



# CONNECTIONS

## Fall/Winter 2007

published for the customers of Greenville Utilities



## Greenville Utilities

"Connections" is our customer newsletter, which we publish periodically to keep you informed about issues, activities and services at GUC.

If you have suggestions for topics or questions you'd like to see answered, please call our Public Information Office at 551-1522 or write to Connections, P.O. Box 1847, Greenville, NC 27835. [www.guc.com](http://www.guc.com)

We look forward to hearing from you!

## Public Power Week | October 7-13

GUC joins more than 2,000 other electric utilities in the U.S. that provide services on a not-for-profit basis in an annual celebration of Public Power Week, October 7-13. As a community-owned utility, GUC's priorities are different from private, investor-owned utilities. Unlike private utilities, we are not driven to maximize profits for out-of-town stockholders. Instead, we concentrate on investing in our system to provide reliable, top quality service to our customers right here at home. We are willing to go the extra mile for our customers because they are our friends and neighbors. We care about customer service and serving our community because we live here too.

Today, there are over 70 public power communities across the state, serving more than

500,000 North Carolinians.

Our State's public power communities continue to be strong, vibrant areas in which to live and work. Public

power custom-

ers benefit from utility policies established by local officials who reflect community values.

Local control and operations enable public power cities to grow and prosper by allowing revenue to stay where it belongs—at home.

For more information on the benefits of Public Power, visit our website, [www.guc.com](http://www.guc.com).



## Awards of Excellence

GUC was honored with six "Public Power Awards of Excellence" at the Electricities Annual Meeting August 10-11. We received awards for Economic Development, Communications, Customer Service, Key Accounts, Energy Efficiency and Training. These awards showcase our commitment to customers and to the community. Here's a description of each award:

**Economic Development** – recognizes initiative in economic development efforts, including industry recruitment leading to job creation, and implementation of economic development studies.

**Communications** – recognizes outstanding customer communications, including the use of bill inserts, innovative strategies to communicate policies, production of a newsletter or e-newsletter, assignment of a public information officer, and completion of a coordinated communications plan.

**Customer Service** – recognizes outstanding customer service efforts, including residential

customer programs such as medical alert, payment assistance, bank draft program, and energy efficiency options. Also included in the criteria is designation of a central point of contact for commercial customers and holding a customer appreciation event.

**Key Accounts** – recognizes efforts with key business customers, including advanced training by key account representatives, implementation of a key accounts business plan, communication with key accounts customers, and locally-sponsored events.

**Energy Efficiency** – recognizes efforts with energy efficient building programs, energy education, energy audits and participation in NC GreenPower.

**Training** – recognizes a commitment to ongoing staff education and training, completion of a continuing education or tuition reimbursement program, and in-house training opportunities.

### For Your Convenience

We offer several ways to make paying your bill easier:

- Online at [www.guc.com](http://www.guc.com)
- By mail to: P.O. Box 1847, Greenville, NC 27835
- In person at our Main Office or GUC Express
- By EZ Pay, our automatic bank draft program
- At many local banks before the due date
- By credit card by calling: 1-800-722-8203

For more information, please call 551-3312.

# Records Broken During August Heat Wave

Due to the prolonged hot spell this August, Greenville Utilities customers set new records for electrical and water usage. "Because August was about 29% hotter than average, air conditioners had to work overtime to beat the heat and dry lawns required more watering," said Ron Elks, GUC's General Manager/CEO. "A new 24-hour electric system demand record was set on August 8 when we purchased 7,172,936 kilowatt-hours (kWh) for our customers' usage. There were two separate days in August that exceeded the previous 24-hour record of 7,045,118 kWh set on August 3, 2006."

Water usage broke records as well. Our Water Treatment Plant produced a record monthly average day of 13.3 million gallons in August. This beat the previous record monthly average day of 12.6 million gallons that occurred in August

1999. For comparison, the annual average day production for 2006 was 9.8 million gallons.

Despite the record-breaking numbers, GUC had no problem meeting the demand. Fortunately, we have the facilities and production capacity in place to provide service to customers when they need it.

We want customers to be aware that high temperatures and humidity can account for high energy and water consumption, which can result in higher bills. The outside temperatures force even the most energy-efficient homes to consume more power for cooling, and dry conditions create a higher demand for water. For tips on decreasing your electric and water usage in any kind of weather, check out our website at [www.guc.com](http://www.guc.com) or call Energy Services, 551-1525.

## Help Prevent Natural Gas Pipeline Emergencies

Though natural gas pipeline incidents are uncommon, you should know their signs:

- **LOOK.** Blowing dirt, bubbling creeks or ponds, dry spots in moist areas or dead plants surrounded by live, green plants may indicate a natural gas leak.
- **LISTEN.** Near a gas appliance or line, there may be a hissing sound when natural gas is leaking.
- **SMELL.** Stay alert for the distinctive, rotten-egg-like smell of natural gas. You should take action anytime you detect even a small amount of this odor in the air.

