

Spring 2022

UTILITIES & YOU

Let's get down to earth...

Disconnection process for nonpayment of utilities resumes in April

The moratorium on disconnection of utilities put in place at the start of the pandemic ended on March 31, 2022. We resume the process for disconnections due to nonpayment this month.

If you have pas-due balances before March 1, 2022, you are now on an automatic, interest-free, 24-month re-payment installment plan. If you are on the installment plan, you must stay current on new charges while paying off your past-due balances to prevent disconnection, or your utility service(s) will be subject to shut off. We are required to collect past-due balances.

If you struggle to stay current on your installment plan, you might be eligible for assistance. Tens of millions of dollars are still available through several relief funds and utility assistance programs, but you must apply while funds last.

Our team is here to help and will work with you to identify available assistance programs and provide payment plan options. Our goal is to help you keep your utility services connected.

Learn more at MyTPU.org/COVID19. U*

Upgrades to MyAccount take place this month

It's time to unveil the new and improved MyAccount! The upgraded web portal will continue providing you the self-service features you've come to know, such as easy online payment and billing, and introduce enhancements to make managing your power and water use easier than ever.

To complete the upgrade, MyAccount will be unavailable for a short time. We'll place a message on the website letting you know that the work is underway. Once the upgrade is complete, you'll log in using your existing user ID/account number and password. The system will prompt you to update your password and security questions to meet the new security requirements. Your account information and payment and billing preferences will stay the same unless you change them.

Don't use MyAccount? You can enroll any time and use its helpful tools and features like AutoPay and paperless billing.

View information, log in, or enroll at MyTPU.org/MyAccount. U*

Environmental leadership: Every day is Earth Day at TPU

When it comes to our commitment to the environment, every day is Earth Day at TPU.

Some of our tactics are included in Strategic Directive (SD) 5: Environmental Leadership. SD5 is one of 14 Public Utility Board SDs that guide our efforts to stay accountable to you.

The SD5 purpose statement is: TPU is committed to being stewards of the region's beautiful natural resources, and a leader in the preservation, protection, and restoration of those resources while maintaining our excellent delivery of services. It is clear that in order to ensure we fulfill our operational duties into the future, we must balance our resource usage with the health of our environment.

We support our planet in many ways, including:



Providing power customers with clean, renewable hydroelectric energy.



Mailing customized water savings kits to water customers.



Using idle reduction tracking equipment on Tacoma Rail locomotives.

Learn more at MyTPU.org/SD. U*

The Small Tree Arboretum is a beautiful resource

The Tacoma Power Small Tree Arboretum in North Tacoma is a showcase of trees well suited to home gardens and parking strips in our area due to their size and growth patterns. You can find it at 2402 North Pearl Street next to a Tacoma Power substation. It's home to trees over 20 years old and many planted in 2021.

Planting the right tree in the right place helps prevent power outages, broken underground utility lines, and cracked sidewalks. Consider planting larger shade trees near your house, but away from power lines. They provide a buffer from the sun and wind,

which can help reduce your electric bill. You should only plant trees near power lines that grow less than 25 feet tall to help eliminate improper pruning practices like topping.

The arboretum is a fantastic place to learn about local trees, trees suited for your yard, or to simply take a stroll. You are encouraged to visit and see over 50 species of trees each with new informational tags coming this spring.

Visit MyTPU.org/TreeTips and click on Right Tree. Right Place. to learn more. U*

Power rate adjustment in effect April 1

New power rates went into effect on April 1. You will see a \$1.88 average monthly increase on your electricity bills. As a not-for-profit utility our customers own, you entrust us to ensure you get the most value and quality services you expect. Your power rates cover the cost of providing you with safe, reliable electricity, maintaining utility infrastructure, protecting natural resources near our facilities, and investing in system improvements that make your services better.

Rate adjustments help cover the cost of operating the utility and caring for its assets, make up for revenue shortfalls, and provide increases in payment assistance to customers in need during the pandemic.

