



Energy Savings & Safety Tips to Prepare for Winter

With Fall bringing milder temperatures, now is the time to tackle weatherization and energy-efficiency improvements in your home or business in preparation for colder weather. The transition period between the cooling and heating seasons provides an opportunity to assess and undertake ways to reduce one's energy consumption, ensure a safe home environment, and identify other ways to save. From sealing cracks and gaps around windows and doors, servicing a heating system, or testing smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors, there are numerous things homeowners can do this time of the year.

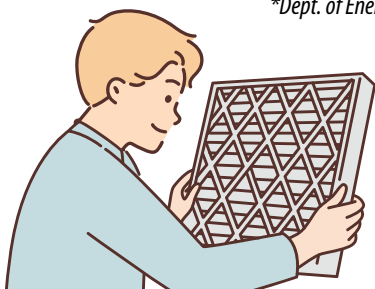
For more tips and information, see pages 4-5.



DID YOU KNOW?

Nearly half of all energy costs come from HVAC systems. Replacing your furnace filter regularly can reduce annual energy costs by 5-15%.

**Dept. of Energy*



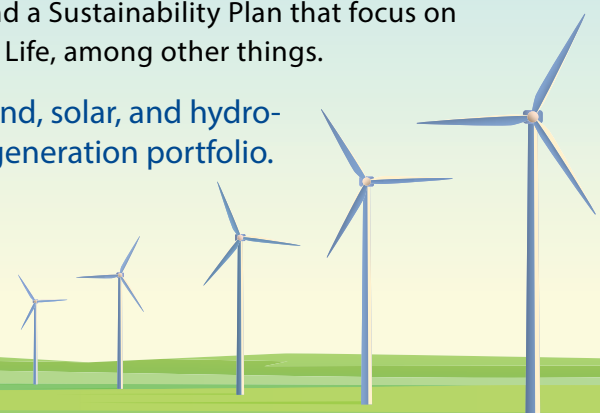
Committed to Sustainability and the Community

As a not-for-profit public electric and water utility, BPU's goal is to not only provide safe, reliable, and affordable services to its customers – but to also make a positive impact on the environment and quality of life in the community. This includes award-winning Social Responsibility efforts and a Sustainability Plan that focus on Performance, the Environment, and Quality of Life, among other things.

In 2005, renewable “green energy” from wind, solar, and hydro-power comprised less than 4.5% of BPU's generation portfolio.

Today, 48% of BPU's energy now comes from renewable energy!

Continued on page 6 ■



Track Your Utility Usage Online

BPU's Energy Engage portal gives customers control over their utility usage, so you can maximize your savings while minimizing your environmental impact. This free tool offers real-time usage and cost information, insights into the environmental impact of usage, conservation tips, and more.



It's simple and easy. Log in to your account using the "Manage Account" button at the top of the BPU.com homepage, then enter your account number and sign in by clicking Energy Engage. If you don't have an existing self-service account, sign up as a "new user" and have immediate access. For questions or assistance, call **913-573-9190**.



Safety First: Call 811 before you dig

In concert with Kansas One-Call, BPU helps customers dig safely by sending out "locators" to dig sites to mark the location of buried water and electric lines. BPU serviced more than 15,000 Kansas One-Call requests last year alone!



BPU | *president's letter*

ROSE MULVANY HENRY

President
BPU Board of Directors



With seasonal changes taking place and the holidays just around the corner, this edition of BPU's community newsletter includes helpful information for customers on how to weatherize a home, reduce energy usage, and remain safe during the colder winter months. Home weatherization assistance is available for those in need and be sure to check out BPU's YouTube page that includes videos on simple ways to save and helpful tools to assist customers.

BPU continues to provide reliable, quality electric and water service in Wyandotte County, as it has for more than 100 years. As a not-for-profit publicly owned entity, BPU's primary mission remains serving its residential, commercial, and industrial customers – while working to improve the overall quality of life in the community.

