

CONNECTIONS



Celebrate Public Power and Natural Gas October 4-10

The first full week in October is always an exciting one at Austin Utilities. Public Power Week and Public Natural Gas Week is October 4-10. This week highlights the importance of public power and natural gas. To celebrate, we are continuing our White Truck Treasure Hunt with clues starting on social media on Monday, October 5, at 9 a.m. The finder of the white truck wins a FREE dehumidifier. Let us say thank you for being a customer and stop by our lobby on Thursday, October 8, for a cookie. While you're in the lobby, take a moment to view our department photos showcasing the hardworking employees who help make public power and natural gas services possible at Austin Utilities. Also, our mascot, Buddy, is taking some AU friends on a field trip to visit Kids Korner to educate children about the importance of utilities while showcasing some of our vehicles.



**IN OUR LOBBY
DURING THE
MONTH OF
OCTOBER AS A
THANK YOU
FOR BEING OUR
CUSTOMER!**

DONATION DRIVE WITH THE UNITED WAY OF MOWER COUNTY

During the month of August we partnered with the United Way of Mower County to accept donations towards their Success Closet. The Success Closet helps support students ages 3-18 in need as well as adults under certain circumstances. We are incredibly grateful to the employees and customers who donated and helped support the Success Closet. Your generosity will help provide essential items to students and individuals in need throughout our community. If you missed the Donation Drive but would still like to contribute, check out the United Way of Mower County's website for more information.



2026 Direct Load Control



- Load Control devices were implemented 12 times this summer season. We were able to reduce our load 5-6MWs through the Energy Management Program, which equates to a \$500,000-\$600,000 annual savings for our customers – ultimately avoiding pressure to increase rates.
- When SMMPA (our wholesale energy provider) hits its annual peak energy demand for its members, AU's energy demand at that same hour creates billing determinants for our power supply from SMMPA for the entire year. The 2026 coincident peak was set on July 27th during the 3:00-4:00pm hour.
- All three phases of our Energy Management Program were successful, which included our Energy Hero Program, Public Peak Alert, load control devices activated, and customer and utility owned generation operating. Thank you for participating and helping lower our peak demand and help to keep our power supply costs lower!

Apply Now! AU

Customer Advisory Panel (CAP)

Want to be a voice for the customers of Austin Utilities?

- Quarterly Meetings- 3 Year Terms
- Refreshments Provided
- Offer input on things that relate to you as a customer of AU

Check our website for the CAP Application



OUTAGE DASHBOARD FROM AUGUST 2026

ELECTRIC

44
MIN



Avg outage duration: 44 minutes
Avg customers affected per outage: 45
Total customers affected: 364

GAS

11
MIN



Avg natural gas emergency response time: 11 minutes

WATER

0
WATER
LEAKS



Water leaks: 0
Avg customers affected per leak: 0
Total customers affected: 0
Avg time water was off: 0 minutes

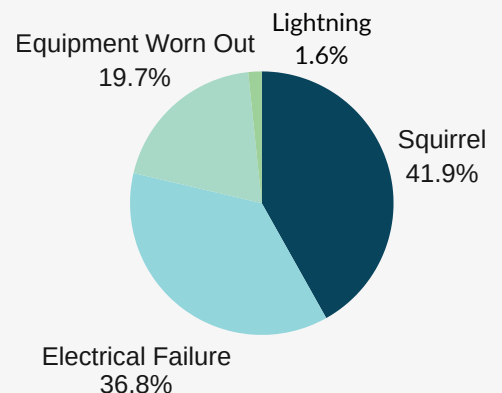
CAUSES OF ELECTRICAL OUTAGES

SQUIRRELS

ELECTRICAL FAILURE

EQUIPMENT WORN OUT

LIGHTNING



- Average electrical outage duration in the U.S is 120 minutes, AU's for August was 44 minutes.
- AU's goal for natural gas emergency response time is 15 minutes, August's average response time was 11 minutes.
- Water main breaks are typically repaired within 4-8 hours in the U.S. In August, AU had 0 water leaks for 0 minutes.

BEHIND THE SCENES - COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT

Meredith Manahan is our Communications Assistant. Her responsibilities include creating articles for the Connections Newsletters, managing internal communications, and communicating with residential and business customers. She also oversees AU social media platforms, updates and creates website content and webpages, and designs educational materials and customer handouts. Her role also involves producing reports, analyzing marketing performance and consumer data, and creating graphic design materials.

Experience needed would be a 4-year degree in communications, marketing, or degree in related field. Hands-on experience and knowledge about social media and graphic design is also valuable.

