

## NPU announces improvements to online bill payment services

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve customer service and increase operational efficiency, Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) is pleased to announce a new online bill payment process. Working with Invoice Cloud, NPU will provide customers with greater ease and flexibility in viewing and paying utility bills online.

The new payment system will have the following advantages:

- Easier use and navigation
- Payments will be reflected in real time
- A single vendor will now process payments
- A one-time payment option without requiring registration

NPU's new payment portal will provide customers with quick access to accounts to view bills, check account balances, make payments and enroll in paperless billing.

Other features include an "at a glance" dashboard, email reminders, the ability to link multiple accounts, and more automatic options such as choosing a specific day for payments to process.

In time, NPU is considering plans that would allow customers to make phone payments 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through an automated payment line.

We are also considering an option to all customers to pay via a text message from a mobile phone.

This new payment system will require customers to re-register with Invoice Cloud, a simple process that should take less than three minutes. Feel free to contact us at 860-887-2555 if you have any questions regarding re-registering for online payments.

**PAY BILL ONLINE**

Visit [www.norwichpublicutilities.com](http://www.norwichpublicutilities.com) to pay online.

## NPU renews commitment to AFVs

NPU marked Earth Day 2017 by renewing its commitment to Alternative Fuel Vehicles (AFVs) and released the results of the Norwich Clean Cities program for 2016.

In 2016, 38 NPU vehicles, using bio-diesel or compressed natural gas (CNG) fuels were responsible for the avoided use of 26,642 gallons of gasoline and a reduction of 40.7 tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

NPU also dispensed nearly 100,000 gallons of CNG at its fueling stations on North Main Street and West Town Streets. The use of this fuel was responsible for the avoided use of nearly

93,000 gallons of gasoline and a reduction of 119.8 tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

NPU continues to serve as the host agency for Norwich Clean Cities, a coalition of 29 public and private entities in the New London and Windham counties.

As a group in 2016, Norwich Clean Cities was responsible for the avoided use of 391,066 gallons of gasoline through the use of alternative fuel vehicles, electric and plug-in vehicles, hybrid vehicles and reduction in miles traveled, such as car-pooling and mass transportation. These collective efforts reduced greenhouse gas emissions in Connecticut by more than 3,000 tons.



A CNG Class 8 tractor trailer fueling at NPU's West Town Street fueling station

## Ten Tips...

from Energy.gov to save energy  
this summer.

1. **Set your thermostat as high as comfortably possible.** The smaller the difference between indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your overall cooling bill will be.
2. **Avoid setting your thermostat at a colder setting than normal when you turn on your air conditioner.** It will not cool your home any faster and could result in excessive cooling and unnecessary expense.
3. **Use a ceiling fan to increase cooling efficiency.** If you use air conditioning, a ceiling fan will allow you to raise the thermostat setting about 4° F with no reduction in comfort.
4. **Turn off fans when leaving the room.** Fans cool people, not rooms, by creating a wind chill effect.
5. **Avoid placing lamps or TVs near your room air conditioning thermostat.** The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which causes the air conditioner to run longer than necessary.
6. **Don't heat up your home with appliances and lighting.** On hot days, avoid using the oven; use a microwave oven or grill outside.
7. **Take advantage of daylight instead of artificial lighting,** but avoid direct sunlight.
8. **Wash full loads of laundry and dishes** and consider air drying both.
9. **Lower your water heating costs.** Take short showers instead of baths and turn down the temperature of your water heater to a warm setting.
10. **Keep hot air from leaking into your home.** Seal cracks and openings to prevent warm air from leaking into your home.

Source: <https://energy.gov/energysaver/spring-and-summer-energy-saving-tips>

**The 2016 Water Quality Report is  
available on  
[www.norwichpublicutilities.com](http://www.norwichpublicutilities.com)**

## A minute with the Mayor:

# Eruv established in Norwich



Deb Hinchey  
Mayor of Norwich

Earlier this year, I was approached by representatives from Congregation Brothers of Joseph with an invitation to learn more about their plans for establishing an Eruv, which is an important religious boundary that is set around several neighborhoods that include Jewish homes.

