

# Community OUTREACH

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

September/October 2024

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## xAI marks the spot

A “gigafactory of compute” has moved into the old Electrolux facility in southwest Memphis to house an artificial intelligence (AI) supercomputer for xAI. The company, xAI, was founded last year by multi-billionaire, Elon Musk. Once the xAI facility in Memphis is complete, it is expected to be one of the most advanced computing systems in the world.

### xAI Project quick facts

- xAI is occupying the former Electrolux manufacturing facility in the Pidgeon Industrial Park and is operating.
- MLGW is providing utilities to the facility at prevailing commercial rates as set by the utility’s Board of Commissioners and Memphis City Council, and at no capital cost to MLGW:

**Water** – Up to 1 million gallons per day (MGD) from an existing 20” water main serving the area. The water main had available capacity before the xAI project. There will be no impact on the availability of water to other customers.

**Natural Gas** – The facility is being served with natural gas from an existing 16” gas main. Like other industrial customers, xAI will secure contracts for gas from third parties for their operation that will flow from our gas main to their facility. They cannot exceed contracted quantity, therefore **there will be no impact on the availability of gas to other customers.**

**Electricity** – The facility is being served initially with the adjacent substation used by Electrolux, which will be increased to 50MW of capacity when several circuit breakers are added to upgrade the substation by MLGW. The customer is paying for all upgrades. **There will be no impact to the reliability of availability of power to other customers from this electric load.**

- xAI is requesting an additional 100MW of power, for a total of 150MW of power, which will require several actions to be completed. With these conditions met, there will be no impact to other electric customers:



– Approval by the TVA Board of Directors to serve the total 150MW demand

– Enrollment in a Demand Response (DR) program in which the company agrees to reduce its electric consumption when conditions warrant it to preserve power for existing customers

– \$1.7M of improvements to a 161kV transmission line (per the MLGW electric system impact study)

– Construction of a new substation adjacent to the facility

• Value for the MLGW Customers.

– Increased MLGW electric sales will result in \$500K of

(see xAI on back page)

## Blue Suede Networks breaks ground

Recently, MLGW President McGowen was among the speakers at the ceremonial groundbreaking for the Blue Suede Networks (BSN) at Willow Park. BSN plans to invest \$829 million over five years to install fiber internet for at least 85% of Memphis. The project is a public-private partnership that includes the City of Memphis and MLGW. Next to water, gas and electricity, high-speed internet is now considered an essential utility.

President McGowen said, “This is a natural pairing with our modern electric grid. Building this infrastructure now, we don’t even know all the benefits ahead of us, but this investment will pay dividends for decades to come.” This project brings transformative opportunities for low-income families to have access to high-speed internet for education and other purposes like home-based businesses, remote work, telemedicine and distance-learning.



Before this deal, only 25% of Memphians had access to superior fiber internet. With BSN, Memphis will go from the 90th to Top 10 in the country for fiber availability.

## Fall and 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](https://mlgw.com/residential/naturalgasleak). And don’t forget to call 811 before you do any digging.

## Sky high perspective

MLGW engineers are using drones to get a bird’s-eye-view of high-voltage transmission towers. The inspections are part of the Roadmap to Reliability plan to assess and improve utility infrastructure. Drones allow the team to inspect equipment and make sure all the hardware is where it should be and that nothing is damaged. “If repairs need to be made, we send out work orders to get repairs done,” says Jason Mayo, Lead Transmission Engineer.

The Division is using contractor PLP Inspection Services to fly the drones. Inspecting equipment in this kind of innovative way helps MLGW better assess where repairs are needed before there is an outage. The drone inspections should take around six weeks to finish.

## Schedule a pilot light safety inspection

To ensure gas appliance safety, MLGW offers pilot light safety inspections. Customers are encouraged to begin scheduling appointments. 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 an appointment with a service advisor, 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.



## Buried gas pipelines

As a natural gas customer, you may have a natural gas line running underground from the meter to either a separate building or an outdoor gas burning appliance such as a gas grill, gas light, pool heater, etc.

Federal regulations require MLGW to make you aware that you are responsible for maintaining any underground gas piping on your property that extends beyond the meter. If not properly maintained, buried gas pipelines may be subject to corrosion (if metallic) and/or leakage. To ensure

its continued safe and reliable operation, buried piping should be checked for leaks or damage. You are advised to contact a natural gas contractor such as a private utility service, meter specialist or gas-certified plumber to locate, inspect and make any necessary repairs to your buried gas piping. MLGW cannot perform inspections or make repairs on customer-owned buried piping. If you are not the property owner, please notify the owner about this requirement.

## Creating career paths for students

Thirty-one students graduated from MLGW and Southwest Tennessee Community College’s Utility Construction and Automotive Technology Boot Camps recently. These three-week, comprehensive camps were designed to bridge the transition from high school to a prospective career at MLGW. While it is the inaugural year for the Automotive Boot Camp, it is year two for the Utility Boot Camp.

