

# UTILITIES&YOU

January 2018

Turn the page  
to a new year



# Public Utility Board seeking your input

The Tacoma Public Utility Board, in coordination with the Tacoma City Council, is in the process of hiring a new Tacoma Public Utilities director. The five-member utility board is appointed by the Tacoma City Council and serves as the governing body for TPU. Hiring the director is an important decision.

The board wants feedback from you to help inform the hiring process, which will include development of the candidate profile, interview questions and selection process.

## They want to know:

- What do you like about Tacoma Public Utilities?
- What do you not like about Tacoma Public Utilities?
- What questions would you like the Public Utility Board and Tacoma City Council to ask the applicants for utility director?

## You can provide feedback in one of three ways:

1. Go to **MyTPU.org/Feedback** and share your thoughts online. The online form will close Jan. 15.
2. Come to the **Public Utility Board meeting** at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 10 in the TPU Auditorium, 3628 South 35th St. in Tacoma, and share your thoughts in person.
3. Respond **by mail**. Send a letter postmarked by Jan. 15 with answers to the three questions above to: Tacoma Public Utility Board, 3628 S. 35th Street, Tacoma, WA 98409.

"Selecting a new director will likely be the most important decision the board makes this year," said Chair Monique Trudnowski. "We are here to provide vital services to you, and I very much appreciate you taking a few minutes to help us understand your perspective." U\*

**MyTPU.org/  
Feedback**



GET INVOLVED

## Attend Your Local Neighborhood Council Meeting

Want to be in the know about TPU and City of Tacoma operations? Consider attending your Neighborhood Council meetings. By attending meetings, you'll gain a deeper understanding of the services provided by Tacoma Public Utilities and all other City of Tacoma departments. Each Neighborhood Council serves as an independent, non-

profit, citizen-led organization established to promote citizen-based efforts for neighborhood improvement. If you live, work or play in one of Tacoma's Neighborhood Council districts, you are welcome to attend. Representatives from City departments attend and give monthly reports, and this is where the most current dialogue about proposed or current major

projects or initiatives takes place. Tacoma's eight Neighborhood Council boundaries – North East Tacoma, New Tacoma, North End, West End, Central Tacoma, South Tacoma, Eastside and South End – correspond to the City's traditional planning areas. Find more information including dates, times, meeting locations and agendas at [cityoftacoma.org/neighborhoodcouncils](http://cityoftacoma.org/neighborhoodcouncils). U\*

## LENDING A HAND

# Tacoma Link Extension

In fall 2018, Sound Transit will begin construction of a 2.4 mile expansion of the Tacoma Link. The route extension starts with a relocated Theater District station, and adds six new stations connecting to popular destinations such as Old City Hall, the Stadium District, Wright Park and major medical facilities before reaching its new Hilltop terminus at the St. Joseph station at South 18th Street and MLK Jr. Way. For more information about the Tacoma Link project, visit [soundtransit.org/tacomalinkextension](http://soundtransit.org/tacomalinkextension).

To prepare for construction of the Tacoma Link extension, Tacoma Public Utilities will begin relocating utilities in early 2018. We'll be moving power poles and water pipes out of the way of the construction

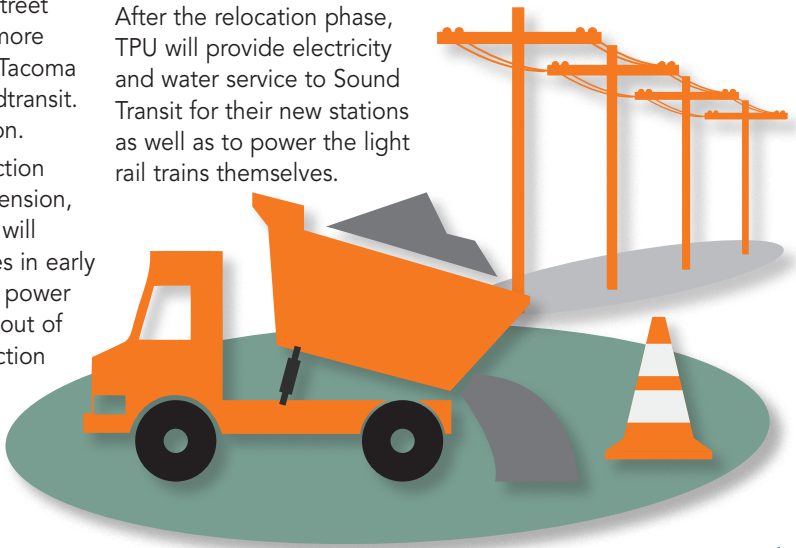
areas with as little disruption to neighboring homes and businesses as possible.

