News from your customer-owned utility

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Service 24/7

Need to know your last meter reading, due date of bill or amount owed?

Call us any time of the day or night at **504.7025** to access your account information.

You will need the first six digits of your account number found in the upper left-hand corner of your bill.

You also will need the last four digits of the account holder's social security number, or for commercial accounts, the employer identification number (EIN).

Ten communities receive in-lieu-of-tax revenue

Annual payments by M.U.D. in-lieu-of-taxes boosted the treasuries of 10 metro area communities by a total of $5,775,398.

In-lieu-of-tax payments are based on 2 percent of gross revenues derived from the sale of natural gas and water in communities we serve.

The District also pays motor vehicle license fees, wheel and gasoline taxes, permit fees and all other excise and general sales taxes.

City of Omaha	$5,382,641
City of Bellevue	295,449
Village of Boys Town	30,745
City of Elkhorn	16,998
City of LaVista	15,567
City of Ralston	8,751
City of Springfield	7,328
City of Bennington	6,564
City of Fort Calhoun	6,060
City of Yutan	5,293

Fuel line for dryer: $25

We will hook up a new fuel line for your gas dryer for $25.* Call **504.7719** to set up an appointment with one of our technicians. We will bill you $25 on your monthly statement when work is completed.

A natural gas dryer is your best buy for low cost, cleanliness and efficiency.

Electric dryer annual operating costs (5.8 cu. ft., 5,600 watts)	$108
Natural gas dryer annual operating costs (5.8 cu. ft., 20,000 Btu/hr.)	$51
Annual savings with gas dryer	**$57**

**Restrictions:*

- Dryer must be at house or delivered at time of connection appointment.
- A permanent location for the dryer may not be located more than 25 feet from an existing adequately-sized gas fuel line. M.U.D. technicians will not remove ceiling or wall panels to conceal new fuel line to dryer.
- If necessary, the fuel line will be installed through one floor or one wall surface.
- Installation of the dryer vent line will be the responsibility of the homeowner.

Wise use of energy

The District passes the cost of natural gas from the supplier directly to you, as required by law. The cost of natural gas from suppliers varies from day to day because it is an unregulated commodity. Factors include:

- Weather — how cold temperatures are in the U.S.;
- Storage — how much gas utilities have in storage, and
- Demand — how much gas is used by residential and commercial customers across the U.S.

One way to avoid winter heating surprises is to join the District's budget plan (call **554.6666**), which allows you to pay the same bill amount every month. You may join the plan any time of the year. Another way is to conserve energy. Here are some tips to lower your utility bill.

1. Have your heating system and chimney inspected every year. Properly-operating appliances lower utility bills and help prevent carbon monoxide from escaping into your home.

metropolitan UTILITIES DISTRICT

1723 Harney St • Omaha NE 68102
www.mudomaha.com
e-mail: customer_service@mudnebr.com

2. Set your thermostat at 65 degrees in winter. You can lower it another five degrees or so at bedtime, or when you'll be away for any length of time. *(Note: Older adults may want to raise the thermostat to prevent hypothermia.)*
3. Clean or replace furnace filters once a month or as needed.
4. Replace an older furnace with a high-efficiency natural gas model. It can lower heating costs 30 percent or more.
5. Keep the fireplace damper closed unless a fire is going. An open damper is like having a 48-inch window wide open during the winter; it allows warm air to go right up the chimney.

   Install tempered glass doors and a heat-air exchange system that blows warmed air back into the room.

   Use grates made of C-shaped metal tubes to draw cool room air into the fireplace and circulate warm air back into the room.

   Check the seal on the flue damper and make sure it is as snug as possible. Add caulking around the fireplace hearth.
6. Check ducts for air leaks. Look for sections that should be joined but have separated, and look for obvious holes. If you use duct tape to repair and seal your ducts, look for tape with Underwriters Laboratories (UL) logo to avoid tape that degrades, cracks and loses its bond with age.
7. Clean warm-air registers. Make sure they are not blocked by furniture, carpeting or drapes.
8. Keep drapes and shades on south-facing windows open during the day to allow sunlight to enter your home. Close them at night.
9. Use kitchen, bath and other ventilating fans wisely. In just one hour, these fans can pull out a houseful of warmed air. Turn fans off as soon as they have done the job.

Insulation

The easiest and most cost-effective way to insulate your home is to add insulation in the attic. Measure the thickness of the insulation. If there is less than R-22 *(7 inches of fiber glass or rock wool or 6 inches of cellulose)* you will benefit by adding more. The recommended R-value for attics in our area is R-49.

Also check the insulation in ceilings, exterior and basement walls, floor and crawl spaces. Insulation is measured in R-values. The higher the R-value, the better your walls and roof will resist the transfer of heat. The recommended R-values for our area are:

Attic	R-49
Cathedral ceiling	R-38
Floor	R-25
Crawl space*	R-19
Wall	R-18
Interior basement	R-11
Exterior basement	R-10
Slab edge	R-8

*Insulate crawl space walls only if the crawl space is dry all year, the floor above is not insulated, and all ventilation to the crawl space is blocked. A vapor retarder (e.g., 4- or 6-mil polyethylene film) should be installed on the ground to reduce moisture migration into the crawl space.

Insulation comes in four types — batts, rolls, loose-fill and rigid foam boards. Each type is made for a different part of your house.

Batts (made of fiber glass or rock wool): Fit between studs in the walls or between the joists of the ceiling or floors.

Rolls or blankets (fiber glass): Lay over the floor in the attic.

Loose-fill (fiber glass, rock wool or cellulose): Blown into the attic or walls.

