

Community OUTREACH

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

November/December 2008

New Customer Care Policy

Memphis Light, Gas and Water has made changes to its credit policies, part of a new Customer Care Policy designed to improve customer service.

Highlights of the new policy include a new Customer Bill of Rights, a rewritten more-favorable customer credit rating system (benefiting an additional 50,000 to 70,000 customers annually), new deferred-payment policies, reduced overall late charges and limited late-charge discount allowances, more-favorable hardship criteria, new billing dispute options, and no water cut-offs for at least 60 days when electric or gas services are disconnected for non-payment. Our Smart Pay option will also be open to a wider array of customers and will not be impacted by credit history.

The amount of the residential service deposit has been reduced – the \$500 maximum was replaced with a \$225 maximum and a \$125 minimum. And new customer deposits can be spread over the first five months' bills.

Details of the new credit policies can be found on MLGW's Web site at www.mlgw.com through the *Customer Service Central* link. Look under *Consumer Residential* on the left panel, click on the *Your MLGW Bill* link and look for *Credit Policy*. The Customer Bill of Rights can be found on the *Customer Service Central* page, too. You can also call our Customer Care Center at 544-MLGW (6549) and ask for credit policy information.



Tammy Brown, Downtown Credit Ofc., and **Daylan Cheeks**, Meter Reading - NSC, hand out energy conservation information on Community Conservation Day.

Conservation Meets Convenience at Exxon On the Run

MLGW employees met customers at the gas pump combining conservation with convenience as they staffed informational tables at 36 Exxon On the Run convenience stores throughout Memphis and Shelby County on Friday, October 10 for MLGW's first Community Conservation Day. MLGW executives also teamed with other employees at all five MLGW Community Offices to distribute informational materials.

With costs rising in virtually all sectors of the energy market, MLGW partnered with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and Exxon On the Run to share information with customers on how to best use energy in their daily lives. On Community Conservation Day, customers were eager to learn and MLGW employees were there to answer energy conservation questions and give away free energy kits that included compact fluorescent light bulbs and outlet-insulating gaskets. Approximately 9,000 customers received the kits.

The day kicked off with Mayors AC Wharton and Willie W. Herenton (who was unable to attend) officially proclaiming October 10 Community

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Winter Conservation Quiz

Winter is coming, and it's time to conserve energy while staying warm at the same time. There are many ways you can conserve and save on your utility bills. So take this fun and enlightening winter conservation quiz, and see how well you know how to conserve and save. Answers are on the back page.

1. During the winter, set your thermostat on 68° or lower. Every degree below 68° can save you ____ on your heating bill.
 - a. 2 percent
 - b. 4 percent
 - c. 6 percent
2. MLGW's Winter One-Stop is:
 - a. A place to buy blankets and firewood.
 - b. A page on mlgw.com where customers can learn energy saving tips to save on their energy bills this winter.
 - c. A stop sign.
3. Which one of the following will not help you to save on your energy bills this winter?
 - a. Caulk cracks around windows and doors.
 - b. Install storm windows and doors.
 - c. Lower or turn off thermostat when leaving your home for four hours or more.
 - d. Open all windows and doors while running your heating unit at full blast.
4. Central heating air filters should be changed every 30-90 days.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. Wearing layered clothing and thick socks to keep warm, adding extra blankets, and lowering or turning off your thermostat when leaving your home for four hours or more are all ways to help you save this coming winter.
 - a. True
 - b. False
6. When trying to stop the influx of cold air and drafts in winter, you should:
 - a. Caulk cracks around windows and doors.
 - b. Add attic insulation of R-30 value or better.
 - c. Seal drafty spaces behind light switches and electrical outlet plates with foam gaskets.
 - d. Do all of the above.

For more energy-saving tips, visit MLGW's Web site at www.mlgw.com, click on the *Save Energy* link at top right, highlight *Energy-Saving Tools* in the left hand column and look for winter tips.

Community Conservation Day *continued from page 1*

Conservation Day at the 1355 Union Ave. Exxon location. Mayor Wharton was joined at the opening kickoff by Memphis City Council members Barbara Swearingen Ware and Myron Lowery; MLGW, TVA and Exxon On the Run executives; and representatives from various local agencies.

Wearing bright orange t-shirts that proclaimed "Ten-Ten-Zero Eight" (representing the date), employees engaged customers at Exxon convenience stores giving them free energy kits, energy conservation materials and brochures. "There are a lot of little things that we can do each day that together add up to big savings. We want to encourage our customers how to think about energy conservation," said MLGW President and CEO **Jerry Collins Jr.**

Tennesseans use more electricity than any other state except for Alabama. While MLGW's electric rates are

comparatively low, excessive usage can cause bills to be unnecessarily high. Community Conservation Day was aimed not only at raising awareness of wise energy use, but also for customers to find ways to curb their energy usage and reduce their carbon footprint.

