

Community OUTREACH

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

September/October 2025

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MLGW deploys 5G wireless network

MLGW has reached a historic milestone in our ongoing efforts to modernize the grid, selecting global telecommunications leader Nokia to deploy a comprehensive private 5G wireless network across Memphis and Shelby County. This bold step forward not only supports MLGW's commitment to innovation but positions the utility as the first municipal utility in the United States to implement a full-scale, stand-alone private 5G wireless network.

The two-phase project lays the foundation for MLGW's broader Grid Modernization Initiative, enhancing how the utility communicates and automates its operations across electric, gas and water services.

"The 5G Network Deployment is a foundational aspect of MLGW's Grid Modernization Initiative," said MLGW President & CEO Doug McGowen. "We will be able to meet the requirements for a modern electric grid. We will have fast and reliable communication



for grid devices; increased reliability during storms or cyber events that will help us restore power even faster after outages." This enables more automation and smart control operations and supports future technology like electric vehicles and battery storage.

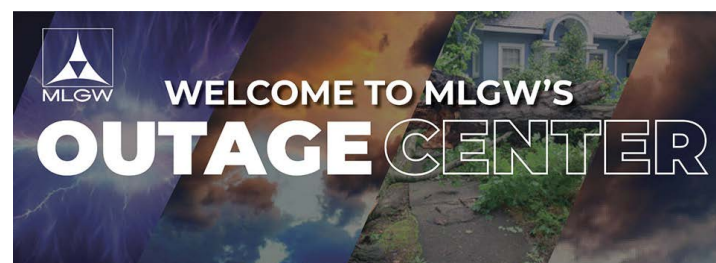
In collaboration with Nokia, the project will ensure real-time communication across utility infrastructure, boosting both responsiveness and resilience. Phase 1 of the deployment will establish foundational coverage for core utility operations and is expected to reach 93% of Shelby County. Phase 2 will extend that footprint, further enhancing network resiliency and unlocking future applications such as advanced grid automation and next-generation energy technologies.

"This collaboration marks a major milestone in advancing MLGW's power grid modernization and their commitment to building a smarter, more resilient, and future-ready utility infrastructure for the community," said Jeff Pittman, Head of Enterprise North America, Mobile Networks at Nokia.

As MLGW leads the way in utility innovation, this 5G deployment underscores a broader vision of innovation.

Welcome to MLGW's Outage Center

MLGW has launched a revamped Outage Center at mlgw.com/outagecenter! The site provides customers with clear, updated guidance on how to respond to power outages, gas leaks, water emergencies, earthquakes and more. This new resource is part of our ongoing effort to help customers stay informed and prepared. Please go check it out and help spread the word!



MLGW celebrates substation with ribbon-cutting in Collierville

In 2024 and 2025 alone, MLGW invested more than \$65M in substation reliability upgrades and expanded system capacity to accommodate future growth. From Boxtown to Bartlett, Alcy-Ball to Arlington, and Downtown to Orange Mound, these improvements are making a difference for our customers who deserve improved reliability.

MLGW has cut the ribbon on another investment in that portfolio of improvements, the new electric substation #83 in Collierville. Substation 83 will enhance the reliability and resilience for residents and businesses throughout southeast Shelby County, and provide new capacity necessary to accommodate residential, commercial and industrial growth in this fast-developing part of our service area.

"Substation 83 represents not only a major milestone in our march toward improved reliability and resilience for Collierville, but also adds the capacity needed to serve this community's projected growth for the next 15-20 years," said MLGW President & CEO Doug McGowen. Increasing demand for electric power from current and future customers is something that every electric utility is facing. MLGW has been aggressive in budgeting and building infrastructure that will meet the



needs of customers across Shelby County, making our system more reliable today, and ready for the demands of tomorrow.

Mayor Maureen Fraser captured the importance of the event "As Mayor, and as a parent who raised kids here, I'm always thinking about what we're leaving for the next generation. Today reminds me that our community doesn't just respond to challenges—but anticipates them. Today's ribbon cutting is about power, yes—but more than that, it's about progress."

With continued investments in substations and infrastructure, MLGW is not just keeping the lights on; it's lighting the way forward. As Shelby County grows, so does the utility's commitment to reliable, resilient utilities for every corner of its service area.

Mallory Pumping Station

At first glance, the Mallory Pumping Station off North Parkway may not look like the center of a transformation. But behind the gates, it provides some of the cleanest drinking water in the country.

Since December 2024, MLGW has been undertaking a major infrastructure upgrade at Mallory as part of a larger initiative to replace filter beds at five pumping stations. This is not routine maintenance; it's the most significant overhaul of the utility's filter bed infrastructure in its history.

At this project's heart is the full replacement of filtration systems with entirely new stainless-steel under-drains and troughs, along with refreshed filtration media made of sand and anthracite. Unlike previous efforts that added new substrate on top of old layers, this process required a complete demo: draining the beds, removing all old materials, jackhammering out aging components,



pouring new concrete and installing state-of-the-art materials designed for improved performance.

"This kind of work doesn't always make headlines because it's not flashy," said President & CEO McGowen. "But it's critical. We're replacing five filter beds to keep our water the best in the country, and that work is underway and often underappreciated because it happens behind the fence. The net result is that we continue to have the cleanest water in the country and that's happening today."

Jeremy Wiseman, Water Operations Supervisor, has been on the ground overseeing the process at Mallory. The upgrades are intricate and labor-intensive, but they promise major dividends in water quality, filtration efficiency and long-term system resilience.

