

UTILITIES&YOU

January 2017



Warm up to this
good stuff...

THE ENVELOPE, PLEASE . . .

Customers give TPU high marks

At TPU, we do our very best to provide you reliable, high-quality service. We are planning years in advance while also focusing on your daily utility needs. We're proud of our work, but there's always room to improve, and we look to you for feedback about our performance and what should come next.

To get that information, we recently conducted a customer satisfaction survey – the third in three years. We are very pleased to report that overall satisfaction with Tacoma Public Utilities is high and improving with each passing year. In 2016, 72% of those surveyed said they were very satisfied with TPU, compared with 70% in 2015 and 69% in 2014.

TPU is ranked in the top 10 nationally for being well managed, having knowledgeable and well-trained employees, and having friendly and courteous employees. TPU continues to be a leader nationally in customer satisfaction in a number of areas.

TPU ranks:

#2 of 98 utilities in providing reliable service

#2 of 96 utilities in promptly fixing customer problems

#3 of 97 utilities in overall satisfaction

Tacoma Power also ranks first out of 96 utilities measured for the value of the electric service provided, and second out of 96 utilities for the reasonableness of its electric rates.

Using the results

Numbers are great, but the important part is what's done with them. Since we started conducting these surveys, we've launched some notable projects thanks to your feedback.

Here are two:

- Improving your access to information, and the information itself, during power outages; we are in the process of updating Tacoma Power's outage communication system now so you'll be able to get better, more timely information in a variety of ways
- Updating our power conservation campaign to help more people take advantage of programs that save you electricity and money

Thank you for sharing your thoughts about our performance. We will continue to ask what you think. When you share your opinions, you ensure you're included in our everyday operations and long-term planning. We're listening and ready. **U***





TACOMA'S WATER SUPPLY

Focus in 2017 on planning, managing

In 2017, you'll be hearing from Tacoma Water, and we will want to hear from you. We'll be updating two significant plans that help shape how we manage Tacoma's water supply now and in the future.

The goal, as always, is to continue to reliably provide high-quality water to all of our customers.

The first plan, called an Integrated Resource Plan, will be a detailed look at the potential future demands for water in our area and how the existing water supply matches up. We will examine our water supply options against a range of possible future conditions to identify ways to respond to whatever changes the future may hold.

We are also updating a longstanding document called the Water System Plan, which is required by the Washington State Health Department every 10 years. This plan covers the full scope of our drinking water system, from operations to supply to protecting our water sources and ensuring we meet the public health regulations that govern our work.

As we get further into the planning process, we will update you on ways you'll be able to learn more and provide input. Tacoma Water takes seriously our role and responsibility to provide you clean, reliable water supply long into the future. [U*](#)

Service, planning and innovation lead to awards

We rang out 2016 with a bang, bringing home two awards that reflect the kind of service we try to provide our customers every day.

Tacoma Water

Year after year of planning, strategy and hard work were recognized when Tacoma Water was one of 10 utilities in the nation to be given a Platinum Award for Excellence by the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies. The organization includes the largest publicly owned drinking water systems in the country. Tacoma Water received recognition for its construction and startup of the Green River Filtration Facility, and its significant natural resource enhancements and habitat work in the Green River Watershed.

Tacoma Power

Two members of Tacoma Power's residential conservation team, Sara Bowles and Jordan Whiteley, earned major praise from the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, a group of more than 140 utilities and energy efficiency organizations. Sara and Jordan won the Leadership in Energy Efficiency Award for Innovation for developing a video chat inspection pilot program. Instead of inspectors' on-site field visits to customers' homes, the program uses Facetime and Skype technology for real time virtual inspections. (More about that program on page 5.)
Way to go! [U*](#)



Get energy conservation information in a new way

If you haven't visited Tacoma Power's Energy Saving Center in the Tacoma Public Utilities lobby, now's the time to stop in and pick up some helpful information about energy efficiency.

Stop by and find out how LEDs can light up your home and save you money. See a ductless heat pump and learn how it works inside your home and out.

Energy experts can show you around and answer your energy efficiency questions. Come in and check out the updated Energy Saving Center! U*

\$ 10 easy ways to help lower your electric bill

Simple energy efficiency updates to your home can make a difference. Here are a few easy ways to start saving today.

- 1 Upgrade lighting with Energy Star-labeled LED bulbs and fixtures. Energy Star LEDs meet strict efficiency guidelines.
- 2 Turn lights off in unoccupied rooms.
- 3 Set your water heater's temperature to 120 degrees, and install a foam pad beneath if it sits on concrete or an uninsulated floor.
- 4 Install efficient showerheads that use 2 gallons of water per minute or less and faucet aerators that use 1.5 gallons per minute or less; repair any plumbing leaks.
- 5 Change and clean your heating system's filters regularly.
- 6 Repair, seal and insulate your heating system's ductwork.
- 7 Set your refrigerator thermostat to 38 degrees and your freezer temperature to 0 degrees.
- 8 Recycle your old, extra refrigerator or freezer. A 10-year-old unit can use twice as much energy as a new energy-efficient model.
- 9 Wash only full loads of laundry and dishes, and wash clothes in cold water; rely on detergents to clean and sanitize, not the water temperature.
- 10 Unplug unused electrical devices; they continue to use energy while not in use. U*

Project inspections done with video chat

Some people use Skype and Facetime to video chat with friends and family. Tacoma Power now uses similar tools to inspect energy-efficiency project installations, like ductless heat pumps, insulation and replacement windows, at customers' homes.



A typical ductless heat pump inspection takes about 15 minutes on site, while a video chat inspection only takes about six minutes. Customers get the same high-quality inspection. The biggest savings, however, come from eliminating travel to and from customers'

homes, as well as reducing the utility's need to re-inspect projects that were done incorrectly the first time. That saves time for customers, contractors and the utility.

