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# Community OUTREACH

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

September/October 2020

## Community Outreach is now only available electronically

Community Outreach is now only available online or by email. You can visit [mlgw.com/communityoutreach](http://mlgw.com/communityoutreach) to read or print this and future issues, or receive an email link of the publication by request at: [commrelations@mlgw.org](mailto:commrelations@mlgw.org).

## Census helps our community

There's still time to complete and submit your US Census! The Census helps determine everything from community funding to emergency response, so it's important to do your civic duty and complete the 2020 Census. Due to COVID-19 challenges nationwide, more time has been allowed to submit your Census survey, available at [my-2020census.gov](http://my-2020census.gov).

United States  
**Census  
2020**

## MLGW in the Community

Due to coronavirus (COVID-19) precautions, many community events have been postponed or canceled. Due to Shelby County's Safer at Home orders and social distancing measures, our MLGW in the Community section will be in hiatus until events resume.

**Please note:** We encourage customers to use MLGW's My Account as a safe option instead of coming into a community office. Signing up is easy. Go to [mlgw.com](http://mlgw.com) or download our app.

**Reminder:** Check your billing due date. It may change as MLGW moves meter reading routes and billing cycles to become more efficient and serve you better.

**Warning:** Beware of utility scams during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Make sure those asking for access to your property have MLGW IDs. MLGW employees will never personally call demanding money and threatening disconnection or suggest buying a pre-paid debit card or calling a 1-800 number. For more information, visit [mlgw.com/scamalerts](http://mlgw.com/scamalerts).

## Need help with your bill?

If you're having difficulty with your bill, help is available! MLGW is offering a one-time extended payment plan that allows eligible customers to repay their past due balance over a 12-month period. To participate in the extended payment plan customers are required to pay at least 25% of their indebtedness beforehand. Visit [mlgw.com/covid-19](http://mlgw.com/covid-19) or call 901-544-6549 (Residential) or 901-528-4270 (Business). Business owners can get information on how to obtain help from the Business Resources Center: [memphischamber.com/covid19](http://memphischamber.com/covid19).

Assistance is also available through the following MLGW programs:

### On Track

On Track is a MLGW payment program that provides energy and financial information to customers in need of help. By joining the program and working together with MLGW staff, you can get back "On Track" with all your bills. On Track is designed to help residential customers with limited incomes to manage

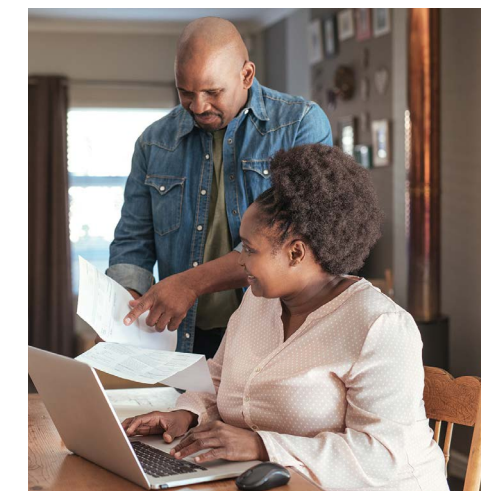
debt and pay off their bills over a period of time. The program focuses on education, financial management and social services assistance. Contact On Track at (901) 528-4820 or [mlgwontrack@mlgw.org](mailto:mlgwontrack@mlgw.org) for more information or to receive an application.

### PrePay

MLGW PrePay frees you from fees! No late fees! No deposits! No reconnection fees! No end-of-the-month bill surprises. Similar to prepaid cellphone plans, PrePay gives you the freedom to set your utility budget. With smart meters and the tools you'll find in My Usage, PrePay's account management application, you'll be able to see just what you've used on a daily basis and pay for a day, a week, a month or more at a time— you decide. The customer of record can call the Customer Care Center at (901) 544-6549 to sign-up.

### Financial Assistance and Referrals

Utility assistance is available through the following agencies:



• **CSA:** [shelbycountycsa.org](http://shelbycountycsa.org) or call 901-222-4212 and leave a message.

• **MIFA:** [mifa.org/emergencyassistanceeligibility](http://mifa.org/emergencyassistanceeligibility).

For referrals on help with rent, utility payments or other needs contact:

• **LINC/211** by dialing 2-1-1 or 901-415-2790, Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sat. 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

• **United Way** [call.drivingthedream.org](http://call.drivingthedream.org) or call 1-888-709-0630.