In addition to filter upgrades, Mallory is also seeing progress on the utility's broader groundwater strategy. A new well is already in service, another is awaiting final approval from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), and another is being drilled near the University of Memphis, where MLGW is also working to repair and replace water collection mains.

These investments are not just about infrastructure; they're about trust, stewardship and maintaining a legacy of excellence of the city's aquifer.

Upcoming pilot light-up season

MLGW’s annual pilot light-up season has begun! Customers can schedule appointments through the Residential Care Center. From Sept 2-30, pilot light safety inspections are free. From Oct 1-Dec 31, the cost is \$55 for up to three appliances, plus \$16 for each additional unit. Service is

always free for disabled customers and seniors (60+). Appointments are available in morning, afternoon or evening slots on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. Call 901-544-6549 or use MLGW’s automated system with your account or phone number to schedule.

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 odorant 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 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. And don’t forget to call 811 before you do any digging.

Winter Moratorium: Stay warm this winter by planning ahead



Before you start planning for the holidays, plan to stay warm this winter with MLGW’s Winter Moratorium. The program ensures uninterrupted service to senior citizens 60+ years of age and disabled customers during the winter months. It is set up to assist these customers 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 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. Deadline for application is November 15. Applications are available at mlgw.com, at the Aging Commission, at MIFA offices, at any MLGW Community Office, or by calling 901-544-6549.

Enter MLGW’s 2025 Student Poster Contest!

Memphis-Shelby County students: Grab your paints, brushes, colored pencils, computers, crayons, glue and glitter! Think about MLGW’s Power League superheroes, then create your masterpiece!

The 2025 MLGW Art Contest theme is generation, storage and distribution of Wind Power. Memphis Light, Gas and Water wants students to help in designing the newest MLGW Power League superhero, Windy!

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 entry form can be found at mlgw.com/artcontest. Submission deadline: 4 p.m. Friday, Dec. 12, 2025. Additional information: Email groulin@mlgw.org.



Our very own Vidale Cothran, Residential Energy Services, recently received high praise from customer Evelyn Ashbrooks after conducting an energy audit at her home. Vidale identified several key improvements that helped make the home more energy efficient and comfortable.

Kudos to Vidale for making a meaningful impact and representing MLGW with care and professionalism!

In a handwritten thank-you card, Ms. Ashbrooks wrote,

“We are living much more comfortably. We very much appreciate all the help you have been. Major work was done on the heating and air system. We plan to caulk the windows very soon. Thank you so much!”

MLGW and the Community

- Sept. 4** – Pink with a Purpose Community Resource Expo, Orange Mound Community Center, 2572 Park Ave, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Sept. 6** – West Fight On 2025 Bike/Run/Walk, Shelby Farms Park, 6903 Great View Dr N
- Sept. 7** – Amigos Foundation Fiestas Patrias, Agricenter ShowPlace Arena, Noon-9 p.m.
- Sept. 9** – Page Robbins Empowered: A Caregiver's Conference, Temple Israel, 1376 E Massey Rd, 8:30 a.m.-3:45 p.m.
- Sept. 11** – McWherter Senior Center, 1355 Estate Dr., 10:30-11:30 a.m.
- Sept. 12** – World Relief Memphis Health Fair, 5340 Quince Road, Noon-4 p.m.
- Sept. 14** – La Prensa Latina United Festival, Beale Street Landing, 251 Riverside Drive, 5-9 p.m.
- Sept. 15** – Wesley Highland Meadows, 3517 Andy Way, 10-11 a.m.
- Sept. 18-21** – Memphis Jewish Community Center Pickleball Palooza, 6560 Poplar Avenue, various times
- Sept. 20** – Keel Avenue Baptist Church Community Resource Fair, 778 N Bellevue Blvd, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Sept. 24** – Expo4Seniors Senior Lifestyle, Health and Wellness Expo, Great Hall and Conference Center, 1900 S. Germantown Road, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

- Sept. 24** – Memphis Flyer-Best of Memphis, Loflin Yard, 7 W Carolina Ave., 5:30-8:30 p.m.
 - Sept. 27** – Gray’s Creek Church Annual Church Picnic and Health Fair, 3141 Inglewood Place, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
 - Sept. 28** – Amigos Foundation Festival Latino, Agricenter Show-Place Arena, Noon-9 p.m.
 - Oct. 7** – Memphis Medical Collaborative Taste of the District, Health Sciences Park, Madison and Dunlap, 4 - 6 p.m.
 - Oct. 11** – Professional Network on Aging Senior Safari, Memphis Zoo, 2000 Prentiss Place, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
 - Oct. 18** – Making Strides for Breast Cancer Walk, Shelby Farms Park, 6903 Great View Dr., 9:30 a.m.
 - Oct. 25** – Shelby Farms Park Greenline 15 Birthday Celebration, Shelby Farms, 6903 Great View Dr.
 - Oct. 10-12, 16-19, 22-26, 30-31, Nov 1** – Zoo Boo, Memphis Zoo, 2000 Prentiss Place, 6-9:30 p.m.
 - Nov. 2** – Amigos Foundation Dia de los Muertos, Salon Monarca, 4350 Stage Rd, Noon-8 p.m.
 - Nov. 6** – Germantown Senior Expo, Great Hall and Conference Center, 1900 S. Germantown Road, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Community outreach and volunteer programs are always part of MLGW’s schedule. If you would like MLGW to participate in your meeting, fair or festival, please complete the form at mlgw.com/speaker.