

NPU you!



A community newsletter for the customers of

Norwich Public Utilities

NPU provides two local organizations with \$130,500 through Neighborhood Assistance Act

As part of the January meeting of its Board of Commissioners, Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) announced that it has contributed \$130,500 to two local organizations through the State of Connecticut's Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) program.

The NAA is a tax credit program administered by the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services that allows businesses such as NPU to claim a State tax credit for cash contributions made to municipally-approved programs and projects conducted by local tax-exempt agencies.

"The State's Neighborhood Assistance Act program is a great way for us to make important investments with organizations that are pillars in our community," said Chris LaRose, General Manager of NPU. "Keeping these funds in Norwich is another way for NPU build on our longstanding tradition of support for community; we are very happy to continue our partnerships with these outstanding organizations."

Through the NAA, the following organizations will receive funding from NPU in 2024:

St. Vincent DePaul Place (\$75,000) to support the work of replacing 15 out-of-

date, wood frame windows with energy-efficient windows as part of a multi-year effort to upgrade and improve the heating, air conditioning, and ventilation (HVAC) systems at the organization's facility on Cliff Street in Norwich. St. Vincent DePaul Place operates out of a 99-year old former elementary school building, providing food and a variety of personal supplies to more than 500 at-risk people each month.

Norwich Historical Society (\$55,500) to support the ongoing rehabilitation work at the circa 1763 David Greenleaf House, located at 2 Town Street, directly adjacent to the iconic Leffingwell Inn. This restoration project is part of a comprehensive plan to improve and connect existing heritage tourism sites in Norwich. Ultimately, the goal is to convert the Greenleaf House property into a multi-purpose event space to compliment the Leffingwell Inn.

Each year, NPU pays Gross Receipts Tax to the State of Connecticut from the purchase of its electricity. The NAA limits participating organizations to \$150,000 per year in tax credits and the statewide program has a cap of \$5 million. Since 2022, NPU has been exempt from the Gross Receipts Tax on its purchase of natural gas, which saves customers more than \$950,000 each year.

Important reminder: Call 8-1-1 Before You Dig

With spring finally here, it's time to start planning for residential and commercial construction projects. Be sure to notify Call Before You Dig (CBYD) as part of your plans.

CBYD is a free service to anyone excavating near their home or business. This one-call notification system enables excavators, contractors or homeowners to obtain information on the location of underground utility pipes, wires and cables in the area of the proposed work. This helps protect anyone digging from harm and the utilities from damage.

Digging responsibly is very important. The impact of unsafe or careless digging practices is real and often costly in terms of personal injury and damage to underground utility lines, property and the environment.



By law, anyone planning an outdoor project that requires digging with power or mechanized equipment must notify CBYD before they start digging. Additionally, anyone using hand tools for their project is encouraged to notify CBYD. Hand tools such as axes, shovels, post hole diggers, etc. can easily damage underground utility pipes and cables as well as risk personal injury.

Some examples of projects that would require notifying CBYD include installing decks, fences, trees, mailbox posts, swing sets, room additions, swimming pools, and patios.

When notifying CBYD, the person doing the digging is required to call with the location for the work. Always make sure to contact CBYD at least two full working days, excluding weekends and holidays, in advance of when you plan to start digging.

NPU Community Assistance Rate:

NPU is offering its Community Assistance Rate (CAR) for qualified individuals and families. Norwich households with incomes below 60% of the State of Connecticut's Median Household Income by family size would be eligible for this reduced electric rate. To find out if you qualify, reach out to NPU's Customer Service Center by calling (860) 887-2555.

If you need assistance paying your utility bills, there are additional resources available from the following agencies:

Norwich Human Services - (860) 823-3778

TVCCA - (860) 425-6681 or visit <https://www.tvcca.org/energy-assistance/>

Operation Fuel - (860) 243-2345 or visit <https://operationfuel.org>

NPU at the Norwich St. Patrick's Day Parade:



A minute with the Mayor:

Learn more about NPU's *Get the Lead Out* program



Mayor Peter Nystrom

I have always loved the long and proud history of Norwich. However, the age of our city means we have a number of very old houses in our community, which significantly increases the likelihood of homes in Norwich

that might contain pipes that contain lead for their water service.

If your home was built before 1986, and you are an NPU water customer, the service line that bringing water into your house – and is your property - maybe made of lead and should be replaced.

Fortunately, Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) is undertaking a comprehensive program, called *Get the Lead Out* - to comply with a federal mandate to identify and ultimately remove lead service lines throughout our city. This type of project is underway with every water company across the United States.

In Norwich, this work will take place over the next several years and will ultimately result in safer and healthier homes for thousands of our residents.

The water leaving NPU's water treatment plants every day is free of lead; thousands of tests are completed each year to confirm that the water provided to customers is safe and healthy. But many older homes in Norwich have household fixtures, plumbing, and water service lines that contain lead.

NPU has created an initial inventory of lead service lines based on their construction records, but these records are not complete. To improve their inventory, NPU is conducting field surveys throughout Norwich to identify service lines that must be replaced.

NPU is working with a well-regarded contractor, Arcadis, to complete surveys for lead service lines that can be completed in three ways: a 'scratch and magnet' test near the water main; an in-home lead confirmation test near the water meter, or a small excavation at the along the service line, typically near the intersection of the property line and the City's property.

The testing and replacement of the service lines will be completed by NPU and Arcadis without any out-of-pocket costs to the customer.

NPU recently hosted two open houses to share more information on this important initiative and has a great deal of information on its website (www.norwichpublicutilities.com). You can also reach out to the NPU Customer Service Center at 860.887-2555 for more information.

Exposure to lead, especially for young children, can have very significant health implications. Please take the time to learn more about this important project and reach out to NPU to arrange for a quick assessment of your service line and plumbing, which should take only a few minutes.

NPU commits \$27,034 to United Way for 2024 through successful fundraising campaigns

The employees of Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) have completed another successful fundraising campaign for the United Way of Southeastern Connecticut, raising and pledging \$17,328 through one-time contributions and regular payroll deductions through 2024.

In addition, over the final few weeks of 2023 and to kick-off the annual campaign, NPU also organized several fundraising activities for employees, including breakfasts and lunches that generated an additional \$4,706 for the United Way.

When combined with NPU's annual corporate gift of \$5,000, NPU's total contribution to the United Way in 2024 will be \$27,034

"I am inspired by the continued dedication displayed by our employees to the United Way, generously donating their time and money for those in need in our community," said Chris LaRose, General Manager of NPU. "Time and time again, the NPU team demonstrates their compassion and service to our customers and community."

Over the past six years, NPU and its employees have contributed more than \$225,000 to the United Way of Southeast Connecticut.

Organizations that have been designated for support by NPU employees include United Community & Family Services (UCFS), the ARC of New London County, the Martin House, and Madonna Place.

NPU offers programs and rebates to help customers save money and improve home energy efficiency:

- 1. Home Energy Savings (HES) -** Customers can schedule an audit (\$50 co-pay) to check your energy use. 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 Program and receive a rebate of up to \$1,200 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 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, customers can apply for specially financing from one of our lending partners.



NPU's Electric Vehicle & EV Charging Rebate Program

Qualifying NPU electric customers can receive a rebate of up to \$1,500 for the purchase or lease of a new electric vehicle, or up to \$4,000 for the installation of an electric vehicle charging station at their home or business.

To apply visit: www.norwichpublicutilities.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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