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## Be sure to dial the right number

Do you ever open your MLGW bill and find you have a question about your fire, sanitation, sewer, storm water, or mosquito or rat control fees or services listed on the statement? If so, then make sure you call the correct number for help, instead of calling MLGW. The phone numbers for these municipal services are listed on your MLGW bill for your convenience. MLGW lists the fees for these services on your utility bill to minimize municipal billing costs, as well as return postage costs for our customers. However, we do not administer those services. We simply collect the fee payments and pass them on to the corresponding municipal organization.



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



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



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.

Address all correspondence to:

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

## 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:

**May 15** – Highland Heights Community Fair, Treadwell Middle School, 920 N Highland Street

**May 27** – Bartlett Annual Senior Health and Fitness Day, 7700 Flaherty Place, 8:30-11:30 a.m.

**June 6** – Day of Merrymaking, Overton Park, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

**June 9** – Mt. Moriah Station Neighborhood Watch, 2602 Mt. Moriah Road, 6:30 p.m.

**June 19-21** – Juneteenth Urban Music Festival, Beale Street at Robert Church, 11 a.m.-11 p.m.

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](http://www.mlgw.com/speaker).

# Community OUTREACH

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

May/June 2015

## The 2015 Plus-1 Telethon raises \$67,457 for needy MLGW customers

On Tuesday, April 7, MLGW, MIFA and Channel 3 partnered for the Plus-1 Telethon, an event with the goal of increasing awareness and participation of the Memphis community in the Plus-1 assistance program. The show featured live periodic reports on WREG News Channel 3, ending with a 30 minute program at 6:30 p.m. The event focused on people who have been helped by Plus-1 and volunteers helped MLGW customers sign up to help.

This year the Plus-1 Telethon received more than \$67,457 in pledges and donations, which means that almost 300 additional families facing a temporary hardship will be able to receive utility assistance this year.

The Plus-1 program, created in 1982 as a partnership between MIFA and MLGW, provides one-time utility assistance for individuals and families in financial crisis. MLGW customers sign up to donate by agreeing to add \$1 or more per month to their utility bill for Plus-1. Donors can also make a one-time donation for any amount. MIFA screens clients for eligibility and priority, and authorizes payments from the Plus-1 fund to their accounts.

The average eligible household receives \$200 in assistance, plus negotiation with MLGW to establish a payment plan for their existing balance.

### Interesting Plus-1 facts

- In 2014, Plus-1 kept the lights on for more than 2,400 families.
- Memphis Light, Gas and Water customers fund the program through one-time donations or by adding a dollar or more to their utility bill each month.
- A customer donation of \$200 could help keep the lights on for one family.

- In Fiscal Year 2014, MIFA received over 15,900 requests for financial assistance.

- Loss of utilities is often a contributing factor to homelessness.

- Top reasons for assistance request include: Medical crisis: 35%; Employment related loss of income: 33%; Disaster (fire, theft): 5%; Disabled and over 60: 23%.

- Plus-1 Works! 80% of clients with active utility services were still connected 180 days after assistance, 90% were still connected after 90 days.

- The Plus-1 program offers one-time assistance. It serves as a "stop gap" measure to those in need, not an on-going source of assistance.

- Customers living in Shelby County are eligible for assistance once every two years.

- To receive assistance, families must document a crisis such as debilitating illness, recent unemployment or disaster occurred within last 90 days.

- Eligibility is based on crisis, not based on income.

- During Fiscal Year 2014, the total MLGW bad debt avoided by MIFA assistance was over \$732,000.

- To donate, you can visit [mifa.org/plus-1](http://mifa.org/plus-1) or [mlgw.com/residential/plus1](http://mlgw.com/residential/plus1).



## MLGW employee awarded Young Engineer of the Year

Carol Whelchel, MLGW Gas Engineering, recently won the Young Engineer of the Year award from the Memphis Chapter of the Tennessee Society of Professional Engineers (TSPE). The Young Engineer of the Year Award recognizes members who are 35 years of age or younger who have made outstanding contributions to the engineering profession and their communities during the early years of their careers. Welchel has been with the Division since 2010 and participates in numerous volunteer activities, continuing education courses, and is a member of several professional organizations.



Carol smiles with her husband, Jim at the TSPE Awards Ceremony.



# Prepare your system and yourself for the summer

Feeling comfortable during a hot and humid Memphis summer can be challenging, but it does not have to be costly. Here are some of the easiest ways to stay cool and save:

- Have a professional, reputable contractor clean and inspect your air conditioner. This should be done every year, whether you have window or central units.
- Check your air conditioner's filter every time you receive your utility bill. Look for a dust build-up that can restrict the airflow and place stress on the system. This added stress causes wear and tear on the unit, and increases operation costs.
- Always replace the filter cover. By creating a tight seal around the filter opening, you can block any unconditioned air that is being pulled into the unit.
- Use fans to move the air inside your home. This gives the sensation that it is five degrees cooler than the actual temperature.
- Shade windows on the sunny side of your home. Keep drapes closed or add room-darkening shades to block out the heat from the sun.
- Do not set your thermostat at a colder setting than normal when you turn on your air conditioner. It will not cool your home any faster and could



- result in excessive cooling and, therefore, unnecessary expenses.
- Set the thermostat at 78° degrees or higher for the most energy efficient operation. Each degree below this setting can add up to six percent to your cooling costs.
  - Use a programmable thermostat to allow the inside temperature to rise while you are away from home for four hours or longer. Pre-set the thermostat to adjust back to your normal comfort range one half hour before returning home.
  - Use your programmable thermostat setting to automatically allow the temperature to increase at bedtime. Sleep under lightweight bedding and use fans during sleep.
  - Do not place lamps near your thermostat. The thermostat senses the heat produced from the lamp and causes the air conditioner to run longer than necessary.
  - Plant trees or shrubs to shade air-conditioning units but not to block the airflow. A unit operating in the shade uses as much as 10 percent less electricity than the same one operating under the sun.
  - The outside portion of a central air conditioner is the condensing unit. Keep it clear from dried mud, debris and grass clippings, because it needs to breathe.



