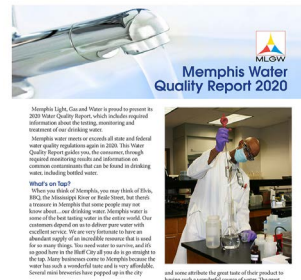


MLGW's 2020 Water Quality Report available online

Do you realize how fortunate we are to have such awesome drinking water in Memphis and Shelby County? Many areas are not as lucky. Specialists in MLGW's Water Laboratory perform numerous tests throughout the year to monitor the components of Memphis' water. The 2020 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. Customers can readily view MLGW's 2020 Water Quality Report online at mlgw.com/waterquality, as well as request a paper copy of the report by calling 320-3950 or emailing corpcomm@mlgw.org.



Assistance Program

The COVID-19 Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance Program offers up to 12 months of relief payments, made directly to your landlord and/or MLGW. Eligibility is determined by income, and residents must also be able to demonstrate a loss

of income due to COVID-19 and an unstable housing situation. To learn more and fill out an application, visit home901.org/covid-resources or text HOME901 to 21000.

Adopt-a-School Black History Month Essay Contest

In partnership with its adopted school, Craigmont Middle School, MLGW University hosted an essay contest in honor of February's Black History Month. Twenty-two entries were received – the highest number of entries in recent years. Students wrote 500-750 word essays on one of the following topics:

1. Compare and contrast the concept of American slavery to the criminal justice system. Explain how educational pursuits can help alleviate criminality and produce higher standards of living.
2. Why is it important for today's generation to focus on family, education and personal achievement?
3. If you could be a civil rights leader in today's society, what issues would you focus on? Why? How do those issues impact society now and into the future?
4. Honoring Our Past, Preparing Our Future: Using the Achievements of Pioneering African Americans to Power Our Dreams. Target a prominent African American, express how this prominent African American's achievements inspired you, and how his/her achievements can be used to power your dreams.
5. What is the impact of popular culture (music, reality television, social media and fashion) on the African American community? Please explain.



Three prizes were offered for best overall essays. Genevieve Thomas, Human Performance, says the essay contest is not only about the prizes but academic success. "Students compete for awesome prizes by participating in the Black History Month Essay Contest, but the contest is actually a learning enrichment tool for academic success. It helps prepare students for the state's TCAP writing assessment for grades 6 and 8." The winners are: First Place – Makayla Weston (\$100 gift card, pictured left); Second Place – Zyan Williams (\$50 gift card, pictured middle); and Third Place – Stephan Webb (\$25 Domino's Pizza gift card, pictured right).

Craigmont Middle School's staff was extremely thankful for the awesome prizes. Their coordinator said, "They were so excited about winning and truly grateful."

MLGW in the Community: Due to coronavirus (COVID-19) precautions, many community events have been postponed or canceled. Due to 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 as our community offices are closed to walk-in customers. Signing up is easy. Go to mlgw.com or download our app.



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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P.O. Box 430, Memphis, TN 38101-0430

Community OUTREACH

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

May/June 2021

Community Outreach is now only available electronically

Community Outreach is now only available online or by email. You can visit 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.

Summary of the State of MLGW from President J.T. Young

During a recent Board of Commissioners meeting, President J.T. Young presented the State of MLGW address. During the presentation, he highlighted some of the accomplishments from 2020 and also discussed what 2021 will look like for MLGW, and upcoming projects. Here are some of the key points from the President's address.

COVID-19 impact on MLGW: There was a reduction of employees in offices; 800 that transitioned to telecommuting. Most face-to-face internal meetings and community engagements were changed to virtual meetings.

2020 Accomplishments:

- Replaced a total of 1,057 lead lines.
- Received a 99 out of 100 score on the Tennessee Department of Environmental and Conservation sanitary survey.
- Increased savings on natural gas purchases by 25% for an unprecedented annual savings of \$9.3 million utilizing prepay natural gas contracts.



• Implemented a Pandemic Plan to better serve our customers during a time of crisis, the plan included the suspension of disconnections and waiver of late fees for all customers until further notice.

2021 Upcoming Projects: Ramping up to install 1,100 distribution automation system devices during the planning period. Six hundred wood poles will be replaced. There will be 200 sites getting 5G. Replacing 4,000 feet of underground cables. 1,000 water lead lines will be replaced. MLGW will assess water

pumping stations this year to determine the best course of action on some of our older stations. Gas cast iron replacement will be completed.

A review of MLGW's Pandemic Response Plan

Just over a year ago, MLGW had to change the way we operate due to COVID-19. On March 13, 2020 President and CEO J.T. Young held a press conference to update customers on our cut-off policy, ways to pay bills online and MLGW's pandemic response plan. Since we are a safety-first organization, we wanted to prevent transmission and the spread of the virus. Eight hundred employees transitioned to telecommuting, and community offices were closed, except for drive-thru services and drop boxes for payments. Most face-to-face internal meetings and community engagements were changed to virtual meetings and many of our direct-service events were readjusted for drive-thru servicing.

