

# NEWS

from Metropolitan Utilities District, your customer-owned utility

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## 2022 BUDGET, WATER RATE INCREASE APPROVED

The M.U.D. board recently approved the 2022 budget, which continues to fund priorities to replace critical water and natural gas infrastructure, update facilities and invest in technology to improve operations.

Also approved was a rate increase to water commodity charges, which will result in a 4-percent annual increase to the average residential water bill as compared with 2021 budget assumptions. There is no increase to fixed charges. The annual water bill for the average residential customer is projected to increase by \$15 per year based on usage of 104 CCF (77,792 gallons). The water rate increase takes effect January 2, 2022.

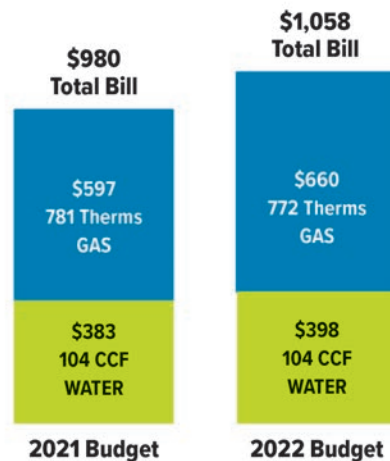
There is no change in natural gas rates. However, the annual gas bill for the average residential customer is projected to increase by \$63\* per year based on usage of 772 therms. This 11-percent projected increase is due to “pass through” components of the bill, including the increased cost to purchase gas. (\*These are updated figures as of mid-December.)

### INFRASTRUCTURE REPLACEMENT & EVALUATION

It is critical that M.U.D. continues to responsibly invest in infrastructure replacement and evaluation to ensure the reliability of our gas and water distribution systems. With aging infrastructure, the frequency and cost of water main breaks continues to increase each year. To reverse these trends, we are using a variety of strategies, including:

- Adding more internal construction crews dedicated to replacing water mains.
- Partnering with several local water construction contractors on a multi-year basis.
- Installing new pipes with a more resilient exterior coating, coupled with increased wall thickness, to better protect from corrosion.
- Exploring alternate installation techniques and main material types to minimize rising replacement costs.
- Implementing new technologies to detect water leaks, assess pipe condition and analyze data to target critical water mains for replacement.

## GAS AND WATER ANNUAL BILL COMPARISON (Average Residential Customer)



### AFFORDABILITY AND UTILITY ASSISTANCE

As compared to 39 other U.S. utilities that participated in the 2021 Memphis Light, Gas and Water Survey, the District ranked second lowest in cost for residential gas bills and 14th lowest for residential water bills.

M.U.D. continues to be responsive to the financial hardships faced by some customers over the course of the pandemic. We will work with those who are struggling and help them tap into utility assistance funds. If you would like to help those in need, please consider donating through the new Bill Round Up program. Visit [mudomaha.com/billroundup](https://mudomaha.com/billroundup).

### CREDIT RATINGS REMAIN STRONG

Moody’s Investors Service recently completed a credit surveillance analysis of our Gas and Water Departments and affirmed the “Aa2” credit rating, which is its third highest credit rating. Fitch Ratings recently completed an analysis of the Gas Department and affirmed the “AA+ Stable” rating, which is its second highest rating. Strong credit ratings are important as they enable M.U.D. to issue bonds at very favorable rates, resulting in savings to our customers.

# HEAT THE STREETS RUN & WALK FOR WARMTH CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF RAISING FUNDS FOR UTILITY ASSISTANCE

Registration is open for the Heat the Streets Run & Walk for Warmth, scheduled for March 5 at Aksarben Village. The event is a family-friendly timed 5K and untimed one-mile walk. A virtual option also is available.

The event – co-sponsored by M.U.D. and Omaha Public Power District – raises awareness and funds for those in our communities in need of utility assistance. Last year, the event surpassed its \$100,000 fundraising goal. With continued economic and health challenges, its estimated that customer need has more than doubled. This year’s fundraising goal has increased to \$300,000.

Co-chairs for this year’s event are M.U.D. Director Jim Begley and his wife, Rebecca, and OPPD Director Craig Moody and his wife, Emily.

To register or donate, visit [heatthestreetsomaha.com](http://heatthestreetsomaha.com).



## EVENT DETAILS:

**WHERE:** Aksarben Village, outside Inner Rail Food Hall. Parking is free.

**WHEN:** Saturday, March 5, 5K begins at 9 a.m., with walk to immediately follow.

Every effort will be made to ensure participant safety. The event planning team is monitoring local and state guidelines as they relate to the coronavirus pandemic. Status updates will be posted at [heatthestreetsomaha.com](http://heatthestreetsomaha.com) and [facebook.com/heatthestreetsomaha](https://www.facebook.com/heatthestreetsomaha). If guidance recommends cancellation of in-person gatherings, all registrations will transfer to the virtual option in lieu of refunds.

### REGISTRATION PRICES:

- 5K price: \$35 (Through March 1)
- Virtual 5K price: \$35 (Through March 5)
- One-mile walk price: \$25 (Through March 1)
- Virtual one-mile walk price: \$25 (Through March 5)

**QUESTIONS?** Email [heatthestreetsomaha@gmail.com](mailto:heatthestreetsomaha@gmail.com).

## TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR FAUCETS AND PIPES FROM FREEZING

When water freezes, it expands. Plan ahead to prevent the cost and mess of frozen pipes or a broken water line during winter months.

Here are some things you can do to prepare for winter:

- Disconnect and drain outdoor hoses. Detaching the hose allows water to drain from the pipe. A single hard, overnight freeze can burst either the faucet or the pipe it’s connected to.
- Allow heat to circulate around meters and pipes located in outside walls, uninsulated cabinets or other enclosed areas.



- Fill cracks in doors, windows and walls near water meters and pipes.
- Where previous freeze-ups have been a problem, a slight trickle of water from the faucet may keep a pipe from freezing.

### PLANNING TO BE AWAY FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD?

Below are some tips for your home:

- Keep the furnace on, but at a lower setting.
- Have someone briefly run all faucets daily to reduce the risk of frozen pipes.
- Turn off your water at the Stop Box. By doing so, it will reduce the likelihood of further damage from running water if system is not drained and freezing occurs.
- Drain all pipes, toilets and water lines to be completely safe.