

# NPU you!



A community newsletter  
for the customers of

**Norwich  
Public Utilities**

## Congressman Courtney visits NPU to discuss federal investment opportunities

Congressman Joe Courtney visited Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) in November to discuss a variety of infrastructure and economic development projects that could be suitable for federal investment in light of the bill recently signed into law by President Biden. The NPU projects span all four utility services – natural gas, electric, water, and wastewater, in addition to projects that could support economic development in Norwich in the years ahead.

The meeting with Congressman Courtney also included a tour and overview of NPU's wastewater plant, which will undergo a major upgrade beginning in 2022, with construction expected to begin next summer.

NPU also highlighted for the Congressman its commitment to 'human infrastructure' and provided a summary of the support that has been provided to customers who have had difficulty in paying their bills as a result of the pandemic. This support includes:

- More than \$750,000 in support facilitated through the Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA); NPU pays the salary of a TVCCA employee to work from our Customer



*Pictured, from left to right: Larry Sullivan, NPU Integrity Mgr.; Congressman Courtney; Chris LaRose, NPU GM*

Service Center to process applications for utility assistance.

- More than \$150,000 in support through the State's UniteCT program, with the possibility of additional funding being available in the months ahead.
- \$110,000 in support through the Community Development Block Grant program; Congressman Courtney's advocacy for this funding was critical
- NPU's Special Payment Arrangement (SPA) program, which allows eligible customers to pay a portion of their past-due utility bills penalty and interest-free, over 20 months. This program has helped more than 1,200 customers (residential and commercial) with collective balances of more than \$1.4 million

## Natural Gas Safety: Removing snow from meters

Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) reminds natural gas customers to be aware of a number of safety tips regarding their gas meters this winter.

It is important to keep the area around the meter free from snow so that fire departments and other emergency response agency personnel have access to gas meters in case of an emergency shut-off situation.

NPU Meter Readers also need easy access to the meters so that we can avoid estimating usage for customer bills.

When removing snow around gas meters:

- Make sure you know the exact location of your meter before you begin to remove snow.
- Maintain a safe distance between gas meters and shovels, snow blowers,

and other equipment while shoveling.

- **Never** push snow against gas meters, gas piping, or appliance vents and make sure all vents are free of snow or other obstructions.
- **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, which could lead to 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 - natural gas smells like rotten eggs - exit the premises and call 911 immediately.

## Ten Programs...

to save you money:

**NPU offers a variety of programs and rebates to save customers money by lowering energy consumption and improve energy efficiency.**

1. Home Energy Savings (HES) - Customers can schedule a free assessment to see how you make your home more energy efficient. Call Lantern Energy at 1-877-878-3006 to schedule an appointment.
2. Electric water heater rebate - Replace an old, inefficient water heater with an Energy Star certified energy efficient model and receive a rebate of up to \$500.
3. Window air conditioner rebate - Before purchasing a new window a/c unit, make sure to buy one that's Energy Star certified and get \$60 back from NPU (up to 3 units).
4. Wall or attic insulation program - NPU customers are eligible for a rebate of up to \$1/square foot for wall insulation, and up to \$1.50/square foot for attic insulation.
5. CHIPP - Take advantage of NPU's Cooling and Heating Incentive Pilot Program and receive a rebate of \$2,400 per ton when you purchase and install a heat pump system. Enjoy efficient heat in the winter and cooling in summer from one system.
6. Cool Choice Program - If CHIPP isn't a fit for you, take advantage of the Cool Choice rebate when you install a high efficiency central air system or heat pump.
7. Natural gas heating rebate - NPU offers sizable rebates for the purchase and installation of new, high efficiency natural gas-fueled boilers or furnaces.
8. Natural gas water heater rebate - Receive a rebate up to \$450 by installing an on-demand tankless or indirect-fired water heater.
9. Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) rebate - NPU offers rebates for high efficiency VFDs for qualifying commercial/industrial customers.
10. 0% Financing Program - To help offset the cost of making improvements and upgrades to increase energy efficiency, qualifying customers can apply for specially financing from one of our lending partners.

Program details and forms are available at [norwichpublicutilities.com](http://norwichpublicutilities.com) or call 860-887-2555 for additional information.

