

NPU you!



A community newsletter for the customers of

Norwich Public Utilities

NPU secures \$4.4 million to continue wastewater system upgrades in Greenville

Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) has been awarded \$4.4 million through the State of Connecticut's Clean Water Fund Priority List. The list, which is administered by the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, is a roadmap for improving wastewater infrastructure across Connecticut.

NPU will receive \$4.4 million to continue its work of 're-lining' its aged sewer mains in Greenville; 50% will be grant-funded, 50% will be a low-interest (2%) loan repaid over 20 years.

There are approximately 27,000 linear feet of piping that needs to be replaced; 6,000 feet have been completed over the past four years. NPU records indicate that these pipes were installed between 1885 and 1950.

The existing pipes allow for a significant amount of "inflow and infiltration" which can overtax the combined flow pipe network during significant rain events; this results in more frequent overflows with larger volumes of combined discharge.

The liner pipe is installed inside the existing "host"

pipe which removes rain and groundwater from the pipe network providing more capacity in NPU's system.

When complete, we estimate that these improvements will reduce the amount of wastewater being discharged into the Shetucket River by millions of gallons per year. This will benefit every community between Norwich and Long Island Sound along the Thames River for generations to come.

This funding will be used to reline pipes from approximately St. Joseph's Cemetery, south along North Main Street and Central Avenue, to Hickory Street.

In addition, an RFP is about to be advertised for the next phase of the I&I removal project through previously secured funding of \$1.4 million that is anticipated to be undertaken in the Spring, 2025.

NPU has also secured \$1.6 million through the advocacy of Senators Blumenthal, Murphy and Congressman Courtney to reline more of this infrastructure.

NPU preparing for hurricane season

Extensive planning is key to safe, effective restoration efforts

As hurricane season for 2024 moves forward, Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) continues its extensive efforts to prepare for severe weather that could impact utility services for its customers in the weeks and months ahead.

Ahead of every major storm, NPU confirms that it has the appropriate materials, equipment, and personnel in place to respond to an emergency; in some instances, NPU may pre-stage vehicles and equipment across the city to allow for a more immediate response to large-scale emergency. Over the past several months, NPU's annual pre-hurricane season preparations have been reviewed and confirmed, including:

- Tree trimming – Throughout the year, NPU line crews and two contractors tree crews work on tree trimming and removing heavy vegetation, especially vine growth in targeted areas.
- Contractors crews – NPU has confirmed the availability of additional contractor tree crews that are assigned to the utility; additional assistance will be secured by NPU if necessary.
- Mutual aid - NPU has mutual aid agreements with the Northeast Public Power Association (NEPPA) and the American Public Power Association (APPA). If a storm is localized to lower New England, crews from other NEPPA members will be able to send line crews to assist with restoration efforts in Norwich.

NPU will also utilize two important technologies to provide regular updates to the public before and during a major storm:

- The Outage Map on the NPU website (www.norwichpublicutilities.com) provides customers with a snapshot of outages across the city. The map updates every ten minutes and displays clusters of customers out of service, not individual homes or businesses. Should a customer see that an outage is impacting their neighborhood on the outage map, a call into NPU's Customer Service Center will not be necessary.
- NPU will also use its 'robo-call' system, CodeRed, if necessary, to make automated calls to customers to provide updates on outages, progress with restoration, and important safety messages. NPU is encouraging customers to confirm that NPU has the most up-to-date phone numbers for these notifications.

NPU IS PREPARING FOR HURRICANE SEASON

We are ready to respond.

