

Summer 2022

UTILITIES & YOU



Here comes some sun...

Conversion to monthly billing starts for customers with advanced meters

Over 50,000 customers now have monthly billing. Monthly billing will help you better plan for and budget the cost of your utility bills. After we upgrade your meter(s), you will be converted to monthly billing and be able to access your power and water use data online through MyAccount. Additionally, your new meter(s) use alerts, alarms, and system indicators that allow us to detect leaks, high-flow, and other issues more quickly to resolve them faster so your utilities are more resilient.

For more information about the benefits of advanced meters and to track installation progress, visit MyTPU.org/AdvancedMeters. U*

Explore options in your upgraded MyAccount

The upgraded MyAccount, with a modern design and enhanced features, is the easiest way to manage your utility services. You can pay your bill, track payment history, and enroll in programs like AutoPay and paperless billing that help you check things off your “to do” list.

If you have an advanced meter, you now have access to your detailed power and water use data through MyAccount.

This data can help you understand when, and sometimes why, your power or water use is higher or lower. Here are a few examples how this data can help:



Identify water leaks – If you notice a spike in water use or constant use, even when all your faucets are off, you could have a leak.



Track your power and water to **set conservation goals**, which can help lower your bill.



Monitor seasonal patterns to help plan and budget for bill fluctuations.



View the outside temperature on your usage graph to see if you could benefit from one or more utility energy-saving incentives like home heating and cooling or weatherization upgrades.

Log in or register today at MyTPU.org/MyAccount. U*

THURSDAY, AUG. 18*

Attend TPU Night at the Tacoma Rainiers

Join us Thursday, Aug. 18, for TPU Night at the Tacoma Rainiers! When you buy a ticket to TPU Night, the Rainiers will donate \$5 to our Senior Assistance Fund. The fund helps seniors in our community who struggle to pay their utility bills. Your \$20 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. Visit WeRTacoma.com/TPU-Night for tickets and more info. We look forward to seeing you there! U*

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



Use water wisely to help lower summer water bills

Tacoma Water charges a slightly higher rate for water use above five units from June 1 through Sept. 30. The summer rates encourage customers to use water prudently when demand is high and rainfall is low.

Discover a few simple tips to reduce your water use when it's hot outside to help save money on your utility bill. Visit MyTPU.org/YardCare. U*

Learn more about water quality

We mailed our annual Water Quality Report to homes in early July. Clean, reliable water is one of the most valuable services we provide, and we want you to be as informed as possible about your drinking water. This year's feature articles can help you understand how water flushing works and how we maintain our water system. You'll also find a summary of test results and interesting water definitions. It reflects the commitment of our employees to deliver quality water to your home.

You can also read the report online at MyTPU.org/WaterQuality. U*



Stay current on water supply updates

Our new water supply indicator makes finding up-to-date water supply conditions easy. Tacoma Water closely monitors snowpack and rainfall, and other criteria, to inform you about trends and supply forecasts.

Increase your knowledge about current conditions at MyTPU.org/WaterSupply. U*



POWER MOVE #19:

Letting us buy you a new cooling and heating system



Want air conditioning? We're buying! How cool is that? A heat pump not only keeps your home cool and comfortable all summer, but also cozy and warm in the winter. Plus, you'll significantly lower your energy use and your utility bill for heating. That's why we want to help you install one. Choose the incentive that's right for you:

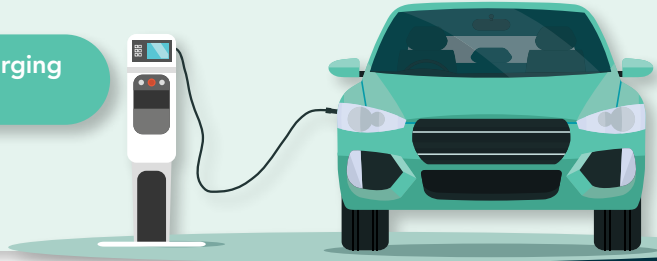
- **7-year, 0% interest loan**
- **Up to a \$1,000 contractor discount**
- **Deferred loan + bonus rebate** where you don't pay us back until you sell your home (income limits apply)

Learn more at MyTPU.org/PowerMoves. U*

New streetside Level 2 EV charger in the Oakland-Madrona neighborhood

The Oakland-Madrona neighborhood received a new streetside Level 2 EV charger recently. The charger is available to residents and visitors, and will benefit local businesses. You can find it at **3851 Center Street in Tacoma**. The charger is the first of 15 new EV chargers coming to Tacoma’s neighborhood business districts by the end of 2022.

