News from your customer-owned utility

Vol. 20 No. 1 2007

Financial counseling

A United Way of the Midlands representative will be in the lobby of our downtown office, 1723 Harney St., through March 30 to provide financial counseling to customers facing utility shut-offs.

No appointment is necessary. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., weekdays.

Rate comparisons
for one therm of gas

According to the 2005 Gas Facts, published by the American Gas Association, M.U.D.'s residential gas averaged 85 cents per therm in 2004. This is 22 percent lower than the national average of $1.04 cents per therm.

Mid-Atlantic area	$1.19
Missouri	1.07
Kansas	1.04
U.S. average	1.04
Iowa	.99
Pacific area	.95
South Dakota	.92
Minnesota	.92
North Dakota	.88
Nebraska	.88
M.U.D.	.85

Rates include service charges.

Budget includes rate increase

The M.U.D. budget for 2007 totals $753.9 million compared to estimated expenditures of $764.3 million in 2006.

The budget includes a water rate increase of 5 percent, effective January 2, 2007. The average residential customer who uses 110,000 gallons of water will pay $195.28 a year, compared with $185.90 in 2006.

For the second year in a row, the District did not assess a hydrant tax which recovered $2 million in 2005.

The average residential natural gas customer will see an increase of 3.1 percent, which is comprised of a $2 increase in the customer service charge and a 4-percent increase in the District's margin.

The natural gas service charge for residential gas customers increases from $10 to $12 a month.

The average residential gas customer's bill will increase a total of $28.45 a year, from $917.45 to $945.90.

The water department budget totals $173 million compared to an estimated $210.7 million in 2006.

The District plans to spend $78.4 million in 2007 for construction of the 100 million-gallon-a-day water treatment plant at 217th & Q Sts.

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Rate comparisons

The annual cost of water for the average residential M.U.D. customer, who uses 110,000 gallons of water per year, is $195.28. Listed below are costs for 110,000 gallons in various Midwest cities.

City and Annual Bill		% above M.U.D.
Kansas City	$372.15	91%
Council Bluffs	313.26	60%
Wichita	285.54	46%
Indianapolis*	281.34	44%
Denver	276.47	42%
St. Paul	274.97	41%
Milwaukee	231.26	18%
Lincoln	211.68	8%
Des Moines	208.06	7%
M.U.D.**	195.28	

*Indianapolis has a 34% rate increase pending that is not reflected in this chart.

**Totals include service charge based on 5/8-inch residential meter. M.U.D.'s figure also includes the 2% in-lieu-of-tax payment to cities.

M.U.D. water meters measure use in ccfs and these are shown as billing units on the statement. One ccf = 100 cubic feet of water or 748 gallons.

One penny buys 10 gallons of M.U.D. water.

Communities receive more than $5 million

Annual payments by M.U.D. in-lieu-of-taxes boosted the treasuries of 10 metro area communities by a total of $5,464,932. 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. Here are the amounts each community received:

Omaha	$5,068,771	LaVista	$16,754
Bellevue	297,586	Ralston	9,164
Boys Town	26,043	Fort Calhoun	7,655
Elkhorn	19,807	Bennington	7,524
		Springfield	6,708
		Yutan	4,920

metropolitan UTILITIES DISTRICT

1723 Harney St • Omaha NE 68102

website: www.mudomaha.com

e-mail: customer_service@mudnebr.com

What's yours? What's ours?

Water

Main: The large pipe laid in or along a street is called a water main. The main is four inches or more in diameter with a fire hydrant attached to it. We are responsible for water mains.

Corporation: A valve connecting the main to the water service line. We are responsible for the corporation.

Service Line: The pipe from your house to our main. If the main is across the street, the service runs under the street. You own and maintain the water service line.

Private Line: A service that is connected to the closest main when there is no main adjacent to your property. Like a service line, the property owner owns and maintains the private water line.

Meter: Measures the amount of water used. You own the water meter. However, we maintain it, and must have access to the meter for readings and maintenance. We will replace it if it is defective.

Stop Box: Provides access to the curb stop or valve. Usually located between the back of the curb and property line. If the stop box is too high, it may be a hazard for anyone walking over it and should be lowered. You are responsible for maintenance of the stop box.

