

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:

July 17 – Energy Conservation, 10 a.m., St. Paul Church, 2124 E. Holmes Rd.

July 19 – MLGW Community Conservation Day, 7:05 p.m., AutoZone Park.

July 27 – Senior Programs, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Senior Expo & Health Fair, Oak Court Mall.

July 30 – Citywide Public Health/Safety Expo, Senior Programs/Special Assistance Programs, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Hickory Ridge Mall.

Aug 6 – Energy Conservation, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Greater Mt. Moriah Baptist Church, Potters House Life Center, 489 Edith St.


Aug 9 – Energy Conservation, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Shelby Station Senior Apartments (Community Room), 3290 Woodhol-low Dr.

New Video Highlights MLGW's Earthquake Preparedness Efforts

For the past several years, MLGW has taken a leading role in local earthquake preparation through its proactive seismic retrofitting efforts. Seismic retrofitting is the modification of existing structures to make them more resistant to seismic activity, ground motion or soil failure due to earthquakes.

To illustrate MLGW's efforts as a company, MLGW has produced a series of videos titled "Structurally Sound," that highlight the utility's efforts to brace its system against earthquake damage. Customers with YouTube access can view the videos at www.youtube.com/mlgwwaystosave or request to receive a DVD by mail by contacting MLGW at 528-4557 or e-mailing corpcomm@mlgw.org.





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 Glen Thomas, Supervisor, Communications and Public Relations, at (901) 528-4557. Address all correspondence to:

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Community OUTREACH

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

July/August 2011

Preparation is Essential

Preparation Is Essential is the theme for the 2011 MLGW Neighborhood Leaders Conference scheduled for Friday, August 5 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Joyce M. Blackmon Training Center (4949 Raleigh-LaGrange).

Recent events have shown how important it is for Memphians to be prepared for events such as floods, tornadoes, heat waves and other community crises. This year, the conference will feature 15 workshops educating leaders on issues such as utility safety, Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and using new technologies such as text messaging and business apps to communicate.

Participants can also take advantage of a hands-on computer workshop focused on CIM (Community Issues Management). CIM is a Web-based database of community information designed to assist with everything from identifying and mapping community resources to understanding community problems and grant writing.

The cost of the conference is \$5, which includes breakfast, lunch and conference materials. To get a brochure or to register by phone, call Anet at 528-4322. Information is also available at www.mlgw.com/neighborhoodleaders.



Presenter Vivian Wilihoite addresses the audience on the subject of Financial Relief for Seniors during the 2010 Neighborhood Leaders' Conference.

MLGW to Issue Gas Billing Credit in August

A recent adjustment to MLGW's Purchased Gas Adjustment (PGA) will result in credits that will be reflected on the August bills of MLGW's natural gas customers. The adjustment is the result of a billing error that was recently discovered and reported by MLGW staff. The error dates back to a rate adjustment that was made in January 2008 and reflects gas usage between then and May 2011. The average credit will be about \$38 per residential customer and will be reflected in customers' gas charges. Some customers will receive more or less, depending on their gas usage during that time.

"We regret that this error occurred," said Jerry Collins Jr., MLGW President and CEO. "However, we are making it right in the form



of this credit to our customers and hope that it will provide some relief for their August utility costs."

The PGA is a cost recovery mechanism. Monthly gas bills reflect the cost of the natural gas MLGW purchases, as well as the cost of gas storage, transportation and delivery. These costs fluctuate because of the deregulated, competitive natural gas marketplace. Like virtually all natural gas utilities, MLGW uses a PGA to pass along these increases and decreases in gas costs to its customers. The actual amount of these credits is based on each customer's actual gas usage between January 2008 and May 2011. The amount of the credit adjustment for commercial customers will vary.

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Just visit mlgw.com and click on the logos.

MLGW, Neighborhood Christian Center Help Seniors "Play It Cool"

Seniors living in homes without air conditioning were able to apply for 230 free window air conditioners donated through Memphis Light, Gas and Water's "Play It Cool" Program. As part of MLGW's community outreach efforts, the units were available to qualified low-income seniors and disabled residents of Shelby County.

The Neighborhood Christian Center accepted applications and screened eligible



households for the free units in April, May and June. To qualify, applicants had to be residents of Shelby County, low-income seniors 60 years of age or older, and without operable air conditioning. Air conditioners were not installed at addresses with operating units, or in homes with window bars or storm windows. Installation of units was performed by MLGW employees.

MLGW's Customer Advocacy Center: Working on Your Behalf

MLGW customers now have an additional, more direct option to communicate their utility concerns online. The MLGW Customer Advocacy Center's (CAC) primary purpose is to build stronger customer relationships by earning your trust and exceeding your expectations. The CAC is responsible for identifying process improvements by retrieving, assigning, tracking and

managing the resolution of your complaints or concerns.

This is how the process works for customers: On the front page of our website, www.mlgw.com, click on a link called "Customer Contact/Feedback," which will take you to a menu of options that includes a new feedback link titled, "Tell Us How We Are Doing." Finally, this link takes customers to a

feedback page where they can indicate if they are satisfied or not satisfied, and write additional comments.

The message or comment is then sent to the appropriate manager. If the customer is unsatisfied, the manager has 14 days to resolve the issue through the system. The link has been designed with our customers' benefit in mind. Please visit us and let us know your concerns.

Find Your Utility Status in a Snap with MLGW's iPhone App

MLGW has created a new iPhone application that allows MLGW customers to access a variety of utility-related information, including outage status and a new mobile friendly outage map. The app is available for free download in the Apple iTunes app store at www.apple.com or through iPhone or iPad devices. One of the app's most useful features is the ability for customers to be able to check the status of an outage at their address. Customers will need the phone number associated with their MLGW account and the last four digits of their social security number OR their 16-digit account number.

