

# connections



*Since 1904 in Groton*

## Public power delivers

Each October, more than 2,000 public power utilities in the country pause to celebrate the benefits delivered by community-owned electric utilities like Groton Utilities. This year, October 1-7 is the official Public Power Week celebration across the country.

Everybody's electric bill in New England has been going up, but, because you are served by a public power utility like Groton Utilities, your bill has actually been less than the neighboring investor-owned utility, Connecticut Light and Power Company (CL&P). On average, Groton Utilities' electric rates are 25 percent less than CL&P's rates.

A total of 82 percent of Groton Utilities' expenses goes to purchased power costs. The majority of the increases in purchased power costs are the result of fuel costs and the higher cost of generating electricity.

Generators pass these costs on to the local electric distribution companies like Groton Utilities. The Purchased Power Adjustment (PPA) on your bill reflects these increases.

Federally mandated congestion charges approved earlier this summer by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) are penalties all ratepayers pay for demand that exceeds supply coming from within the state due to insufficient electric generation capacity and an overburdened, inefficient transmission system.

Groton Utilities is working with its customers to help them reduce their monthly bills. Since the first of this year, we have offered an Energy Conservation program to all our customers. You can save money by participating in this program. See related story on page two of this newsletter.

While fuel and generation costs have clouded the good weather usually associated with municipally owned utilities, there remains much sunshine. Revenues earned by Groton Utilities help keep the City's taxes low. For example, the \$2 million a year that Groton Utilities contributes to the City of Groton equates to more than two mills that the City does not have to add to the tax bills of its residents and taxpayers. Public power is indeed powerful.

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## At our Customer Service Center

# Get your free light bulb!

GU has a little gift for you – each of our residential customers is eligible for one free compact fluorescent light bulb while supplies last. Just drop by our Customer Service Center in the Municipal Building at 295 Meridian St. and ask for one. But stop by soon—quantities are limited!

Energy-efficient compact fluorescent lighting can cut your electric bill while also helping to hold everyone's bills down.

That's because lowering your energy use reduces the amount of costly power we have to purchase during times of high electricity demand. Customer by customer, the savings add up.

**Learn About CFLs**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

- ENERGY STAR® qualified Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs) last a minimum of 6,000 hours, and many last 10,000 hours or more!
- Using ENERGY STAR light fixtures and bulbs reduce energy use and help prevent air pollution.
- Replacing a 100-watt incandescent with a 25-watt CFL can save you up to \$55 in energy costs over the life of the bulb.

Compact Fluorescent Lamps are available in many shapes and sizes to fit most existing fixtures.

Want more savings ideas? Visit [grotonutilities.com](http://grotonutilities.com) to see all the ways we can help you. Click on the Energy Conservation Programs icon and follow the Residential link. You will find programs to help you save on lighting, air conditioning/heat pumps and energy-efficient appliances. There's also information on demand response programs and a low-income water heater wrap program.

Or, feel free to call us at 446-4000 to speak with someone who can guide you through the cost-saving possibilities. Don't hesitate. The quicker you take action, the quicker we can show you ways to cut your monthly energy costs.

**ADD IT UP**

CFL (watts)	Incandescent Bulb (watts)	Typical Light Output (lumens)
11	40	450-500
15	60	800-900
18	75	1,100-1,220
25	100	1,600-1,700

Compact Fluorescent Lamp vs. Incandescent Bulb

90% LIGHT 10% HEAT vs. 10% LIGHT 90% HEAT

ONE CFL replaces TEN INCANDESCENTS

ONE CFL saves you up to \$55 in energy costs!

# TVC's Groton build-out nearly done

If you live on the east side of the Town of Groton, Groton Utilities' Cable Television Division, Thames Valley Communications (TVC), will be there by the end of this year. We appreciate your patience, as constructing an entire new infrastructure for a cable television and high-speed Internet service is a major undertaking.

"We are working hard to meet the customer demand in the rest of geographic Groton, including Mystic," says David Lee, TVC's Chief Operating Officer. "If you are in these areas, we want you to know that we are on our way and will be in your neighborhood soon."

Noting that it is TVC's policy to create a quality, state-of-the-art system, Lee says it is most important that our primary goal is fulfilled—meeting the highest standards of quality service that will truly satisfy our customers.

"We are here for the long run and intend to maintain the

proud tradition of outstanding customer service created and maintained by Groton Utilities for more than 100 years," he says.

Thames Valley Communications (TVC) has taken great strides in moving east toward the Mystic River. TVC has fully wired all of the City of Groton, Groton Long Point, a growing number of neighborhoods along the Route 1 corridor, and is moving nicely east along the Route 184 corridor.

If you are a City of Groton business or resident and have not yet signed up for our cable and high-speed Internet services, you can get service immediately. Call for more information at 446-4009 or stop by TVC's Customer Care Center in the Municipal Building at 295 Meridian St. in the City of Groton.

You can also get more information about TVC services on the web at [tvconnect.com](http://tvconnect.com).

## 2006 Community Service Award

# Congratulations to Mimi Orkney

E. Marion "Mimi" Orkney is the winner of the 2006 Jacqueline B. Nixon Community Service Award for her many years of giving back to the community. The award was presented to her by Glenn M. Wilson, Director of Groton Utilities, at the annual City of Groton Day celebration in August.