Rigid foam board (polyisocyanurate, polystyrene): Use in confined spaces such as exterior walls, basements, foundation and crawl space walls, concrete slabs and cathedral ceilings.

- Insulating ducts in the basement will make the basement colder. If both the ducts and the basement walls are uninsulated, consider insulating both.
- If your basement has been converted to a living area, install both supply and return registers in the basement rooms.

Weatherization

You can save 10 percent or more on your energy bill by reducing the air leaks in your home.

Test your home for air tightness. On a windy day, hold lit incense stick next to your windows, doors, electrical boxes, plumbing fixtures, electrical outlets, ceiling fixtures, attic hatches and other locations where there is a possible air path to the outside.

If the smoke travels horizontally, you have located an air leak that may need caulking, sealing or weather-stripping.

- Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows that leak air.
- Caulk and seal leaks where plumbing, ducting or electrical wiring penetrates through exterior walls, floors, ceilings and soffits over cabinets.
- Install rubber gaskets behind outlet and switch plates on exterior walls.
- Look for dirty spots in your insulation, which often indicates air leaks into and out of your house. Seal the holes by stapling sheets of plastic over the holes and caulking the edges of the plastic.
- Install storm windows over single-pane windows or replace them with double-pane windows. Storm windows as much as double the R-value of single-pane windows and they help reduce drafts, water condensation and frost formation.

  As a less costly and less permanent alternative, you can use a heavy-duty, clear plastic sheet on a frame or tape clear plastic film to the inside of the window frames. The plastic must be sealed tightly to the frame to help reduce infiltration.

How does air escape?

Air infiltrates in and out of your home through every hole, nook and cranny. About one-third of this air infiltrates through the openings in your ceilings, walls and floors.

Floors, walls, ceilings	31%
Ducts	15%
Fireplace	14%
Plumbing	13%
Doors	11%
Windows	10%
Fans and vents	4%
Electric outlets	2%

How much will I save if I lower the temperature?

If the normal temperature setting on your thermostat is 70 degrees and you lower it to 68 degrees, your gas bill will decrease 6 percent per month during the heating season.

If the normal temperature setting on your thermostat is 70 degrees and you lower it to 67 degrees, your gas bill will decrease 9 percent per month during the heating season.

If the normal temperature setting on your thermostat is 70 degrees and you lower it to 66 degrees, your gas bill will decrease 13 percent per month during the heating season.

Weatherization program

Owners and tenants, who meet income guidelines, may sign up for a free inspection of their home to identify the most effective energy improvements.

The program also will repair or replace faulty or non-working heating systems. Homes are disqualified if they have leaky roofs, structural damage, pest infestation or are a health or safety risk.

If a household member receives Supplemental Security income, Aid to Dependent Children or Energy Assistance payments from the Nebraska Health and Human Services, the household automatically qualifies for the project, regardless of income.

For more information, call the Douglas County Weatherization Trust Inc., **342.1611.** If you live in Sarpy County, call **862.2411.**

Energy conservation information in this newsletter is from the U.S. Department of Energy booklet, "Energy Savers: Tips for Saving Energy and Money at Home." Call us at 554.6666 for a free copy. The booklet also is available on the web (www.eree.energy. gov/consumer/tips).

Before you replace your heating system, think about...

- *Comfort level:* Conventional gas furnaces provide air from your registers at a range of 110 to 130 degrees. A standard electric heat pump provides air from registers in the range of 85 to 95 degrees.
- *Two heating systems:* A gas furnace will supply all your heating needs. An electric heat pump requires a back-up heating system.
- *Installation costs:* When installed by a qualified contractor, a heat pump on the average will cost $1,000 more than a standard air conditioning unit.
- *Other:* Gas furnaces do not lose efficiency as outdoor air temperatures drop. Higher volumes of air typically are required with heat pumps. Existing duct systems are not designed to provide the higher air volumes.

If you're thinking about replacing your home's heating system, call us at 504.7023. We'll be happy to answer your questions and give you a gas and electric cost comparison.

Gift certificates

Looking for a gift for someone who has everything? Buy a M.U.D. gift certificate in any amount and for anyone who uses M.U.D. gas or water. You can even remain anonymous. The recipient's account will be credited for the amount of the certificate.

To buy a certificate, stop by our downtown office, 1723 Harney St., or send a check or money order to: M.U.D. Cashier, 1723 Harney St., Omaha, NE 68102. Questions? Call **504.7207.**

Gas, water emergencies
554.7777

Meter Reading Hotline
504.7008

24/7 Customer Service
504.7025

Customer Service
(7:30 a.m. - 5:15 p.m.)
554.6666

Buying a house?

If you're buying a house, check with the seller or Realtor about the existing water service or private line. When the service is very old and made of a material that can corrode, the service line may be deteriorated.

If the water service line leaks, you are responsible for repairs.

Having difficulty paying a bill?

If you're finding it difficult to keep up with your utility bill, please call us. We will work with you to set up a payment that works with your budget. **Call 504.7002.**

Looking for a speaker?

The M.U.D. Speakers Bureau offers entertaining and informative programs on water and natural gas issues, including Sniffasaurus or "Sniffy," our lovable dinosaur (live character). Sniffy teaches the importance of natural gas safety, and is perfect for fairs, exhibitions, class visits. (K-5th grade). *Visits to preschools and day care centers are not available.*

We also offer videos, traveling demonstrations and water plant tours to illustrate the importance of natural gas and water and the safe use of these resources.

All programs are presented at no charge. Reserve a program via our website (www.mudomaha.com) or

Call 504.7010

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