

Controlling rising energy costs

Every little bit counts.

A new bill—co-sponsored during the last session of the Connecticut General Assembly by State Representatives Melissa Olson (D) and Edith Prague (D), with support from Jack Malone (D), and passed by both the House and the Senate—will save NPU customers more than \$600,000 per year. The bill fixes a disparity in the way tax is calculated for municipal electric utilities, which includes NPU.

How the State taxes electricity

Electric rates cover three separate areas of service. The first is generation, which covers the expense of producing electricity. The others are transmission and distribution, which cover the costs associated with delivering the electricity from the power plants to customers.

“NPU is very efficient in purchasing energy and tremendously responsive to the needs of its customers.”

As an outcome of deregulation in 1998, investor-owned utilities only paid a gross-revenue tax to the State of Connecticut on two areas of service—energy transmission and distribution—but not on generation. In contrast, municipal-owned utilities, like NPU, continued to pay a gross-revenue tax on all three areas of service, but the tax percentage was lower than what the investor-owned utilities were paying.

Since energy generation costs had been low, paying the lower tax on all three services didn't negatively affect municipal

electric customers. However, John Bilda, General Manager of NPU remarked, “generation costs have exploded—including the tax on our customers' bills. This bill corrects a long-overdue inequality and benefits the customer directly.”

The new law removes the tax on municipalities from the fastest rising and most unstable cost—energy generation. Now, both municipal utility customers and investor-owned utility customers are taxed the same way—on transmission and distribution only.

NPU—hard at work to curb rising costs

Beginning in February, John Bilda and Maurice Scully, Director of Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperate (CMEEC), collected and provided a large portion of detailed information for State Representative Melissa Olson. Olson said, “NPU was a driving force behind this piece of legislation. They made me aware of the inequity in the tax law. It was their input, along with CMEEC, that enabled me to properly draft the bill.” Armed with the facts she needed, Olson was able to clearly present this disparity to legislators.

“Norwich is extremely fortunate to have a municipally run utility. NPU is very efficient in purchasing energy and tremendously responsive to the needs of its customers,” Olson added.

NPU continually advocates for reliable energy policies at the state level, creates pro-active, energy efficient programs for its customers and searches for best-priced energy sources.

Helping those who have trouble paying their bill

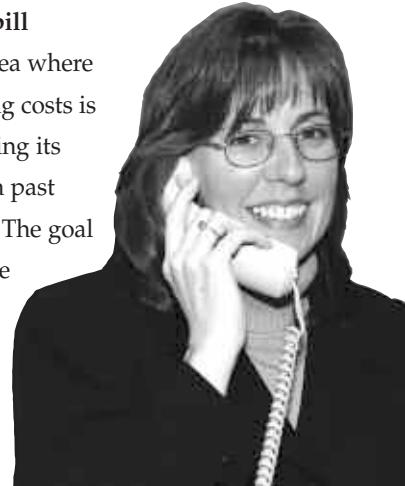
Another area where NPU is curbing costs is by strengthening its approach with past due accounts. The goal is to make sure customers who pay their bills are not negatively affected by those who do not.

Customers who have trouble paying their bills are urged to contact NPU to find what assistance may be available, including payment options. The NPU Customer Service Center is located at 173 North Main Street or call 887-2555. To view NPU's collection procedures, click on the “Important Notices” link at www.norwichpublicutilities.com.

Everyone can help control rising costs

Customers can start by putting energy efficient guidelines into practice at home and at work; be more informed about energy issues; and contact their State representative to voice concerns over rising energy costs. Learn more about the Connecticut General Assembly—and find your representative—at www.cga.ct.gov.

Do you have ideas on curbing rising energy costs or energy efficiency? Contact NPU at communitymatters@npumail.com.



Norwich Safe Communities Coalition would like to remind everyone to practice these **summer safety tips**



Kids love summer! They don't have to go to school, they can stay up late and best of all—they have all day to play. Norwich Safe Communities Coalition and Safe Kids New London County remind you to follow the safety tips below to make sure your children's summer memories are safe ones.

Ride Safe!

- Make sure you secure children in the age- and size-appropriate child safety seat or safety belt
- Always secure children in the back seat
- Study your vehicle owner's manual and child safety seat instructions carefully
- Children should ride in a booster seat until at least age 8 or until 4'9" tall

Swim Safe!

- Always supervise young children near water, including pools, spas, toilets, bathtubs and buckets
- Insist your children wear personal flotation devices when out on boats, near open bodies of water or participating in water sports

Wheel Safe!

