

## Fix-a-Leak Week - March 18 - 24

Did you know that an average household can waste nearly 10,000 gallons of water every year due to leaks? Shockingly, about ten percent of homes have leaks that waste 90 gallons or more per day. The most common types of leaks found in homes are worn toilet flappers, dripping faucets, and other leaking valves. Fortunately, these types of leaks are often easy to fix with just a few tools and hardware that can pay for themselves in water savings. By fixing these commonly occurring household water leaks, homeowners can save up to 10 percent on their water bills.

### The Facts on Water Leaks

*from epa.gov/watersense*



10  
percent of homes have leaks that waste 90 gallons or more per day



A leaky faucet dripping at the rate of one drip per second can waste more than

**3,000**  
gallons per year

Minor water leaks account for nearly



**1 trillion**

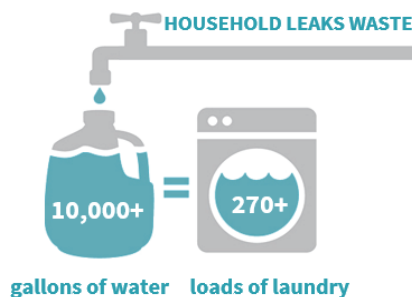


A shower leaking at 10 drips per minute wastes more than **500 gallons** per year

Replacing toilets with WaterSense models saves



**13,000**  
gallons of water for the average family



**10,000+** gallons of water = **270+** loads of laundry

gallons of wasted water each year and is equal to annual household water use in nearly



**11**  
million homes



By fixing household leaks, homeowners can save **10 percent** on their water bills

### Here is how to check for some common leaks in your home:

- ⇒ Take a look at your water usage during a colder month, such as January or February. If a family of four exceeds 12,000 gallons per month, there are serious leaks.
- ⇒ Check your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used.
- ⇒ Identify toilet leaks by placing a drop of food coloring in the toilet tank. If any color shows up in the bowl after 10 minutes, you have a leak. (Be sure to flush immediately after the experiment to avoid staining the tank)
- ⇒ Examine faucet gaskets and pipe fittings for any water on the outside of the pipe to check for surface leaks.

[www.epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week)

# Gas Worker Appreciation

March 18 is Natural Gas Utility Workers' Day. It is a day to bring awareness of the hard work done by employees of natural gas utilities. Throughout 2023, our gas service technicians responded to more than 1,000 emergency natural gas calls. Additionally, they visited 1,500 homes and businesses last year to either upgrade gas meters or install new meter reading technology to existing meters.

Our natural gas construction team was engaged in various projects in 2023, including the installation and replacement of 10,230 feet of gas main. They also successfully installed 6,000 feet of gas service and completed the reconstruction of a natural gas regulation station.

We recognize the accomplishments of our Austin Utilities Natural Gas employees and thank them for their commitment to our customers.



**MARCH 18**  
Natural Gas Utility  
Workers' Day



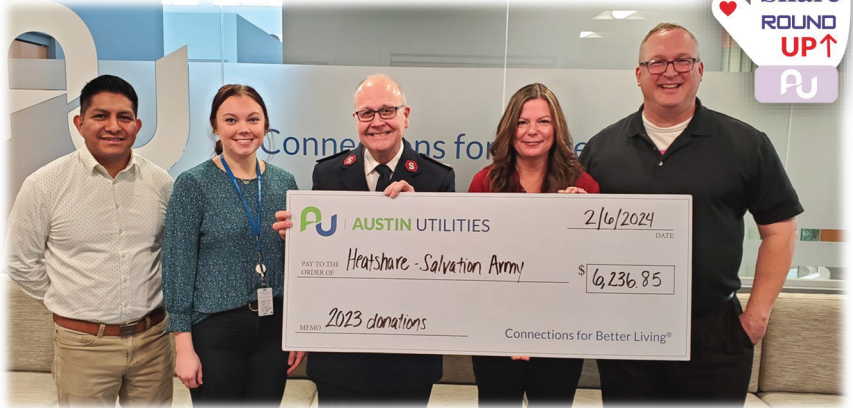
*Shower Yourself With Savings*  
**\$25 WaterSense  
Showerhead Rebate**

Rebate not to exceed purchase price. Go to [austinutilities.com](http://austinutilities.com)



**CONSERVE & \$AVE™**

# HeatShare Donations



AU presented a \$6,236.85 check to Major Jeffrey Strickler from the Salvation Army. Customer contributions come from the HeatShare Round Up program. Other donations come from AU employees fundraising. If you are interested in contributing to HeatShare, please contact customer service at AU.