Created by GU during our Centennial in 2004, the award recognizes a member of the community who has contributed time, energy and resources to make the community a better place in which to live and work. The award's name honors the late Jacqueline B. Nixon for her many years of operating a local food pantry.

The Utility Commission, management and employees of Groton Utilities congratulate Mrs. Orkney and thank her for her many years of community service. Being the fine lady she is, Mrs. Orkney commented, "I couldn't have done it without all my friends."

Highlights of her community service are:

- She served as Community Service Representative for the Mystic AARP, delivering food and clothes to Groton Social Services and the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Club every month for five years.

- She was the Community Service Representative for the First Church of Christ Groton, delivering food to Groton Social Services. She also delivered turkeys and hams to Jackie Nixon for the holidays.



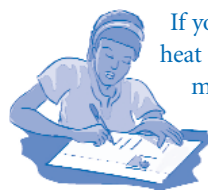
*E. Marion "Mimi" Orkney is the 2006 Jacqueline B. Nixon Community Service Award winner, shown with Nolan Nixon, left, and GU's Director of Utilities Glenn M. Wilson.*

- She delivered food to the soup kitchens in Groton and New London for 10 years as Activity Member at the Shennecossett Yacht Club.
- As Groton Intake Chairman for Child and Family Services, she set up, received and organized clothes donated for the Annual Sale. She did this for 10 years, last year from a wheelchair. She could not participate this year due to her hip replacement.
- She maintained a community thrift shop for 20 years for her church, the Groton Congregational Church. In addition, she has been a member of the Senior Choir for 50 years, served on the Flower Committee for 25 years, the Music Committee for 10 years and has been a Deacon for four years.

- And she has been a Justice of the Peace for the past 20 years!

*Many thanks to Billye Serabian for her work in conjunction with this year's Community Service Award. She also compiled most of the material for this article.*

## Level out your electric heating bills



If you have electric heat and would like to make level payments, now is the time to sign up for Groton Utilities' Budget Plan. There is no extra charge and it's simple to set up – just stop by our office and we'll do the rest.

All residential electric heating customers can sign up, as long as your account is current with a zero balance. Based on your past usage, we will calculate a monthly budget payment amount that will remain level for the next 11 months. In the twelfth month, your bill will reflect the difference between what you paid and your actual

costs. Your bill will either be credited or debited, and you will need to pay any balance due in full.

To sign up, you must visit our office and sign the application in the presence of a Customer Service Representative. For details, call us at 446-4000.

## Holiday Closings

Our offices at the City Municipal Building, including Customer Care and Thames Valley Communications, our Cable Television Division, and Project Management and our Operational Sections, located at The Julio H. Leandri Operations Complex on Poquonnock Road, will be closed for these upcoming holidays:

**Monday, October 9**

Columbus Day

**Friday, November 10**

Veterans' Day

**Thursday, November 23**

Thanksgiving Day

**Friday, November 24**

Thanksgiving holiday

Our operations crews for both water and electric are available for emergencies during holidays. If you experience an electrical outage or a water main break, call us at 446-4000, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Normal business activity for all three Groton Utilities' Divisions, including electric, water and cable television, is conducted Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Customer Care is also open until 7 p.m. on Thursdays and 8 a.m. to noon on Saturdays.

Groton Utilities hopes you and your family have enjoyable holidays. But, please drive safely. **And, yes, don't forget to buckle up!**



### GROTON UTILITIES

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Groton, Connecticut 06340  
T 860-446-4000  
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**Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement**  
Federal and State law prohibits employment discrimination. It is the policy of the City of Groton to comply with the laws which prohibit discrimination as to race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status, national origin, ancestry, veteran status, history of mental disorder, mental retardation or any other legally protected class.

## Teach your children about electric safety

As the kids head back to school this fall, please add electric safety to their lessons. Take a few minutes to make sure they understand how to stay safe around electricity.

A good way to start is to walk through your neighborhood with your children and point out overhead power lines, substations, ground-level transformers (they look like big green boxes) and other electrical equipment they should never go near. Teach them what a high voltage sign looks like and why they should stay away.

Tell them not to climb utility poles or trees that are growing into or near power lines. They should also be told



not to play near electrical equipment, especially if the game involves a ball or other object that may go astray. If a kite or other object gets caught in a power line or other utility equipment, children should never try to retrieve it themselves. That goes for adults, too. Call us for help at 446-4000.

For both children and adults, there is just one rule about what to do if you see a fallen power line – stay far away from it. You can't tell by looking if a line is energized, so always consider every wire you see to be live and dangerous. Call us to report downed lines or any type of outside electric equipment that looks damaged.

## School bus safety tips

After you talk about electric safety with your children, keep the safety discussion going by making sure they know and obey these school bus safety rules:

- Follow the instructions of your school bus driver.
- Always make sure you can see your driver's face when you cross in front of the bus. If you cannot see the driver's face, then the driver cannot see you.
- If you drop something in front of the bus or near it, don't pick it up. Ask an adult to get it for you or wait until the bus leaves.

• Do not walk along the side of the bus. If you can touch it, you're too close.

• Don't run, play ball, fight or horse around at the bus stop, and don't stand or play on snow banks while waiting for the bus.

• Take your seat quickly and remain in your seat while the bus is in motion.

• Be alert to traffic when approaching or leaving the bus.

• Never use the back door except for emergencies or bus evacuation drills.

