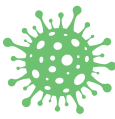




COVID-19 UPDATE



The health and safety of our customers and employees are our top priorities, so we are continuing to monitor the COVID-19 situation and respond accordingly. We hope to open our offices for customers soon. Please check our website and social media for updates. In the meantime, our website and drive thru lanes are available for you. Stay strong. Stay Safe.

AVOID THE DANGERS OF BACKFLOW

Most of the time water flows “forward” from the Water Treatment Plant, through the water distribution system, into your home or business. Backflow is the term used to describe the “backward flow” of water. In other words, backflow would occur when water from your home “flows back” into the water supply. Backflow can also happen with water from a garden hose flowing back into your home.



How does it happen? As an example, say you are washing your car and the phone rings. You leave the end of your garden hose in a bucket of soapy water. While you are on the phone, a water main breaks down the street and the water pressure quickly and momentarily has a significant drop, creating a vacuum. Like sucking on a straw, the vacuum could pull the soapy water into your home's water system. Then, someone gets a glass of water from the kitchen faucet. What should be a refreshing drink actually ends up being contaminated by the effects of backflow.

Significant water pressure drops are uncommon, but they can happen. Here are some precautions you can take to safeguard your family:

- Never submerge hoses in buckets, pools, spas, tubs or sinks.
- Always keep the end of the hose away from possible contaminants like puddles or chemicals.
- Don't drink from your garden hose.
- Don't use spray attachments (pesticide applicators, portable pressure washers, drain openers or radiator flush kits) without a backflow prevention device. Devices are available for less than \$10 at most home improvement stores. Ask for a hose bibb vacuum breaker. [Find out more at guc.com.](http://guc.com)



SUMMER SAVING TIPS

- Set your thermostat on the highest comfortable setting. We recommend 78 degrees or higher. Every degree above 78 saves about 4% in cooling costs.
- Clean or change your filters monthly to keep your system running at peak performance.
- Use a ceiling fan or portable fan to supplement your air conditioning. A fan can make you feel three to four degrees cooler so you can set your thermostat a few degrees higher and save on cooling costs. Use in occupied rooms since fans cool people, not rooms.
- Switch your central air conditioning to “auto” rather than continuously “on” – you'll get better cooling and humidity control.
- Unplug outside refrigerator/freezer if not in use or if items will fit in your indoor refrigerator/freezer.

Visit guc.com for more ways to save all year.

DETECTING A NATURAL GAS LEAK

Natural gas is one of the safest, most reliable, and environmentally friendly fuels in use today, but leaks can occur. There are three key ways to recognize a natural gas leak.

LOOK. Blowing dirt, bubbling creeks or ponds, dry spots in moist areas or dead plants surrounded by green, live plants also may indicate a natural gas leak.

LISTEN. An unusual hissing sound near gas lines or appliances may indicate a natural gas leak.

SMELL. In its raw state, natural gas is colorless and odorless. Natural gas utility companies add a substance to create the familiar, rotten-egg-like odor you associate with natural gas.

You should take action even if you detect only the faint odor of natural gas in the air. For more information on natural gas safety, visit guc.com or call us at 252-551-1587.

HURRICANE SEASON IS HERE!
TO REPORT AN OUTAGE CALL:

1.855.SOS.2GUC

EMERGENCY HOTLINE



LITTLE TREES SERVE BIG PURPOSE AT WASTEWATER PLANT

Environmental stewardship has played a big role at Greenville Utilities for decades. We have modeled conservation for many years, long before the term “going green” became popular. Our Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) has always been at the forefront of our environmental initiatives. These efforts were recently expanded through a new conservation initiative.

One of the largest assets that GUC owns is the WWTP “farm” that encompasses 700 acres of land originally used for land application of biosolids (a byproduct of the treatment process). This part of the property has sat dormant since 2005, and staff came up with a way to convert that land to an environmental asset. This idea, several years in the making, recently came to fruition with the planting of 63,900 hardwood trees and shrubs along 100 acres of stream drainage areas on the farm.

The 31 species of hardwood trees and shrubs - such as persimmons, oaks, and redbuds - that were planted on our WWTP farm will eventually capture nutrient runoff before it enters the Tar River. The Tar-Pamlico watershed is a nutrient-sensitive waterway that is harmed if excessive soil nutrients, like nitrogen and phosphorus, flow into the river.

In an effort to postpone a costly plant expansion, WWTP staff worked with Restoration Systems (an environmental restoration and mitigation banking company) on a plan to grow “vegetative buffers” to remove nitrogen and phosphorus from groundwater flows. Certain species of trees and shrubs remove thousands of pounds of these nutrients before they get into the stream and cause harm. These pounds of removed nutrients also have a monetary value with the State in the form of “banked credits.”

We can use these credits to offset our own construction needs or use it to incentivize new or expanding industrial needs in our service area.

“This conservation project is a win-win for GUC and wildlife” said Jason Manning, Water Water Treatment Plant Superintendent. “We get to postpone our Plant expansion, save money on construction for other Commission projects or industrial expansion, keep our river ecosystems thriving, and attract wildlife and pollinators with some of the new trees and shrubs. It fits perfectly into GUC’s mission.”



PROTECTING YOUR WATER: ANNUAL TEMPORARY SWITCH TO CHLORINE KEEPS SYSTEM IN TOP SHAPE

Beginning June 15 and continuing until July 27, Greenville Utilities will temporarily change the disinfectant used in the water treatment process. We will use chlorine rather than chloramines during this period of time.

Since December 2002, we have used chloramines, a mixture of chlorine and ammonia, as the disinfectant in its water treatment process. Chloramines are an effective disinfectant and also reduce the level of byproducts that are regulated by the US Environmental Protection Agency. State drinking water guidelines recommend that water systems using chloramines periodically switch back to free chlorine (chlorine alone) for a period of time. This brief, scheduled change in disinfectant is a standard water treatment practice to keep water mains clean and free of potentially harmful bacteria throughout the year.

During the temporary switch to free chlorine, you may notice a slight change in the taste or smell of your tap water. The mild chlorine taste and smell is normal and poses no health risk. Most customers will not need to take any precautions as the water remains safe to drink and is treated according to both state and federal standards. People and businesses that normally take special precautions to remove chloramines from tap water, such as dialysis centers, medical facilities and aquatic pet owners, should continue to take the same precautions during the temporary switch from chloramines to free chlorine. For more information, please visit guc.com or contact GUC at 252-551-1551.