Students from Whitehaven and Cordova high schools in the utility construction component of training underwent safety training and instruction in electrical, water and gas principles and completed the technical and physical ability assessments before they practiced climbing utility poles at the Macon Cove Campus of SWTCC.

With the growing need for mechanics at MLGW and nationwide, MLGW with the support of Memphis Shelby County Schools – College, Career and Technical Education and SWTCC decided to strengthen our boot camp program by creating our first automotive boot camp. Automotive campers from Cordova,



Kingsbury and Craigmont high schools learned various automotive service principles which included advanced engine diagnostics and advanced transmission repair. All campers engaged in decision-making/critical thinking, industry math and communications, and utilized industry tools and equipment.



Memphis Light Gas & Water will be hosting soon the 2024 One-Stop Resource Fair/Mobile Food Pantry. Like every year, the goal of the event is to educate the public about local resources while providing families with free nutritious food donated by the Mid-South Food Bank. So, go ahead and save the date!

**What:** MLGW’s 2024 One-Stop Resource Fair/Mobile Food Pantry  
**Where:** First Baptist Church Broad, 2835 Broad Ave, Memphis, TN 38112  
**When:** Saturday, November 9, 2024, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

## Enter MLGW’s 2024 Student Poster Contest

Grab your paints, brushes, colored pencils, computers, crayons, glue and glitter! Think about superheroes, then create your masterpiece! The MLGW Art Contest theme for 2024 is “Solar Power: Sol-Man – Making solar a way of the future,” illustrating ways to generate, utilize and save with the use of solar energy! Memphis Light, Gas and Water wants students to help in designing the newest MLGW Power League superhero, “Sol-Man”.

Winning students and their teachers will receive a \$125 prize each. 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). Specific details, contest rules and entry form can be found at [mlgw.com/artcontest](http://mlgw.com/artcontest). Submission deadline: 4 p.m. Friday, Dec. 13, 2024. For information, email [gmoulin@mlgw.org](mailto:gmoulin@mlgw.org).



(cont. from xAI)

- additional PILOT payments annually to the City of Memphis. (MLGW pays approximately \$60M per year to the City’s General Fund.)
- The project is forecast to create ~300+ new, high paying jobs.
- **Reducing demand on the aquifer.** xAI is joining the City of Memphis, MLGW, and TVA in the design and proposed construction of a graywater/recycled wastewater facility that will take in treated wastewater and produce water suitable for cooling processes. When completed, this project

- will reduce the daily draw on the aquifer by up to 10 MGD and will put recycled wastewater to productive use.
- **Utility Scale Battery Storage.** MLGW and XAI are coordinating procurement and early installation of more than 50MW of utility scale battery storage in the MLGW system starting in 2024. The batteries once installed will be used by MLGW to “peak shave” during periods of high energy consumption, and to provide dispatchable energy into MLGW’s system when demands on the grid are high. This will provide an additional hedge of resilience for our customers. This will be the very first of what is forecast to be a series of investments in battery storage by MLGW.

## MLGW and the Community

- Sept. 15** – La Prensa Latina Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration, Beale Street Landing, 251 Riverside Dr, 5 - 8:30 p.m.
- Sept. 19** – City of Memphis Taste of Memphis at Tiger Lane, 450 Early Maxwel, 5 – 10 p.m.
- Sept. 21** – Keel Ave. Baptist Church Resource Fair, 778 N Bellevue Blvd, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Sept. 25** – Expo4Seniors, the Great Hall and Conference Center, 1900 S. Germantown Rd., 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Sept. 25-29** – Memphis Jewish Community Center 4th Annual Pickleball Palooza, 6560 Poplar Ave, various times.
- Sept. 27** – University of Memphis, Safety Palooza Community Resource Expo, University of Memphis-Plaza, 3720 Alumni Avenue, 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
- Oct. 2** – Professional Network on Aging - Senior Safari, Memphis Zoo, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Oct. 10** – TN Dept of Human Services Vocational Rehabilitation VR Transition Services Session Fair, Ed Rice Community Center, 2935 N. Watkins St., 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

- Oct.12** – Wolfchase Galleria Community Fair, 2760 N. Germantown Pkwy, 1 – 4 p.m.
  - Oct. 12** – Greater Imani Church Community & Health Fair, 3824 Austin Peay Hwy, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
  - Oct. 12** – Jerusalem M.B. Church Community Health Fair, 1761 West Shelby Dr, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
  - Oct. 19** – Making Strides for Breast Center, Shelby Farms, 9:30 a.m.
  - Oct. 31** – Germantown Senior Expo, Great Hall and Conference Center, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
  - Nov. 9** – MLGW 2024 One-Stop Resource Fair/Mobile Pantry, First Baptist Church Broad, 2835 Broad Avenue, 10 a.m. –1 p.m.
  - Nov. 22-23** – Christmas in Bartlett Market and Festivities, Keith McDonald Pavilion at Freeman Park, 2629 Bartlett Blvd., Fri. 4– 7 p.m. & Sat. 9 a.m. – 4 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 [www.mlgw.com/speaker](http://www.mlgw.com/speaker).*



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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