Other features:

- Current utility bill
- Payment arrangements
- Important numbers
- Payment locations
- Bill due date and amount
- Energy tips

MLGW plans to develop Android and Blackberry apps in the near future.



Holiday Bill Break Program



The MLGW Board has approved a new program called the Holiday Bill Break to take place of the annual cutoff moratorium. The new program will

ensure that no residential customers are cut off from December 15 until January 14 for unpaid balances of \$399 or less.

This new program will allow customers to have extra cash during the holidays while protecting them from getting into serious debt.

A separate policy blocks MLGW from turning off utilities on days in which the wind chill factor drops below 33 degrees for four or more hours within a 24-hour period. There's also cutoff protection on hot days, plus additional cutoff protections for those age 60 or older as well as for those with serious health problems or disabilities. Even

when MLGW cuts off gas and electricity to residences, it leaves water on for at least 60 days.

One of the main reasons that prompted the new policy is that many customers would not pay their bills during the moratorium period, which caused their debts to grow and made them desperate for help when the period ended. Another fact that prompted the decision is that the federal government has reduced the amount of emergency utility aid available.

Get EnergySmart @ Your Library

Memphis Light Gas and Water, Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Memphis Public Library have joined to offer two new programs to help Shelby County residents reduce energy consumption: Get EnergySmart @ Your Library and Kill-A-Watt Checkout.

Get EnergySmart @ Your Library is a two-hour workshop that imparts practical tips and offers hands-on instruction. Attendees leave Get EnergySmart sessions with a tote, valued at \$50, that includes materials and tools to complete simple do-it-yourself projects that will save money and energy. Both programs are free. However, registration is required for the Get EnergySmart workshops; call the presenting branch to reserve a space.

For those wondering just how much it costs to run their home appliances, Kill-A-Watt Checkout will help identify electricity-gorging culprits. The Kill-A-Watt devices can be checked out from area libraries with a valid library card.

Put Your Utilities on Vacation! Tips to Save Energy while You Are Away

The suitcases are packed, reservations have been made and tickets are tucked in your pocket. You take one last look around the house, then firmly close the door. Vacation time at last...

Wait! You have forgotten one very important detail. Utility usage does not stop when you leave the house. In fact, unless you made some adjustments before departing, your usage could be nearly as high as when you are home.

Vacations cost enough, so don't waste your money on things you won't enjoy, like wasted energy. Before you close the door, take 15 minutes to flip a few switches, turn a few knobs, and fix a few leaks.

Touch that dial... Start with the thermostat to maximize savings. Nearly 60 percent of your home's annual energy bill is used for heating and cooling the house. Since you won't be home, why keep the house at your regular comfort level?

During the summer, keep the thermostat above 85°, or turn off the air conditioner completely. Factors to consider are the presence of pets, plants and heat-sensitive decorations (such as candles and oil paintings).

Programmable thermostats are helpful to ensure that your home stays at the selected temperature while you are

swimming in the surf or basking on the beach. Many units can be programmed to return to your preferred temperature shortly before you return.

Getting into hot water... Your water heater maintains water at a constant temperature 24 hours a day, whether or not you are home to take a hot bath. Fortunately, you can turn the water heater into an energy saver by adjusting the thermostat to its "vacation" or lowest setting. Since electric water heaters have two thermostats – an upper and a lower – you must adjust both. (Electric water heaters can be turned off at the circuit breaker also.) Don't forget to reset the thermostat when you return, or your first shower will leave you cold!

Money down the drain... A constant water drip the size of a pinhead can waste more than 1,500 gallons of water each week. Why not save money on your vacation and repair leaky



Determining consumption using Kill-A-Watt is easy. The electricity usage monitors plug-in wall sockets. Plug an appliance into the monitor to assess energy usage. Each Kill-A-Watt is pre-programmed with MLGW rates. Knowing how much electricity it takes to operate an appliance can help residents manage electricity usage, potentially saving hundreds of dollars.

For general information about Get EnergySmart or the Kill-A-Watt Checkout program, call 415-2700.

Get EnergySmart Workshop Dates:

Tuesday, July 12, 10:30 a.m., South Branch, 1929 S. Third, 946-8518

Tuesday, July 12, 3 p.m., Frayser Branch, 3712 Argonne, 357-4115

Tuesday, July 19, 10:30 a.m., Hollywood Branch, 1530 N. Hollywood, 323-6201

Tuesday, August 9, 10:30 a.m., Cordova Branch, 8457 Trinity Rd., 754-8443

Tuesday, August 9, 3 p.m., Poplar-White Station Branch, 5094 Poplar Ave., 682-1616

Tuesday, August 16, 3 p.m., Cornelia Crenshaw, 531 Vance, 525-1643

faucets, toilets and showerheads before you depart?

Plug into savings... Unplugging television sets, computers, stereos and other electronic equipment will not save much money, but will protect appliances from potential electric surges.

Shine some light on crime... Use a timer to operate lights instead of burning constantly during your absence. Install on lamps in various rooms and set to operate at different times for a real "at home" look.

There are several other measures you can take to deter crime while you are away. Stop mail and newspaper delivery, or have a friend collect daily. Ask someone to mow the lawn and haul garbage cans to the curb. Have a neighbor pick up flyers and other items delivered to your door.

Saving energy pays... By taking a few minutes to make adjustments around your house, you can have your vacation and save energy dollars, too.

You can also save year-round by taking advantage of MLGW's free home energy survey. Visit www.mlgw.com and click on the Home e-Valuation link. Once the survey is complete, you'll receive customized recommendations for your home that are sure to save you energy and money.