Celebrating Virtually
Public Power and Public Natural Gas Week

Oct. 4th - 10th Austin Utilities hosted a week of virtual activities showcasing the benefits of public power and public natural gas. Austin Utilities customers participated by joining in online kid’s experiments, a white truck treasure hunt, a virtual tour of AU, online challenges, and other contests.

Ignatious Gilbert received a Thank You packet for trying the experiment testing static electricity.

Whitney Heiny followed the clues and found the model AU service truck to claim her prize, a new dehumidifier.

Website Truck Challenge Winners:
- Gabriel Deyo
- Amanda Gilbert
- Shelley Thompson
- Teri Johnson
- Whitney Heiny

Facebook Like and Share Winners:
- Wanda Hatfield
- Claudia Cristobal
- Amanda Brenner Gilbert

Gift of Warmth

Drop off your new or gently used winter hats, scarves gloves and mittens in the AU lobby through Nov. 23rd. Items will be placed on the fence by Skinner’s hill for anyone in need on December 5th. This is the 4th year “Gift of Warmth” has collected winter items in the Austin community.
Covid Relief Funds

Austin Utilities in cooperation with Mower County has reached out to customers facing financial hardships due to the COVID-19 pandemic. So far, 13 customers have been approved to receive awards totaling over $5,300. Households meeting the financial criteria were contacted by AU and encouraged to apply.

Propane Plant Asset Ready for Winter Season

Austin Utilities Propane Air Plant is a vital part of AU’s natural gas infrastructure and that is why improvements were made in 2020 to prepare for peak natural gas usage this winter. Among upgrades to its electrical systems, valves and controls, AU replaced the Horizontal Water Bath Liquid Propane Gas Vaporizer which applies heat to the LPG and converts the LPG to a vapor. Once the LPG is a vapor it’s mixed with air resulting in a propane-air mixture, also called LPG-Air or SNG, essentially synthetic natural gas. When demand or natural gas prices are high AU utilizes the Propane Air Plant to help reduce heating costs for all of us.

Dave Maloney works to prepare Propane Air Plant for winter service.
Feel the need to feel good?
If you are fortunate enough to be one of the people who are not affected by COVID-19 symptoms and side effects, you may be feeling a need to help others who are not as fortunate. We have a few ideas that may help.

**Utility Gift Payments** - Give the gift that will never be returned and will always be used and appreciated. When you make a gift payment on an account you receive a Gift Payment Certificate to give to the recipient showing the amount of the payment.

**ENERGY STAR Gifts** – When buying electronics and appliances as gifts, be sure to look for the ENERGY STAR logo. These products use less energy and money over time.

**HeatShare Donation** – Help those less fortunate with winter heating bills and heating related repairs by donating to HeatShare. Make a one-time donation or set up a monthly donation. Call of our friendly customer service staff at 433.8886 to help.

**What is HeatShare?**
HeatShare is a Salvation Army program that provides emergency utility assistance for people with no place left to turn for assistance with high winter heating bills during difficult times. Funds typically go to low-income seniors, disabled people, and anybody experiencing an unexpected financial emergency. The average assistance payment is $400. The program is funded by local utility companies and their customers, and the funds stay in our community to help locally. It’s easy to make a donation on your monthly utility bill and you can even set up regular monthly donations.

**Employee Spotlight**

**Bill Bumgarner**
**Electric Distribution Supervisor**

Bill Bumgarner spent time as a cable guy before joining AU as a janitor in 1995. He worked his way through the Gas and Water department as a laborer, the Electric department as a lineworker and in 2016 became the Electric Distribution Supervisor. He enjoys the challenges of being a supervisor but his heart is in helping people. “Something about restoring a system that people use, getting that going again for them, it is very rewarding. In our case, getting the lights back on after a storm or other cause is the most enjoyable part of what we do.”

Bill has three adult children, Joe, Ben and Kallie, and shares a hobby farm with girlfriend, Jane Carlson. His joys outside the office are as impressive as his sense of humor. “I enjoy scenic drives. I enjoy fishing, just the concept, as I never really catch anything, but it’s peaceful to be on the water! I like trees, having planted many different varieties on Jane’s and my property, to provide for the wildlife that I enjoy watching, I want to get some wildflowers going next! I like taking trail rides in our side by side. I’m also quite an old movie buff, preferring classics like “Cool Hand Luke”, “The Deer Hunter”, “Pretty Woman”, and “Three Days of the Condor” to name a few. I spend a lot of time tackling projects on the property, building fences for Jane’s ever growing petting zoo, full size horse, mini horse and mini donkey! Lastly, I enjoy cooking, my favorite is making a meal for Jane and my children on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon.

Bill has no real plans for retirement in the near future but he'll have plenty to keep him busy when the time comes.
In compliance with the Code of Federal regulation #49, Part 192.16, Austin Utilities must notify each customer who owns buried natural gas piping after the meter.

1. Austin Utilities does not maintain the customer’s buried piping.
2. If the customer’s buried piping is not maintained, it may be subject to the potential hazards of corrosion and leakage.
3. Buried gas piping should be:
   (a) periodically inspected for leaks.
   (b) periodically inspected for corrosion if the piping is metallic.
   (c) repaired if any unsafe condition is discovered.
4. When excavating near buried gas piping, the piping should be located in advance, and the excavation done by hand.
5. Austin Utilities and plumbing and heating contractors, can assist in locating, inspecting, and repairing the customer’s buried piping.

Customers with buried natural gas piping should feel free to contact Austin Utilities at 433-8886. You can also find information at www.austinutilities.com.

The Austin Utilities Board of Commissioners
Monthly Meeting was held on October 12, 2020. Agenda items included:

- City of Austin Right of Way Ordinance
- COVID-19 & customer accounts
- Amending AU bylaws

Meeting minutes are available at www.austinutilities.com