Norwich Public Utilities

Six Ways... to detect a natural gas leak

Share this important safety information with all members of your household

1. **Smell.** Natural gas has no natural odor, so a chemical called Mercaptan is added which gives off an odor similar to that of a rotten egg or burnt match. This is the most common way natural gas leaks are detected.
2. **Noise.** Escaping natural gas from pipes and appliances can produce a hissing sound.
3. **Air bubbles.** If you see bubbles in standing water such as puddle or even mud, this may be a sign of natural gas leaking through the soil.
4. **Dead or dying plants.** If you notice plants or shrubs dying for no logical reason, this could be an indication of a natural gas leak.
5. **Higher than normal gas usage.** An unexplained increase in the amount of natural gas use, not due to seasonal weather or changes in the household, could indicate a leak.
6. **Physical symptoms.** Symptom of exposure to leaking natural gas can include headaches, dizziness, fatigue, nausea, or irregular breathing.

What to do if you suspect a natural gas leak?

First and foremost, everyone should leave the premises immediately. Do not turn on or shut off any lights, appliances, electronics or other devices that could cause a spark. Once you are a safe distance away, call 9-1-1.



A minute with the Mayor:

Marina re-development in Norwich - A tremendous opportunity



Mayor Peter Nystrom

The key to almost any successful endeavor is to play to your strengths: what makes you, your idea or project, different, more appealing, and entertaining.

And for far too long, the marina in, Downtown Norwich, one of our more remarkable community assets, has been under-utilized and overlooked, and sadly, even forgotten by some of us.

But now, momentum is building to behind the idea of reimagining the area in and around the Yantic, Shetucket and Thames Rivers into a more vibrant, active site that could lead significant economic development in our city for years to come.

The Norwich Community Development Corporation (NCDC) is leading a community discussion on how our community can best move forward: do we demolish the existing building or renovate the 'towers' to accommodate new tenants? Visit envisiornorwich360.com to join others in our community who have expressed their opinion on this exciting opportunity.

The marina has always been among the most scenic



views in Norwich, even during its dormant days. But with the right ideas and investments, it can be the hub for so much activity that will benefit our community and our region for years to come. Fun and active public spaces, opportunities for public and private events, more dining options, and the potential for marine traffic and housing are all possible.

In other communities, waterfront development leads to a variety of options for shopping, dining, and gathering. And if we work together, there is absolutely no reason that Norwich can't have this, too.

But as the old saying goes, if this were easy, it would've happened already.

Yet at the same time, there is cause for real optimism, beyond all of the public and private investments we are seeing in the Rose City. According to the Connecticut Town Economic Index (CTEI) from the State of Connecticut's Department of Labor,

Norwich is performing very strongly in comparison to the other 24 largest cities in our state.

The study looks at the overall economic health based on business establishments, employment, wages, and unemployment and indicates that Norwich is bouncing back strongly from the considerable challenges of the pandemic.

Rebuilding and reimagining our marina will be a very considerable undertaking and likely require investment from private, federal, and state sources. But there is growing interest in this opportunity – and momentum for this idea is growing.

Consider supporting Operation Fuel

Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) is proud to support the critical work of Operation Fuel, an organization that works tirelessly to ensure that all people in Connecticut can access affordable heat, energy, and water. Operation Fuel also advocates for improving the health and economic wellbeing of all people in Connecticut by reducing their energy burden.

In 2023, NPU customers contributed nearly \$3,500 to Operation Fuel by adding \$1, \$5, or \$10 to their monthly bills.

In the 2024-2025 heating season, NPU will match all customer contributions to Operation Fuel to support their critical work.

Please consider making a small one-time or recurring contribution to Operation Fuel on your NPU bill, which includes a box to check to confirm your contribution.

To learn more about this organization, please visit www.operationfuel.org.



NPU continues partnership with United Way

Throughout the year, the NPU United Way Planning Committee brings employees together by hosting fundraising programs including bake sales, breakfasts, potlucks, and more. All proceeds are donated to United Way and support basic needs for families in Southeastern Connecticut.



Call 8-1-1

It's free. Safety first.



Norwich Public Utilities



Before You Dig



Know what's below. Call before you dig.

HERE TO SERVE YOU

Visit our website for more information: norwichpublicutilities.com
Please call, fax or e-mail us your questions, comments and suggestions.
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