She works with other departments by collaborating on projects like brochures, customer handouts, newsletters, website updates, and social media content. As well as gathering information from staff throughout the organization to help communicate important updates, promote services and programs, and keep customers informed.

She says that the most challenging part about her role is adapting communication strategies to reach multiple generations who consume information in different ways. What she enjoys most is the variety. No two days are the same, and communications touches nearly every area of the organization. She also enjoys the opportunity to work on diverse projects, be creative, and help share the stories and information that matter to our customers and employees.

Her role benefits customers of AU by answering questions and providing clear, accurate, and timely information on AU services, programs, rebates, projects, and community involvement. By providing this information, she helps customers stay informed and make the most of the services available to them.

She is also excited to continue finding new ways to strengthen communication, enhance customer engagement, and provide valuable information to our community. Thank you, Meredith, for all your hard work behind the scenes!



MMUA SUMMER CONFERENCE

In August, two AU employees (Alex and Michelle) and two members of our Board of Commissioners (Jay and Steve) attended the MMUA Summer Conference. Two well-deserved awards were presented. Michelle, Customer Service Supervisor, received the Rising Star Award, and Board Commissioner Steve Greenman received the Community Service Award. These awards reflect their dedication, leadership, and commitment to serving both Austin Utilities and our community. Congratulations to Michelle and Steve on these outstanding achievements!



OCTOBER ENERGY-
SAVING TIP

Furnace Tune-Up Time

SCHEDULE A FURNACE CLEAN AND TUNE-UP BEFORE THE COLD WEATHER ARRIVES. REGULAR MAINTENANCE HELPS YOUR SYSTEM RUN MORE EFFICIENTLY, USE LESS ENERGY, AND STAY RELIABLE THROUGHOUT THE HEATING SEASON.

STAY COZY AND SAVE

Getting a new furnace? Check out our rebates to save up to \$600!

CONSERVE & SAVE

CUSTOMER SERVICE APPRECIATION WEEK

Customer Service Week is October 5th-9th. We are so appreciative of our Customer Service and Dispatch teams. They deserve all the recognition of their efforts for customers, professionalism, and dedication. No matter the time or day, this team will answer your call and be there to help support you. We thank them for all the work that does not go unnoticed.



Customer Service Team:
Back Row: Ashley Stadheim, Audra Smalley, Brooke Hostetler
Front Row: Michelle Orozco, Maribel Martin, Heather Felten, Kara Wollschlager, Wendy Whalen

Dispatch Team:

Kevin Spinler, Corey Kreutzbender, Dave White; Not Pictured: Steve Bisset, Dominic Lura



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.

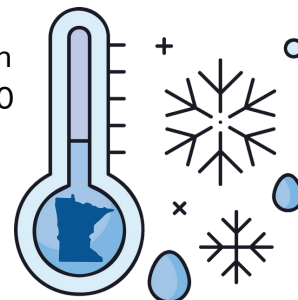
1. Austin Utilities does not maintain the customer's buried piping.
2. If the customer's buried piping is not maintained, it may be subject to the potential hazards of corrosion and leakage.
3. Buried gas piping should be:
 - (a) periodically inspected for leaks.
 - (b) periodically inspected for corrosion 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.

MINNESOTA COLD WEATHER RULE

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule protects a residential utility customer from disconnection due to non-payment from October 1 - April 30 when the disconnection would affect the primary heat source for the residence and the necessary conditions are met. To learn more about the conditions or Cold Weather Protection information, please view our website.



ENERGY ASSISTANCE

NEED HELP WITH YOUR ENERGY BILL? WE'RE HERE FOR YOU

If you're facing challenges with your energy bill, you're not alone — and help is available. Our Customer Service Team is your best resource for navigating energy assistance options. They are highly knowledgeable and invested in helping you identify the support that fits your situation.

Here are a few local programs that offer energy assistance:

Semcac
507-433-5889 or
800-944-3281
Online Application
@
<https://energy-assistance.web.com/merce.state.mn.us/>

Mower County Health & Human Services
507-437-9701

Salvation Army
507-437-4566



Austin Utilities

Board of Commissioners

Tyler Hulsebus
Steve Greenman

Geoff Baker
Jay Lutz

Kristin Johnson

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

ONLINE
NEWSLETTER
& MORE INFO
ON OUR
WEBSITE



AU WILL BE CLOSED ON WEDNESDAY, NOV. 11TH FOR VETERANS DAY AND ON THURSDAY, NOV. 26TH & FRIDAY, NOV. 27TH FOR THANKSGIVING

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