During these unprecedented times we wanted to assist our customers. MLGW waived late fees, temporarily suspended disconnects for non-payment for more than six months and offered customers a special, 12 month extended payment arrange-

ment. We also launched Power Pivot, a regular webinar series aimed at helping small businesses survive during the pandemic. Additionally, MLGW leadership called for a special meeting of the MLGW Board of Commissioners to approve \$200,000 for a COVID Community Care fund created by The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). MLGW selected the following Memphis-area, 501(c)(3) organizations engaged in meeting community needs resulting from the pandemic to receive grants: Plus-1 (MIFA): \$75,000; Mid-South Food Bank: \$75,000; United Way of the Mid-South: \$25,000; and Mid-South COVID-19 Regional Fund: \$25,000. All MLGW funds were matched by TVA for a total donation of \$400,000 to local nonprofits. Our crews were on the frontline and worked on a network transformer vault to bring power to the COVID-19 field hospital on Union Ave. MLGW also started offering virtual energy audits to help customers looking for ways to reduce energy use.

Business pays for utility bills for neighbors in need

A local business is easing the financial struggles that families are dealing with from the pandemic. Recently, the Reaves Law Firm paid \$9,217.77 in utility bills for 29 families in Whitehaven where the firm is located.

MLGW's Board of Commissioners recognized the donation at its meeting on March 12, 2021. MLGW's Vice President of Community and External Affairs Gale Jones Carson (pictured left) accepted the donation for the program.

"I'm proud to be one of the first businesses in Greater Memphis to give to the Gift of Comfort program, especially to benefit residents in Whitehaven," said Henry E. Reaves III (pictured right), founder and owner of Reaves Law Firm. "I will continue to invest in the city with a major focus on the Whitehaven area where I was raised and operate my practice."

"It looks like I was selected by an angel," said Whitehaven recipient Loretta Gilliam. "That's what brought tears to my eyes. I'm so grateful."

Any business or group can give through the Gift of Comfort program and earmark the donation for a certain ZIP code, area, or family by contacting MLGW's Corporate Social Re-



sponsibility team at (901) 528-4820.

"I hope that my fellow Memphians come together to assist those in need through the Gift of Comfort to help our neighbors, especially during these winter months," Reaves said. Individuals can make a payment towards someone else's utility bill online at mlgw.com/giftofcomfort.

EmPOWERING Sustainable Neighborhoods

MLGW's annual Neighborhood Leaders Conference is going virtual through a series of quarterly training sessions for community leaders. Our theme for the year is "EmPOWERING Sustainable Neighborhoods" and will feature sessions to serve as a catalyst for creating places where people want to live now and in the future.

Register to attend at mlgwneighborhoods.eventbrite.com.

Each Zoom meeting will be held from 4-5 p.m. Be sure to mark your calendar for the upcoming sessions:

• **June 24** – Shining Light on Solar Energy - Find out if solar energy is right for you. See what financing programs are available

and how to make the decision for installing solar.

• **August 26** – Plugging into Electric Vehicles - As automakers expand the distance, performance, style and price options for electric vehicles, the EV market is growing. Plug in and learn what you should consider when choosing an EV and the local EV charging network.

• **October 28** – Creating Sustainable Neighborhoods - Sustainable neighborhoods are communities that are socially, environmentally and economically healthy. Hear what a few Memphis neighborhood groups are doing to achieve that goal.

MLGW ranked again for the Top 500 Security

According to securitymagazine.com, MLGW is ranked in the top 20 utilities category for security. MLGW, is ranked 13th in the Utilities category. For the past seven years, MLGW has continued the trend of being ranked in the top twenty-five out of one hundred in the Utilities category. MLGW has also been ranked in the top 20 companies for security for the past three years. Last year, MLGW



was ranked seventh. At the Feb. 3, 2021 Board of Commissioners meeting, Lashell Vaughn, Vice President and Chief Information Officer, presented the plaque. During her presentation she said, "The team is thrilled to be selected as one of the top 15 companies ranking amongst extremely large organizations like Baker Hughes, Exxon Mobil Corporation, Xcel Energy and American Electric Power.

Utility assistance available

Shelby County Community Services Agency's Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has funds available for utility assistance. If you received assistance prior to October 1, 2020, you are encouraged to apply! To see if you qualify, call 901-222-4200.

Are you or someone you know homeless or looking to move but can't obtain new utility services because of an old or delinquent utility account? If so, Shelby County Community Services Agency has funds available to assist with your delinquent account. Call 901-222-4232 to see if you qualify.

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 do not 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 employee saves a resident's life

Recently, Patrick O'Neil, MLGW Customer Service, was dispatched to 90-year-old resident, Bobbie Jean Wilson's home. O'Neil initially was sent to check out her outlets but noticed something that wasn't normal after he completed the outlet inspection. He saw smoke coming from the back and asked her if her dryer was running. After Wilson told him that the dryer was not running, he went to check where the smoke was coming from. O'Neil discovered that her



shed was on fire. He moved quickly to get Wilson to safety by taking her across the street away from the fire and he called the Fire Department.

Because of O'Neil's quick actions, he was able to save Wilson's life because the fire had spread to her carport and house. We are very proud of employees like O'Neil for representing our company and demonstrating our "Serving You Is What We Do" motto.

Happy Women's History Month to the women of MLGW

MLGW honored and celebrated the women that the utility has the privilege of having among its ranks. March is a month where we honor and celebrate the accomplishments of women in our culture and society. According to iea.org, "despite making up 48% of the global labor force, women only account for 22% of the labor force in the oil and gas sector and 32% in renewables." Women are needed in the utility industry, and we want to take the time to thank all our female employees for working for MLGW.

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.