

Community OUTREACH

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

March/April 2014



MLGW Celebrates Diamond Anniversary

This year, Memphis Light, Gas and Water is proud to celebrate a significant milestone – 75 years as a leading utility provider to the residents of Memphis and Shelby County.

MLGW began operating as the city's first utility company in 1939. Seventy-five years later, MLGW is the nation's largest three-service municipal utility with some of the lowest combined bills of any utility in the country.

MLGW began as a dream of prominent Memphians, such as the legendary Shelby County political leader and former Memphis Mayor E.H. Crump, to have all the utilities in the city owned and operated by the city government and free of interference from far-off companies and non-local interests.

When the Tennessee Valley Authority was formed in 1933, many felt the opportunity had arrived for Memphis to obtain cheap electric power. The unified Memphis Light and Water Division was formed in 1935 to oversee power and water systems, and a contract with TVA was also signed that year. After three years of litigations and negotiations, a sale agreement for purchase of Memphis Power and Light

was reached. On March 9, 1939, the governor of Tennessee signed an amendment to the Memphis charter creating Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division.

Prior to the signing, organized utility service was available for 87 years before MLGW was formed. MLGW's parent companies provided services not long after the Civil War.

Since 1939, the Division has strived to meet its mission to improve the quality of life of Memphis and Shelby County customers through efficient and safe delivery of electricity, natural gas and water. The slogan found on the first MLGW logo still resonates with the Division today: "Public Service—Publicly Owned." "I attribute this achievement of reaching our 75th anniversary to the tremendous wealth of talent and knowledge our 2,700 employees bring to work with them every day," said Jerry Collins Jr., President and CEO of MLGW. "The employees of MLGW are dedicated—to their jobs, to their co-workers and to their customers. This dedication brought us through many milestones. Not only will we celebrate the achievements of our 75-year history this year, we will keep this as a reminder of how much we can accomplish and allow it to motivate us to do even more in the future."

MLGW in the Community

Community outreach and volunteer programs are always part of MLGW's schedule. Some of the upcoming events that MLGW will be participating in include the following:

March 22 – Memphis Black Expo, Agricenter, 7777 Walnut Grove, 10:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

March 26 – University of Memphis Off-Campus Housing Information Fair, Michael D. Rose Theatre, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

March 29 – Scouts Rock at Graceland, 3734 Elvis Presley Blvd., 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

April 3 – Creative Aging Game Day, Memphis Jewish Community Center, 6560 Poplar Ave., 1-3 p.m.

April 13 – 1st Annual Multicultural Job Fair, Hilton Hotel Memphis, 12 p.m. – 6 p.m.

April 16-18 – Neighborhood Redevelopment Conference, Cook Convention Center, various times

April 16-20 – Africa in April, Robert R. Church Park, various times

If you would like MLGW to be an exhibitor or speaker at your event, please call 528-4820 or request online at www.mlgw.com/speaker.

Power of Warmth Program

MLGW teamed up with the Neighborhood Christian Center to assist qualified low-income seniors and physically challenged residents of Shelby County through the Power of Warmth Program. The program provided 100 space heaters and 100 electric blankets to qualified applicants.



Interact with MLGW via: Twitter, Blogspot, Facebook and YouTube



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 Communications and Public Relations, at (901) 528-4557.

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MLGW Commissioner Rick Masson Named Board Chairman

Rick Masson, a member of the MLGW Board of Commissioners since June 2004, is the new MLGW Board Chairman for the next two-year term, through December 31, 2015, replacing former Board Chair Steven Wishnia. Rick Masson spent more than 20 years

working for the City of Memphis. During his tenure with the City, Masson held several positions in the area of Finance. Masson served as Chief Administrative Officer of the City of Memphis from 1996 to 2003. Since leaving the city, Masson has served as

the Executive Director of the Plough Foundation and as the Executive Director of the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy.



MLGW at the Top for Cybersecurity

With recent data breaches at Target and Neiman Marcus retail stores, cybersecurity is a hot topic of late. MLGW employees and customers can rest assured knowing MLGW's systems and processes incorporate the best industry practices as recognized by Security Magazine. The publication issued its top 500 rankings and the Division was among the top 30 in the utility industry. The Security 500 survey identifies, ranks and reports on the 500 biggest and best security organizations across 17 sectors.



MLGW was recognized for its cybersecurity efforts. The award was presented at a recent Board of Commissioners meeting. Accepting from MLGW were Allan Long, Utility Compliance Manager; LaShell Vaughn, VP, Chief Technology Officer; Jerry Collins Jr., President and CEO; Steve Wishnia, Board Commissioner; and Alonzo Weaver, VP, Engineering & Operations.

Annual Race to CARE Assists Elderly and Disabled Customers through Project CARE

More than 200 runners and MLGW employees registered, volunteered and contributed to the second annual Race to CARE 5K. The race benefits Project CARE, a program that assists elderly and disabled customers with emergency energy efficiency repairs to their homes. Thanks to their support, MLGW can help customers like Alma Katherine Jones, a recent Project CARE program participant. Jones experienced a severe water leak in her home that caused her to go to extreme lengths. She had to go to the water meter to turn her water on and off anytime she wanted to take a shower or wash dishes. Thanks to Project CARE, her water pipes were

rerouted and she can simply walk to her kitchen faucet and turn the knob. For more pictures from the 2013 Race to CARE, visit www.mlgw.com/racetocare. To donate to Project CARE, sign-up for Share the Pennies, www.mlgw.com/share-thepennies.