Visit MyTPU.org/EVStreetsideCharging to learn more. U*



Hilltop Heritage is the first Tacoma school with solar panels

On Earth Day, Hilltop Heritage Middle School celebrated the installation of their “Watts Up” solar project with students, staff, community members, and funders, including Tacoma Public Utilities. A grant through the Tacoma Power Evergreen Options program that supports local renewable energy projects partially funded the solar panels.

Hilltop students launched the “Watts Up” project and led the effort to secure funds for the panels. The 250 solar panels will allow the school to generate a portion of their renewable energy and sell any extra back to the utility. It also provides a living laboratory for learning about renewable energy for all Tacoma Public School students.

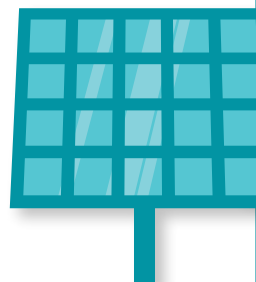
The school will save over \$5,000 a year in energy costs with the new panels.

Evergreen Options participants fund the utility’s grant that helped pay for the solar panels. Participants pay a little extra on their utility bills to support electricity generated by wind and solar and grant programs like this. While most of our electricity comes from clean, renewable hydroelectric energy, by participating in Evergreen Options, you can buy power generated by wind and solar too. Programs and grants like this support and grow Tacoma’s green economy. U*

What to know before you install solar panels

Solar panels use energy from the sun to generate electricity you can use in your home. However, using solar alone cannot meet all your electricity needs. Read the answers to questions frequently asked in our community before making decisions about investing in solar.

Visit MyTPU.org/Solar for more details. U*



Futuristic fish tagging trailer creates huge efficiencies for fish programs

We are huge fish fans. At our two Cushman Hydro Project hatcheries, we grow coho, steelhead, spring Chinook, and sockeye. We tag our fish so we can track returning adults and learn which hatchery management strategies are most successful. One tag type we use is coded wire tagging (CWT). We also clip adipose fins (customary for hatchery fish). Neither hurt the fish.

It typically takes 13 people to clip and tag fish by hand, and the fish must be anesthetized. However, thanks to the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission's (NWIFC) innovative fish tagging trailer, we have taken a step into the future!

Two people operate the trailer, which clips and tags triple the fish in the same amount of time as a manual operation. A camera measures each fish to 1/10 of a millimeter and they get sorted by size. Another camera takes a photo to determine the fin's location. A set of foam pads grabs and holds each fish for a split second to clip the fin and insert the CWT, which is the width of a human hair, into the fish's snout. Amazing!

The NWIFC also handles our critical pathology work and oversees our fish veterinarian work. We appreciate the outstanding efforts of the NWIFC to help us protect and preserve fish populations! U*



Fish passage at Howard Hanson Dam receives \$220M in federal funding

Two hundred and twenty million dollars in federal funding for the downstream fish passage at the Howard Hanson Dam will help ensure additional future drinking water storage for our region and reopen many miles of crucial salmon and steelhead habitat.

The dam is located on the Green River, which serves as Tacoma Water's primary drinking water source for hundreds of thousands of people in Pierce and King Counties. Experts expect the downstream fish passage to double the available habitat for endangered salmon and steelhead in the Green-Duwamish watershed. It could be the largest single opportunity to increase salmon production in Puget Sound, which is critical for the recovery of Southern Resident orca whales.