Repairs

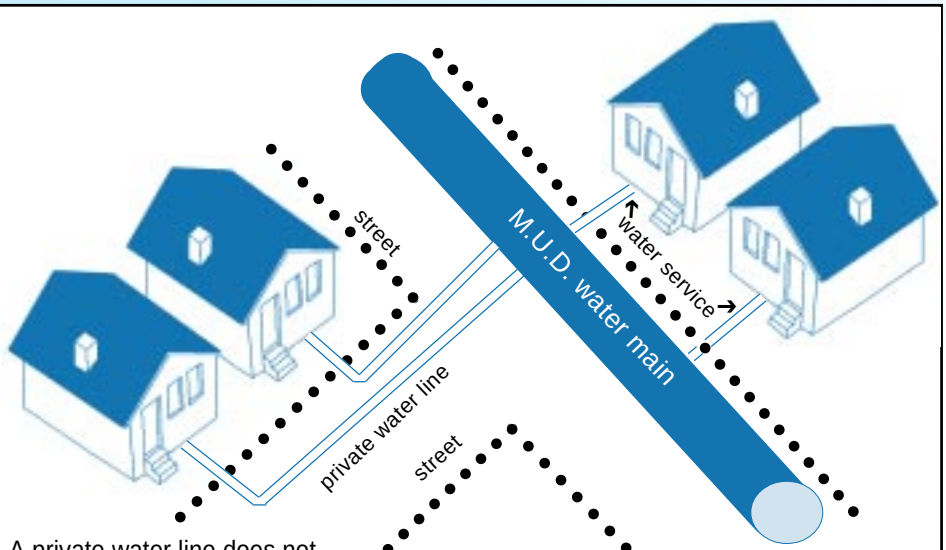
Mains: Buried water pipes can break or leak. We may find leaks on routine checks. However, if you are aware of a leak, call us at **554.6666.** When the leak is from a main, we will repair it.

Service Lines: We issue notices for leaking or broken water services. Codes require that repairs be made by a master plumber, licensed by your city. You must get a permit from M.U.D. before any repair is done.

Your plumber determines if the water service can be repaired, or will advise you of options. You may call us to verify the type of repair needed. You are responsible for making sure repairs are made.

Water will be turned off when the leaking or broken service line causes damage, is a safety hazard, or if you fail to make arrangements for repair. The property owner is responsible for disconnect charges.

NOTE: Water service lines may not be relocated, repaired or modified without a permit from M.U.D. Any work must be inspected by the District.



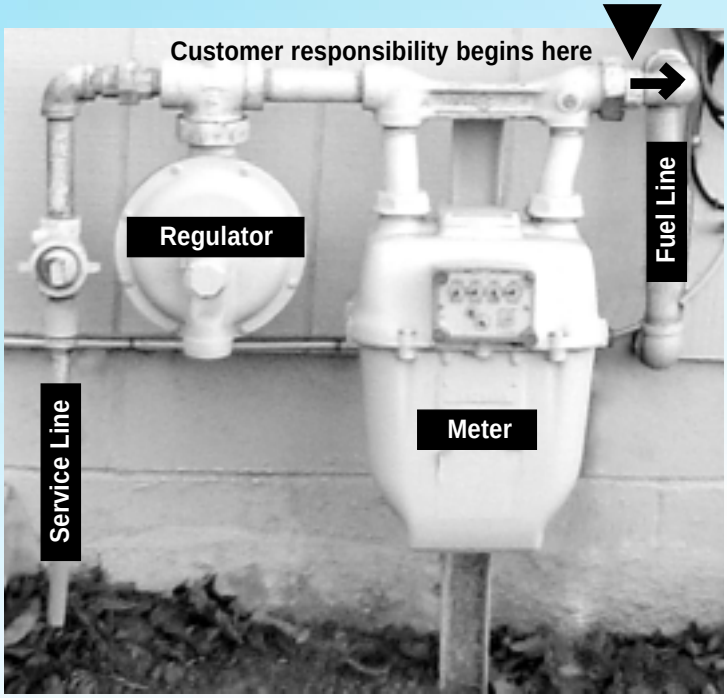
A private water line does not have a water main installed in front of the property.

What's yours? What's ours?

Gas

Natural gas is delivered by an underground **service line.** The service line runs from the main in the street to the meter. M.U.D. is responsible for maintenance, repair and location of the service line, including the regulator and meter.

The customer is responsible for the **fuel line** on the "house side" of the meter. The fuel line begins after the meter as noted on the picture.



Buried natural gas fuel line after the meter

Some fuel lines are installed underground. If an underground fuel line is not maintained, it may be subject to potential hazards of corrosion (rust) and leaks.

1. Inspect the buried fuel line periodically for leaks.
2. If the buried fuel line is metal, inspect it periodically for corrosion.
3. Repair any unsafe condition.