Shelby County Gets Federal Grant Money to Offset 2011 Flood Expenses



amount, Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division gets \$2.3 million, which will be used for storm restoration expenses that weren't reimbursed by FEMA, said Jerry Collins Jr., MLGW's President and CEO. "The money goes back in the electric division general fund, which directly benefits the customer," Collins said. "Now,

Shelby County has received \$7.464 million in federal grant money to cover expenses incurred after the flooding of spring 2011. Out of that

rather than the customer having to pay for that storm restoration, the federal government is going to pay for it." The repairs include replacing poles that were knocked down, restringing electric cables that were knocked down and replacing cables that were destroyed, he said. The utility had a total of \$9.3 million in eligible charges, and FEMA reimbursed \$5.1 million, which left \$4.2 million, Collins said. "This is \$2.3 (million), so at the end of the day, all but \$2 million will be reimbursed," he said. To receive the funds, communities were required to explain in detail how the grant will be used. Shelby County municipalities, MLGW and local emergency services gathered together to lay out a plan. The grant money could not be used for individual losses, which were covered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in amounts up to \$30,000.



Make Springtime a Safe Time

With the upcoming change to nicer, warmer weather, we frequently get severe weather. MLGW wants you and your family to be safe and protected during severe weather outbreaks, so here are a few tips to increase safety:

- Identify the safest place in your home in case of emergency. It might be a closet or bathroom in the middle of your home, away from exterior doors and windows. Go there if you hear severe weather warnings.
- Stock that place with emergency items such as a first aid kit, flashlights, a battery-operated radio or TV, and extra batteries.

- Store bottled water or tap water in sterile containers, enough for several days, two quarts per person per day. Store some non-spoilable food items that don't require heating, as well as a can opener.
 - Include a whistle or similar device to alert emergency personnel in case of rescue efforts.
 - Store a supply of necessary prescription medicines.
- Safety tips when severe weather strikes:**
- Never approach or touch downed power lines. If one falls on your car, remain inside until help arrives.
 - Know how to turn off your gas, electricity and water in case the lines are damaged.
 - If you smell gas, do not turn on lights or electric appliances and don't use any phones. They could cause an explosion.
 - If you smell gas after severe weather, leave the building immediately. Go to a safe place and call MLGW. Do not go back into your home until MLGW says it is safe to do so.
 - If you use a portable generator, do not operate it inside your home due to carbon monoxide danger. Also, do not plug it into a wall outlet to power your home; that can cause a dangerous fire hazard.
- Should you have downed wires, gas leaks or a broken water main, call MLGW's 24-hour, emergency-only hotline at 528-4465.

January Brought Record-Setting Low Temps

Much of the country experienced frigid wintry weather and some of the coldest temperatures on record during January. No significant problems were reported related to the cold temperatures and MLGW's system dependably provided electric power, natural gas and drinking water despite the incredibly cold weather. The Division's cold weather Emer-

gency Reconnect initiative restored power to 197 customers and their families by providing payment plans. MLGW's Cut-off Moratorium program kept power on for customers at a time when it was most needed. A joint effort with the Neighborhood Christian Center provided 200 seniors and customers in need with space heaters and electric blankets.



Remember: Call 811 Before You Dig!

In addition to being prepared for the dangers presented by severe weather, a little knowledge about natural gas safety is a must. If your home is close to a major gas-supply pipeline, you should know what to do and where to go in case of a pipeline emergency. When warned to evacuate the area, do so immediately. The leading cause of natural gas pipeline accidents – almost 60 percent – is damage from excavation or construction. Other causes include rare damage by vehicles or corrosion. Many of us are eager and can't wait to break ground to start outdoor projects such as building fences or planting trees. But do we know what's under the

ground where we plan to dig? Natural gas pipelines and other utility lines weave beneath the surface throughout our community. Major gas pipelines are marked with a yellow caution sign. But secondary lines aren't as easily identifiable. So don't risk hitting a gas line, disrupting neighborhood service, and facing potential fines and repair costs. Before you begin digging, remember to contact Tennessee One Call at 811 to request that a professional locating crew mark the underground utility lines on your property. And do it in a timely manner, at least three days before starting your project. Failure to do so could result in an explosion or electrocution. The service is free, and it's the law!



Raving Fans: Customer Compliments



I am writing in regards to one MLGW employee in Electric Distribution Engineering. This young man was so impressive that I wanted to share with you everything that he did with such grace and knowledge. He was respectable and knew his job well. We were having a problem with lighting on Ross Rd. Some people were complaining that it was a little dark between Ross Ridge and Ross Rd. Your employee came out and investigated the situation and I believe wanted to put a light where we requested, but he couldn't because a street light wasn't too far from there. This young man revived my thoughts concerning young men because of his kindness, upbeat personality and wanting to do the right thing, but couldn't. Also, it revitalized my thoughts concerning the City of Memphis. We should have more young men or women like him, who love what they are doing. I believe this young man portrays this image all of the time. Thank you for having such wonderful personnel on your team. Sincerely, Johnnie Payton

Text Alerts Help You Remember

Would you like a nudge in the form of a text message letting you know when your next utility bill is due? If you do, MLGW's Text Alerts program is perfect for you. We will send you a text message notifying you of billing due dates or impending cut-offs. All you will need is your 16-digit MLGW account number and the access code found on your MLGW bill in order to sign up. Sign up now and receive a free pair of earbuds. Go to www.mlgw.com/textalerts.

