

UTILITIES & YOU

January 2020



Put your mitts on this...



Baby,

it's cold outside!

When the temperature drops, water pipes can freeze and rupture. Learning how to protect your plumbing during the cold weather can save you costly repairs. Before you think about hibernating this winter, protect your plumbing by taking these easy steps:

- Insulate exposed pipes, valves, and hose bibs.
- Shut off and drain outside faucets.
- Shut off and winterize your outdoor irrigation system.
- Disconnect your garden hoses from hose bibs.
- Locate your emergency shutoff and learn how to turn off your water supply.

Visit [MyTPU.org/ProtectPipes](https://www.mytpu.org/ProtectPipes) for more tips. If you have a water emergency, call 253-502-8384. **U***

JAN.1

Recycle Reset Surcharge in effect

If you live in the City of Tacoma, you will see a new recycling surcharge of \$2.82 per month added to your Solid Waste (garbage, recycling, and yard waste) account beginning January 1, 2020. This surcharge is the result of recent changes in the international recycling market. Strict new policies took effect in January 2018 when China stopped accepting many recyclables due to high levels of contamination and garbage they were receiving. You will see this surcharge on your bills as the "Recycle Reset Surcharge." If you participate in our bill payment assistance programs, we waive the surcharge. **U***

Tacoma Water saves more than \$800,000 over 10 years

As part of our mission to keep rates low, we're committed to using what we know to responsibly manage our system and your dollars. By replacing the right assets at the right time, we deliver on the full value of your investment.

Recently, Tacoma Water inherited plastic pipes with a history of failing. Instead of replacing the pipes immediately, we looked at the pipes, researched their material, and analyzed their construction. The pipes were different than the other type of plastic we have that break. They will last another 50 years!

A few years later, we started to hear about corrosion on our service line connections from our crews. We looked at the connections, and sure enough, they weren't holding up in our soil; they would need to be replaced in 10 years. By using what we learned, we know the pipes will last longer than the connections, and those 10 extra years of safe use calculate to more than \$800,000 in savings for customers. **U***



New water rates in effect Jan. 1

In 2018, the Public Utility Board and Tacoma City Council approved annual drinking water rate adjustments for 2019 and 2020. In 2020, residential rates will increase by 2.9%, which is an average of approximately \$1 per month. Major activities supported by rates include water supply, treatment, storage, and infrastructure.

Providing clean drinking water is vital to community health. We invest in projects that ensure we maintain that essential service. **U***



How to understand your combined utility bill

Did you know that your utility services come from different divisions within the City of Tacoma? Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) and Environmental Services save you money by combining bills for five services into one.

Tacoma Public Utilities includes Tacoma Power and Tacoma Water, which provides your electricity and drinking water. The Public Utility Board and City Council approve our TPU budget and rates every two years.

Environmental Services provides wastewater (sewer), solid waste (garbage, recycling, and yard waste), and surface water (stormwater) services. Environmental Services presents its rate proposals to the Tacoma City Council for approval after receiving recommendations from the Environmental Services Commission (ESC).

Here is the breakdown of your utility services:



Tacoma Power (TPU) PROVIDER

Electricity SERVICE

176,000
NO. OF CUSTOMERS

**City of Tacoma,
parts of Pierce County**
AREAS SERVED



Tacoma Water (TPU) PROVIDER

Drinking Water SERVICE

102,000
NO. OF CUSTOMERS

**City of Tacoma,
parts of South King County
and Pierce County**
AREAS SERVED



Environmental Services PROVIDER

Wastewater (sewer) SERVICE

63,050
NO. OF CUSTOMERS

City of Tacoma
AREAS SERVED



Environmental Services PROVIDER

Solid Waste (garbage, recycling, and yard waste) SERVICE

61,000
NO. OF CUSTOMERS

City of Tacoma
AREAS SERVED



Environmental Services PROVIDER

Surface Water (stormwater) SERVICE

71,100
NO. OF CUSTOMERS

City of Tacoma
AREAS SERVED

For more details about the combined utility services on your bill, visit MyTPU.org/UnderstandBill. **U***



SAVE \$30 ON TREES IN SELECT STORES

Do colossal good by planting beautiful trees

Well-placed and tended trees provide scenic beauty, help reduce storm water runoff, filter air pollutants, provide ambient air-cooling, block wind, and improve energy savings. You can help our community meet its goal of increasing our tree canopy from 20% to 30% by 2030 when you plant more trees.