Toward this goal, and in partnership with the United Way of Greater Kansas City, BPU has provided more than \$1.5 million in utility assistance to qualifying residents through its Hardship Assistance and Utility Assistance Programs since their inception. Last year, these programs helped nearly 600 local families – with even more anticipated in 2023. Every year, the

Board of Directors allocates \$225,000 of the annual budget to the Hardship and Utility Assistance Programs, and in 2022, we approved an additional allocation of \$250,000 for use in 2023.

In addition, at the Board's direction, BPU initiated its new BPU Low Income Rebate Program to assist some of our most vulnerable residents with the recent rate increase. The Board of Directors and Staff at BPU are committed to identifying state and federal programs that provide relief directly to consumers to assist them with reducing their utility bills. Further, BPU will continue to aggressively pursue opportunities to apply for state and federal funding that will hopefully assist our residents, ease their utility burdens, and offset costs of operating the utility.

BPU's commitment to reducing its environmental impact also remains a top priority, with 48% of its generation portfolio now coming from renewable energy like wind, solar, and hydropower.

As always, for the latest information about BPU services and programs, follow us on Facebook or Twitter or go to www.BPU.com. And don't forget, BPU Board meetings are always open to the public, either in person or online. 📺

BPU Text Alerts *Helpful Info on the Go!*

Stay up to date with personalized BPU Text Alerts, including electric and water outage information, billing and payment details, potential water leaks and scheduled maintenance alerts. Save **844-843-3500** to your phone as BPU Texting.





BPU | *general manager's report*

BILL JOHNSON

General Manager

As a municipal utility, BPU operates as a community enterprise focused on the satisfaction and benefit of its customers, working to ensure quality, reliable electric and water service – and an unwavering commitment to the quality of life in the communities it serves. We appreciate and value our customers, continually looking for ways to improve by reviewing existing and introducing new services and programs, supporting economic growth, creating operational efficiencies, reducing costs, and regularly seeking customer and community stakeholder input.

To this end, BPU utilizes comprehensive surveys to identify areas for expanded or improved service throughout the utility, focusing on product offerings, customer service practices, billing processes, environmental initiatives, etc. Please keep an eye out for these, sharing your recommendations and suggestions as BPU uses the results to improve the customer experience, and target areas for improvement, expansion, and elimination to better serve customers and the community.

BPU, and its employees who all live and work right here in Wyandotte County, are focused on ensuring best-in-class service – with the utility and individual employees regularly receiving regional and national recognition. More recently, this includes being designated a Smart Energy Provider for conservation efforts, a Gold Stevie Award for best customer website, an individual Distinguished Career Service Award in the public water field, and an individual Black Achievers Award in Business by the Southern Leadership Christian Conference, among others.

Serving more than 65,000 electric customers and 53,000 water customers, BPU works every day to manage and service more than 3,000 miles of electric lines, 1,000 miles of water lines, 19,000 streetlights, and 6,000 fire hydrants across this community, as well as the community-wide first responder radio system. We're proud to serve the people of Wyandotte County, just as this not-for-profit community-owned utility has done for the last century. 🇺🇸

Commitment to Supplier Diversity

The utility works to provide suppliers with a fair and equal opportunity to conduct business with BPU, recognizing that as a public entity it has a responsibility to purchase goods and services from a diverse base of local suppliers. Through its Supplier Diversity Program, BPU strives to obtain high-quality goods and services from disadvantaged businesses at competitive prices, enhancing opportunities for success for business owners of diverse backgrounds including those that are minority-owned, women-owned, disabled-owned, and veteran-owned. BPU proactively promotes these efforts, participating recently in the 2023 Midwest Supplier Diversity Expo locally.



BPU utilized local Wyandotte County minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned small businesses for more than 300 purchase orders in 2022, totaling \$22 million.

