

Community matters

NORWICH PUBLIC UTILITIES

October 2013

Unique Pilot Program Lowers Energy Bills as Much as 40% Through Conversion from Oil and Propane to Natural Gas

An innovative partnership between Norwich Public Utilities, Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority (CEFIA), Eastern Savings Bank, CorePlus Federal Credit Union and non-profit SmartPower has officially launched Energize Norwich, a unique program to increase residential conversion to natural gas. Norwich Public Utilities will be laying additional natural gas lines in many areas of the city with the goal of helping homeowners convert to a less expensive fuel source and lower energy bills.

CEFIA, the State's clean energy finance authority, is offering Energize Norwich participants low-cost financing through the Smart-E Loan program to offset homeowners' gas conversion costs. CEFIA has teamed up with CorePlus Federal Credit Union and Eastern Savings Bank to offer the no-out-of-pocket cost loans to Norwich residents interested in natural gas conversion. In addition, CEFIA has pre-selected three contractors to perform the natural gas conversions in exchange for guaranteed pricing as well as tiered pricing*. The more residents sign up, the more the price drops for all program participants.

Some 61% of all households across the country now use natural gas for heating, washing and drying clothes, and cooking. In the Northeast, because of older housing stock, many homes are still using oil heat, which is a significantly more expensive fuel source. Saving money was the big motivation for



ENERGIZE NORWICH

Norwich resident Paul Blanchard, who made the switch to natural gas last year. "I was sick of those high oil bills, and wanted to take advantage of the savings by going with natural gas. I love the savings and I couldn't be happier."

Homeowners may like the idea of converting to natural gas, but have not taken action due to the cost of conversion. CEFIA's low cost loan program, working with Core Plus and Eastern Savings Bank, provides homeowners with the opportunity to achieve monthly savings, as their loan repayment will be less than their previous oil bill. In short, homeowners will find themselves with more cash in their pocket every month.

The Smart-E Loan is also available for many other energy measures. Customers interested in everything from adding high efficiency insulation, lighting, and air conditioning to mold remediation to replacing old appliances with Energy Star appliances and even installing solar PV will qualify under the Smart-E Loan.

Norwich Public Utilities is focusing on residents living in areas where natural gas lines already exist, or areas targeted for new lines, such as the Cherry Hill area. Homeowners should contact NPU to find out if their home qualifies for conversion. NPU is committed to helping as many customers as possible take advantage of the benefits offered through Energize Norwich.

The guaranteed prices offered by Energize Norwich contractors will be available to homeowners until November 18. SmartPower is leading the outreach for "Energize Norwich!" Information about the natural gas conversion process can be found at www.energizenorwich.com. Homeowners can also call Katie at NPU directly at 860-823-4514.

www.EnergizeNorwich.com

Contact us - we will help you calculate your savings!

*Customers are not obligated to use these contractors; however the guaranteed/tiered pricing only applies to the pre-selected contractors.

Disposable Does Not Mean Flushable: Avoid Disposing of Harmful Products into the Sewer

Many materials flushed down the toilet or drain can harm the pipes that connect to the municipal sewer and cause damage and costly unplanned maintenance to the equipment in the collection system and treatment plant. Ultimately this will harm our environment.

If a product claims to be “disposable,” it does not mean it is “flushable.” These items should be disposed of in a trash can. Even products listed as “biodegradable” will not break down well enough in our sewer system. Basically, with the exception of toilet paper, if it doesn’t dissolve immediately in water, it should never be flushed into the sewer.

Grease is another major, costly problem for Norwich’s sewer system. Over time, grease will build up on the pipes, causing clogs and back-ups. It also does not degrade well in the treatment plant. Grease should NEVER be poured down the drain! Instead, pour grease into a container, let solidify, and toss into the trash. Class III and IV food establishments are required to comply with the State of Connecticut’s General Permit for Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) discharge. Essentially, this Permit requires that these establishments must have the proper FOG management equipment installed at the facility.

Toxic materials should never be flushed down the drain or toilet. This includes paint and paint thinner, pesticides, solvents, explosive mixtures, oil, and unused medication. Anything that contains mercury or PCP’s is strictly prohibited. The City of Norwich holds Hazardous Waste Disposal Days to enable the proper disposal of these items.