Contact a qualified plumber or heating contractor to provide location, inspection and repair services for buried fuel lines. **M.U.D. does not repair or locate customer-owned fuel lines.**

The **service line** will be located at no charge when you call the Diggers Hotline, **344.3565.** However, Diggers Hotline does not locate buried fuel lines after the meter.

When excavating near a buried **fuel line,** locate the line in advance and excavate by hand. Questions? Call us at **554.6666** or e-mail: customer_service@mudnebr.com.

Flex connectors

Flex connectors are corrugated metal tubes used to attach appliances to the natural gas line in your home or apartment.

Some connectors in homes or apartments more than 30 years old have manufacturer defects and may deteriorate over time, causing gas leaks, fire or explosions.

We notified our customer-owners about defective flex connectors in 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1997, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2006. If we checked the connector, we have a record.

There is no need for concern if:

- You have not installed any gas appliances since the check.
- New connectors were used when new appliances were installed.

However, if a "used" connector was installed with a new appliance or if the flex connectors were not checked, you may have a serious safety issue in your home. You should have the flex connectors checked. One of our service technicians will check the connectors free of charge.

If a connection is faulty, we will replace it for $31 plus the cost of the connector. You also may call a qualified heating contractor to replace the connector.

Call 554.6666 to schedule an appointment.

Do not move the appliance. You run the risk of damaging a safe connector or making a faulty one worse.

2007 Budget from page 1

The $352-million facility will increase water treatment capacity to 334 million gallons a day. The plant is scheduled to go online in 2008. The water department budget also includes $18.4 million for water main installation and improvements.

The gas department budget totals $580.9 million compared to an estimated $553.6 million in 2006. The difference is due to a $20.2 million increase in the cost of gas for resale, a $11.6 million increase in operating and maintenance expenses, a $2.8 million decrease in the capital budget, a $5.9 million increase in the cost of the natural gas inventory, and a $8.5 million decrease in short-term loan retirements.

The budget includes an increase in the number of employees from 806 to 827, including 15 positions required to staff or directly support the Platte West facility.

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).

For more information about 24/7 account information, go to our website, www.mudomaha.com/service/ican.html.

Platte West update

Platte West wellfield construction continued through 2006 with completion of collector piping, access roads, electrical distribution system and concrete valve/meter vaults.

In the Douglas County wellfield, installation of electrical equipment and well pumps was completed. Work in the Saunders County wellfield will continue into 2007 with installation of electrical equipment, wellhead piping and pump installation.

The wellfield will be connected to the Platte West Water Treatment Plant via a nearly four-mile, 72-inch diameter steel transmission main. At the end of 2006, only the connections at the Elkhorn River, the final connection at the treatment plant site and pressure testing remained to be completed. Prior to being placed in service, this main will provide water from the wellfield to the treatment plant for hydrostatic testing of the treatment basins in the spring of 2007.

Alberici Constructors Inc. and their team of subcontractors continued with construction and installation of equipment at the treatment plant. In 2006, work was initiated on every structure of the facility. At the end of 2006, nearly 65 percent of the construction and equipment was completed. The project remains on-schedule for completion by June 2008.

City of Omaha Sewer Project

The City of Omaha, through a federal mandate, must develop a plan to reduce the wet-weather overflows from the combined sewer, which covers 51 sq. miles in the eastern part of the metro area. To learn more about the development of this plan, visit www.omahacso.com or call the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Hotline, 341.0235.

(printed on recycled paper)

2007 chairman

Tim Cavanaugh

The Board of Directors elected **Tim Cavanaugh** chairman for 2007. A retired captain with the Omaha Police Department, he serves as chief deputy of the Douglas County Treasurer's office. Cavanaugh was appointed by the board in 1999 to fill the unexpired term of his father, William Cavanaugh, who died. He won election to the board in 2002.

Directors chose **Tom Dowd** vice-chairman. He is senior partner with Dowd, Howard & Corrigan, Attorneys-at Law. Dowd won his first election to the board in 1974, and has been re-elected four times serving, 28 years on the board.

Other directors are: **Mary Kay Begley, Mark Doyle, David J. Friend, Jack Frost** and **John S. McCollister.**

The board meets at 9 a.m. the first Wednesday of every month at 1723 Harney St.

Gas, Water Emergencies
554.7777

24/7 Account information
504.7025

24/7 Hearing impaired Service
504.7003

How much will I save?

Normal temperature setting is 70 degrees. Lower it to 68 degrees. Your gas bill will decrease 6 percent per year.

Normal temperature setting is 70 degrees. Lower it to 67 degrees. Your gas bill will decrease 9 percent per year.