## A minute with the Mayor:

# Staying strong and optimistic in 2022



Mayor Peter Nystrom

As we begin 2022, I fully understand that just about everyone in our community has been as patient and persistent as they could have possibly been over the past 21 months. There has been so much change, delay

and inconvenience related to the pandemic, above and beyond all of the sickness, death and sadness in Norwich and around the world. But I have always been a firm believer in the old adage that adversity does not develop one's character, it reveals it.

As I begin my latest term as Mayor of Norwich, I am more and more certain that Norwich has revealed great character throughout the pandemic, and as a result, we will emerge as a stronger community when this unprecedented event is behind us.

There are many signs for optimism in our midst – from the tireless and inspirational

healthcare professionals on the front lines, to everyone in our school system who are caring for and educating our kids; the men and women of the Norwich Fire Department and Norwich Police Department, our volunteer fire departments and first responders have all been there for the public when they have been needed, no matter when or how frequently, without question, without fail.

The economic damage created by the pandemic may have dampened the spirits for many of our small businesses, but so many of them have adapted and adjusted to the changing environment, and will emerge even stronger.

Our ethnic restaurants – the heartbeat of our community – found innovative ways to connect with and serve their patrons. All of this adversity has brought about creativity and new strategies, and this helped us all get through the biggest obstacle in anyone's memory.

America always bounces back – that's part of what makes this country great. And the

recovery from the pandemic might take a while longer, but there is no question that the United States – and Norwich – will be back stronger than ever.

We are on the brink of enormous economic investment by the federal and state governments that will make our infrastructure stronger, our communities safer and healthier, while creating jobs and rebuilding our neighborhoods. None of this will be easy but it is inevitable.

In the coming months, the City of Norwich will be working with our federal and state officials to determine the size, scope, and timing for these investments that have the opportunity to move the Rose City forward in a very significant way.

This work will be difficult and time consuming, but we all must work together to be sure that everything is accomplished in a timely manner.

Please join me in staying strong and being optimistic about Norwich in 2022 and beyond.

## Solar Seal Architectural to open major manufacturing facility in Norwich Business Park

Solar Seal Architectural, a leader in the architectural glass fabrication industry, has signed a 10-year lease to occupy the 200,000 square foot building at 40 Wisconsin Avenue in the Norwich Business Park.

As part of its relocation, Solar Seal Architectural will be the first company to take advantage of NPU's new economic development rate which provides a discounted electric rate for large commercial customers. The company's electric rate will be discounted by approximately 13% in 2022, with their rates gradually returning to the existing commercial rate over the next four years.

Solar Seal Architectural has already begun the hiring process and expects to have up to 100 employees at the facility, once the necessary renovations in the building have been completed. The company makes high-quality commercial, curtain-wall glass frequently used in large building towers, with many completed projects in the Eastern United States.

Eventually, the company anticipates having three shifts of operations in Norwich to meet the growing demand for their products. The Norwich facility will allow Solar Seal Architectural to service their primary markets in the Northeast United States and Canada; the company already has more than 100 employees in its South Easton, MA location.



Several NPU employees and family participated in this year's Winterfest parade

After an absence in 2020 due to the pandemic, NPU employees and family members were excited to participate in the 2021 Winterfest Parade, held in downtown Norwich on Sunday, November 28th. NPU joined other community groups, businesses, fire departments and more to help kick off the holiday season in our community.

## NPU marks Public Power Week with contribution to UCFS

In recognition of Public Power Week (October 3-9, 2021), Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) made a \$1,000 donation to United Community & Family Services (UCFS) in recognition of the outstanding job its front-line healthcare workers have done for the region throughout the pandemic.

Every day over the past twenty months, UCFS has been at the forefront of the battle against Covid, promoting public health and safety through a variety of programs and services. Throughout the pandemic, UCFS has been meeting the needs of the community in many ways, including:

- Administering more than 13,000 Covid tests
- Providing more than 10,000 vaccinations
- Establishing and running a drive-through food pantry that has provided food to more than 16,000 people.

Public Power Week is an annual national observance coordinated by the American Public Power Association. The American Public Power Association is the voice of not-for-profit, community-owned utilities that power 2,000 towns and cities nationwide. More information is available at [www.PublicPower.org](http://www.PublicPower.org).

### HERE TO SERVE YOU

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