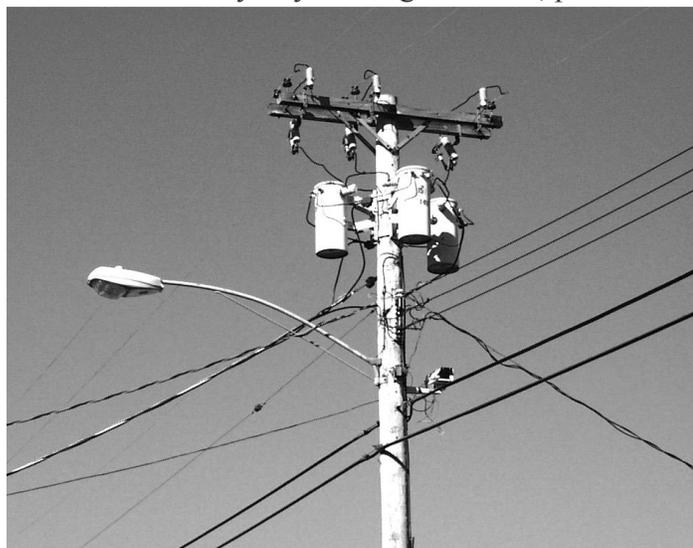
Common items that should not be flushed in the sewer system include:

- Plastic objects (including toys)
- Glass, metal, wood or soil
- Cooking oil or other edible food oils
- Rags, condoms, sanitary napkins, diapers, tampons, paper towels, cotton balls, swabs
- Cigarettes
- Hair clippings
- “Flushable” toilet brushes, wipes and pads
- Wet mopping cloths

If you have any questions about proper disposal of common household items, please contact Norwich Public Works at 860-823-3789. For more information on FOG Discharge Requirements, contact Uncas Health District at 860-823-1189.

Utility poles should never be used as sign posts

Signs that are tacked to utility poles are very dangerous. Many people don’t realize that putting signs on poles endangers line workers who have to climb those poles to make repairs. Staples, nails and tacks used to hang signs on the poles -- as well as the signs themselves -- can cause very serious damage. Line workers risk injury to themselves and damage to their equipment and protective clothing. If you’re planning a tag sale or some other activity in your neighborhood, please do not post or hang signs to advertise on utility poles. Also, we do not permit businesses to advertise by posting signs on our utility poles.



Posting signs on utility poles is illegal in Connecticut (per Section 23-65a. of the General Statutes). Violators can be fined.

Reporting a Street Light Out

Don’t be left in the dark! If you see a street light out in your neighborhood, please let us know. Call us at 860-887-2555 or email communitymatters@npumail.com. We will need the street where the light is located, the nearest cross street, and pole number. Street light maintenance is done on a routine basis.

NPU receives national recognition for reliability

Norwich Public Utilities was proud to be formally recognized as one of only 184, out of more than 2,000, Public Power utilities to earn Reliable Public Power Provider (RP₃) recognition from the American Public Power Association. This recognition certifies what we hope our customers already know about us -- that we are committed to providing only the highest level of accountability and most reliable service to the community we are proud to serve.

To receive the RP₃ designation, we were required to demonstrate proficiency in four key disciplines:

- Reliability
- Safety
- Workforce Development
- System Improvement

Criteria within each category was based on sound business practices and represented a utility-wide commitment to safe and reliable delivery of electricity. While this designation was based on our proficiency in providing electric service, we carry this same diligence of reliable service throughout all of our utilities - natural gas, water, and wastewater.

Applying for RP₃ designation in itself was no easy task. We were tasked with providing detailed documentation to show proficiency in the four disciplines mentioned above, and each discipline was broken down into several key elements as follows.

Reliability

To demonstrate reliability, we had to provide more than just day-to-day service reliability statistics such as load data, service interruptions, and outage information. Reliability also had to be proven by demonstrating the existence and use of a mutual aid agreement, a system-wide emergency response plan,

and both cyber and physical security plans.

Safety

Workers' safety is a critical component of the RP₃ designation. We had to show that a culture of safety exists within our organization, beginning with management and including all aspects of operations. We were required to demonstrate that our safety program includes adherence to safety manuals, that we follow nationally accepted safe work practices, conduct regular safety meetings, and benchmark safety statistics to define trends and to review program effectiveness.