We expect to have the utility relocation work completed in mid to late 2018 and the water pipe relocation completed in coordination with Sound Transit's construction timeline starting in late 2018 through 2022. Any impacted homes or businesses will be notified by TPU in advance.

After the relocation phase, TPU will provide electricity and water service to Sound Transit for their new stations as well as to power the light rail trains themselves.

Tacoma Power's electricity comes from 89% hydropower and is 96% carbon free, so the electric trains represent a significant reduction in carbon emissions in the City of Tacoma's downtown core as they replace gasoline-powered personal vehicles or buses.

To learn more about how TPU will be involved with Sound Transit's Tacoma Link Extension, visit [MyTPU.org/LightRail](http://MyTPU.org/LightRail). U\*



EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1

## Water Rate Adjustment

Tacoma Water customers' next bill will reflect a water rate adjustment that went into effect on January 1, 2018. Residential customers in the city of Tacoma can expect an average increase of \$1.49/month, and residential customers outside Tacoma can expect an average increase of \$1.79/month. Non-residential customers can expect an average increase of 4% per month. This is the second of two rate increases for Tacoma Water that were approved by the Public Utility Board and Tacoma City Council in 2017.

The increased rates will allow us to continue to operate and maintain the system that keeps your home supplied with clean,

reliable water every day. While we know any increase has an effect on people, Tacoma Water customers still enjoy some of lowest rates in the Puget Sound region.

TPU's conservation programs can also help you reduce the amount of water you use. You could lower your bill by installing water-efficient products, such as WaterSense toilets and efficient showerheads, faucets and appliances, finding and fixing leaks that could be wasting water, and watering efficiently in the summer months.

Learn more about our rate-setting process and get tips on how to save water and lower your bill at [MyTPU.org/Water2018](http://MyTPU.org/Water2018). U\*

## Lighten Up!

The short days of winter around here can start to feel like you'll never see daylight again. Brighten up your living space with long-lasting, energy efficient LED bulbs and fixtures. LEDs come in a variety of styles, colors and brightness, including "daylight." Tacoma Power provides instant rebates on LED bulbs and fixtures at local retail stores without any paperwork to fill out. Your discount will be taken automatically at the register. Look for the "Save Instantly" tags with the Tacoma Power logo in the lighting section. U\*

**SAVE  
INSTANTLY.**  
TACOMA POWER

## Feeling the Chill?

This time of year, the drafts and heat loss from old windows and lack of insulation really become apparent.

Did you know that Tacoma Power has rebates that could help fund that home improvement project you've been putting off? Tacoma Power offers rebates for electrically heated homes to insulate ceiling, floors and walls. Plus, you'll save anywhere from 10% to 30% on heating and cooling bills. If your home was built prior to 1988, you may also qualify for a rebate to replace your single pane windows with more energy efficient windows. Visit [MyTPU.org/Rebates](http://MyTPU.org/Rebates) to see if your home qualifies. U\*



100



160



360,000



## Conservation by the Numbers

Tacoma Power customers were busy in 2017! Many of you made upgrades to your home that will help you save energy and money in the long run. Over 300 customers took advantage of Tacoma Power's zero-interest conservation loan, and 200 customers received a low income grant, to finance their energy efficiency upgrades.

Altogether customers received incentives for over 160 insulation upgrades, more than 100 energy efficient window projects, over 600 ductless heat pump installations, 450 plus duct sealing projects, close to 1,400 water and energy saving showerheads, and 360,000 LED bulbs and fixtures.

Together you've saved enough energy to power over 1,000 homes for a year! U\*

## Tacoma Power to Award Renewable Energy Grant

This winter, Tacoma Power will award \$50,000 in grant funds to Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium (PDZA) as part of our Evergreen Options Renewable Energy Grant Program. The program is funded by Evergreen Options customers, who choose to pay a little extra to support local renewable energy projects.

Two program finalists, PDZA and University of Washington Tacoma, both submitted excellent proposals for solar installations, and the winner was decided by Evergreen Options participants.

The zoo will use the funds toward the installation of a 25.8 kW solar array on their Asian Forest Sanctuary building. Starting next year, Tacoma Power plans to offer two grants each year as long as funding allows.

Do you know a local nonprofit interested in generating their own power? Are you interested in becoming an Evergreen Options customer to support these kinds of projects?