MLGW Residential Services representative Michael Hamrick shares information and a giveaway with a customer during a recent Conservation Day.

## MLGW celebrates Conservation Days

Nobody likes high energy bills so community conservation days are another tool MLGW uses to raise awareness of wise energy use and also to help customers find ways to reduce their energy consumption. Residents of Tennessee consume more electricity than any other

state. While MLGW's electrical rates are comparatively low, high consumption can inflate your bill. Energy technicians were recently at MLGW community offices on several different dates to provide information and answer customers' energy questions.

## MLGW strengthens communication with Hispanics

The participation of bilingual personnel in two recent Latino events continues to strengthen communication of Division's programs and services to the ever-growing Hispanic segment of our population. In April, we participated in Radio Ambiente's Children's Festival and in May our sponsorship benefited Latino Memphis and its community programs. During the two events several new brochures in Spanish, such as the "Services for our Senior Customers" and the "2014 Water Quality Report" were promoted and distributed.



# MLGW gives big to help Mid-South neighbors

United Way of the Mid-South President and CEO Rev. Kenneth Robinson, M.D., spoke at a recent MLGW Board of Commissioners meeting and thanked the Division for another great campaign year and MLGW's support of United Way.

"We are grateful for a campaign like this. We are United Way, seeking to help the Mid-South learn how to live united and we are doing this as a community," he said. "We have come together. You know the impact of United Way. Many of you have members of your family who have been impacted by United Way so you know the stories. I am so grateful you let us come in and tell those stories and show our videos."

Robinson praised the high-bar set by MLGW noting, "This is how we do United Way campaigns and this is how we do campaigns well. They are top-down. You have an excellent president and CEO, you have executive leadership support and we have over 70 Key Leaders across the Division who know your constituents and work everyday with your constituents as well as 400 leadership-level donors at MLGW."



Holding the check at the March 18 MLGW Board meeting are left to right, Vice President of Human Resources, Von Goodloe; United Way Co-Chairs Derrick Dones and Kevin Watkins; United Way of the Mid-South President and CEO Kenneth Robinson; Board of Commissioners Chairman Derwin Sisnett and President and CEO Jerry Collins Jr.

Kevin Watkins, co-chair of the 2014 United Way campaign, presented the check for \$646,715.33 and said: "Not only did we meet the goal for 2014. We surpassed it by \$3,000."

## MLGW's 2014 Water Quality Report available online

Do you ever stop and think how fortunate you are to have such awesome drinking water? Many areas are not as lucky as Memphis and Shelby County. Specialists in MLGW's Water Laboratory perform numerous tests throughout the year to monitor the components of Memphis' water. The 2014 test results reveal our water to be well within

the designated limits, and meeting or exceeding all water quality standards set by the EPA. All community water systems are required to prepare and distribute an annual water quality report. MLGW is proud to provide excellent drinking water for the citizens of Memphis and Shelby County. Customers can readily view MLGW's

2014 Water Quality Report in both English and Spanish online at [mlgw.com/waterquality](http://mlgw.com/waterquality), as well as request a paper copy of the report by calling 320-3950 or e-mailing [corpcomm@mlgw.org](mailto:corpcomm@mlgw.org).



## Supplier Diversity exceeds 2014 goals



Department representative Renise Holliday explains supplier diversity programs to potential beneficiaries at a recent event.

2014 spending. "It was a great year for Supplier Diversity in 2014. We outperformed our spend numbers compared to our 2013 numbers," said Renise Holliday, representative of the department. "We had an expenditure of \$144 million, which represents 24 percent of the total spend dollars for the Division. That 24 percent represents \$33 million spent with minority-owned, women-owned and locally-owned

MLGW is making a large economic impact in the Memphis community through its Supplier Diversity programs. In a recent Board of Commissioners meeting, the Supplier Diversity department reviewed its

small business enterprises."

In 2014, Supplier Diversity began tracking their spending by business and industry classifications for the first time. This allowed the department to target efforts in specific areas and industries. Supplier Diversity met and exceeded goals in eight of those industry classifications out of 18 categories.

"We are also excited about being able to increase our opportunities for local small businesses through our new Sheltered Market Program," Holliday stated. "This program was implemented in 2014 and we had 26 companies participating this year, which represents an expenditure of \$7 million or five percent of our total spent dollars. Most of those were in the goods and supplies area of purchasing."

Supplier Diversity plans to continue working to expand its reach. In 2014, the group was recognized by the Black Business Association (BBA) with the Professionals of the Year Award and received the Mid-South Minority Business Council Continuum (MMBC) Outstanding Booth Award at its Economic Fair.