

Natural Gas Utility Workers' Day

Natural Gas Utility Workers' Day on March 18th recognizes the hard work and dedication of the Gas Construction Crew and Gas Service Technicians who ensure the safe and reliable delivery of natural gas to our community every day.

In 2025, Austin Utilities' natural gas teams accomplished the following:

- Built, installed, and replaced 8,628 feet of gas main
- Replaced 67 gas services to homes and businesses
- Installed 18 new gas services
- Responded to 1,078 emergency gas calls

What Should You Do If You Smell Gas?

Never hesitate to call. AU dispatch is available 24/7, and every gas odor call is treated seriously until proven otherwise. The goal is to make the situation safe as quickly as possible.

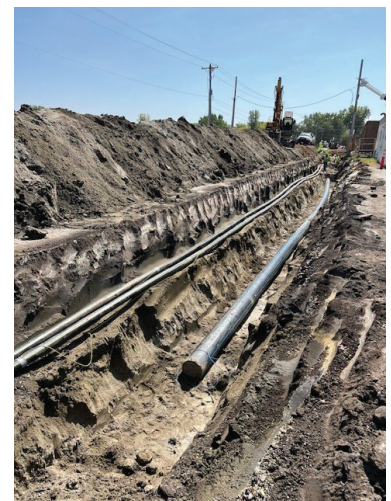
A dispatcher will ask a few questions to understand where and when the smell occurred and will provide immediate safety instructions, including avoiding ignition sources (such as turning on/off light switches).

A gas service technician responds immediately, dropping other work to do so. When the technician arrives they check the area using a Combustible Gas Indicator (CGI) to locate the source of the smell/leak.

If a minor leak is found, it may be repaired right away or gas may be shut off to an appliance or the home. If high or dangerous levels are detected, everyone will be instructed to leave the area and emergency services will be contacted.

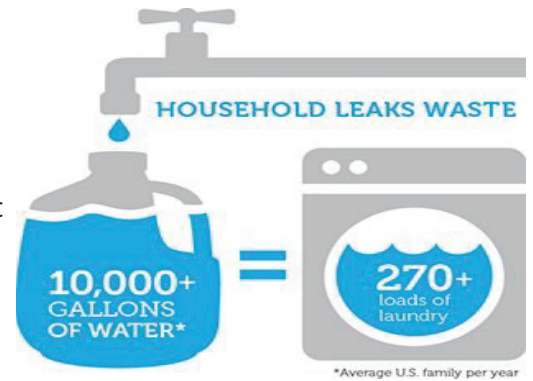
Important Safety Reminders

- Check gas detector batteries and expiration dates regularly
- Never attempt to fix a gas issue yourself
- When in doubt, call us! We are here for you 24/7. Call: 507-433-8886



Fix-a-Leak Week

Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) annual Fix a Leak Week is March 16-22. This week serves as a reminder to conserve water by remembering to inspect and fix water leaks! Did you know that a leaky faucet that drips at the rate of one drip per second can waste more than 3,000 gallons per year. That's the amount of water needed to take more than 180 showers! Even small leaks can add up to big water waste.



Common leak sources in the home include worn toilet flappers, dripping faucets, and leaking showerheads. By fixing water leaks in the home, homeowners can save up to 10% on their water costs and renters can help prevent water waste and costly property damage by reporting leaks early.

Test for leaks by placing a drop of food coloring in the toilet tank. If the color shows up in the bowl without flushing, you have a leak. The good news is that replacement parts are typically inexpensive and easy to install. Leaky faucets can be fixed by checking faucet washers and gaskets for wear and replacing them if necessary. Most leaky showerheads can be fixed by ensuring a tight connection using pipe tape and a wrench. If you are replacing a faucet or showerhead, look for one that has earned the WaterSense label. By purchasing a WaterSense showerhead, it can even earn you a \$25 rebate!

Renters are encouraged to regularly check for leaks and report them to their landlord or property maintenance as soon as possible. Document any signs of leaks or damage to help ensure timely repairs and proper follow-up.

Conserving water in our homes helps to save energy and reduce our carbon footprint. Every drop counts. Take a few minutes during Fix a Leak Week to check for leaks and make simple repairs. Small actions today can lead to lasting benefits for your home and the environment.

