



July 2021

UTILITIES&YOU



Moving forward
together...

FRIDAY, AUG. 13*

Attend TPU Night at the Tacoma Rainiers

Let's Move Forward Together! Join us for TPU Night at the Tacoma Rainiers on Saturday, Aug. 13. 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!

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

For more information about TPU Night, go to MyTPU.org/Rainiers. U*

Take advantage of our community's Pipeline Trail for outdoor recreation

The City of Tacoma completed the third and final phase of the Pipeline Trail. It stretches 1.4 miles along East 56th Street, East 72nd Street, and Waller Road East. The project was a long collaboration between the City, Pierce County, and Tacoma Water, and the entire trail is now available for use.

The new segment is part of a larger 4.3-mile trail throughout the city. It is ADA accessible with a 12-foot-wide asphalt surface, LED lighting, signage, and benches. Most of the Pipeline Trail runs above the underground water pipeline the trail is named after. It provides many recreational opportunities that support healthy, active living in our community. This utility corridor connects the trail to neighborhoods and communities and is the perfect route for everyone to enjoy due to its linear nature.

To discover more about the trail, visit CityofTacoma.org/PipelineTrail. U*



RECOVERING TOGETHER Useful COVID-19 resources to manage utility bill payments and balances

As we move forward through the phases of pandemic recovery together, we know many people in our community struggle financially. Here are several resources available to help:

- ▶ **Limited federal and other utility bill relief funds.**
- ▶ **Expanded residential utility payment assistance programs** so more customers can qualify to receive more assistance per household.
- ▶ **Multiple ways to pay your bill**, including online and PayBox locations.
- ▶ **Extended payment arrangements and waived late fees.**
- ▶ **Suspension of disconnections for nonpayment.**
- ▶ **Tips for lowering electricity and water use** for your home or business.

We encourage you to take advantage of these resources before we resume our normal billing practices.

Our team is working hard behind the scenes to plan for safe restoration of in-person services, including a new appointment ticketing system for lobby visits and bringing staff back safely into our buildings to assist you.

MyTPU.org/COVID19

Feel confident that your drinking water is clean and reliable

We mailed you a copy of the *2020 Water Quality Report* recently. You can learn more about where your drinking water comes from, how we test, monitor, and treat it to ensure safety, and about our working Green River Watershed and the people who manage it.

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



SUMMER WATER RATES ARE IN EFFECT

Summer water rates went into effect on June 1. We charge a slightly higher rate for water use above five units (about 3,700 gallons) from June 1 through Sept. 30, when it can cost more to provide water during the drier, summer months. The two rate levels help encourage everyone to use water wisely to ensure enough water is available for our community, fish, and other wildlife. You can reduce water use outdoors and indoors and save money on your water bills with a few simple tips.

For details, visit MyTPU.org/WaterSmart. U*

How you can accelerate local renewable energy projects

Local non-profits and schools can now apply for a renewable energy project grant of up to \$50,000.

You can help by spreading the word. Funding helps local non-profits and schools generate renewable energy on-site. The grants also give organizations that otherwise might not have the ability to invest in renewable energy an opportunity to participate.



Grant applications are due by Aug. 20. Non-profits and schools can apply at MyTPU.org/EOGrant. U*

How to use water wisely even in abundance

Even with other areas of the West coast experiencing an early drought this year, we don't anticipate any water supply issues in our region. Our experts regularly analyze snowpack in the Green River Basin, the water level in our reservoir, how much rainfall we receive, and how much water the communities we serve use. Based on current conditions and Forecasts, we anticipate we will have a sufficient water supply for people and fish this summer.

During the warm summer months water use can increase significantly outdoors, so we ask that you use water wisely. Many of the most effective things you can do to save water, reduce your bill, and protect our water supply are simple and easy:

Install a smart irrigation controller to improve your water efficiency. We offer a rebate on WaterSense-labeled products.

Inspect your irrigation system for leaks and broken lines to avoid waste. Look for indicators like puddles or soft spots in your yard.

Add mulch to keep the root zone cool and damp.

Water early in the day when temperatures are cooler and to minimize evaporation.

Apply the right amount of water. Most lawns need only 1 inch of water a week, split into two waterings.

Find more ways to help you use less water at MyTPU.org/WaterSmart. U*

SMART HOME

One easy way you can help build a clean energy future for our community

You can help regional utilities learn about the energy savings and satisfaction of smart water heater controllers by participating in our two-year study.