- Make sure children wear properly fitting helmets and other protective gear every time they ride their bikes, scooters, inline skates or skateboards
- Teach your children the rules of the road and practice obeying traffic laws with them

Walk Safe!

- Never let your child under age 10 cross the street alone—teach children to obey traffic rules
- Make sure your children wear retro-reflective materials, and don't let them walk alone at night. If they must walk at dawn or at dusk, make sure they carry a flashlight

Play Safe!

- Always supervise your children at playgrounds or in the backyard. Make sure they play on a safe surface, such as mulch, rubber or sand
- Make sure children wear the right, properly fitted protective gear when they practice and play team sports!

Source: Safe Kids World Wide (2006) www.safekids.org

“Storm Ready” for hurricane season

The 2006 hurricane season began on June 1st and runs until November 30. Severe storms typically occur during August and September in New England, but can come as early as June.

This year, the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is predicting another very active storm season for the north Atlantic—13 to 16 named storms, with eight to 10 becoming hurricanes. Four to six of these hurricanes could become ‘major’ hurricanes with strengths of category 3 or higher.

Connecticut's first “Storm Ready” community

Norwich is the first community in Connecticut to receive the prestigious “Storm Ready” seal of approval by NOAA. This March, dignitaries from NOAA and Washington DC presented Norwich with this distinguished designation.

Storm Ready communities are better prepared to save lives from the onslaught of severe weather through better planning, education, and awareness. No community is storm proof, but Storm Ready can help communities save lives. This designation also has its benefits—Storm Ready communities receive lower National Flood Insurance rates than those without the Storm Ready seal.

Gene Arters, Director of Emergency Management for Norwich, spearheaded the rigorous 18-month compliance process.

Storm safety tips

- Prepare your home for high winds
- Stay clear of downed wires
- Turn off the air conditioner and unplug appliances
- Avoid using the telephone or any electrical appliances
- If caught outside, take shelter under the shorter trees if in wooded area
- If you are boating or swimming, get to land and find shelter immediately

Prepare for an emergency

Use the following information as a guideline:

- Know what the terms “hurricane WATCH” and “hurricane WARNING” mean, and what to do when an alert is issued
- Prepare a personal evacuation plan and share it with your family and co-workers
- Listen to local radio or TV stations for evacuation instructions. If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Assemble a disaster supplies kit
- Take essential items with you when evacuating, such as:
 - Prescription meds and medical supplies
 - Bedding and clothing, including sleeping bags and pillows
 - Bottled water, battery-operated radio and extra batteries, first aid kit, flashlight
 - Car keys and maps
 - Important documents, including driver's license, Social Security card, proof of residence, insurance policies, wills, deeds, birth/marriage certificates, tax records, etc.

Storm Ready criteria includes the setting up of comprehensive communications systems, backup and satellite communications systems, an Emergency Management Weather Information Network (EMWIN) plus equipping schools and other highly populated buildings.

Chris LaRose, Operations Manager at NPU adds, “Although we haven't had a major storm in many years, NPU is prepared to respond to any emergency. NPU continuously reviews its emergency plans, materials and training. As in the past, we will be prepared to restore services quickly, efficiently, and safely.”

For more information, visit:

- NOAA Storm Ready Web site at www.weather.gov/stormready
- Red Cross at www.redcross.org and click on the “Get Prepared” link
- Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security at www.ct.gov/demhs

To report a power outage, call NPU at 887-2555.

Energy efficiency: the solution to peak summer demand

Possible record-breaking electricity demands have been forecasted for this summer by ISO New England, the not-for-profit corporation responsible for the operation of New England's electricity system. Stephen G. Whitley, ISO New England's Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, said, "The region or local areas could experience tight supply situations if generation is constrained or if hot and humid weather increases demand." Whitley added, "Without... greater energy efficiency and conservation, New England could soon be consuming more electricity than it can produce or buy from its neighbors."

Lowering peak-period energy demand helps consumers lower their bills

High-demand days are based on temperature, humidity and time of year, and usually occur during July and August.

ISO New England calls these "degree days" and issues alerts so that areas can reduce strain on the energy system infrastructure. "When summer days are at their hottest, consumers need to lower electricity demand. This puts less strain on the power grid and less strain on their wallets too," said John Bilda, General Manager of Norwich Public Utilities.