## MLGW customers can pay where they shop

A shopping trip to Family Dollar® and Dollar General® is now an opportunity to pay your MLGW bill. Family Dollar® and Dollar General® locations are now authorized MLGW pay agents in Shelby County.

At more than 100 locations, customers will be able to pay their MLGW bill at the register via a new service offering, Vanil-

laDirect Pay™, which appears as a secure and unique barcode at the bottom and back of the utility bill.

The customer can make a payment after the clerk scans the barcode. A transaction fee of \$1.50 will be assessed. MLGW receives no revenue from fees collected. Family Dollar® accepts only cash pay-

ments; Dollar General® accepts cash and PIN debit cards.

Like other authorized pay agents, payments will typically post to the account within an hour.

To search all MLGW authorized pay agents and find the one nearest you, visit [mlgwagents.com](http://mlgwagents.com).



Community Outreach is produced by MLGW's Corporate Communications department. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions about Community Outreach, please call (901) 528-4820 or (901) 528-4557.

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## MLGW receives a 2020 Volunteer Memphis Award

MLGW won the Corporate Impact Memphis Volunteer Project Award. The honor is given to a business or company that has created, or driven a unique volunteer project that has made a meaningful difference by mobilizing its staff.

In 2019, MLGW volunteers focused on Orange Mound. In addition to cleaning and distributing energy kits, volunteers did some minor home weatherization, and held two energy conservation and financial education workshops. In 2020, volunteers focused on the community surrounding the Dave Wells Community Center in North Memphis off Chelsea. They walked the neighborhood distributing energy-saving kits to residents, and gathered trash from the streets, parks and sidewalks.

More than 200 people attended the online Volunteer Memphis awards ceremony. See a full list of winners on the Volunteer Memphis website at [volunteermemphis.org/2020-volunteer-memphis-awards](http://volunteermemphis.org/2020-volunteer-memphis-awards). The Volunteer Memphis



Volunteers collected trash and gave out energy kits in January during the MLK Day of Service.

Awards is a “thank you” to the 300,000 Mid-South volunteers who give tirelessly of themselves each year. People

nominated individuals, service groups, nonprofits, and corporate volunteers from across the area for 14 categories.



(Left to Right) Chantal Lairy, MLGW United Way Co-Chair, Kevin Watkins, MLGW United Way Chair, Lori Robertson, Chief Communications and Engagement Officer, United Way of the Mid-South, Gathion Knight, MLGW United Way Co-Chair, Regina Holland, Associate Research Development Person, United Way of the Mid-South, and Al Edwards, Director of Priority Partners, United Way of the Mid-South.

## MLGW United Way team, Best of the Best winner

Congratulations to the 2019 MLGW United Way Team for winning Best Team Effort for a Large Company in June during the United Way of the Mid-South’s Best of the Best Awards! This award is given to the organization with the highest percentage of company participation. The team was also nominated for Best Campaign Climber, Best Difference Maker and the overall Best of the Best Award.

Kevin Watkins, 2019 MLGW United Way Chair, said, “I’m really appreciative of the MLGW community. The effort we put forth to raise funds for the United Way

was unprecedented. As MLGW’s 2019 United Way Chair, I would like to thank the United Way for our Best of the Best Award. Working with their staff is always a great experience. The award is just the icing on the cake! I would like to thank our President and CEO, J.T. Young, VP, Shared Services Division, Von Goodloe and Manager of Performance Engineering, Valerie McKinney for the opportunity to serve as chair. I would also like to thank my co-chairs Chantal Lairy and Gathion Knight for their support. Our steering committee and our key people were our warriors.”

## Schedule a pilot light safety inspection

MLGW wants you to remain safe. To ensure gas appliance safety, MLGW offers customers pilot light safety inspections. Inspection appointments during the month of September are free. After September 30, customers are charged a \$55 fee which covers up to three gas heating appliances. Each additional appliance will be an extra \$16. The service is free to physically challenged customers and seniors (60 years and older).

To schedule a pilot light safety inspection appointment, customers can call 544-6549 to choose a convenient date and time. MLGW’s Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system can also be used to schedule appointments with the customer’s 16-digit account number or telephone number.



## Enter MLGW’s 2020 Student Poster Contest

Grab your paints, brushes, colored pencils, computers, crayons, glue and glitter! Think about Internet Safety superheroes, then create your masterpiece! The MLGW Art Contest theme is “Internet Safety: The Power Bytes – Making the Internet Safe One Byte at a Time,” illustrating ways to use technology safely and expose the types of Internet hazards and how to avoid them!