Smart water heater controllers provide hot water when you need it and learn to save energy when you don't. Findings from the research will help accelerate beneficial clean energy programs and you'll receive \$80. It's easy. You must:



Own your home



Have a standard water heater



Fill out an application



Take brief seasonal surveys during the study

A professional will safely install the smart controller on your water heater for free at your convenience. **You'll receive \$40 after the installation and \$40 at the end of the study.**

Learn more and sign up at MyTPU.org/SmartWaterHeater. U*

Get a new water heater and get paid

It pays to upgrade your water heater! In fact, it pays over and over again. When you get a hybrid water heater, you'll also get:

- **\$500 off** the regular price at the store
- **\$300 tax credit** from the IRS
- **\$350 annual savings** on your electricity bill (or about \$3,500 over the life of the water heater)

Like most equipment that operates more efficiently and saves you money, a hybrid water heater costs a bit more than a standard electric model – \$1,464 for a 50-gallon tank. But with the combination of these limited-time offers, you don't have to pay the extra to upgrade.

Don't miss your chance to get paid to get a better water heater.

Learn more at MyTPU.org/UpgradeWaterHeater. U*

HYBRID WATER HEATER COST BREAKDOWN

REGULAR COST

\$1,464

FROM TACOMA POWER

-\$500

OUT OF POCKET TOTAL

\$964

TAX CREDIT

-\$300

NET COST

\$664

Tax credit available for past and future home energy upgrades

We have good news if you've upgraded your home with energy-efficient products in the past or you plan to this year. On top of the rebate or loan that we provide, the IRS would like to thank you in the form of a tax credit. Projects completed from 2018 through the end of 2021 could get you a tax credit of up to \$300. Upgrades that qualify for the tax credit include heating and cooling systems, hybrid water heaters, insulation, windows, and more. Make a note so you remember to submit your project documents with IRS Form 5695 when you file your 2021 taxes in 2022.



For more information, call your Tacoma Power energy advisors at 253-502-8363 or visit MyTPU.org/300Credit. **U***

Employees modify fundraisers and exceed giving back in new ways

Our employees have a strong history of giving back to the communities we serve. Over the past year, they got creative adapting fundraisers through our employee giving and volunteer program, Community Connection, during the pandemic. COVID-19 couldn't dampen their long-standing tradition of giving – not even a little.

In January, employees and their families donated 1,477 pounds of food and basic needs items to benefit Nourish Pierce County Food Banks through our **Winter Food and Basic Needs Drive**. We beat our 2020 weight by 500 pounds!

This year our **Delectable Desserts** team partnered with external organizations for the first time: Lutheran Community Services Northwest and Love by the Slice Bakery Catering to deliver over 150 Valentine's Day cupcakes to some Tacoma seniors and raised over \$4,900 for the TPU Senior Assistance Fund – a \$2,613 increase over last year! Employees' donations covered the cost of the cupcakes and the contributions to the fund. The cupcakes they bought also supported a local Black-owned business.

Our annual **Boys & Girls Clubs of South Puget Sound Bowl-a-thon** received a makeover into the first-ever photo scavenger hunt supporting the Boys & Girls Clubs. Employees raised \$9,360, and 128 participated. **U***



U* Calendar

All events take place online during the COVID-19 pandemic unless otherwise noted.

JULY

5

Observance of Independence Day | TPU offices closed

14

Public Utility Board meeting | 3 p.m.

28

Public Utility Board meeting | 3 p.m.

AUGUST

11

Public Utility Board meeting | 3 p.m.

25

Public Utility Board meeting | 3 p.m.

SEPTEMBER

6

Labor Day | TPU offices closed

8

Public Utility Board meeting | 3 p.m.

22

Public Utility Board meeting | 3 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 neighborhoods!

Congratulations and thanks to the 149 people who correctly answered the trivia question published in the April 2021 issue of U*. **The winner of our 2021 Evergreen Options grant, Shiloh Baptist Church, is located in Tacoma's Hilltop neighborhood! U***



U* Trivia ANSWER AND WIN

Which utility assistance program receives \$5 of every \$20 ticket sold for TPU Night at the Tacoma Rainiers?

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.

July 2021

UTILITIES YOU

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THE END



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