Fiscal Transparency/Stability

BPU has once again been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) in 2023. It's the highest recognition in the areas of governmental accounting, financial reporting, and transparency, and the 41st year in a row BPU has received this distinguished recognition.

BPU also maintains a profile/rating of "A" and "Stable Outlook" by national rating service companies Fitch Ratings and S&P Global Ratings, acknowledging the strength of the utility's on-going operations. 🇺🇸



Home Weatherization Saves

Older homes can lack adequate air barriers to protect them from the natural elements like wind, snow, and cold/hot weather. With a significant amount of energy usage from furnaces and a/c units, weatherizing your home can significantly increase its energy efficiency, leading to reduced energy usage.

Weatherizing reduces leaks around the perimeter of a home, and includes sealing air ducts, bypasses, recessed lighting, as well as cracks around windows, doors, etc. This added insulation supplements the barrier between the air inside and outside your home, improving its energy efficiency, **which can result in savings of more than 25 percent on some energy bills.** A weatherized home isn't just great for saving money – it also helps the environment. Energy conservation leads to less carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to global warming.



Weatherizing a home is not dependent on income.

For those that might not be able to afford the upfront costs, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has weatherization assistance programs in all 50 states. The Kansas Weatherization Assistance Program helps low-income households cover the cost of heating, cooling, and energy efficiency improvements – free of charge. It's funded by the DOE and the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program.

At no charge, income-eligible families can receive a comprehensive home energy audit, assessing their entire home. Certified energy auditors will inspect a home, inside and out, looking for inefficiencies and safety concerns using advanced equipment and identify a customized account of areas for cost-effective improvements. The improvements will be provided free of charge by a network of professional crews and contractors. For more information or to enroll, go to www.ECKAN.org/weatherization/ or call 785-242-6413.

Simple Ways to Lower Energy Costs this Winter

Save money and energy while staying comfortable during cold weather. From quick fixes to daily activities, below are simple and inexpensive things you can do to ensure maximum savings this winter.

Take Advantage of Heat from the Sun

- Open curtains on the south-facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat the home and close them at night to reduce the chill from cold windows.

Cover Drafty Windows

- Use a heavy-duty, clear plastic sheet on a frame or tape clear plastic film to the inside of window frames during the cold winter months. Make sure the plastic is sealed tightly to the frame to help reduce infiltration.
- Install tight-fitting, insulating drapes or shades on windows that feel drafty after weatherizing.

Adjust the Temperature

- When you are home and awake, set the thermostat as low as is comfortable.
- When you are asleep or out of the house, turn the thermostat back to save as much as 10% a year on your heating and cooling bills.
- A smart or programmable thermostat can make it easy to set back your temperature. But make sure the temperature is comfortable for pets!
- If you have a heat pump, maintain a moderate setting or use a programmable thermostat specially designed for use with heat pumps.

Lower Water Heating Costs

- Keep the temperature of the water heater to the warm setting (120°F). This will not only save energy – it will also help avoid scalding.

Maintain Your Heating Systems

- Schedule routine service for home heating systems.
- Replace furnace and heat pump filters once a month or as needed.
- Use a humidifier. Moist air feels warmer and cuts down on static electricity.

Find and Seal Leaks

- Seal air leaks around utility cut-throughs for pipes ("plumbing penetrations"), gaps around chimneys and recessed lights in insulated ceilings, and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.
- Add caulk or weather-stripping to seal air leaks around leaky doors and windows.

SON TO PREPARE...

Prevent Carbon Monoxide Exposure This Winter

Carbon Monoxide (CO) exposure occurs more often during the colder months when people are more likely to use gas furnaces, heaters, stoves, and generators in their homes. CO fumes from these sources can build up in enclosed spaces, resulting in 100,000 poisonings and approximately 450 deaths every year. Protect yourself and your family by learning the symptoms of CO poisoning and how to prevent it.



