

Ashon Avent elected Chairman of NPU Board of Commissioners



Chairman Ashon Avent of the NPU Board of Commissioners

During its May meeting, the Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) Board of Commissioners unanimously selected Ashon Avent to serve as its Chairman for the next year. Avent has been an NPU Commissioner since 2021.

“I am very excited to serve as Chairman of the Board of an organization that plays a such vital role in our community,” said Avent. “This is an exciting – and challenging – time for NPU with so many projects underway. It is important that our Board and our employees continue to focus

on what is best for all of our customers every single day.”

Avent is the owner of T-Shirt World, which produces and sells high-quality customer apparel, and recently opened a new store at the Tanger Foxwoods location in Mashantucket. He lives in the Laurel Hill section of Norwich and has been a resident of the city for more than ten years.

Mr. Avent is a graduate of Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU), received his MBA from Albertus Magnus College in New Haven and is pursuing his Doctorate in Business Administration from Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) in New Haven.

“We congratulate Ashon on being selected as our new Chairman and look forward to working with him during this pivotal time for our organization and our community,” said Chris LaRose, General Manager of NPU.

As part of the same meeting, the Board unanimously selected Commissioner Bill Warzecha as Vice Chairman and Commissioner Stewart Peil as Secretary of the Board; he served as Chairman of the NPU Board for the past three years.

NPU is ready for Hurricane Season

As hurricane season for 2025 moves along, Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) continues its comprehensive 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. If a storm is more wide-reaching and impacting most of New England, crews from the APPA mutual aid network would make crews from other parts of the country available to assist.

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

Our 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 automated phone calling system, if necessary to contact 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.

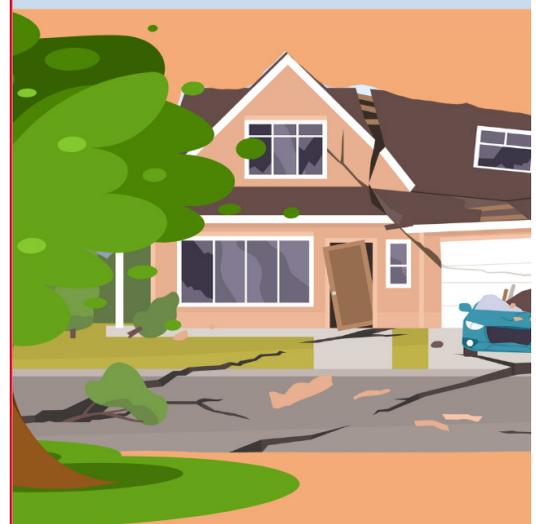
Five Tips...for a safe summer

1. Avoid heat exhaustion or heat stroke by staying hydrated, wearing loose, lightweight clothing, and avoid spending prolonged time outdoors during the hottest part of the day (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.).
2. Use insect repellent to avoid contracting bug-borne illnesses.
3. Nearly 80% of playground injuries are caused by falls. Look for any potential hazards on the playground. 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 their age. Never leave a child unattended near water, never swim alone, and only swim in areas supervised by a lifeguard. Don’t dive into water unless you are sure it is deep enough.

Are you planning to paint or replace siding on your house this summer? Contact NPU at least three business days before getting started to have us wrap the electric service wires attached to your house for your safety. There is no cost for this service. Call 860-887-2555 to learn more and to be added to the schedule.

HURRICANE SEASON

BE PREPARED



A minute with the Mayor:

Stanton School groundbreaking the latest great news for Norwich



Mayor Peter Nystrom

Public schools and public education are the foundation of every community in the United States. And in Norwich, the recent groundbreaking at the Stanton School builds on that tradition.

The existing Stanton School on New London Turnpike has educated tens of thousands of kids, generation after generation of Norwich families - for almost 100 years. And our new and improved Stanton School will provide the same invaluable resource in our community for tens of thousands of kids - most of whom have not been born yet - for many years to come.

This is a very significant milestone for our community - and represents an important investment by the taxpayers of Norwich in the future of our great city.

The residents of Norwich should be aware - and always remember - that the City will be reimbursed for 80% of the costs of construction for this project by the State of Connecticut, dramatically reducing the overall financial impact of this project.

For years, I have been joined by our state legislators and other community leaders in advocating for the greatest possible rate of reimbursement for our school construction projects. And, ultimately, we made a strong case for the State to partner with the City for the benefit of our community. I would like to publicly thank State Senator Cathy Osten, and State Representatives Kevin Ryan, Derell Wilson and Doug Dubitsky for their efforts on our behalf.

We have now secured the 80% reimbursement for the construction of four new schools, which will save our taxpayers millions of dollars in the years ahead. We expect to celebrate another groundbreaking at the Greenville School later this year.

My congratulations and appreciation are also extended to everyone who has played a part in this critical project - past and present City Council members, past and present members of the Board of Education, the School Building Committee, and the many volunteers and supporters, both parents and students, who worked hard to bring us to this point.

Month after month, we are seeing the results of years of hard work and collaboration for the benefit of our city. From the transformation of the former YMCA and Reid & Huges buildings to the exciting redevelopment of our harbor, there is even more good news on the horizon for the Rose of New England.

Winston Churchill once said, "Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts." I know that we all have the courage to continue to move our city forward in the months and years to come.



NPU begins annual hydrant flushing program

Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) has begun its annual flushing of its hydrants for 2025 and expects to have the work completed by the end of September.

Each year, NPU flushes its water system by opening hydrants throughout its service area with initial focus on the mains that feed larger service areas in Norwich. Once complete, localized flushing of smaller mains in neighborhoods will take place throughout the summer and into the fall.

NPU crews have been working in the Norwichtown area from Backus Hospital to Downtown in May and June; throughout the rest of the summer, they will be working in and around Greenville.

NPU will provide regular updates on the status and schedule of this important project on its Facebook page in the weeks ahead.

There are 1,385 hydrants on the NPU system, and the utility is scheduled to flush

approximately 700 this summer as part of a multi-year cycle. In almost all instances, this work, which is done by NPU crews, will take place between 7:00 am and 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

The flushing of a water system on a regular basis helps remove sediments that build up within its pipes and ensures that NPU customers will be delivered water with sufficient oxygen, disinfectant levels and an acceptable taste and smell.

During and immediately after the flushing of the NPU water system, customers may experience a slight and short-term discoloration of their water. Customers are advised to fully open their cold water tap and allow the water to run for several minutes, which should resolve the issue. It is possible for these issues to arise anywhere on the NPU water system while the flushing process is underway.

Hydrant Flushing



Norwich
Public Utilities

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