If you suspect a natural gas leak, take action!

- **LEAVE.** If you ever detect a natural gas leak, LEAVE IMMEDIATELY. Don't try to find or stop the leak.
- **DO NOT TOUCH** anything electrical before you leave or use a telephone, even a cell phone. Do not smoke, turn appliances or lights on or off, or operate any vehicle or equipment that could create a spark.
- **CALL.** Once you are out of the suspected area, immediately call our 24-hour Emergency Hotline at 551-1567 or 752-5627. If the smell of gas is particularly strong, you may also call 911.

# Customers Urged To Use Water Wisely



Greenville Utilities officials are monitoring drought conditions closely, and are encouraging the wise use of water to protect this natural resource. "We have been fortunate so far," said Ron Elks, GUC's General Manager/CEO. "A combination of geographical location and an adequate surface water supply have worked in our favor."

Unlike many other water systems that rely on reservoirs, GUC withdraws the majority of its water from the Tar River. Although river levels are low, with the lowest-ever average stream flow, GUC reports no problems in meeting cus-

tomers demand. GUC's Water Treatment Plant has the capacity to treat 22.5 million gallons of water a day (mgd). In August, customers used an average of 13.3 mgd for the month, compared to the annual average of 10 mgd. "Our all-time peak day was 16 mgd in 1999," said Mr. Elks. "We came close to that record this year on August 20th when we had a peak day of 15.4 mgd."

Availability of water and treatment capacity has not been a problem thus far, but GUC officials are keeping a careful watch on river levels. "We do not have a problem at this point, and we don't foresee problems in the near future," said Mr. Elks. "But the drought in our state is severe, and we are watching the situation very carefully."

Greenville Utilities encourages customers to monitor water usage and use only what they need, year round. "It makes good sense from both an environmental and economic standpoint to do so," said Mr. Elks.

GUC recommends following these water-saving tips:

- Use the shower rather than the bathtub for bathing and limit your shower to no more than five minutes. You can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- Turn off the water when brushing your teeth, shaving or preparing food and save four gallons a minute. That is 200 gallons a week for a family of four.
- Limit vehicle washing. Use a hose nozzle and turn off the water when washing your car and save more than 100 gallons of water. Try to wash your car on the lawn and not the pavement so excess water can return to the ground and not evaporate.
- Don't use a hose to clean sidewalks and driveways. Use a broom and save up to 80 gallons of water every time.
- Water lawns and shrubbery only the minimum amount required, and water in the early morning hours before the heat of the day increases evaporation.
- Avoid sprinklers that spray a fine mist which allows water to evaporate easily. Install a drip irrigation system for gardens, trees and shrubs.

For more water-saving tips online, go to [www.guc.com](http://www.guc.com) or <http://www.wateruseitwisely.com>.

## Mission Accomplished

*Greenville Utilities participates in 2007 United Way Pacesetters Campaign and raises over \$55,000 for local agencies.*

What do Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, the Council on Aging and Greenville Community Shelters have in common? They all will benefit from our extremely successful 2007 Pacesetter Campaign – along with the other human service organizations that receive funding from the United Way of Pitt County. Our goal was to raise \$50,000.

Because of the generous support of our employees, we raised over \$55,000! We are one of 12 organizations that run an early campaign to help jump-start the annual campaign. GUC is one of the top four organizations in Pitt County in terms of contributions.

### Online Applications

Job seekers can apply for jobs online at [www.guc.com](http://www.guc.com). From the "Employment" link of the site, you can view available positions and create and submit applications. You can still mail your completed application to P.O. Box 1847, Greenville, NC 27835 or bring it to the Human Resources Office at 801 Mumford Road. The option to apply online adds to our current web services, including online bill payment and managing account information. Customers can also make requests to connect, transfer or disconnect services. The site includes safety information, money-saving tips and a Kids' Corner section with fun, interactive information about utilities.



**Public Natural Gas Week 2007  
October 7-13**

This year, the nation's municipally-owned gas systems will celebrate Public Natural Gas Week October 7-13. Greenville Utilities' gas system, which is publically owned, has been serving the community since 1927.

# Natural Gas: It's Clean, Efficient and Economical

For heating ... cooking ... drying your clothes, natural gas is an excellent choice! Today—more than ever—natural gas offers economy, reliability and environmental advantages. More and more cost-conscious consumers are choosing natural gas not only for the reasonable rates, but also because many of today's gas appliances pay for themselves in energy savings.

Natural gas has become an increasingly popular choice for Greenville Utilities' customers. In the last ten years, our natural gas system has grown by nearly 50 percent. Natural gas service is available within the City of Greenville, as well as adjoining areas of Pitt County. We also serve the Town of Winterville and the Town of Ayden.

If you're interested in becoming a natural gas customer, please call 551-1587 for details.



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