



Fall 2023

UTILITIES & YOU

Harvest this info...

# Prepare for winter weather and power outages

Winter weather brings heavy rain, wind, and possibly snow which can all cause power outages. When a power outage occurs, trying to find your essentials can be chaotic, but it doesn't have to be if you prepare. The easiest way to prepare for a winter power loss is to list everything you need, like water, food, heat, and light.

If you have Life Sustaining Equipment, call **253-502-8600** to receive a Healthcare Provider form. Once your doctor completes and sends it back to us, we will tag your meter with a medical seal, plus notify you before planned outages.

For a complete list of what you need to know before, during, and after a storm, visit **[MyTPU.org/PowerOutatHome](https://MyTPU.org/PowerOutatHome)**.

You can also register for the Tacoma Power outage platform at **[MyTPU.org/OutageMap](https://MyTPU.org/OutageMap)**.

Our website and outage map are mobile responsive, so you can access them via your smartphone when your power is out. Be sure to update your notification preferences so you can report outages online and via text and receive updates by email. During an outage, view our outage map to report your outage and view information about outages in progress. **U\***



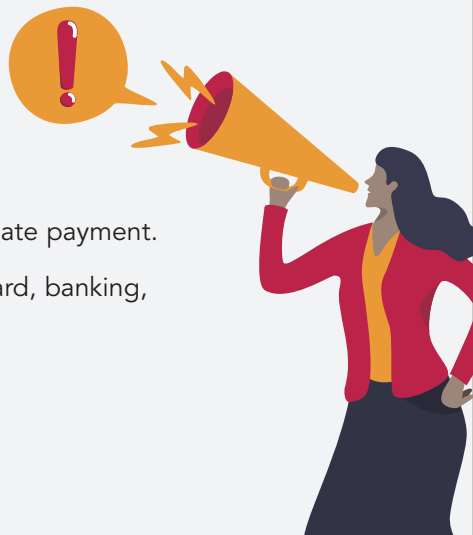
## Know the signs of scams


As the holidays approach, it's essential to be aware of a possible increase in scams. We encourage everyone to be vigilant by knowing the signs of scams, including aggressive threats and insistence on immediate payments. Sophisticated scammers use spoofing technology to look and sound like us. Their caller ID might show our Customer Services line (**253-502-8600**).

If you receive a phone call from someone claiming to represent Tacoma Public Utilities and demanding payment, hang up immediately.

### OUR UTILITY WILL NEVER:

- ✗ Call, email, or visit a home demanding immediate payment.
- ✗ Call, email, or visit a home requesting credit card, banking, or financial information.
- ✗ Request payment on a prepaid card.
- ✗ Disconnect service without mailing a notice.





## Help low-income and disabled customers with their utility bills this holiday season

There is no better time to remember our community than giving the gift of utilities to others when they need it most. Keeping the lights on and water running is essential for the most vulnerable during colder months. Assisting our low-income and disabled community members with their utility bills is easy through one of the three online donation options:



**Enroll in a recurring donation.**



**Make a one-time donation in a fixed amount when you pay your utility bill.**



**Round up your payment to the nearest dollar when you pay your utility bill.**

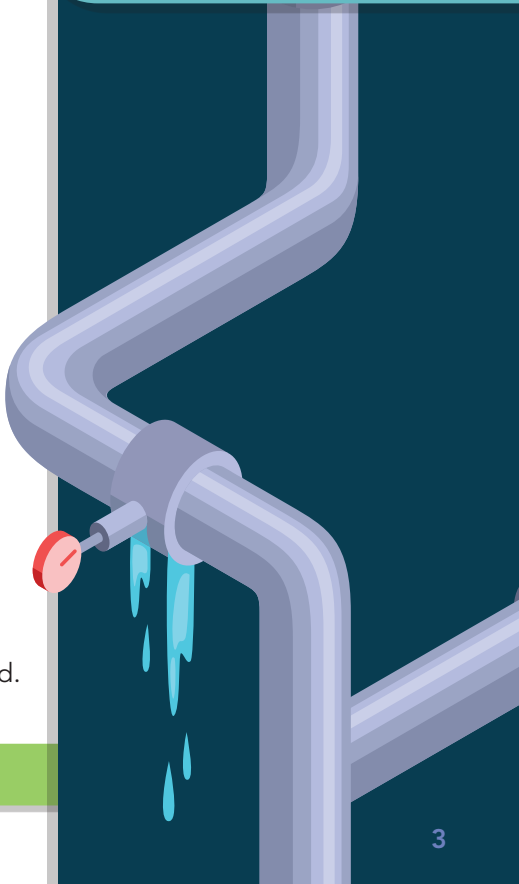
Every dollar donated goes directly to help qualifying customers pay their bills. Please consider supporting others in their time of need.