Learn more and sign up at [MyTPU.org/Evergreen](http://MyTPU.org/Evergreen). U\*

evergreen options



## Space Heating Calculator

With the weather turning brisk, you may be tempted to pull out your space heaters to make the rooms in your house more cozy. But have you ever thought about how much each of those space heaters costs to run? Check out our Space Heating Calculator. You put in the number of space heaters you're using and the hours per day you use them, and the calculator will tell you exactly what they're costing each month. [MyTPU.org/Calculators](http://MyTPU.org/Calculators). U\*



# Tacoma Rail Makin' Tracks

Trains are an integral part of any discussion about Tacoma's history, economics, transportation, geography, and safety. Tacoma Rail has provided rail transportation as a public entity since 1914. With 16 locomotives, 116 employees and 140 miles of track, Tacoma Rail is one of the busiest short-line railroads in the country serving 68 customers and switching 165,000 cars last year.

Tacoma Rail is self-funded, just like a privately owned railroad, generating tax revenue for the City of Tacoma and Washington state.

Unlike a private railroad, rates are cost based, providing customers with low-cost, high-quality rail freight service. And trains are BIG. That's why safety around trains is so important.

Tacoma Rail has a free education program for children called "Makin' Tracks." This outreach focuses on the choices kids make around railroad tracks and how to be safe when trains are near. The program features safety tips, warning materials and video productions from Operation Lifesaver, a national organization dedicated to railroad safety. Also, history lessons and visits to Tacoma Rail may be included.

For more information about Makin' Tracks or to schedule a program for a school, scout group or youth organization, contact Tacoma Rail at (253) 502-8224. U\*



## U\* trivia – answer and win!

### Name 2 ways to conserve water.

Be one of 50 randomly chosen customers with the correct answer, and you'll get a free Tacoma Water magic sponge. To enter, submit your answer online at [MyTPU.org/Trivia](http://MyTPU.org/Trivia) by January 31, along with your name, phone number and mailing address. U\*

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

## U\* readers know their hydro

Congratulations and thanks to the 194 readers who correctly answered the trivia question published in the October 2017 issue of U\*. The answer to the question, "What percent of Tacoma Power's overall power supply comes from clean, renewable hydro?" is "89%." U\*

Send comments and suggestions to:

[u@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:u@cityoftacoma.org)

# U\* Calendar

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

## JANUARY

10 & 24  
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.

15  
Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
TPU offices closed

## FEBRUARY

14 & 28  
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.

19  
Presidents Day  
TPU offices closed

## MARCH

3  
South Sound Sustainability Expo  
Tacoma Convention Center | 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

14 & 28  
Public Utility Board Meeting | 6:30 p.m.

17  
**FREE** Heat Pump Know-How: Home Heating,  
Water Heaters & More Workshop  
EnviroHouse | 3510 S. Mullen St., Tacoma  
10:30 a.m.

24  
**FREE** T Town City Services Expo  
Tacoma Dome

31  
**FREE** Smart Energy Home and Efficient  
Appliances Workshop  
EnviroHouse | 3510 S. Mullen St., Tacoma  
10:30 a.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.....	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

# T-TOWN

PLAY. EXPLORE. LEARN.

CITY  
SERVICES  
EXPO

**Saturday, March 24 | Tacoma Dome**

Don't miss this fun, interactive community event with activities for the whole family. Learn about the services provided by Tacoma Public Utilities and all other City of Tacoma departments, and check out city trucks and vehicles up close. Open to the public. Visit [cityoftacoma.org](http://cityoftacoma.org) for info.

**Event and parking are free.**

2017

# TPU Employees Giving Back

Community Connection is TPU's employee-led giving and volunteer program. Each year we select a variety of programs in the community that best reflect TPU's values and concern for our neighbors, especially children and senior citizens.

According to the United Way of Pierce County, 30% of Pierce County households earn less than what is required to support

their basic needs. Community Connection allows our employees to give back in a way that makes a significant difference in the communities we serve.

In 2017, our employees participated in more than 42 volunteer or giving events. The estimated value of these contributions is \$339,154, including product/cash donations as well as volunteer time.



We've provided thousands of meals to those in need and provided basic needs support to children.

Want to help those in need? You can donate to TPU's low-income assistance program on your regular bill. U\*



# UTILITIES & YOU

We produce and mail this newsletter  
for about 33 cents each.

© 2018 Tacoma Public Utilities  
u@cityoftacoma.org

THE END



P.O. Box 11007  
Tacoma, WA 98411



Printed with soy ink.

PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE PAID  
TACOMA WA  
PERMIT NO 2