

NIP you!



A community newsletter
for the customers of

**Norwich
Public Utilities**

NPU receives \$10M PHMSA grant

In April, Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) was awarded a grant for \$10.9 million through the Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant Program, which is administered by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). This funding follows a \$10 million grant that was announced by NPU in April of 2023.

NPU's applications proposed the disconnection and abandonment of 10.1 miles of higher-risk gas mains and the installation of 9.04 miles of new, high-density polyethylene (HDPE) gas mains throughout Norwich over the next five years.

Per the terms of these two grants, NPU will receive \$21,597,000 for work that will be completed between 2024 and 2028.

NPU is collaborating with PHMSA on the engineering, timing and logistics of the work and will then develop a construction schedule, engage with local contractors, secure materials and supplies, and get started.

"Norwich Public Utilities is very grateful to receive this very significant funding from PHMSA and the U.S. Department of Transportation," said Chris LaRose, General Manager of NPU. "This funding will allow us to improve public safety and reduce leaks across our system, bringing enormous benefit to our community years ahead of schedule."

"We appreciate the continued support and advocacy for NPU by Senators Blumenthal and Murphy, Congressman Courtney and the American Public Gas Association," said LaRose.



Congressman Joe Courtney, Mayor Peter Nystrom, and NPU General Manager Chris LaRose were joined by a number of federal officials at City Hall on April 22, 2024.

NPU budget for Fiscal Year 2025 approved

The Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) budget for Fiscal Year 2025, which is part of the City's overall budget, was approved by the Norwich City Council on June 10.

Per the approved budget, NPU's payment to the City next year will be \$10.3 million, the largest in NPU history. Per the City Charter, this payment is based on 10% of gross revenue from natural gas, electric and water sales and is \$1.2 million more than the payment to the City for Fiscal Year 2024. Over the past ten years, NPU has returned more than \$88 million to the City. NPU's revenues for next year are estimated to be down nearly \$3.9 million, which is a direct saving for our customers. And NPU expenses are anticipated to be down \$1.9 million, which reflects the decrease in wholesale energy (the natural gas and electricity we buy for our customers) costs.

In the new budget, NPU will invest \$108.5 million to fund a variety of critical projects and improvements across all four of our utilities, including:

- \$82.33 million for the continued upgrades at our Wastewater Treatment Plant
- \$14.35 million to upgrade and replace natural gas and water mains
- \$2.2 million in water storage tank improvements

NPU will also utilize very significant grant funding from federal and state sources which also reduces costs for our customers. These funds include \$31.6 million through the Clean Water Fund, \$5.3 million through the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (first installment of \$21 million over the next several years), and \$1.5 million through the Clean Water Fund.

Ten Tips...for a safe summer

Summer is a great time to enjoy the outdoors, stay active, and have fun. Make sure you take steps to avoid illness or injury this year:

1. Avoid heat exhaustion or heat stroke by staying hydrated, wear loose, lightweight clothing, and avoid spending time outdoors during the hottest part of the day (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.).
2. Use insect repellent to prevent contracting mosquito-borne illnesses.
3. Nearly 80% of playground injuries are caused by falls. Before letting your children play, look for any potential hazards. Limit playtime during peak sun exposure times if shade is limited.
4. Fireworks are a major cause of injuries and fires every year. Even sparklers can cause burns. Leave fireworks to the experts.
5. Water safety should be everyone's priority, no matter your age. Never leave a child unattended near water, never swim alone and only swim in areas supervised by a lifeguard. Don't dive in unless you are sure the water is deep enough.
6. At the beach, don't underestimate the power of water and watch for strong currents and undertows.
7. Never drink alcohol when operating a boat, and always have enough life jackets for all passengers.
8. Always wear a helmet when riding a bike and make sure it fits properly. If riding a bike at night, wear reflective clothing and use flashing lights.
9. When riding a bike on the road, follow the same rules as motorists. Ride single-file in the same direction as traffic and use hand signals when turning at intersections.
10. When out walking, pay attention to your surroundings. Walk on sidewalks if possible; if not, walk facing traffic and use crosswalks. Avoid distracted walking (using a cell phone or wearing ear buds). Wear bright and/or reflective clothing and use a flashlight at night.

Are you planning to paint or replace siding on your house this summer? Contact NPU at least three business days before starting to have us wrap the electric service wires attached to the house for your safety. There is no cost for this service. Call 860-887-2555 or visit: www.NorwichPublicUtilities.com

A minute with the Mayor:

Blight is an ongoing battle in Norwich



Mayor Peter Nystrom

As I meet with or run into residents each week around Norwich, a topic that is regularly brought up is our community's ongoing challenge of blight. Whether it is intentional or unintentional, far too many people

are not doing their part and leaving refuse in their yards, on the curb, or our sidewalks.