Visit [MyTPU.org/Rates](https://www.mytpu.org/rates) for more information. **U***

THURSDAY, AUG. 18*

Attend TPU Night at the Tacoma Rainiers

Join us Thursday, Aug. 18 for TPU Night at the Rainiers! When you buy a ticket to TPU Night the Tacoma Rainiers will donate \$5 to our Senior Assistance Fund. The fund helps seniors in our community who struggle to pay their utility bills.

Your TPU Night ticket gets you:

- Entry into the baseball game
- A T-shirt
- A meal with a hot dog, chips, and a bottle of water

We'll celebrate your support for seniors during the game as the Tacoma Rainiers present a big check to reveal the amount raised for the Senior Assistance Fund. We look forward to seeing you there! **U***

**Subject to change, based on current health and safety protocols at Cheney Stadium.*



SUMMER SAFETY TIP

Even if it's hot outside, our lakes are still cold

Summer is almost here, which means many people will head to Washington's waters for fun in the sun.

We want visitors to any recreation area, including our reservoirs, to have a terrific – and safe – time in the water.

Glacier-fed rivers create our lakes. It's important to remember that the water is frigid even when it's hot outside. And the farther from shore, the colder the water can get. Water can be dangerous at any time, especially when it's chilly. Did you know that falling into water under 70 degrees shocks your body, which can cause gasping and drowning? Even experienced swimmers can quickly lose muscle control.

How to Stay Safe While You Recreate

- Always wear your life jacket.
- Never go out in the water alone.
- Never boat or swim under the influence.
- Ease into cold water gradually so your body can get used to the temperature.
- Follow all boater safety regulations.

Find additional safety resources at [MyTPU.org/Parks](https://www.mytpu.org/parks). **U***

If your water heater is over 10 years old, now's the time to replace it

Most people don't think about their water heater until it stops working, leaving no time to consider the best replacement option. Unplanned water heater replacements often come with high stress, expensive costs, and few options. Don't find yourself in that situation!

We've worked out a special package deal for you to get a 50-gallon hybrid water heater professionally installed by our certified contractor – Great Northwest Installations – for only \$2,500*. Plus, we'll help you cover that cost with a three-year, 0% interest loan.

Get started by calling Great Northwest Installations at **1-866-905-9510. U***

**Offer is good for a 50-gallon A.O. Smith hybrid water heater installed by Great Northwest Installations and does not include permitting fees or taxes.*

5 reasons to consider smart irrigation systems

If you haven't upgraded your old watering system, consider the benefits of smart irrigation below. Your investment will pay you back for many summers by helping lower your utility bill.



Save money:

Water smarter based on weather conditions, using just the right amount of water needed.



Enjoy convenience:

Use an app to set up schedules with the push of a button from anywhere.



Conserve water:

Eliminate overwatering to help maintain the water supply for our community and wildlife.



Maintain your yard:

Provide the right amount of water for the right plant in the right place.



Get money back:

Apply for a Tacoma Water rebate up to 50% of the price on qualifying WaterSense products.

Discover more about smart yard products at [MyTPU.org/SmartIrrigation](https://www.mytpu.org/smartirrigation). **U***



Call 811 before you dig

Before you grab your shovel, grab your phone. Whether you want to plant a tree, install a new irrigation system, or excavate on your property, the law requires you to call before digging to avoid damaging utilities.

We will come out and mark underground utility lines in colored paint for FREE. The paint will help you avoid cutting into underground utilities, causing harm, and incurring any costs associated with damage.

Dial 811 or call **1-800-424-5555** to schedule an appointment. You must make your appointment at least two days in advance. **U***

