

## What is the Water Service Fund?

As your home ages, so does the exterior water service line that brings fresh water to your house. If this line breaks or leaks due to ground shifting, pipe aging, corrosion or extreme temperatures, the repair bill can be expensive, often in the thousands of dollars. To protect our customers, AU created the Water Service Fund in March 2005 and enrolled all customers. Each month, a small fee is added to all water customers' bills. The fee is like insurance as most basic homeowner's insurance doesn't typically cover damage due to normal wear and tear.

A broken water service is always unexpected. Here are some signs of a broken or leaking water service –

- A visible water leak in your yard
- Water leaks in your basement
- Low water pressure



Water Service		15.50
Service Availability		15.50
Water Usage	9 CCF @ 1.110	9.99
Water Service Fund		3.00
State Water Tax		0.81
<b>Total Water Charges</b>		<b>29.30</b>

To qualify for reimbursement under the Water Service Fund, customers must be current in paying the water service fee, and all work must be pre-approved by Austin Utilities prior to repair. Austin Utilities will allow each property owner to select a plumber and excavator from an approved list

provided by Austin Utilities. It is important to remember the property owner will retain ownership of the water service line from the water main to the meter. Water service lines found to be leaking due to the property owner's neglect shall not be covered by this fund. All damages to the city right-of-way such as city streets and sidewalks will be repaired by this fund, but damage to private property such as landscaping, sod repairs and driveways will remain the responsibility of the property owner.

## ANNUAL RAIN BARREL SALE

Rain barrels capture and store rainwater draining from your roof, providing free water for gardening and a reduction in storm runoff. Austin Utilities is partnering with the Recycling Association of MN to offer **Rain Catcher Rain Barrels for only \$90 plus tax**. The barrels are constructed of 100% recycled material and include a debris screen, garden hose, shut-off thumb valve, hanging hose clip, overflow hose, and linking kit.

- Assembled Dimensions: 24"D x 24"W x 32"H.
- Total Volume: 6 cu ft. / 45 Gallon

Available beginning March 1<sup>st</sup>. Order online at [AustinUtilities.com](http://AustinUtilities.com). Quantities are limited and all orders must be made and pre-paid online. **Water customers of AU will receive a \$10 bill credit on their purchase when picked up.**



Drive Thru  
Pick up  
May 12th  
3-6 pm



EPA WaterSense

## March 14–20, 2022 Fix a Leak Week

Fix a Leak Week is a time to encourage our customers to find and fix household leaks. Water leaks can occur all around your home in faucets, showerheads, sprinklers and toilets. Toilet leaks are often caused by a worn out flapper, which can waste as much as 900 gallons of water per month. Water leaks can be expensive because not only do they increase the water portion of your bill, but the sewer portion too. It's easy to see water dripping from a faucet, but toilets can often be silent leakers. Follow the simple procedure to identify leaking toilets. If you find your toilet is leaking, don't worry. Fixing the flapper is an easy do it yourself project and can be completed by following the guidelines in the infographic. Take the time to find and fix leaks and start saving today.

### Take the 10-Minute Leak Challenge



Drop food coloring in the tank and replace the flapper if color shows in the bowl.

### Replacing your toilet?

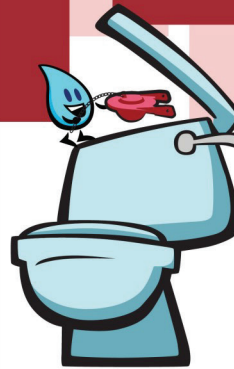
We can help. AU offers a \$25 rebate on high-efficiency WaterSense labeled toilets. They use less water per flush so you can start your savings today.

**CONSERVE & SAVE**



## Want to stop a running toilet?

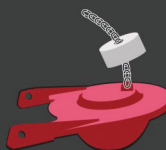
# FLIP YOUR FLAPPER



Do you know what a toilet flapper is? This simple rubber device holds water in the tank, then releases water into the bowl when you flush. It needs to be replaced at least **every five years** or your toilet could leak.

### Replace your toilet flapper in just six steps:

- 1 Turn off water**
- 2 Remove tank cover and flush**
- 3 Remove old flapper**
- 4 Attach new flapper to pegs**
- 5 Reattach/adjust chain length for a tight seal**
- 6 Turn water on and flush**



**Pro tip:** Before you install a new flapper, take a photo inside your tank to make sure you get the right type. Some flappers have a foam float on the chain that needs replacing too.