Donate today at [MyTPU.org/MyAccount](https://MyTPU.org/MyAccount). U\*

## Apply for a grant to fix a leaky water line

If you have a leaking, broken, or end-of-life water service line, you may be eligible for a zero-interest loan or a grant of up to \$5,000 to help pay for the replacement. Our Water Service Line Grant and Loan program offers financial assistance to replace a residential customer's exterior water service line. Making repairs helps ensure your water service's reliability and prevent future leaks in the line, which can save you money.

Review the requirements and apply online at [MyTPU.org/WaterGrantLoan](https://MyTPU.org/WaterGrantLoan). U\*





## Fall yard care checklist for the PNW

Autumn is the perfect time to start prepping your lawn and gardens for the colder months ahead and even for next year's spring. Below are some quick tips to start.



**Water wisely:** plants require less water now, so slow down your system.



**Rake and repeat:** Rake leaves frequently to keep your lawn healthy. Or mow them and leave on the grass as a mulch or add them to your compost pile.



**Care and clean-up:** Trim shrubs and perennials and remove diseased and damaged branches.

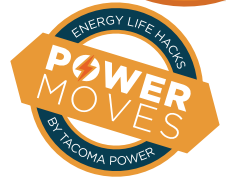


**Prep and repair:** Repair your irrigation system, fix leaks, and prep your system for winter.

Become more water efficient by reviewing additional tips and resources at [MyTPU.org/YardCare](https://MyTPU.org/YardCare). U\*

### POWER MOVE #21:

## Keeping your tootsies toasty while saving money.



Big wool socks aren't enough for fall and winter's cold nights. But don't worry – you can stay warm and save big by upgrading your heating system. Heat pumps use up to 50% less energy, which means lower utility bills for you.

### You have two options to choose from:

**Central heat pump:** A central heat pump uses an outdoor compressor that is connected to a furnace that pushes air through ducts in your home and out of the vents in your rooms.

**Ductless heat pump:** A ductless heat pump (also known as a mini-split) includes two main components – an indoor head and an outdoor unit. In contrast to central heat pumps, ductless heat pumps don't require you to install ducting throughout your home.

Best of all, we'll help you cover the costs!

### Check out the incentives we offer:

- Contractor discount up to \$2,000
- Deferred loan – you don't pay us back until you sell your home

• See what you qualify for at [MyTPU.org/Incentives](https://MyTPU.org/Incentives). U\*

# Get home energy-efficiency incentives and up to a \$3,200 tax credit



If you're considering making upgrades to your home this year, we have good news! We'll help you pay for your energy-efficient improvements with a loan, rebate, or contractor discount. But that's not all. The IRS wants to thank you, too, in the form of a tax credit. Complete your project by the end of 2023, and you could get a tax credit of up to \$3,200. Upgrades that qualify for the tax credit include heating and cooling systems, electric hybrid water heaters, insulation, windows, and more.

Learn more from Energy Star at [bit.ly/EnergyStar23](https://bit.ly/EnergyStar23). U\*

## Do you own an investment property?

Making energy-efficient upgrades to your rental property is a win-win for you and your tenants. Your property's value could increase while tenants save on utility bills. Plus, we'll help you pay for them!

**We can help pay for these upgrades:**



HVAC system



Windows



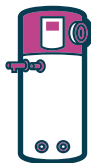
Insulation



Duct sealing



Smart thermostat



Hybrid water heater

Learn more at [MyTPU.org/Rentals](https://MyTPU.org/Rentals). U\*



## TPU Night hit a home run

This summer, we raised over \$2,600 for our Senior Assistance Fund through TPU Night at the Tacoma Rainiers and honored utility workers for their dedication to public service. One worker on deck threw out the first pitch celebrating 35 years.

Five dollars of each ticket package sold for TPU Night went to our Senior Assistance Fund, which helps seniors in our community who struggle to pay their utility bills. We celebrated the donations with a big check presentation on the field. Baseball fans received a T-shirt and a ballpark meal with their ticket.