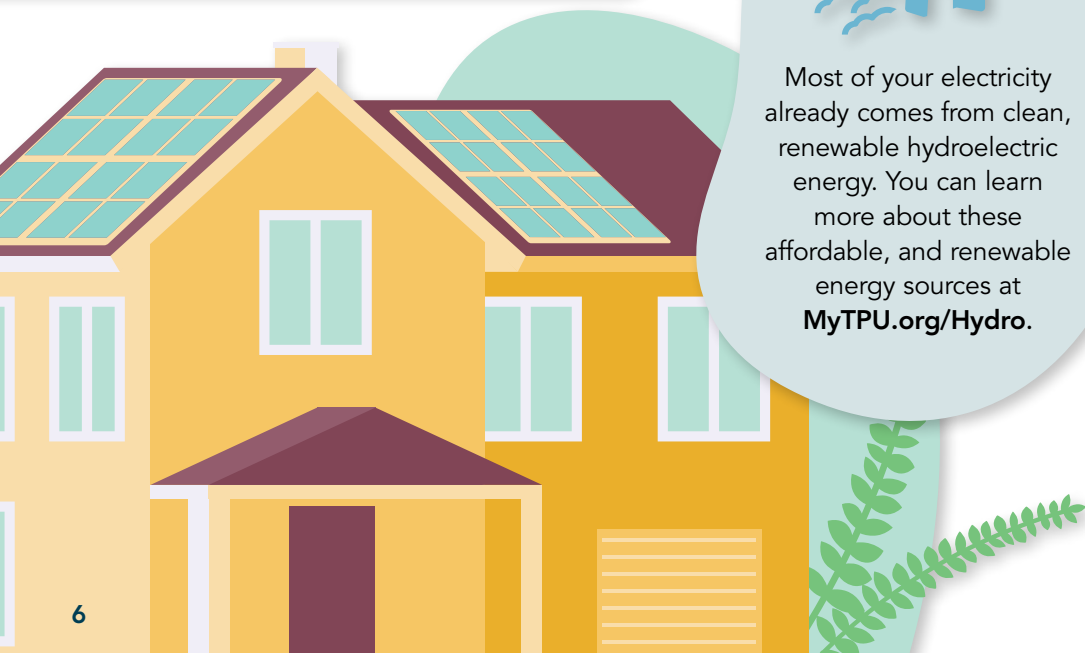


What to consider before installing solar panels

Solar panels use energy from the sun to generate electricity you can use in your home. Installing solar panels can also be costly and may not meet your needs year round. Therefore, it's important to understand whether solar panels for your home are right for you and suit your energy needs.

Before you buy solar panels, read the answers to our frequently asked questions from others in our community.

Visit **MyTPU.org/Solar** for help making informed decisions about investing in solar. **U***



Most of your electricity already comes from clean, renewable hydroelectric energy. You can learn more about these affordable, and renewable energy sources at **MyTPU.org/Hydro**.

U* Calendar

All events now take place online and in person during the pandemic unless otherwise noted.

APRIL

13

Public Utility Board meeting | 6:30 p.m.

27

Public Utility Board meeting | 6:30 p.m.

MAY

11

Public Utility Board meeting | 6:30 p.m.

25

Public Utility Board meeting | 6:30 p.m.

30

Memorial Day | TPU offices closed

JUNE

8

Public Utility Board meeting | 6:30 p.m.

20

Juneteenth National Independence Day | TPU offices closed

29

Public Utility Board meeting | 6:30 p.m.

Find a complete list of events at **MyTPU.org/Calendar**. **U***

You make the call

Area code (253)

Report a power outage 502-8602

Start or stop service 502-8600

Home weatherization 502-8363

Fishing and recreation 502-8690

Fish and wildlife programs 502-8008

Education programs 502-8224

Power conservation 502-8363

Water conservation 502-8723

Report a water emergency 502-8384

Bill Payment Assistance

(available for limited-income customers)

• Electric bill assistance

- **City of Tacoma residents** 572-5557

- **Pierce County residents** 855-798-4328

• **TPU Utility Bill Assistance** 502-8400

U* Readers know how to lower utility balances and prevent disconnections

Congratulations, and thanks to the 238 people who participated in the trivia published in the January issue of U*. To learn more about your options to reduce utility bill balances and prevent disconnection, you can visit our resources page at **MyTPU.org/COVID19**. **U***



U* Trivia ANSWER AND WIN

How many species of trees are in the Tacoma Power Small Tree Arboretum?

Be one of 50 randomly chosen people with the correct answer, and we will mail you a free prize. To enter, submit your answer by April 30 either online at **MyTPU.org/Trivia** or by mail to **U* Trivia, 3628 S. 35th St., Tacoma, WA 98409**. Include your name, phone number, and mailing address. **U***

* City of Tacoma employees and their immediate family members are ineligible to win. One entry per household.

Spring 2022

UTILITIES & YOU

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THE END

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