. This service is free, and all residents who intend to excavate or have contractors excavate are required to call. Damage to utilities can occur during installation of a fence or mailbox, building a deck or additional room, and even gardening. “We want residents of Shelby County to realize that underground utility lines can be disturbed or damaged by common home improvement projects,” said Jerry Collins Jr., MLGW President and CEO. Digging without calling can result in damage to underground utility lines, harm to residents, disruption of neighborhood service, and fines and repair costs for those responsible.

If residents hit or damage a utility line in the process of excavation, they should immediately stop digging and call MLGW. Remember that natural gas smells like rotten eggs. If residents smell this odor, they should evacuate the area right away and call 911 and MLGW’s emergency line, 528-4465. MLGW wants to remind residents that the best way to avoid these dangerous situations is to always call 811 before you dig. More information on calling 811 and natural gas safety can be found on MLGW’s website at [mlgw.com](http://mlgw.com).



Volunteers make repairs to a model solar car during the A-Blazing Race.

## MLGW completes second A-Blazing Race

MLGW has successfully completed its second A-Blazing Race, a model solar car race for boys and girls in grades third through eighth. The race was held Saturday, August 16 at MLGW’s Beale Street Landing parking garage rooftop.

The goal of the race is to challenge children to use scientific know-how, creative thinking, experimentation and teamwork to design and build high-performance model solar vehicles. MLGW provided kits containing a solar panel and motor.

In preparation for the competition, MLGW offered an A-Blazing Race Engineering workshop on Saturday, July 19.

For more information regarding the A-Blazing Race, contact Beverly Perkins at 528-4820, [commrelations@mlgw.org](mailto:commrelations@mlgw.org) or visit [mlgw.com/community/ablaze](http://mlgw.com/community/ablaze).



City of Memphis Chief Administrative Officer George Little (left) and Finance Director Brian Collins presented “Memphis Government 101” to illustrate how the city works.

## Transforming neighborhoods through the arts

The 2014 Neighborhood Leaders Conference on August 1 hosted by MLGW was once again a success. Participants acquired information and resources to better equip them in supporting and building their neighborhoods, particularly through artistic expression and collaboration. From learning more about city budgeting to witnessing the impact of performing arts on the city’s youth, attendees walked away with a myriad of tools to better empower Memphis communities. The day started out with a plenary session entitled “Memphis Government 101” led by City of Memphis Chief Administrative Officer George Little and Finance Director Brian Collins. The two gave a presentation on the city’s expenses, revenue and budget. Following the plenary, participants headed to the workshop sessions.

At the “Connecting the Community through Art” workshop, spoken word poet and Executive Director of The Live Seed, C.J. Evans, spoke about getting the community and young people involved in performing arts. In the “Mural Making” workshop, presenter Siphne Sylve, Director of Public Art at the UrbanArt Commission, explained how to organize a mural-making project in participants’ neighborhoods. Attendees learned about MLGW’s social media channels and the MLGW app for Android and iPhones in the “Connect with MLGW” workshop. The “Bringing Ideas to Life” workshop with Livable Memphis outlined how to share one’s ideas for Memphis and find support through a crowd resourcing platform. The organization and online platform teamed up to start an online project coined Create Memphis, where Memphians can propose ideas, receive funding and implement projects in their communities.

During lunch, MLGW President and CEO Jerry Collins Jr., explained MLGW’s Budget Billing program and discussed MLGW’s dedication to maintaining low utility rates. Customer Metering and Billing Manager Eliza King provided the audience with a detailed description of smart meters, answering questions and concerns raised by conference participants.



## Buried gas pipelines

As a natural gas customer, you may have a natural gas line running underground from the meter to either a separate building or an outdoor gas-burning appliance such as a gas grill, gas light, pool heater, etc. Federal regulations require MLGW to make you aware that you are responsible for maintaining any underground gas piping on your property that extends beyond the meter. If not properly maintained, buried gas pipelines may be subject to corrosion (if metallic) and/or leakage. To ensure its continued safe and reliable operation, buried piping should be checked for leaks or damage.

You are advised to contact a natural gas contractor such as a private utility service, meter specialist or gas-certified plumber to locate, inspect and make any necessary repairs to your buried gas piping. MLGW cannot perform inspections or make repairs on customer-owned buried piping. If you are not the property owner, please notify the owner about this requirement.

## Budget Billing

Would you like to know what your utility costs will be each month, even before you receive your bill? You can - with Budget Billing, a Memphis Light, Gas and Water program that allows you to pay the same amount each month. Budget Billing does not reduce your overall energy expense. It simply lets you spread out your annual energy expense over a 12-month period and lets you know ahead of time what your monthly payment will be. So you’ll be able to manage your household budget a whole lot easier. How it works:

- When you enroll in the program, MLGW analyzes your previous year’s total usage, adjusts for rate changes and weather conditions, and divides the total into 12 monthly installments.
- You pay this installment each month until the following March, when the Budget Billing installment for the next 12 months is determined.
- Your MLGW account will be monitored monthly. If your actual utility costs are consistently lower or higher than your Budget Billing installment, your installment will be adjusted. To apply for Budget Billing, visit [mlgw.com/budgetbilling](http://mlgw.com/budgetbilling).