



A community newsletter for the customers of

Norwich Public Utilities

Christopher LaRose named Acting General Manager of NPU

At a special meeting of the Norwich Public Utilities Board of Commissioners on November 15, 2018, Christopher LaRose was named Acting General Manager of NPU.

Chris LaRose has been with NPU for 21 years, including the past ten years as Assistant General Manager. He's also held the roles of Utility Engineer, Gas Division Manager, and Operations Integrity Manager, where he was responsible for the day-to-day activities for natural gas, water, electric and wastewater operations.

As he undertakes this new assignment, Chris is focused on enhancing NPU's internal and external communications with employees, customers and stakeholders. He has already assumed responsibility for developing the 2019-20 NPU budget, met with every NPU employee and looks forward to playing



a bigger role in NPU's outreach efforts in the community.

Chris is a graduate of the University of Connecticut with a BS in Engineering and received a Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He lives in Salem, CT with his wife of 31 years, Leanne, a nurse. They have three children, Elizabeth (27), Allyson (25) and Matthew (21). In his free time, Chris enjoys mountain biking, hiking and skiing with his family and friends.

LED Streetlights will save over \$358K in annual energy costs

In the fall of 2018, NPU upgraded nearly 5,000 streetlights with new Light Emitting Diode (LED) streetlights, which will save the City of Norwich \$358,217 in annual energy costs.

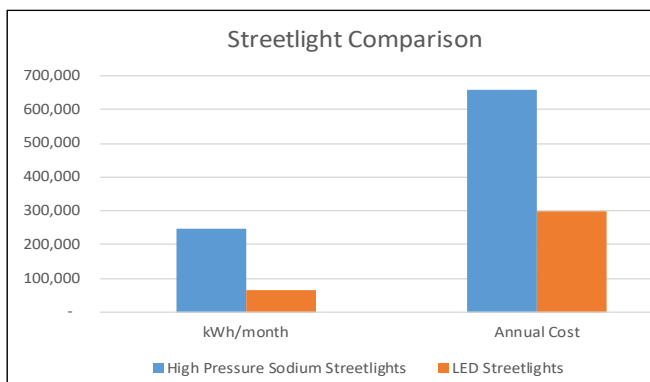
In the past, the City of Norwich used about 246,000 kilo-watt hours (kWh) of electricity for streetlights per month, at an annual cost of \$658,465. The new LED streetlights are projected to use just over 64,000 kWh monthly, at an approximate annual cost of \$300,000. This results in an annual savings of more than \$358,000.

In addition to the cost savings, LED streetlights provide a number of additional benefits:

- Reduced energy usage, which helps the environment
- Reduced operations and maintenance (O & M) costs for NPU, with fewer repairs and replacements required
- Better visible light on the streets, increasing public safety in the community.

The LED streetlight conversion project had a budget of \$1.8 million and did not impact NPU's existing residential or commercial electric rates. The contractor for the project, Tanko Lighting, is a nationally recognized leader in the lighting industry.

"The new LED streetlights will provide our community with financial, environmental and public safety benefits for years to come." - Chris LaRose, Acting General Manager



5 tips to save money and stay warm this winter

By making a few simple adjustments in your home, you can save energy and save money on heating costs during the cold months of winter.

- Utilize free solar heat during the day by keeping blinds and curtains open. Shut them at night to help insulate your home.
- Heat rises, and if you have an open fireplace that is not being used, that heat is going right up the chimney. When not in use, be sure the damper is closed. If the fireplace is never used, block off the chimney with a piece of rigid insulation that fits tightly in place.
- Keep windows locked when closed. This will ensure a tight seal. If you feel drafts around your windows, be sure to caulk or install weather stripping.
- Have your furnace or boiler cleaned for optimal operating efficiency. Make sure you have working carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors in your home.
- Make sure furniture, carpets and drapes are not blocking warm-air registers, baseboard heaters or radiators.

If you need assistance paying your utility bills, call NPU at 860-887-2555. We can work with you to set up a budget plan that fits your needs, or we can refer to agencies that may be able to help with your payments.

NPU Lives United



NPU and its employees are proud supporters of the United Way of Southeastern CT. You'll find our employees helping each month at the Mobile Food Pantry and annually at the Tommy Toy Fund distribution center. Our employees also generously donate to the United Way Giving campaign and support in-house fundraising events.



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A minute with the Mayor:

Momentum continues in city-wide effort to address blight



Mayor Peter Nystrom

Throughout 2018, the City of Norwich has made a concerted effort to address the issue of blight across our city. Working together, we have made a significant impact on making our neighborhoods and streets

cleaner and more appealing. And while we are proud of the progress we have made, everyone agrees that we still have work to do on this vitally important issue.

And as with most things in life, much more can be accomplished when people come together to meet a common goal. In October, the Norwich City Council passed a resolution to recognize the outstanding work of Clean up the Streets, a project that encourages building bridges with various community groups in Norwich. The inspiration for the program was the leadership of the St. Vincent de Paul

Place, who has organized volunteers and resources to clean our streets. This grass-roots organization, now in its fifth year, has removed more than 100,000 pounds of trash from the streets of Norwich.

Clean up the Streets raised funds and brought together dozens of volunteers from a number of civic-minded organizations to make this work possible. Support was provided by Home Depot, The Last Green Valley, Caring Hands International, Cornerstone City Church, Taftville Revitalization, Norwich Historic Society, S.E. Mental Health Authority, Norwich Public Works, Uncas Health District, Rose Arts Committee, Norwich Community Development Corporation (NCDC), The Art House of Norwich, Sankofa and the Ellis Ruley Memorial Committee.

This inspirational group serves as a great example of what can be accomplished in our community when we all pull together. Raising awareness is a critical component for aggressively addressing the issue

of blight in Norwich, and it is this type of spirited response that is already making an enormous difference in our community.

Additional progress in addressing blight was demonstrated at the City's Free Disposal Saturday on October 27 was another success, with several thousand pounds of refuse dropped off at the Rogers Road Landfill. As always, residents are encouraged to schedule a bulky waste pickup with Willimantic Waste by calling them at (860) 423-4527. Please remember to not leave any bulky waste outside of your home or business until the appointment has been scheduled.

Every resident in Norwich can do their part to keep our streets and neighborhoods clean. Please join me – and the community leaders at Clean Up the Streets - to build on our collective success this year. By continuing to work together, and bringing more volunteers and resources to our efforts, we can make an even bigger impact on blight in 2019.

NPU supports Change the Script

Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) is proud to support the Uncas Health District's initiative, Change the Script, which aims to connect people impacted by the opioid crisis with the help they need. Change the Script provides prevention, treatment and recovery resources for people facing drug misuse and addiction.

Change the Script is supporting people whose lives

are affected by the prescription drug crisis such as healthcare professionals, treatment professionals, and the members of the public. The program offers resources to help rewrite the story about how the community deals with this pressing public health issue, including prevention measures, treatment and recovery programs, prescriber education, safe storage and disposal information, and more.

For more information, including collateral materials, please contact Brittany Grabill at Uncas Health District at 860.823.1189 x 116 or bgrabill@uncashd.org.



Remove snow from gas meters this winter

Norwich Public Utilities reminds customers to be aware of a number of 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.

For more gas safety information, visit <http://norwichpublicutilities.com/community/safety>. You can also request gas safety information by calling us at 860-887-2555 or emailing communitymatters@npumail.com.



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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