Thanks to everyone who contributed, and to our 165 workers celebrating their years of service who continue providing clean, reliable, and affordable services that are vital to your quality of life. U\*

## We vote yes on positive government relations

Building positive and productive relationships with sovereign Native American Tribes and federal, state, and other local units of government is critical to our utility's success. Through these relationships, we seek to protect the long-term investments our customers make to ensure reliable, affordable services.

We operate under the values and outcomes of Guiding Principle (GP) 10: Government Relations. GP 10 is one of 14 Public Utility Board GPs that guide our efforts to stay accountable to you.

We regularly and proactively engage with our governmental partners to listen, share relevant information, and identify opportunities for collaboration.

GP 10 purpose: TPU commits to build and strengthen respectful and mutually productive relationships with tribal, federal, state, and other local units of government in order for public policy to benefit customers and achieve Guiding Principle outcomes.

Learn more about GP 10 at [MyTPU.org/GP](https://MyTPU.org/GP). U\*



## How utility employees give back to the community

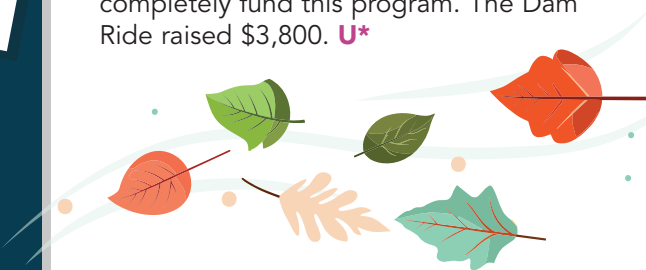
**Our employees passionately give back to the community through our Community Connection program.**

Last spring, we celebrated the return of the TPU Bowl-a-Thon. Four hundred people, including bowlers, employees, employees' families, and friends, raised over \$20,000 for the Boys and Girls Clubs of South Puget Sound – more than we've raised at a Bowl-a-Thon in 13 years!

Other community events included our Food and Basic Supplies drive and the School Supplies and H.U.G.S. Drive. The Food and Basic Supplies Drive benefited My Sister's Pantry. Employees donated over \$4,200 worth of food and basic supplies. The annual School Supplies and H.U.G.S. Drive provided school supplies and basic clothing needs such as hats, underclothing, gloves, and socks (H.U.G.S.) for the clients at HopeSparks, and our employees contributed nearly \$9,000 in donated items.

Our employees also came together for two Tacoma/Pierce County Habitat for Humanity building days to address our community's pressing need for affordable housing. Through Habitat for Humanity, we worked to help their clients and future homeowners build their homes.

We wrapped up with our TPU Dam Ride this summer – a time for cruising out to utility dams and raising money for our Senior Assistance Fund. The fund assists seniors with a one-time grant to help pay their utility bill. Our employees completely fund this program. The Dam Ride raised \$3,800. U\*





# U\* Calendar

All events take place online and in person unless otherwise noted.

## OCTOBER

**11**  
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.

**25**  
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.

## NOVEMBER

**10**  
Veterans Day Observed |  
TPU offices closed

**15**  
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.

**23**  
Thanksgiving Day | TPU offices closed

**24**  
Thanksgiving Day Observed |  
TPU offices closed

## DECEMBER

**13**  
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.

**25**  
Christmas Day | TPU offices closed

Find a complete list of events at  
[MyTPU.org/Calendar](https://MyTPU.org/Calendar). **U\***

# You make the call

Area code (253)

Billing questions or start/stop service .....	502-8600
Report a power outage .....	502-8602
Report a water emergency .....	502-8384
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

## 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\* Trivia

ANSWER AND WIN

What should you do if you suspect  
you might be experiencing a  
utility phone scam?

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 Oct. 31 online at [MyTPU.org/Trivia](https://MyTPU.org/Trivia) or by mail to **U\* Trivia, 3628 S. 35th St., Tacoma, WA 98409 U\***

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

# U\* readers know how TPU Night at the Tacoma Rainiers helps support our Senior Assistance Fund

Congratulations and thanks to the 308 people who participated in the trivia contest published in the summer issue of *U\* - Utilities & You*. The Tacoma Rainiers donated \$5 to the Senior Assistance Fund for each ticket package sold for TPU Night. We raised over \$2,600 for the fund. **U\***





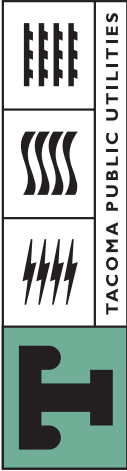
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## UTILITIES & YOU

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Communications@CityofTacoma.org.

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5359 1023



PO Box 11007  
Tacoma, WA 98411



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