Seniors Enjoy a Day at the Zoo

A beautiful, crisp day greeted seniors from around Memphis attending Senior Day at the Zoo October 1, and MLGW was there to greet them with useful information about saving energy to reduce utility bills, assistance programs and MLGW's Winter Moratorium. **Stacey Greenberg**, Communications and PR (pictured, blue jacket), handed out brochures to seniors attending Senior Day.

Two New Commissioners Join MLGW's Board

Former Memphis City Councilman Dedrick Brittenum Jr. and Memphis businessman Steven Wishnia are the newest members of MLGW's Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Brittenum is a partner in the law firm of Farris, Bobango and Branan, PLC. He served as a member of the Supreme Court of Tennessee Commission on Continuing Legal Education from 1986 to 1993 and has served as an Assistant Shelby County Attorney since 1985. Active in community affairs, Brittenum is a member of the board of Memphis Museums, Inc., the Cooper-Parkway Neighborhood Association and the United States Selective Service Commission. He is a former member of the City of Memphis Civil Service Commission, serving as the Commission's chairman for 13 years. He received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Wyoming and his Juris Doctorate from North Carolina Central University School of Law.

Mr. Wishnia replaces former Commissioner Nick Clark, and will serve Clark's term until its expiration in November 2010. He is founder, president and managing director of the Highland Capital Management Corporation. Wishnia earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from Pace University in New York. He is a trustee of the Plough Foundation, serves on the Board of Directors of Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare, and is past chairman of the board for Le Bonheur Children's Hospital. He also serves on the Grizzlies Fan Advisory Board.



Dedrick Brittenum Jr.



Steven Wishnia

Stay Warm with MLGW's Winter Moratorium

When temperatures drop and gas prices rise, seniors may experience difficulty paying their utility bill. MLGW does not want to see anyone left in the cold.

MLGW's Winter Moratorium provides elderly (60+) and disabled customers uninterrupted utility service during the coldest months of the year (December 1 - March 1). This program does not relieve customers of their obligation to pay, but it does offer peace of mind with the promise of no cut-offs during the winter months.

In order to qualify, residential customers must show proof of age or disability and have a zero balance on their account at the close of business Friday, November 28.

Participating customers who have balances on their accounts at the end of the program will be eligible for an extended payment plan for up to three months.

Once customers have been approved for the Winter Moratorium, they are automatically re-enrolled each year if they have a zero balance at the close of business November 28. Previous customers will receive a reminder letter to clear balances in the mail at the beginning of October.

Customers can download brochures at www.mlgw.com, pick one up at any MLGW Community Office or have one mailed by calling 544-MLGW (6549).

MLGW in the Community

MLGW's Communications and Public Relations department has been active in community outreach and volunteer programs this fall, providing staff, informational booths, volunteers and programs for:

- Delta Fair, Aug. 29 – Sept. 7
- Big Scoop Ice Cream Festival, Sept. 6
- United Way Day of Caring, Sept. 12
- Le Bonheur Children's Hospital Health Fair, Sept. 12
- Mid-South Fair, Sept. 19-28
- Living Green in Germantown Expo, Sept. 20
- Senior Day at the Zoo, Oct. 1
- Project MAX, Oct. 3, 18 & 31
- Community Conservation Day, Oct. 10
- NeighborFest, Oct. 11
- Tennessee Faith-Based Public Policy Conference, Oct. 14
- Mid-South Transportation Fair, Oct. 16
- CAAP Inc. Domestic Violence Family Day Celebration, Oct. 18
- Collierville MulberryFest, Oct. 19
- MED Annual Safety Fair, Oct. 22
- Cooper-Young Forest Faire, Oct. 25
- Whole Foods Community Fair, Oct. 26

Call 528-4820 to request MLGW Community Relations staff to attend your event.

Plus-1: A Season of Giving

This is the season of giving, but many Memphians are suffering from financial problems, major medical emergencies and other difficulties. Many are unable to pay their utility bills. YOU can help by donating \$1 or more per month to Plus-1 on your utility bill. The Plus-1 program administered by MIFA helps those in need of utility-bill assistance. Help those in need by signing up online at www.mlgw.com or by calling 544-6549 to enroll.

Plus-1

ber 31, 2009 when you complete the *Home Profile* and *My Appliances* home energy audit questions through your My Account access at www.mlgw.com.

Gift of Comfort

Give a special gift this holiday season, the gift of utilities. You can make a payment on someone's utility bill by going to www.mlgw.com, click on *Get Help and Assistance Programs* and look for *Gift of Comfort*, or call 544-6549. Show you care, give a Gift of Comfort this season.

Free Energy Kits Extended

You can still receive a **Free Energy Kit** from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) through Decem-

Winter Conservation Quiz Answers

1. b; 2. b; 3. d; 4. a; 5. a; 6. d



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. The community relations area also assists neighborhood groups and churches with training needs and technical assistance. Address all correspondence to:

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