The Eruv, which utilizes pre-existing infrastructure (primarily utility poles) allows observant Jews to take part in public activities that would otherwise not be allowed on the Sabbath - when these families are forbidden from carrying objects outside, driving or riding in any vehicle from sundown on Friday until sundown on Saturday. As long as an individual is within an Eruv, they are permitted to carry or push objects, such as baby strollers.

In Norwich, the Eruv covers the residential area surrounding the synagogue on Broad Street and it encompasses a number of businesses, stores, and hundreds of homes, including those of many families who are members of the Brothers of Joseph community.

Eruvs have been around for more than 2,000 years and are present in urban areas around the world. A number of cities in Connecticut – West Hartford, New Haven, Stamford and Waterbury – have established Eruvs.

In learning more about this project, I was told that an Eruv is often a catalyst for economic development as many Modern Orthodox Jewish families want to live and raise a family in very close proximity to their synagogue, and other recreational locations that would otherwise be difficult to reach during the Sabbath.

According to Alan Merriman, a representative from Brothers of Joseph, Norwich and Southeastern Connecticut are a very appealing place to live, given the variety of economic and cultural activities in the region, proximity to Boston and New York and the affordability of homes relative to other cities in the Northeast.

Merriman hopes that the Eruv associated with the Brothers of Joseph community will lead to more homes being purchased, more families coming to Norwich and more businesses opening and succeeding in our city. He hopes that the Eruv in Norwich will be helpful in their efforts to expand the Brothers of Joseph membership in the months and years to come.

## NPU Steam Plant becomes part of history

NPU recently demolished its former Steam Plant Control Building which had outlived its use and has been empty for nearly 20 years. Given the physical condition of the building and its proximity to the adjacent railroad line, taking the building down was the safest and most practical step for NPU to take.

### History of the Steam Plant Control Building:

Construction of the building was completed in 1890 by the former Norwich Electric and Light Company, just eight years after Thomas Edison oversaw construction of the world's first electric generating facility at the Pearly Street Station in New York City.

NPU's facility was expanded over the years to keep pace with the growing demand for electricity,

The Hurricane of 1938 destroyed a great deal of NPU's electric distribution system and as part of the rebuilding process, a new 7500 kW, 3-phase generator was installed. This generator was large enough

to meet the electrical needs of the entire city at that time.

Between 1943 and 1945 the plant was shut down by order of the War Production Board, which oversaw the conversion of industries from peacetime work to wartime needs. During this time, the City purchased its power from Connecticut Light & Power.



Interior of the Steam Plant Control Building, circa 1940s

In 1970, NPU shut down the Steam Plant and abandoned the building, other than the Control Room which remained in place until 1999, when it was replaced to the Operations Building at 16 South Golden Street.

## NPU employees L.E.A.D. by example

Several NPU employees recently spoke to this year's participants in the Greater Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce's L.E.A.D. Program.

L.E.A.D., which stands for Leadership Exploration and Development, is a community-based program that develops knowledgeable, committed, and action-oriented community leaders. Participants include local business professionals from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives.

In addition to identifying emerging leaders and enhancing leadership competencies, the program is designed to demonstrate how strong leadership can improve businesses and support our community.

NPU employees Jeff Brining, David Poore, Chris Riley, Laura Huren, Chris LaRose, and Fawn Walker spoke to the current class, outlining their responsibilities at NPU as well as their career paths. A tour of NPU's facilities was also included.

For more information about the Greater Norwich Chamber of Commerce's L.E.A.D. Program, contact the Chamber at 860-887-1647 or visit [www.norwichchamber.com/lead-leadership.html](http://www.norwichchamber.com/lead-leadership.html).

### HERE TO SERVE YOU

Visit our website for more information: [norwichpublicutilities.com](http://norwichpublicutilities.com)

Please call, fax or e-mail us your questions, comments and suggestions.

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