

# NPyou!



WINTER 2017

A community newsletter  
for the customers of  
**Norwich  
Public Utilities**

## NPU completes water testing program

Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) has successfully completed a comprehensive water testing program that confirms that its water quality is well within the federal and state standards for both copper and lead.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Connecticut Department of Public Health require regular testing for copper and lead by public water systems across the country. Because of its very strong public health and safety record, NPU is required to test for copper and lead less frequently, every three years.

Between July and September this year, NPU collected and analyzed water samples from 30 residential locations in its service territory. NPU's testing program was accepted by the Connecticut Department of Public Health and the properties targeted by NPU were those where the presence of lead piping was most likely.

Water samples taken at all 30 locations were below federal and state action levels for the presence of both copper and lead.

NPU has conducted extensive inspections of its existing infrastructure along with historical records and have not identified any lead service pipes on its property. However, NPU's infrastructure ends at the property line of the residences and businesses it serves.

Given the age of the housing stock in Norwich and the other communities served by NPU, it is probable that a very small percentage of residences still have lead water services on their property. The only way to be certain of the presence of lead in a home is to have a reputable plumber inspect a home's service line, internal pipes, lead solders and fixtures that may contain lead.

While the lead levels for NPU's water supply are below the action level, customers who are concerned about lead exposure in their home are encouraged to ask their health care providers about testing children to determine levels of lead in their blood.

## Drought-like conditions persist

Water levels at reservoirs across Connecticut are at well below normal levels for this time of the year. This photo, taken at the end of November, shows how low the water level is at the Stony Brook Reservoir, one of two reservoirs that supply water to Norwich. Under normal conditions, most of what you see in the foreground of the photo would be under water.



At this stage, NPU has issued an Alert, asking customers to voluntarily reduce demand on the water system by 10 to 20 percent. We have also been in contact with large commercial water users to determine where the potential for conservation exists. We are also evaluating emergency supply options, including the use of the Norwichtown well, should drought conditions continue in the future.

Internally we have instituted a number of water conservation measures, such as reviewing and adjusting our leak detection and repair program and postponing non-essential repairs that could result in reduced supply. We also eliminated our fall hydrant flushing program.

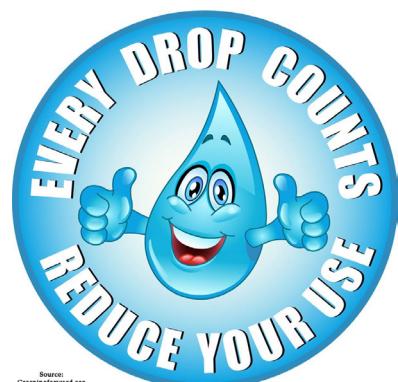
Please help us weather the drought by conserving water where ever possible.

## Ten Tips...

To reduce the amount of water used in your home:

1. **Repair leaky faucets.** Be sure to check both indoor and outdoor faucets for leaks.
2. **Repair leaky toilets.** Add 12 drops of food coloring into the tank. If the color appears in the bowl an hour later, your toilet is leaking.
3. **Run full loads of laundry.** If purchasing a new machine, buy a water saving model that can be adjusted by load size.
4. **Take short showers instead of baths.** Keep your shower to 5 minutes or less to save up to 1,000 gallons of water per month.
5. **Turn off water to brush teeth, soap up in the shower and shave.** Fill your sink to shave and save up to 300 gallons a month.
6. **Run the dishwasher only when full.** When purchasing a new dishwasher, select one with a 'light wash' option.
7. **Use the garbage disposal only when necessary.** Composting is a great alternative.
8. **Install faucet aerators and low-flow shower heads.**
9. **Don't use running water to thaw food.** Instead, thaw in the refrigerator -- it's safer and uses no water.
10. **Cook food in as little water as possible.** Not only does it cut down on water usage, it also helps retain more nutrients.

For more water saving ideas, visit [www.wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve](http://www.wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve)



Source:  
GreeningForward.org

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*A minute with the Mayor:*

# Cities must be ready to adapt to workforces change



**Deb Hinckley**  
Mayor of Norwich

I recently came across a very interesting study from the National League of Cities (NLC), *The Future of Work in Cities*, which examines the impact that evolving technology has on the American workforce. The report is focused on two sectors of the economy – retail and office administration – that employ nearly 25% of all Americans in today's economy.

"While fear about technology taking away jobs is nothing new, cities can be proactive rather than reactive in planning for a constantly evolving economy,"

said Clarence Anthony, NLC's CEO and executive director. "Local leadership is vital to creating an economy that works for everyone, where every resident has an ability to make a decent living and an opportunity for economic mobility."

*The Future of Work in Cities* assesses a number of strategies for public officials and policy makers to consider as our national workforce continues to adapt. These proposals include:

- Investing in digital and physical infrastructure that supports modern working patterns
- Rethinking education and workforce training programs to meet employer needs
- Ensuring equality is considered in business development programs
- Supporting entrepreneurs and startup companies

Here in Norwich, many of the resources needed to act on these ideas are already

in place, from first-rate traditional and technical high schools, a strong community college, and a highly motivated workforce in a civically-minded community.

I have been impressed with the initial reaction to Foundry 66 in the old Norwich Bulletin building on Franklin Street that offers temporary working space for small and micro businesses who can take advantage of a variety of shared services including copiers, WiFi, and meeting spaces.

Given our proximity between New York and Boston and the availability of high-speed rail service, easy access to I-95, and the high quality of life in our region, Norwich and Eastern Connecticut do not have to take a back seat to any state or region in the Northeast in terms of economic development.

## Remove snow from gas meters this winter

Norwich Public Utilities reminds customers to be aware of a number of critical safety tips regarding their natural gas meters. It is important to keep the area around the meter free from snow. Fire departments and other emergency response agency personnel must have access to gas meters in case of an emergency shut-off situation.

NPU Meter Readers also need access to the meters if customers want to avoid an estimated bill.

When removing snow around gas meters:

1) Make sure you know the exact location of your meter before you begin to remove snow.

2) Maintain a safe distance between gas meters and shovels, snow blowers, and other equipment while shoveling.



3) NEVER push snow against gas meters, gas piping, or appliance vents and make sure all vents are free of snow or other obstructions.

4) NEVER pile snow on top of gas meters, gas piping, or appliance vents.

All natural gas customers should be aware that gas meters that are buried in deep snow or damaged by snow removal equipment could begin to leak. Gas meter leaks are a potentially hazardous situation.

Customers are encouraged to report any problems with their meters to NPU's gas emergency line at **860-887-7207**. If there is a natural gas odor present, exit the premises and call 911 right away. Natural gas has a rotten egg-like odor.

## NPU employees support United Way

NPU kicked off its annual Giving Campaign this year by selling breakfast sandwiches to employees, with proceeds going to the Southeastern Connecticut United Way. This was just one of several fundraising events planned during the holiday season. Other events included Team Jersey day, where employees paid a donation to wear their favorite sports team jersey, soup and sandwich day, a chili cook-off, and a holiday cookie swap.

These events led up to the start of the Giving Campaign, where employees donate a portion of their pay each week. This year's goal is to top the \$33,000 raised last year by NPU employees.



*Customer Service Center representatives took part in Team Jersey Day, benefiting the United Way.*

Have you tried NPU's online bill payment? It's the fastest and easiest way to pay your utility bill. Visit [www.norwichpublicutilities.com](http://www.norwichpublicutilities.com) to sign up.

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