**MARCH ENERGY-SAVING TIP**

**MARCH INTO SAVINGS**

One of the simplest ways to save both water and energy is to install water-efficient products. Installing WaterSense labeled faucet aerators in your bathrooms costs just a few dollars but could save you enough electricity to dry your hair for a year!

For more Drops & Watts tips visit [www.epa.gov/watersense/start-saving](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/start-saving)

## Space Heaters

As temperatures drop, many AU customers turn to space heaters to provide warmth and comfort during the colder winter months. While space heaters are effective at heating small spaces, it is crucial to practice safety while using them. Improper usage can pose fire hazards and lead to accidents.



Here are some safety tips to keep in mind.

- Choose the right heater – opt for models equipped with safety features such as automatic shut off switches, tip over protection, and overheat protection.
- Placement matters – keep heater on a flat, stable surface, away from flammable materials such as curtains, bedding, rugs, and furniture. Maintain a clearance of at least three feet around the heater.
- Plug directly into the wall outlet.
- Never leave a space heater unattended or use while sleeping.

While space heaters offer flexibility and targeted heating, they may be more expensive to operate than centralized heating systems. Continuous operation of space heaters can result in higher electricity bills, particularly if the heater operates for extended periods of time or at high power settings. Striking a balance between warmth and affordability is the key to ensuring a warm, cost-effective winter.

## Employee Spotlight

### Dan Ulland

#### Employee Relations Director

Dan joined Austin Utilities in January of 2021 as Employee Relations Director, a position he still holds today. His experience in Human Resources has taken him through a variety of different industries, cultures, and experiences. He imparts that knowledge today by making positive differences both internal and external to AU.

Dan's family comes from Norway and were some of the original settlers in Freeborn County back in 1859. He learned to play piano at an early age and was a member of the University of MN Marching Band. He lists his hobbies as playing piano, reviewing classic films, and enjoying the perfect cup of tea. In the near future Dan hopes to revisit the north of Ireland and enjoy a turf fire in a cottage by the sea.



# Customer Advisory Panel

At our Customer Advisory Panel (CAP) Meeting in January we welcomed four new members – Sean Lutz, Don Nystel, Tara Plath, and Suzi Stone.

CAP members shared feedback regarding our website and adding features to make it easier to use. The rate changes for 2024 were discussed. Lastly, CAP members saw a draft of Business Connections – a newsletter focused on our business customers.

If sharing feedback on topics like this sounds interesting to you – apply to be part of the panel. AU is taking applications for 2025. Use the code below to apply or visit [www.austinutilities.com/form/CAP/](http://www.austinutilities.com/form/CAP/).



## NOTICE

In compliance with the Code of Federal regulation #49, Part 192.16, Austin Utilities must notify each customer who owns buried natural gas piping after the meter.

1. Austin Utilities does not maintain the customer's buried piping.
2. If the customer's buried piping is not maintained, it may be subject to the potential hazards of corrosion and leakage.
3. Buried gas piping should be:
  - (a) periodically inspected for leaks.
  - (b) periodically inspected for corrosion if the piping is metallic.
  - (c) repaired if any unsafe condition is discovered.
4. When excavating near buried gas piping, the piping should be located in advance, and the excavation done by hand.
5. Austin Utilities and plumbing and heating contractors, can assist in locating, inspecting, and repairing the customer's buried piping.

Customers with buried natural gas piping should feel free to contact Austin Utilities at 433-8886. You can also find information at [www.austinutilities.com](http://www.austinutilities.com).

## Austin Utilities Board of Commissioners

**Tyler Hulsebus**

**Jeanne Sheehan**

**Steve Greenman**

**Jay Lutz**

**Kristin Johnson**

To contact or find more information on AU's elected Commissioners visit [www.austinutilities.com/pages/board](http://www.austinutilities.com/pages/board)

ONLINE  
NEWSLETTER &  
MORE INFO  
ON OUR  
WEBSITE



# Update Contact Information

Do you have a new email or a new phone number? Contact [customerservice@austinutilities.com](mailto:customerservice@austinutilities.com) or update it in your Smarthub account.



## BLOOD DRIVE

**Tuesday, April 30th**  
**Austin Utilities**  
**1908 14th St NE**  
**9:00 am - 3:00 pm**

[redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) 1-800-REDCROSS

**Austin Utilities will be  
CLOSED**  
**Friday, March 29th**  
**in honor of Easter**



## Austin Utilities

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Website: [www.austinutilities.com](http://www.austinutilities.com)