- **DO** have your heating system, water heater and any other gas, oil, or coal burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year.
- **DO** install a battery-operated CO detector in your home and check or replace the battery when you change the time on your clocks each spring and fall.
- **DO** seek prompt medical attention if you suspect CO poisoning and are feeling dizzy, light-headed, or nauseous.
- **DON'T** use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline or charcoal-burning device inside your home, basement, or garage or near a window.
- **DON'T** run a car or truck inside a garage attached to your house, even if you leave the door open.
- **DON'T** burn anything in a stove or fireplace that isn't vented.
- **DON'T** heat your house with a gas oven.
- **DON'T** use a generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine less than 20 feet from any window, door, or vent.

Lower Your Water Temperature



Water heating accounts for 18% of a home's energy use, typically the 2nd largest energy expense. There are several ways to reduce your water heating bills, while also helping conserve this natural resource:

- Turn down the thermostat on your water heater to the "warm" setting (120°F).
- Insulate your water heater and pipes.
- Buy a new, more efficient model or type of water heater.
- Use less water. Take shorter showers, use your dishwasher/washing machine for full loads only, etc.

General Safety Reminders

Inspect Extension Cords

- ✓ With the holidays approaching, you may want to use extension cords. Always check cords for damage, and make sure any used outdoors are "weather-rated". If using multiple cords, be sure and use surge protectors to provide internal load protection.

Check Cold Weather Tools

- ✓ Electrical tools that may be used as it gets colder, like leaf blowers, should be checked for unusual wear and tear and have their power cords replaced or repaired if they show damage.

Rake Dry Leaves

- ✓ When leaves begin falling from trees, sweep them away from outdoor outlets, light fixtures, and power cords. Dry leaves can catch fire if hit with a spark. Keep your outdoor a/c unit clean and clear of any autumn debris as well.

Be Careful Using Electrical Devices Outdoors

- ✓ Make sure electrical devices used outside are weatherproof, and only use GFCI outlets with bubble covers to keep moisture out and protect against shock.

Test Smoke Alarms

- ✓ Always make sure your smoke alarms are in working order – ensuring if an electrical fire does break out, you and your family are properly warned before the fire grows too big.

Use Electric Blankets Safely

- ✓ Make sure the blanket is in good condition – checking the power cord for cracks, cuts, or fraying. Never put anything on top of an electric blanket when it's in use.

Meeting Community Needs Continued from page 1

PERFORMANCE

The utility is continually working to improve – monitoring and analyzing performance data, implementing performance metrics, and seeking inputs and priorities through customer and stakeholder surveys and inputs. BPU has once again exceeded all federal and state water safety standards. In addition, on an annualized basis in 2022 the average customer experienced 1.69 service interruptions, totaling 2.5 hours, with service restored within 1.5 hours*.

BPU conducted 41,000 tests on 8,700 water samples last year to ensure safe, potable, and reliable drinking water for the community.



THE ENVIRONMENT

Working to reduce its impact on the environment and improve community health, BPU has cut its carbon emissions by more than 50% since 2005 (a reduction of 1.68 million tons less emission) by switching to “greener” renewable energy sources. Conservation measures also reduce water usage and waste, and minimize the impact on wildlife and waterways.



QUALITY OF LIFE

BPU works to not only provide best-in-class utility services, but to improve the daily lives of its customers working to provide timely and accurate information, improving reliability and reducing outages, and supporting community initiatives. BPU provided \$225,000 in utility assistance to customers in 2022, and more than \$1.5 million since the program’s inception. In December 2022, the BPU Board authorized another \$250,000 in utility assistance for use in 2023.

DID YOU KNOW?



BPU maintains 19,000 streetlights in our community. Call 913-573-9522 to report any streetlight issues, providing a pole number, address or cross streets, and the problem.

Residential In-Home Life Support Program

If you or someone in your home uses an oxygen concentrator, dialysis machine, ventilator, respirator, aspirator/suction machine or electric motorized wheelchair, your account may be able to be identified as life support.