If you live in Pierce County, you can now get \$30 off each tree you buy in select nurseries, up to three trees, thanks to free tree coupons from the City of Tacoma and its partners. You can request your coupon online through March 15, or until funds are gone, and can redeem it through March 31, 2020.

For more information, a list of participating nurseries, and to get your free coupon, visit CityofTacoma.org/TreeCoupon. U*



Support local businesses during Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension

Tacoma Public Utilities is proud to be part of the project extending the Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension through downtown Tacoma. You can continue to support local businesses during construction. The project more than doubles the length of the Tacoma Link, starting with a relocated Theater District Station, and six new stations. The new stations connect to popular destinations such as the Stadium District, Wright Park, and major medical facilities before reaching the new Hilltop neighborhood terminus at Martin Luther King Jr. Way and S. 19th Street.



The project is 2.4 miles long and requires us to relocate water and power utilities the entire stretch. Some of the existing underground pipes are 100 years old. The improvements will provide more reliable services. Our TPU account managers work closely with Sound Transit and the businesses located along the route to keep service interruptions to a minimum. Sound Transit expects to complete the project in 2022.

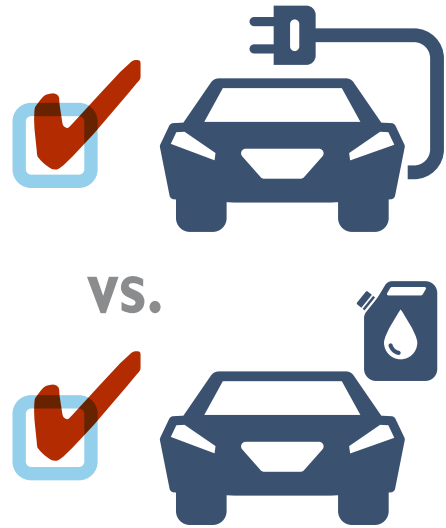
To find the best routes during construction, visit SoundTransit.org/htlink for current information and to sign up for product updates and construction alerts. U*



Tools help you compare the benefits of Electric Vehicles

Tacoma Power offers an electric vehicle (EV) savings calculator and an EV carbon reduction calculator to help you learn a bit more about EVs. Our fast, easy tools let you compare new and used gasoline-powered vehicles to electric vehicles. With a few simple entries, you can compare the estimated carbon reduction benefits of moving from a gas-powered vehicle to a clean running EV. Our savings tool uses an average price-per-gallon of gasoline and our residential electric rate for comparisons. Tacoma Power's electricity comes from clean, renewable hydropower with some of the lowest prices in the country, which means charging an EV with Tacoma Power is affordable and lowers your carbon footprint.

Get your motor running and check out the benefits of driving electric. Try the savings tool at [MyTPU.org/EVCalc](https://www.mytpu.org/EVCalc), and the carbon reduction tool at [MyTPU.org/Carbon-reduction](https://www.mytpu.org/Carbon-reduction) to see how much you could save. **U***



Local honey bees get a little help from utility friends

The candy company Brown & Haley cleaned the 40-feet tall sugar-storing silos they use to make ALMOND ROCA® at their downtown Tacoma factory this past fall. Thanks to the help of Tacoma Public Utilities and the City of Tacoma's Environmental Services, local beekeepers can receive the sugary cleaning byproduct instead of it going down the drain. Beekeepers can use sugar water to feed bees over the winter months when nectar supplies are low.