Not only is this an unpleasant and unnecessary situation; it is illegal. But there is a very easy, free solution to this issue that I strongly encourage everyone to consider as we all spend more time outdoors in the nicer weather.

Residents of Norwich who are served by Willimantic Waste are entitled to two bulky waste collections per calendar year. For multi-family dwellings, each unit is entitled to two bulky waste collections per calendar year. **Call Willimantic Waste Paper at (860) 423-4527 to schedule**

your bulky waste collection.

Any resident who places bulky waste outside of their home without scheduling an appointment for pickup will be subject to a possible fine by the City's Blight Enforcement officer.

Bulky waste piles must be placed neatly at the curbside with dimensions not exceeding 10 feet long x 6 feet wide x 4 feet high.

The following items are acceptable for a scheduled bulky waste pick-up:

- Household furniture - sofas, mattresses, chairs, bureaus, carpeting, etc. Carpeting must be folded and/or cut to a maximum length of four feet.
- Appliances such as household appliances such as washers, stoves
- Tires - a maximum of four automobile and/or small pickup truck tires will be picked up. Tires must be separated from the metal rim to be collected. Large truck tires will not be accepted.
- Metal – with a maximum length of eight feet and a maximum weight of fifty pounds, per piece.
- Scrap Wood- such as scrap lumber

from construction sites, excluding pressure-treated and/or creosote-treated wood.

The following items will NOT be picked up as part of this program, but they will be accepted at the Rogers Road Transfer Station:

- Electronics: Computer monitors, TVs, microwaves, etc.
- Appliances that contain Freon: Refrigerators, air conditioners, freezers, humidifiers/dehumidifiers
- Empty propane tanks
- Toilets, sinks, tubs & shower stalls
- C & D Waste (Construction and Demolition Debris): shingles, drywall, sheetrock, etc.
- Hazardous household waste items are not allowed for bulky waste pick up or disposal at the Transfer Station.

This program is an important part of keeping our community safe and livable. Please join me in this important initiative in the weeks and months to come.

Keeping Norwich clean and safe is everyone's responsibility and reflects the pride in our community that I know so many of our residents share.

Norwich Public Utilities Recognized as a Reliable Public Power Provider

Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) has been recognized by the American Public Power Association with the Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) award for our consistently reliable and safe electric service.

This designation acknowledges NPU's excellence in reliability, safety, workforce development, and system improvement. With a Diamond Level achievement and a 99% score on the APPA evaluation, NPU ranks in the top 5% of public power utilities nationwide. The APPA advocates for communities across the country, shaping electricity policy, technology, and operations for the benefit of millions of Americans.

The RP3 designation is for three years and NPU received this recognition in 2012, 2015, 2018, and 2021. This recognition reflects NPU's ongoing commitment to meeting high standards and ensuring dependable service for our community.



American Public Power Association

Gas Safety - Call 8-1-1 before you dig

8-1-1 is the national call-before-you-dig phone number. Anyone who plans to dig should call 8-1-1 or go to their state 8-1-1 center's website a few business days before digging to request that the approximate location of buried utilities be marked with paint or flags so that you don't unintentionally dig into an underground utility line.

8-1-1 protects you and your community. Hitting a buried line while digging can disrupt utility service, cost money to repair, or cause serious injury or death. Always contact your 8-1-1 center, wait the required time for utilities to respond to your request, and ensure that all utilities have responded to your request before putting a shovel in the ground.

Any digging requires contacting your 8-1-1 center, either by calling 8-1-1 from anywhere in the U.S. or making your request through your state 8-1-1 center's website. Planting a garden? Installing a fence or mailbox? You must contact 8-1-1.

When you dial 8-1-1, you will automatically be connected to a representative from the Connecticut 8-1-1 center who will ask you simple questions about the location and details of your digging project. If you make your request online, you will enter the same information into

a form. Either way, you will receive a ticket number and instructions for how much time utilities have to respond to your request, as well as how to confirm that all utilities have responded before you can safely dig.

Utilities will mark their buried lines on your dig site. In Connecticut, utility companies have a few days to respond to your request and

will send out locators who will come to your dig site to mark the approximate location of buried utilities with paint or flags so that you can avoid them. Each utility type corresponds to a specific color of paint or a flag -- for example, gas lines are marked with yellow paint or flags. In addition to waiting for marks, you must use the info on your ticket to confirm that all utilities have responded before you can 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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