Contractors say they like the faster rebate payment process, immediacy of self-check and the ability to correct installation issues without returning for a second visit.

How it works

A Tacoma Power inspector logs into a in-office computer while a contractor uses a video chat app at a customer's home where a project has been completed. The contractor shows the work that requires inspection and answers questions, as if the inspector was on site.

The utility performed 37 video chat inspections during the pilot, which began in June. Tacoma Power plans to increase these types of inspections in 2017. U*



FREE HOME WALK-THROUGH

Water efficiency expert can advise on your water use

If you want to lower your water bill, or if you're just interested in becoming more water efficient at home, take note! Our

Tacoma Water efficiency expert can perform a free walk-through of your home to examine your fixtures and recommend ways you can cut back on water use.

After the 30- to 60-minute walk-through, you'll get a personalized report for your home.

From toilets to dishwashers to sprinkler systems, the report will let you know which fixtures use the most water and how you can make them more efficient.

You'll also learn how to check for leaks at your meter, which is easier than you might think.

When you know what's using the most water in your home, you can take action.

To get your free home walk-through, call Tacoma Water at (253) 502-8723 or email conservation@cityoftacoma.org. U*



In 2006, voters approved I-937, also known as the Energy Independence Act. I-937 set new standards for energy efficiency by requiring large utilities like Tacoma Power to help people do things like insulate their homes and replace old windows.

It also required utilities to increase their renewable resources, such as wind and solar power, to 15% by 2020, even if their supply was primarily renewable hydroelectricity. Since I-937 passed, Tacoma Power customers as a whole have saved

490 million kilowatt hours. That's enough power to heat 10,000 homes for four years.

Thank you for helping Tacoma Power continue to be a clean, green utility. Let's keep it up! U*

TPU employees give... and give

When it comes to doing good, TPU employees are doing great. Through 2016's United Way campaign, the TPU team raised more than \$173,000 – money that will go back into the community to support basic needs, strong families and success for young kids in school.

Happily and proudly, TPU is one of the largest employee giving campaigns for the United Way of Pierce County. On United Way's Day of Caring, employees volunteered at the Tacoma Area Coalition of Individuals with Disabilities site, helping with upkeep on the exterior of the building.

Community Connection, our employee volunteer and giving program, provides opportunities for employees and their families to leverage their unique skills and resources to help meet critical needs in the communities we serve.



Giving back through the United Way campaign is an extension of TPU's customer service values; caring about our customers goes beyond our daily job duties.

We're ready to see what 2017 brings and how we can help. **U***

U* trivia – answer and win!

Will you receive a personalized report after a Tacoma Water efficiency expert conducts a walk-through of your home?

Be one of 50 randomly chosen customers with the correct yes or no answer and you'll get a very cool water timer for your shower! Submit your answers at MyTPU.org/trivia or call (253) 396-3389 by Jan. 31. Leave your name, mailing address, phone number and answer to enter. **U***

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



U* readers have all the facts!

Congratulations and thanks to the 284 readers who answered the trivia question published in the October issue of U*. The correct answer to the question, "What is the web address for the bill redesign survey?" is MyTPU.org/BillSurvey.



U* Calendar

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

JANUARY

11 & 25

Public Utility Board meeting
6:30 p.m.

16

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
TPU offices closed

FEBRUARY

8 & 22

Public Utility Board meeting
6:30 p.m.

20

Presidents Day
TPU offices closed

MARCH

8 & 22

Public Utility Board meeting
6:30 p.m.

You make the call



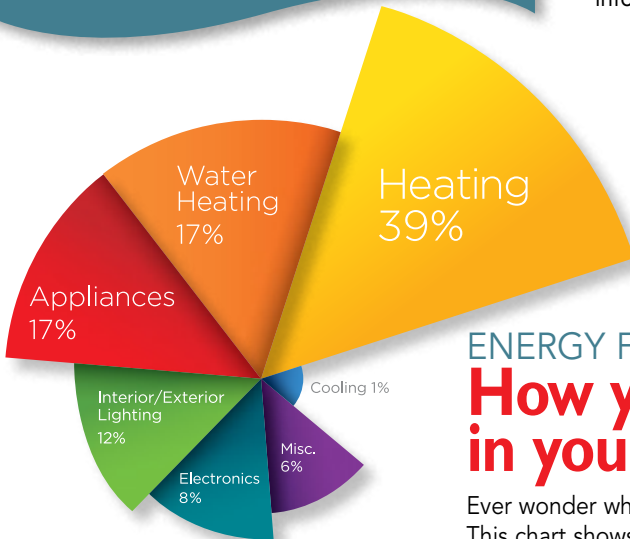
Area code (253)

Report a power outage.....	502-8602
Start or stop service.....	502-8600
Order Click! Cable TV.....	502-8900
Home weatherization.....	502-8363
Fishing & Recreation Line.....	502-8690
Fish & wildlife programs.....	502-8008
Education programs.....	502-8224
Power conservation.....	502-8377
Water conservation.....	502-8723
Report a water emergency.....	502-8384

Bill Payment Assistance

(available for limited-income customers)

- Electric bill assistance – Family Need Program
 - City of Tacoma residents.....572-5557
 - Pierce County residents..... (855) 798-4328
- Click! Cable TV discounts.....502-8900
- Water and Environmental Services payment assistance and discount rate info line.....502-8369



*Tacoma Power Average

ENERGY FUN FACT

How you use energy in your home

Ever wonder where you use the most energy at home? This chart shows an average breakdown of the top electricity uses. See the story on page 4 for 10 easy ways to lower your electric bills! U*



WE'RE VERY SOCIAL. ARE YOU?
FOLLOW US.



UPDATES YOU

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THE END



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