## Your tank will thank you!



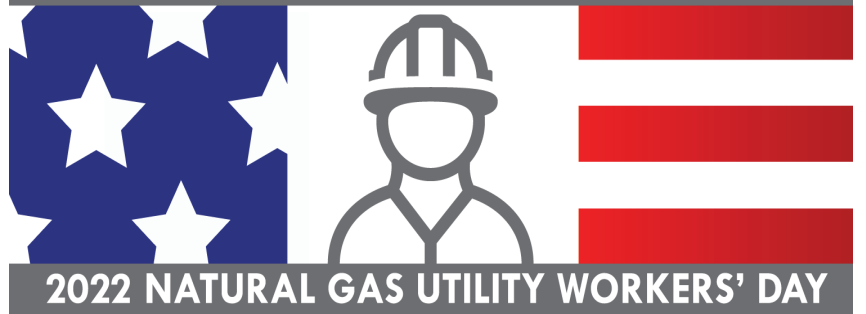
## Compressed Natural Gas Vehicle (CNG)

Did you know that Austin Utilities has a gas service truck that runs on compressed natural gas (CNG)? CNG is like ordinary gas, used for heating, but it is compressed between 200 and 300 times and consists mainly of methane. Vehicles powered by CNG emit fewer fine particles and less CO<sub>2</sub> than gasoline or diesel cars. CNG is stored in gas bottles which are fitted into the vehicle's chassis.

## Since 2016, natural gas

companies across the nation have been recognizing Natural Gas Workers Day in March. March 18 is the date of the New London, Texas school explosion in 1937 that led to the widespread odorization of natural gas and an increased emphasis on safety. Safety is a vital aspect to natural gas distribution and the employees of distribution companies, like Austin Utilities, strive to make natural gas delivery as safe as possible. In Austin, we add mercaptan to our natural gas before it enters our distribution system to make it easier to detect leaking gas. Mercaptan is a non-toxic substance made of carbon, hydrogen and sulfur. It has a pungent smell which has been described as having the stench of rotten eggs. When a customer calls us reporting this smell, we take action immediately and dispatch our trained technicians to identify the cause of the smell and remedy the situation.

# MARCH 18



## *Employee Spotlight*

### Alex Bumgardner

### Utility Operations Director

In June of 2009 Mechanical Engineer, Alex Bumgardner had an apartment lease nearly signed and his bags packed for a move to Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada when AU offered him a job as Power Production Director. It wouldn't be his first experience working for AU, he was a summer helper in his younger years and had spent lots of time on a lawn mower and trimming weeds. Alex's responsibilities have grown, along with his experience in the utility industry, to bring him to his current position. Alex loves the variety of work every day brings and says, "It's extremely rewarding to be part of the AU team that brings the everyday necessities of natural gas, water and electricity to our community."

Alex has been married to his wife, Michelle, for 10 yrs. and they have an 8 yr. old, Eli and a 5 yr. old, Emery. A Cavapoo puppy rounds out their family. His spare time is spent with kid's activities in hockey, motocross, gymnastics and dance. He also tries to squeeze in DIY projects at home and riding his Harley. When asked about his future plans he would only say, "Life moves way too quick; I'm focused on enjoying and making the most of the present, especially while our kids are young!"



# Service Promise

## We Promise:

- To post your payments accurately
- To notify you if we are unable to keep a scheduled appointment
- To turn on an existing service within 3 business days.
- To respond to your billing concerns by the end of the next business day (5 business days if a site visit is required)

We are committed to meeting these promises. If we fail to meet our commitment to you, we will credit your account \$10.



AU's Customer Service department dressing in support of all forms of Cancer Research. Left to right: Audra Smalley, Dar Duholm, Michelle Orozco, Melissa Swenson, Wendy Whalen, Dave Thompson, and Kara Wollschlager.

## SUPPORTING PAINT THE TOWN PINK

For the seventh year in a row AU employees have donated items to be raffled off with all proceeds going to Paint the Town Pink. This event has raised an overall total of more than \$10,000. This year's raffle featured a grill, football themed gift baskets with local gift cards, a tent, outdoor chairs, and even a kayak.

## Red Cross Blood Drive

**Tuesday, April 5th**  
**Austin Utilities**  
**1908 14th St NE**  
**9:00 am - 3:00 pm**  
[redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org)  
**1-800-REDCROSS**

How to help during our **national blood crisis.**

- ➔ Donate blood, platelets or plasma.
- ➔ Recruit friends to donate.
- ➔ Volunteer at a blood drive.



## \$500 AU Scholarship



Open to seniors who have a parent or guardian who is a customer of Austin Utilities. Applications available at [austinutilities.com](http://austinutilities.com). Deadline April 8th.

### Austin Utilities Board of Commissioners

Thomas C. Baudler      Jeanne Sheehan  
 Steve Greenman      Kristin Johnson  
 Jay Lutz

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



**Austin Utilities Office will be Closed Friday, April 15th**