The funding will also increase drinking water supply and maintain dam performance to support Tacoma Water customers' drinking water needs. U*





Caring for trees earns Tacoma Power a top award

Tacoma Power received the Tree Line USA* award from the Arbor Day Foundation for its commitment to proper tree pruning, planting, and care.

Tree Line USA recognizes public and private utilities for pursuing practices that protect and enhance America's urban trees. Tree Line USA promotes the dual goals of delivering safe and reliable electricity while maintaining healthy community forests.

The utility achieved the award by meeting five standards. Utilities must follow industry standards for quality tree care; provide annual worker training in best tree care practices; sponsor a tree planting and public education program; maintain a tree-based energy conservation program, and sponsor or participate in an Arbor Day celebration. **U***

Tacoma Water is among the top water utilities in the nation for financial stability

Standard & Poor's (S&P) Global Ratings recognized Tacoma Water for its ongoing commitment to financial strength and long-range planning with an upgraded bond rating of AA+, with a stable outlook. The rating agency cites consistently healthy financial performance, affordable and competitive rates, robust management and operational practices, a stable customer base, and broad long-range planning as contributors to the higher rating.

Previously rated as AA, the new rating puts your water utility in the top 17% of all U.S. water utilities rated by S&P. Higher credit ratings generally result in lower borrowing costs, which result in lower long-term rates. In their rating, S&P also notes its confidence in Tacoma Water's financial future, ability to manage operations and make rate and other budgetary adjustments without diluting financial performance. **U***

A focus on providing excellent financial stewardship of your funds

You work hard for the money you earn and spend on your electricity and water services. That's why it is of the utmost importance to us that we use your dollars wisely and efficiently. We laser-focus on being thoughtful stewards of your money.

To that end, we operate under the values and outcomes identified in Strategic Directive (SD) 2: Financial Sustainability. SD2 is one of 14 Public Utility Board SDs that guide our efforts to stay accountable to you.

SD2 purpose:

TPU will secure its commitment to provide safe and reliable power, water, and rail services over the long term by maintaining sustainable budget, financial, and asset management practices.

We are intentional about creating and maintaining savings. Our financial leaders provide thorough reports about the state of our finances to the Public Utility Board quarterly. We use a biennial budget and rates process; plans for the next budget cycle (the 2023-2024 biennium) are in the works now.

You can view our financial values, outcomes, and measurements at MyTPU.org/SD. **U***



U* Calendar

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

JULY

- 4**
Independence Day | TPU offices closed
- 13**
Public Utility Board meeting | 6:30 p.m.
- 27**
Public Utility Board meeting | 6:30 p.m.

AUGUST

- 10**
Public Utility Board meeting | 6:30 p.m.
- 24**
Public Utility Board meeting | 6:30 p.m.

SEPTEMBER

- 5**
Labor Day | TPU offices closed
- 14**
Public Utility Board Meeting | Canceled
- 28**
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

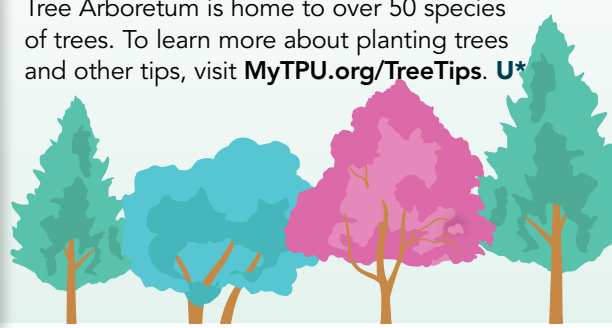
Bill Payment Assistance

(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 their arboretum trees

Congratulations, and thanks to the 364 people who participated in the trivia published in the spring issue of U*. The Tacoma Power Small Tree Arboretum is home to over 50 species of trees. To learn more about planting trees and other tips, visit MyTPU.org/TreeTips. U*



U* Trivia ANSWER AND WIN

How many utility customers have converted to monthly billing?

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 July 31 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.

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THE END

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