

NEWS

from Metropolitan Utilities District, your customer-owned utility

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NATURAL GAS STORAGE HELPS REDUCE IMPACTS FROM POLAR VORTEX

On-site storage and multiple pipeline suppliers allowed District to meet gas needs and avoid price spikes during extreme cold weather

February brought challenges to many utilities in the United States. On February 14 the frigid temperatures started what was termed a “polar vortex” that affected states from as far south as Texas and upwards throughout the Midwest. Many states saw temperatures average 25 to 50 degrees below normal.

During this stretch of cold weather, Metropolitan Utilities District’s natural gas customers used approximately 50% more gas on average to heat their homes and businesses. A record amount of gas was sent out on February 15. The District was able to meet this increased demand due to the efforts of our dedicated employees and a variety of supply and storage strategies.

System reliability was maintained through the purchase of gas from several pipeline suppliers in regions south, west and north of Nebraska.

Also, District-owned storage facilities (liquefied natural gas and propane) provided more than 30% of gas used by customers over a six-day period. This on-site storage also helped to avoid higher costs, as gas did not have to be purchased on the spot market during record price spikes.

As a result, the average residential gas customer will see an additional \$17.21 on their bill for February’s increased usage. If the natural gas had instead been purchased on the spot market, this increased cost could have been higher — by more than \$200.

We are sensitive to the fact that during already challenging times, the increased usage driven by this unprecedented cold weather increased customers’ February bills.

Need utility bill help?

Visit mudomaha.com/homefund or call 402.554.6666.



Customers who need help should contact the Nebraska Energy Assistance Program. Visit dhhs-access-neb-menu.ne.gov/start or call 402.595.1258 (Omaha area) or 1.800.383.4278 (Outside Omaha). If you are not eligible through the state, please visit the M.U.D. Home Fund site at mudomaha.com/homefund or call 402.554.6666.

EVENT RAISES MORE THAN \$103,000 FOR UTILITY ASSISTANCE

More than 500 runners and walkers participated virtually March 6 in the 14th annual Heat the Streets Run & Walk for Warmth. Registrants, sponsors and donors brought in more than \$103,000 for the event, put on by M.U.D and Omaha Public Power District. More than 300 households will benefit from the fundraiser.

While the need for assistance is always present, M.U.D. and OPPD have seen a 38% increase in the number of customers requesting assistance since COVID-19 struck last year.

M.U.D. Director **Tanya Cook** co-chaired the event along with OPPD Director Janece Mollhoff and her husband, Wayne Mollhoff. Proceeds are split between M.U.D.’s Home Fund and OPPD’s Energy Assistance Program. Funds are administered by Dollar Energy Fund, Inc., a registered 501(c)3 organization.

Utility assistance is a year-round need, and donations are still being accepted online at heatthestreetsomaha.com.

PROGRESS ON INFRASTRUCTURE REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

M.U.D. must maintain a reliable distribution system to provide safe, high quality drinking water and natural gas. To replace aging gas and water mains, the District has an infrastructure replacement program.

Our gas and water rates include monthly fees to provide long-term funding for infrastructure replacement. In 2008, the District's Gas Department began an accelerated program to replace cast iron gas mains; this program should be substantially completed by the end of 2027.

The Water Department has more recently focused on increasing the rate of replacement of critical, aged water mains, many of which are cast iron. Our long-term goal is to increase the rate of main replacements to approximately 25 miles a year. We are working hard to reverse the trend of the increasing number of water main breaks that impact our community.

The District spent \$46 million in 2020 to improve gas and water main infrastructure. We replaced 40.9 miles of gas mains and 13.4 miles of water mains. For 2021, the District plans to replace 40 miles of gas mains and 15 miles of water mains using a combination of District crews and contractors.

Keeping you informed

Whenever possible, projects are done in conjunction with road or redevelopment projects or the City of Omaha's combined sewer separation work to save money and minimize inconvenience to customers.

We will notify you when crews may be working in your area. In addition to mailings to affected customers, we provide neighborhood-specific project information and a map on our website at: mudomaha.com/infrastructure-projects.

METROPOLITAN UTILITIES DISTRICT

Stay in the loop! Follow us.

Visit mudomaha.com to find social media links.



Buying a house?

If you're buying a house, check with the seller or your real estate agent about the existing water service or private line. Ask when it was installed and if there have been repairs.

When the water service line is very old and made of a material that can corrode, it may deteriorate. If the water service line leaks, you are responsible for repairs.

TARGETED MAIN REPLACEMENT

(in miles)

	Since <u>2008</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Beyond</u>
Water	102.4	10.1	13.4	Up to 25 mi/yr
Gas	364.9	40.6	40.9	Substantially completed by 2027

Exterior water service line coverage plan

HomeServe USA, an independent provider of home repair service solutions, is offering M.U.D. residential water homeowners an optional coverage plan to help protect your exterior water service line at a preferred price. For more information, visit mudomaha.com/homeserve or call HomeServe at 1.833.805.6754. *Coverage is subject to eligibility requirements, exclusions and terms and conditions. See the HomeServe website or call for information.*

WATER RATE INCREASE REMINDER

Effective May 2, residential customers will see an increase to water rates that will result in a 1% annual increase to the average residential bill.

Due to concern over the financial hardship many customers experienced during the coronavirus pandemic, the M.U.D. Board of Directors approved deferring the rate increase from January 2 until May 2, 2021.

If you have been financially impacted by the pandemic and need rent or utility assistance, please visit mudomaha.com/covid19relief for links to resources or call M.U.D. Customer Service at 402.554.6666.