We brought the right parties together to help Brown & Haley recycle the 1,500 gallons of wastewater created during the cleaning process. The group worked with contractors to make the recycling solution food-safe. They used only potable water to clean the silos and clean equipment to transport and store the sugar water at the City's central wastewater treatment plant in Tacoma.

If the creative pilot between Brown & Haley and the City works, they may continue the process each time the candy company cleans their sugar stores. **U***



COMMUNITY CONNECTION

How TPU employees make an impact in our community

Each year, Tacoma Public Utilities employees make a difference in our community through Community Connection – our employee-led giving and volunteer program. In 2019, our employees participated in 45 giving and volunteer opportunities. Take a peek at a few highlights:



Rebuilding Together South Sound and Habitat for Humanity: Over 100 employees helped build, paint, and clean affordable housing. For the first time, efforts included participation by a team of female employees with Habitat for Humanity's Women Build.

Emergency Food Network: As of November 2019, employees contributed over 430 hours scooping, sorting, and packing over 163,500 pounds of food. They packed 50,000 more pounds than any other volunteer group in 2019.

United Way: Nearly 300 employees contributed over \$175,000 to help fight poverty and provide basic needs for people in our community.

Comprehensive Life Resources' Adopt-a-Family: Employees adopted 210 individuals receiving services through the agency.

Senior Assistance Fund: Employees raised nearly \$6,800 to support seniors who need assistance with their utility bills. The Senior Assistance Fund is supported solely by our employees. The largest annual fundraiser for this program, the Dam Ride – in its 20th year – raised over \$3,500. **U***



U* readers know their critters

Congratulations and thanks to the 207 people who correctly answered the trivia question published in the October issue of U*. Rascally squirrels cause more unplanned power outages than any other animal. **U***

U* trivia – answer and win!

How much did TPU employees give through the United Way in 2019 to help fight poverty and provide basic needs for people in our community?

Be one of 50 randomly chosen people with the correct answer, and you will get a free prize. To enter, submit your answer by January 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.

Send comments and suggestions to:
u@cityoftacoma.org





U* Calendar

All events take place at the Tacoma Public Utilities Auditorium, 3628 S. 35th St., Tacoma, unless otherwise noted.

JANUARY

- 1
New Year's Day | TPU offices closed
- 8
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.
- 20
Observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day | TPU offices closed
- 22
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY

- 12
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.
- 17
Observance of President's Day | TPU offices closed
- 26
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.

MARCH

- 11
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.
- 25
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.

For a complete list of where to find us at local events, festivals, and farmers' markets, and our free workshops, visit MyTPU.org/Calendar.

You make the call

Area code (253)

Report a power outage	502-8602
Start or stop service	502-8600
Order Click! Cable TV	502-8900
Home weatherization	502-8363
Fishing 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 residents572-5557
 - Pierce County residents855-798-4328
- Click! Cable TV discounts502-8900
- TPU Utility Bill Assistance502-8400



FREE EVENT

Attend T-Town to learn about City services

People of all ages will have an opportunity to play, explore, and learn about the City of Tacoma's Services during T-Town – a free community event on March 28.

Bring your family and friends to play in various City of Tacoma vehicles, explore displays and demonstrations, and learn about the services we provide our community.

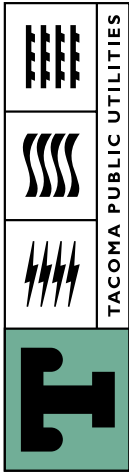
The event is at the Tacoma Dome from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. with a new Quiet Hour (low sensory stimulation) from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. You can park on-site for free or use public transportation on multiple bus routes (42, 400, 501, 574, and 612), Tacoma Link Light Rail, or the Sounder Lakewood-Seattle train. Go to PierceTransit.org to plan your trip.

Learn more about the event at CityofTacoma.org/Expo. We look forward to seeing you there! U*



UTILITIES YOU

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THE END



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