For more information on detecting and fixing leaks, scan the QR code or visit <https://www.epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week>



OUTAGE DASHBOARD FROM JANUARY 2026

59 MIN	 ELECTRIC	<p>Avg outage duration: 59 minutes</p> <p>Avg customers affected per outage: 12</p> <p>Total customers affected: 122</p>	CAUSES OF ELECTRICAL OUTAGES <div style="background-color: #0070c0; color: white; padding: 2px;">SQUIRRELS</div> <div style="background-color: #0070c0; color: white; padding: 2px;">EQUIPMENT DAMAGE</div> <div style="background-color: #0070c0; color: white; padding: 2px;">VANDALISM</div> <div style="background-color: #0070c0; color: white; padding: 2px;">UNDERGROUND</div> <div style="background-color: #0070c0; color: white; padding: 2px;">REPAIRS</div>	
12 MIN	 GAS	<p>Avg natural gas emergency response time: 12 minutes</p>		
7 WATER MAIN BREAKS	 WATER	<p>Water main breaks: 7</p> <p>Avg customers affected per break: 50</p> <p>Total customers affected: 135</p> <p>Avg time water was off: 7 hours and 4 minutes</p>		

- Average electrical outage duration in the U.S is 120 minutes, AU’s for January was 59 minutes.**
- AU’s goal for natural gas emergency response time is 15 minutes, January’s average response time was 12 minutes.**
- Water main breaks are typically repaired within 4–8 hours in the U.S. In January, Austin Utilities’ average shutoff time was 7 hours and 4 minutes, influenced by one intermittent outlier lasting nearly a full day. Without that break, the average was 2 hours and 54 minutes.**

New Employee–Jared Wiersma

Austin Utilities welcomed Jared Wiersma as the new Light Equipment Operator in the fall. Before AU, he owned his own concrete business. With his new position at AU, he likes the people he gets to work with and having more time with his family. His family includes his daughter, Peyton and his fiancée, Holly. His hobbies include hunting and spending time with friends.



A graphic with a green background featuring gold coins and a calendar showing the date 17 in March. A white box contains the text: "MARCH ENERGY-SAVING TIP" in a green banner, "Stop the Drip" in a large green cursive font, and "DON'T LET A DRIPPY FAUCET DRAIN YOUR WALLET. EVEN A TINY HOT-WATER LEAK WASTES BOTH WATER AND THE ENERGY USED TO HEAT IT, SO TIGHTENING THAT HANDLE OR REPLACING A WASHER KEEPS YOUR HOME EFFICIENT AND YOUR BILLS LOOKING GOOD." in a smaller black font.

A graphic for a spring cleaning promotion. It features a white air purifier in a living room setting with a green sofa and a white blanket. A blue circle on the left says "RECEIVE A \$25 REBATE". A QR code is in the center. On the right, a pink and blue banner says "SPRING CLEANING?" and "CLEAN THE AIR IN YOUR HOME WITH AN ENERGY STAR® CERTIFIED AIR PURIFIER." in white and blue text.

Behind the Scenes– Water/Chemical Technicians

Wayne Guyette and Adam Heimer serve as the Water/Chemical Technicians at AU, playing a critical role in ensuring Austin’s water is safely and reliably distributed. Their responsibilities include drawing samples and conducting water quality testing using specialized lab equipment. They regularly test for fluoride, nitrates, ammonia, chlorine, and bacteria, and they also inspect and maintain equipment as needed. In addition, they track daily water usage and ensure accurate reporting of all water data.

To perform this work, you must have a Class “B” Water Systems Operator certificate and bring more than six years of experience in utility water operations.

Wayne and Adam collaborate with other departments by responding to customers’ water-related issues and working alongside AU’s master electrician on the use and maintenance of the SCADA system, as well as management and supervisors to ensure smooth operations and team effort. One of the most challenging aspects of their role is troubleshooting issues that arise during water pumping operations.

What they enjoy most is working directly with customers, explaining where Austin’s water comes from, how it is treated, and solving water-related concerns to ensure the highest possible water quality. As well as their continued education and efforts in keeping Austin’s drinking water safe.

Thank you, Wayne and Adam, for the hard work you put in behind the scenes to provide safe and reliable water for Austin!



YOU'RE IN LUCK

There's still time!
Don't miss out on your 2025 rebates. Turn yours in today!

2025 rebates are due by
March 31, 2026.

CONSERVE & \$AVE™

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.

Austin Utilities Board of Commissioners

Steve Greenman Geoff Baker
Kristin Johnson Jay Lutz
Tyler Hulsebus, 2026 President

To contact or find more information on AU's elected Commissioners visit www.austinutilities.com/pages/board

AU-SMMPA Scholarship Opportunity



APPLY
NOW!

Do you know a local graduating senior who is looking for financial support to further their education? Austin Utilities and Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (SMMPA) are offering a \$1,000 scholarship to help achieve academic dreams. Applications must be received at Austin Utilities by April 10th. Scan the QR code or visit austinutilities.com/pages/scholarship/ for more details.

Austin Public Schools Receives Large Rebate



Austin Public Schools received a Conserve and Save

and Save rebate check totaling \$282,666.44 during the February 9th school board meeting. The rebate was earned through LED lighting upgrades in buildings throughout the district in 2025.

ONLINE
NEWSLETTER
& MORE INFO
ON OUR
WEBSITE

AUSTIN UTILITIES
will be **CLOSED**
FRIDAY, APRIL 3RD.

HAPPY EASTER!



Austin Utilities

1908 14th St NE Austin, MN 55912
Office: 507-433-8886

Email: talk2au@austinutilities.com
Website: www.austinutilities.com