Memphis Light, Gas and Water wants students to help in designing the newest MLGW Power League superheroes, the “Power Bytes” family:

- Father – Giga Byte;
- Mother – Mega Byte;

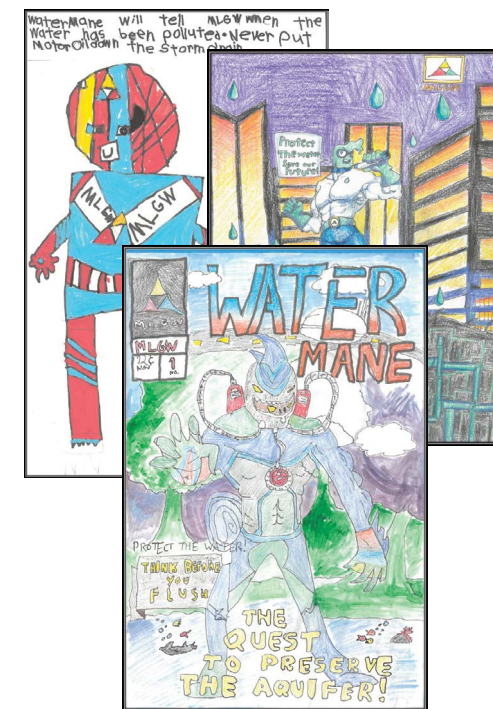
- Child – Kilo Byte; and
- Family pet – Peta Byte.

Winning students will receive a \$125 prize. All students enrolled in grades K-12 attending ANY school within Shelby County or home schooled within

Shelby County are eligible to enter the contest. There will be four categories (Grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12). Subject details, contest rules and an entry form can be

**You can create the Power Bytes!**

found at [mlgw.com/artcontest](http://mlgw.com/artcontest). Submission deadline: 4 p.m. Friday, Nov. 20, 2020. Information: Email [gmoulin@mlgw.org](mailto:gmoulin@mlgw.org) or call 901-828-6440 (Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.).



## My Account Mobile

While the coronavirus pandemic continues to challenge us all, MLGW now offers more safe and contactless options for you to pay your utility bill. MLGW’s My Account Mobile is now up and running with more features to help you securely pay your bill.

**New My Account Mobile features include:**

- Sign in using FaceID or fingerprint recognition technology
- Alerts inform customers about programs, updates and important information
- An in-app review prompt so customers can provide feedback
- Outage map auto-refreshes every 5 minutes with date-time stamp noting last update

My Account gives you 24/7 access to your account so you can pay your bill, report power outage, review your usage and request payment arrangements. If you haven’t enrolled in My Account, it only takes a few minutes. Go to [mlgw.com](http://mlgw.com) or download our app. For COVID-19 updates, visit [mlgw.com/covid-19](http://mlgw.com/covid-19).

## Fall/Winter natural gas safety

Fall is pilot light-up season and time for furnace and gas appliance inspections. It’s all about safety and preventing gas leaks. Natural gas leaks typically result from damaged underground pipelines or indoor gas appliances. MLGW adds the odorless mercaptan to colorless, odorless natural gas so it smells like rotten eggs or sulfur to aid in leak detection. Outdoor gas pipeline leaks sometimes offer more hints such as water bubbling near the site, dirt being blown into the air, frozen ground, or dead or dying vegetation near the pipeline. If you suspect a natural gas leak, the proper response could save your life. Follow these tips to avoid disaster:

- Don’t do anything that could cause a spark. Don’t use lights or electrical switches, matches, candles, etc. Extinguish any open flames. Don’t smoke!
- Evacuate immediately! Shut off your gas meter outside if you know how.
- Don’t use any phones inside. Go outside to use your cell phone or use a neighbor’s phone and call MLGW at 528-4465 (or 911) to report the gas leak.
- For an outdoor pipeline leak, avoid anything that can create sparks, don’t



**Know what’s below. Call before you dig.**

start vehicles, and go to a location away from the leak site to call MLGW or 911 and report the leak.

For gas appliance safety, make sure your gas appliances, furnace and water heater are properly vented and inspected annually by a licensed professional. For more information on natural gas safety, visit [mlgw.com/residential/naturalgasleak](http://mlgw.com/residential/naturalgasleak). And don’t forget to call 811 before you do any digging.