NPU: Offering energy efficiency solutions

The NPU efficiency team is leading the community by providing various tips and incentives to help reduce peak electricity



usage and control electricity costs for all consumers. The team has

created **Power Alert Days**, which correspond to ISO New England's degree days. When a Power Alert is issued, consumers are asked to initiate energy efficiency measures. Whitley added,

Energy efficient tips to help curb peak summer demand

- Set your thermostat comfortably high in the summer
- Install a programmable thermostat
- Use compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs)
- Air-dry dishes and laundry
- Turn off your computer and monitor when not in use
- Use power strips and turn them off when equipment is not being used
- Lower the thermostat on your hot water heater to 120 degrees
- Take short showers instead of baths
- Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes
- Run pool filters, air conditioners and other appliances after 8 p.m.
- Look for the ENERGY STAR® label when buying home appliances and products

"Reducing peak-period electricity use can deliver an immediate and sustainable impact on overall wholesale electricity prices in New England and help the region avoid unwanted stress on its power grid."

You can find out about Power Alert Days by listening to WICH 1310 AM. You can also visit the NPU web site regularly, www.norwichpublicutilities.com, as well as sign up to receive an email alert.

Make every drop count

The dry, summer season is fast approaching. Water is a precious resource, especially at this time of year.

Consider these facts: Less than one percent of the entire world's water supply is usable for humans—the rest is salt water, or locked in glaciers and ice caps.* The average household uses about 240 gallons of water per day.

A clean, healthy, and ample water supply is vitally important for many reasons—drinking, washing, gardening, fire fighting—just to name a few. Together, we can conserve our water supply by using water wisely in our homes and businesses.

The benefits of water conservation

- It saves you money
- It protects drinking water resources
- It reduces water pollution & health risks

Conservation resources

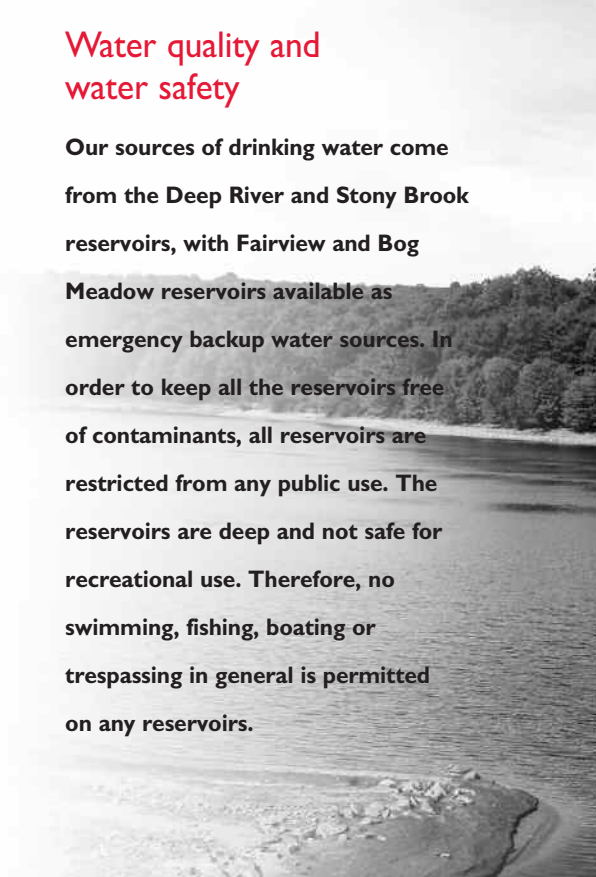
For water-saving tips, you can visit www.norwichpublicutilities.com and click on the Energy Efficiency link, www.wateruseitwisely.com, or EPA's site at www.epa.gov/owm/water-efficiency. You can also get more information from NPU by calling 860-887-2555 or emailing communitymatters@npumail.com.

* Source: US EPA

Water quality and water safety

Our sources of drinking water come from the Deep River and Stony Brook reservoirs, with Fairview and Bog

Meadow reservoirs available as emergency backup water sources. In order to keep all the reservoirs free of contaminants, all reservoirs are restricted from any public use. The reservoirs are deep and not safe for recreational use. Therefore, no swimming, fishing, boating or trespassing in general is permitted on any reservoirs.



Communitycalendar

NORWICH PUBLIC UTILITIES

JULY/AUGUST 2006

Ongoing – 1st Thursday of each month

Taftville Lions Pasta Supper

ALL YOU CAN EAT Pasta Supper held at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Taftville from 4:30-6:30 pm. \$5 per person—take-out available. All profits benefit various Lions Charities and local Taftville projects. Call 889-8300 for more information.