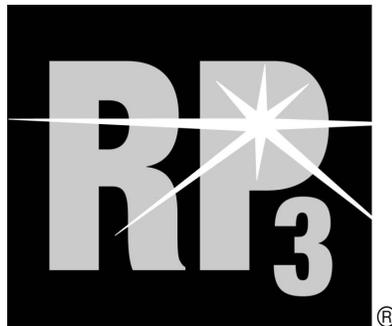
Work Force Development

For RP₃, we had to demonstrate that training employees requires more than just traditional avenues such as workshops and courses. For public power utilities like NPU, it is crucial that traditional education be accompanied by opportunities for utility staff to network with other industry representatives throughout the state, region, and country. Utility staff knowledge increases through membership in state, regional, and nationally focused committees. Succession planning, recruitment and recognition are also critical elements of work force development.

System Improvement

Demonstrating a strong research and development program was crucial for system improvement points. R&D had to address power supply, system planning, energy efficiency issues, and improvement projects that focus on maintaining system integrity. The ultimate goal was to show that we understood that keeping our system well maintained and up-to-date shows responsible stewardship of utility assets and will ensure long-term system reliability and performance.

RP₃ designation is assigned for a 3-year period. We will be ready to submit for redesignation again in 2015!



Reliable Public Power Provider



Call Before You Dig

If you are planning a project that requires digging, you or your contractor must notify Call Before You Dig (CBYD) by dialing 811, or their toll-free number 1-800-922-4455.

State law requires that you provide at least two (2) working days notice before you start your project. CBYD will dispatch all utilities (including phone and cable) to mark out where any underground lines, wires, or pipes are located. Failure to comply could result in an accident or legal penalties. Visit www.cbyd.com for more information.

Communitycalendar

NORWICH PUBLIC UTILITIES

October 2013

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Farmers Market

The Farmers Market located at the Howard Brown Park in downtown Norwich will be open every Wednesday through October 30th, from 10 AM to 2 PM.

Weekends through
October 20, 2013

Renaissance Faire

The Connecticut Renaissance Faire moves to its new home at Dodd Stadium this fall for 5 weekends of fun in the past! For more info call 860-478-5954

October 18-20, 2013

The Friends of Otis Semi-Annual Book Sale

Free General Admission:

Friday, Oct. 18th: 10 AM - 3 PM

Saturday, Oct. 19th: 10 AM - 3 PM

Sunday, Oct. 20th: Noon - 3 PM

Otis Library's Book Sale offers thousands of books! All proceeds from the sale will benefit the Otis Library. For more information, 'like' Friends of Otis on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofotis>

Ongoing: The Friends of Otis Library collects clean, gently used books, CDs, and DVDs, two bags or boxes at a time, at the Otis Library, 261 Main Street, Norwich. For larger donations, please call 860-889-2365, ext. 125. No textbooks, magazines, or encyclopedias, please.

November 23, 2013

O'tis a Festival at Otis

This year marks the 5th anniversary of this holiday festival held at Otis Library in Norwich. In addition to handcrafted items for sale, this community event features children's events, musical performances, unique demonstrations, and photos with Santa. Proceeds from this event will benefit Otis Library. For more information, visit www.otislibrarynorwich.org

November 30, 2013

Winterfest Parade

The annual Norwich Winterfest Parade kicks off at 1 PM from Chelsea Parade. For more information, visit www.norwichct.org.

STOP Idling. START Saving.

With the cold weather approaching, we are faced with the uncomfortable situation of getting into cold cars. To avoid this, most of us will start the car and let it 'warm up.' While this practice might make us feel more comfortable, in reality we are wasting money and harming our environment. Plus, advances in vehicle technology have eliminated much of the need for idling, so it is not even necessary for the operation of the vehicle.

According to a study conducted by the Argonne National Laboratory (U.S. Department of Energy), vehicles actually warm up faster when driving than when idling! Considering that idling fuel usage can vary from 0.2 to 0.5 gallons/hour (for passenger cars), every time you let your car idle can add up to a substantial waste of gas and money.

Idling a car for more than 10 seconds uses more fuel and emits more carbon dioxide (CO₂) than starting the engine. For short stops, it makes sense to turn your vehicle off. If each car in the United States idles just 6 minutes per day, about 3 **billion** gallons of fuel are wasted annually, costing drivers \$10 billion or more--for going nowhere! Think about that the next time you are waiting in a fast food or bank drive-through line.

For more information and facts on idle reduction benefits, visit the U.S. Department of Energy's Clean Cities website at <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/cleancities>.



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Here to Serve You

Visit our web site for more information:
www.norwichpublicutilities.com

Please call, fax or email us your questions, comments and suggestions.
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