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## **Austin Utilities Holds Open House to Celebrate Your Public Utility #CommunityPowered**

Celebrate with us! Public Power and Natural Gas Week

AUSTIN, MN October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 —In October we celebrate Public Power and Natural Gas Week. This year, October 2-8, Austin Utilities (AU) will be celebrating with live and virtual events. “We are opening up our building for a live event and tours for the first time in two years, but our past virtual events have been popular with our customers, so we kept some of those,” says Mark Nibaur, General Manager.

The events are part of an annual campaign to raise awareness of Austin’s public utility. Austin Utilities is proud to be a public, community-owned, not-for-profit electric, natural gas, and water utility. Says Nibaur, “We have so much to share with our customers about the benefits of having a local public utility and that is why we open up our building to the community to celebrate.”

### Activities

We hope customers will have fun engaging in the live and virtual activities we have planned for Public Power and Public Natural Gas Week. Activities can be followed at [www.austinutilities.com](http://www.austinutilities.com) and our Facebook page. You must be a customer of Austin Utilities to earn prizes.

### White Truck Treasure Hunt -

Beginning on Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>. We’re hiding a model sized replica of one of our service trucks somewhere in the community of Austin. Find it using our daily clues and win a new EnergyStar dehumidifier. Clues will be posted daily at 9 a.m. on our Facebook page and website.

### White Truck Website Challenge -

Beginning on Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Let us know where you find ten utility truck icons on our website to be eligible for one of ten AU Gift Kits. Send your location list to [Talk2AU@austinutilities.com](mailto:Talk2AU@austinutilities.com).

### Kid Friendly\* Open House, -

On Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup> from 4-6pm. There is something for everyone at our Kid Friendly Open House. Come visit your favorite AU staffers from our, electric, gas, water, and engineering departments, and see up close some of the biggest equipment we use to provide public service to you including a line truck, skid loader and tractor backhoe. Then visit with customer service and energy efficiency staff. We’re sharing information you need to manage your account, save on energy costs and learn more about driving electric.

\*Hey kids, pick up a passport when you enter. Visit each department table and get a special prize when you leave.

## Building Tours –

On Thursday October 6<sup>th</sup> at 10 am or 5 pm. Sign up to tour the Austin Utilities building. With operating three utility businesses in a facility over 105,000 square feet you're sure to be amazed at the features of this building. Tours last approximately 45 minutes.

ALL CUSTOMERS - Stop in the office during the month of October and receive a free gift for being a customer of a public utility!

These events celebrate the benefits of being served by a municipal utility. Austin Utilities' first organized board of commission meeting was May 1903, but we have been serving Austin as far back as 1888. Austin Utilities is one of the largest combined municipal utilities in the State of Minnesota with 74 full-time staff.

Your public utility is good for the community for many reasons including:

- **Local Control:** Having a public utility gives a community local control over how homes and businesses are served. Decisions are made through an elected board and citizen participation instead of being made in a distant city by people who do not understand local issues and who are primarily focused on profits instead of service.
- **Competitive Costs:** To offer fair and competitive rates, public utilities operate as a not-for-profit entity and do not face pressure to pay dividends to stockholders.
- **Economic Benefits:** As a public utility, we play a valuable role in helping communities broaden their tax base, and in turn improve the local economy and increase jobs. Public utilities ensure that local dollars stay at home.
- **Customer Service:** As a not-for-profit entity, we focus on service, rather than profits. Public utilities are an integral part of a community. We maintain a close relationship with our customers, and as a result, we are successful in meeting our customers' needs.

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Austin Utilities is a municipal utility serving approximately 12,300 electric customers, 10,300 natural gas customers, and 9,000 water customers. Their mission is to offer utility products and services in a safe, reliable, and responsible manner in order to enhance the quality of life in our community. Austin Utilities' Board of Commissioners are elected by the consumer-owners of Austin to represent their best interest. For more information on Austin Utilities visit their website at [www.austinutilities.com](http://www.austinutilities.com).