Ongoing – 1st Friday of each month

First Fridays

Downtown Norwich comes alive with arts and entertainment every first Friday of the month! View original art at several galleries or enjoy a musical or theater production. Call 886-4683 for information.

Ongoing – 1st and 3rd Friday of each month

Open Mic Night

City Perk, located at 154 Main Street (across from the Court house), open mic night from 5:30 p.m.-10:00 p.m. For more info, contact Shawn at 204-8443.

June – September

Free Friday Summer Concerts

Musical concerts held at the Norwichtown Green and Brown Park Gazebo. Call 886-4683 for details.

July 15 – July 16

Eastern CT 21st Annual Antique Auto Show

Antique and classic car show. Dodd Stadium, Stott Ave., Norwich. Auto auction, oldies concert, flea market and food vendors. Classic Car Show on

Sunday with and hundreds of antique, classic cars and enthusiasts! Call the Chamber of Commerce, 464-7373, for more info.

August 1, 2006

2006 National Night Out

Crime Prevention Block Party, hosted by the Norwich Police Department, 6 to 9pm at Marcus Plaza parking lot, 634 West Main Street. Give neighborhood crime and drugs a going away party. For more information, contact Detective Peckham at the Norwich Police Department, 886-5561, ext. 157.

August 19, 2006

Norwich Grange Fair – 174 West Town Street

86th annual fair promoting agriculture and fun for the whole family, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Vegetables, flowers, photos, and arts & crafts exhibits. Contact Richard Tarryk at 887-3145 for more information.

September 7 – September 10

31st Annual Grecian Festival

Enjoy the foods and music of the Greek-American Community in Norwich featuring fresh baked goods, gyro booth and traditional meals. Contact Father Paul at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church at 887-1458.

September 9

Taste of Italy

The annual community event includes bocci games, art exhibit and fireworks at Brown Park. Contact Frank Demicco at 889-1369 or Frank Jacaruso Jr. at 889-0864 for details.

September 16 – November 19

Connecticut Pastel Society

Renaissance in Pastel art exhibit at Slater Memorial Museum, 108 Crescent St. Call 887-2506 for info.

September 17

Family Day

Share your family with your community! Food, fun and games for all including "Harry O Youth Race." Join the fun from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Mohegan Park. For more information call Sherry Filiatreault at 823-3782.

September 21

Wine & Roses

Annual Wine Tasting Benefit for the Tommy Toy Fund at the Marina at American Wharf. Enjoy fine wine, entertainment and hors d'oeuvres from 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Call Cathy Cline at 887-9211 for info.

September 30

21st Annual Run for Reliance House

Kids race @ 11:00 a.m. and adults @ 11:30a.m. \$15 for preregistration or \$20 if you register the day of race. Kids run is FREE. For more info call 887-6536.

Relay for Life!

Help Fight CANCER

Form or Join a RELAY For LIFE TEAM

SE CT Relay For Life is looking for you

YOU will make a difference—form or join a team today!

Date of Relay: September 9 and 10

Ledyard High School, Ledyard, CT

To form or join a team, contact Lori Manske at 884-8494 via email at weaselcam@snet.net or Marlana Montgomery at 235-9445 via email at mmontgomery@waterfordct.org or the American Cancer Society at 885-6303 via email at Bill.Alley@cancer.org

Summer at the Leffingwell House Museum

This summer the Leffingwell House Museum presents "Afternoons in New England," a craft demonstration and education program for all ages and levels of experience. On each Saturday afternoon—from June through September—various crafters from Norwich and surrounding areas will demonstrate and teach their crafts to the visiting public. The museum will be open to the public Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 4 p.m. and other times by appointment. Admission is \$5.00 for adults, \$3.00 for seniors and children, and free for members of the Society of the Founders of Norwich.

Afternoon in New England Schedule

July 15 Learn to Knit
July 22 Wash Day – Learn to use an old fashioned washboard
July 29 2 p.m. – Historic presentation by the Mohegan Tribe of Indians
Aug 5 Wood Carving Demonstration by Mystic Seaport's "History to Go"
Aug 12 Exhibit by the Clamshell Quilt Guild and the Thames River Quilters
Aug 19 Knot-tying Demonstration by Mystic Seaport's "History to Go"
Aug 26 Corn Husk Doll-making and Demonstration
Sept 2 Celebration of the Season – contests, games and fun
For more information, contact www.leffingwellmuseum.org



Here to Serve You

Visit a special link on our web site for more information:

www.norwichpublicutilities.com/communitymatters

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

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