Contact the dedicated BPU life support line at **913-573-9928** to request the required paperwork and verification procedures. If a power outage should occur in your area, BPU will work to restore services as soon as possible, but outages may last for minutes, hours or in severe cases, several days.

Life support status does not indicate or guarantee that your power will be restored immediately, so it is advised that participants always have a contingency plan in place should an outage occur, such as a backup power source or a plan for relocating until your power is restored.





Telephone Scam Targets BPU Customers

Customers need to be aware of all scams, including the latest utility scam telling customers that their utility bill is past due and service will be disconnected unless a payment is made immediately. The caller uses caller ID spoofing to make it look like the phone number they are calling from is the BPU outage number, 913-573-9522. The caller will then give instructions to make a payment.

Please be aware, BPU will never ask for payment over the phone or threaten disconnection due to non-payment. Customers that suspect they are being targeted by a scam need to hang up right away and call the BPU Customer Service Department at **913-573-9190**. Although BPU sometimes uses pre-recorded messages to notify customers about future dates for possible disconnection, they do not cold-call customers to demand immediate payment.

How Deep is a Wooden Utility Pole Buried?

On average, 10% of the length of the pole plus an additional two feet is buried underground. If a pole is 45 ft. tall it would be buried 6 ft. Over time, narrowing of the underground portion occurs due to dirt, moisture and air combining, along with destructive insects – all which increases the rate that a pole decays and eventually fails.



Track Outages Online or via Mobile!

Stay informed of electric outages in your neighborhood either online or via mobile device with BPU's Outage Map tool. Using a birds-eye view of the entire service area, you can see outages "live" down to the street level at outage.bpu.com. To alert BPU about a power outage in your area, dial 913-573-9522.

POWER OUTAGE MAP

View outage updates at <https://outage.bpu.com/>



*BPU Customer Service answered more than **100,000** calls in 2022; more than **8,000** of those calls in Spanish.*



540 Minnesota Avenue
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #1
KCMO



WHAT'S UP?

BPU continues to support and invest in area youth, providing the resources they need and preparing them for the future. *BPU's 2023 Summer Youth Program* supported nine area non-profits that assisted hundreds of kids, with BPU hosting the Closing Ceremony of the Central Avenue Betterment Association's (CABA) program in its Board Room. Utility staff also regularly host educational tours of BPU's water treatment and generation facilities, educating youth on conservation and safety issues, as well as the importance of STEM courses in school like science, engineering, and mathematics.

BPU | BOARD OF DIRECTORS



ROSE MULVANY HENRY
President
Member-at-Large
rhenry@bpu.com



THOMAS GRONEMAN
Vice President
Member Second District
tgroneman@bpu.com



ROBERT L. MILAN, SR.
Secretary
Member First District
rmilan@bpu.com



MARY L. GONZALES
Member-at-Large
mgonzales@bpu.com



JEFF BRYANT
Member Third District
jbryant@bpu.com



DAVID HALEY
Member-at-Large
dhaley@bpu.com

WHAT NUMBERS TO CALL:

Customer Service	573-9190
Billing Inquiries by phone—7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Friday	573-9190
If your electricity is out	573-9522
If your water service is out	573-9622
If you need service turned on or off	573-9190
Billing questions	573-9190
If you need to make payment arrangements on your bill	573-9145
BPU Job Line	573-6900
BPU Ethics Commission Hotline	271-6337
To request public information	573-9173
If you have administrative questions	573-9000
Heat Pump Hotline	573-9988
If you need a "dig" check for electrical cables or water lines	1-800-DIG-SAFE
Administrative Office Number	573-9000
Contact your BPU Board Member	573-9025

CONTACT US

MAIN OFFICE

Kansas City Board of Public Utilities
540 Minnesota Avenue
Kansas City, Kansas 66101
Phone: (913) 573-9000
Visit our Website at: www.bpu.com

OFFICE HOURS

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

