Austin Utilities reminds you to Fall back on November 1st by setting your clock back one hour at 2 am. It's also a good time to:

* Check the batteries on your thermostat – Not all thermostats have batteries but many models do.
* Check the batteries in your carbon monoxide detector – this gas is colorless and odorless so detectors are crucial for detecting leaks.
* Change the filter on your furnace - Changing your furnace filter as recommended is a very simple way to keep your indoor air clean and avoid costly repairs to your heating system.

We Speak Your Language
Meet Michelle Orozco. Michelle, who has been with AU since 2016, is our bilingual Customer Service Representative who is fluent in Spanish. Her skills have been an asset to our Spanish speaking customers who are transacting business with us. Austin has become a community of many languages, so we also use Google Translate to assist us in communicating with customers who speak other languages. We continue to look for customer-friendly ways that allow the community to do business with us.

Cold Weather Rule Reminder
The Cold Weather Rule (CWR) in Minnesota protects customers from being disconnected from October 15th through April 15th under special conditions. Contact our Customer Service staff at 507-433-8886 with any questions or to discuss payment plan options.

Weenies for Weenies
Drive thru our front lot and pick up a treat bag for the kids.

Salvation Army Food Drive & LED Handout
Drop off at least 2 non-perishable food items and receive an LED 3-way bulb.

Introducing Utility Buddy – your new public utility mascot
Austin Utilities has selected a mascot to represent our organization. Utility Buddy was born and raised in Austin MN and considers himself a hometown guy. Buddy comes from a "power-full" family. In other words – a long family history of utility workers. Just like our tagline Connections for Better Living, Buddy loves "connecting" with people in the community - especially connecting them with the employees and services available at Austin Utilities. He is a spunky, fun and lively guy and he loves giving high fives, low fives and fist bumps. He’s also a great dancer, so if you see him in public feel free to encourage him to show his moves. Growing up in Austin, some of his favorite pastimes include sledding down Skinners Hill and riding Austin’s bike trails.

You can look forward to seeing Buddy at utility sponsored events in the future. He’ll be making an appearance on several of our videos as we celebrate Public Power and Public Natural Gas week.

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UPDATE, WIN, & BE A HERO
Winner for August is Leroy Koll.

Austin Utilities Drive Thru Event
Thursday, October 29th 1-6 pm
HALLOWEEN DRIVE THRU TRICK OR TREATING
Drive thru our front lot and pick up a treat bag for the kids.

AUSTIN UTILITIES BLOOD DRIVE
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 5TH
1908 14TH ST NE

The blood donation process is safe and staff members are taking extra precautions to ensure they protect donors, volunteers and the general public. To support social distancing, appointments are required. Visit www.redcrossblood.org for appointments and more information.

AU Enhances Application Service
Austin Utilities customers can now apply for utility service online using their computer or smartphone. As we continue to enhance the way we serve our customers, we have added a new secure online application service. Customers will no longer be required to come to our office to start new service or move service to a new location. The addition of this new service comes at a time when many are looking for options to manage business remotely. Of course, for those who still prefer to do business in person, our office is open limited hours. We ask customers to wear a mask and practice social distancing when they come to our office.

The Austin Utilities Board of Commissioners
Monthly Meeting was held on September 8th, 2020. Agenda items included:
- GIS project update
- COVID-19 & customer accounts
- Amending AU bylaws

Meeting minutes are available at www.austinutilities.com

Australian Utilities Office
Wed., Nov. 11th, 2020
Veterans Day
Honoring all who served

AUSTIN UTILITIES BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
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Employee Spotlight

Pat Andera - Journey Line Worker

Pat started his AU career in 1994 as a journey line worker in the Electric department. Prior to joining AU Pat was a journey line worker at Owatonna Public Utilities. After a few years specializing in the electric meter shop at AU, Pat has returned to his line worker roots. All in all, Pat has spent 31 years of his life providing electricity to Minnesota customers, which he says is one of the best parts of his job. Pat also enjoys the troubleshooting aspect of his career and the challenges that come with it. He says "I like looking at things that aren't working and trying to figure out all the technical issues. It's a great feeling when you can solve a problem."

Outside of the office Pat enjoys spending time with his three children and four grandchildren who all live in the area. Hunting, fishing, camping, and trips to motocross events fill his weekends but he still manages to find time to practice his secret skill, butchering all kinds of animals. He developed a love for all things outdoors at a young age on the Andera family farm near Cresco, IA, which is still in the family with ownership split between the six children. Although retirement is still quite a few years off, Pat would like to spend some of that time visiting China, where a former exchange student he hosted lives. He's already been to Columbia to see two other exchange students who lived with him. In the meantime, you'll see Pat in the community, with his family, or on the job in an AU service truck.

Public Utility - Local Control

Each year during the first full week of October, we celebrate Public Power and Public Natural Gas week. One of the many benefits of being part of a public utility is local control. Your utility is locally controlled by a group of five elected commissioners. These unpaid elected volunteers attend board meetings held at 4 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month in the Austin Utilities Board Room. In addition to monthly meetings, each board participates in one of three committees: Budget Committee, Personnel Committee, and Mower County Water Management Committee, that meet periodically throughout the year. In total, this amounts to a monthly time commitment of approximately two hours per month, plus various special meetings.

Your current board members are:

Tom Baudler – Tom has been a board member since he was appointed to fill the position left after his father died in 1999. As a local attorney he brings experience in many areas especially legal and personnel issues.

Jeanne Sheehan – Jeanne was also appointed to her position when a member left mid-term in 2003 due to a work relocation. Her interest in serving grows as she continues to learn about the critical needs the utility provides to the community.

Tyler Hulsebus – Tyler has been a board member since 2016. His experience at Hormel Foods in engineering and maintenance allowed him to work with utility personnel and his participation in the Leadership Austin program sparked his interest to serve.

Steve Greenman – Steve was appointed to the board in 2018 to fill a resignation. As a local business owner, he has an interest in representing local business concerns.

Kris Johnson – Kris is our newest board member just recently appointed in 2020. She brings experience in her strong financial background that will be a benefit to the utility board.

How do Austin citizens get on the utility board?

Austin is unique in that utility board members are elected to serve 4-year terms. In order to run you must be 21, a resident of the City of Austin, who is not an employee of Austin Utilities, and a registered voter in the City of Austin. The cost to file is $25.