



Utility Commission Meeting Agenda

Thursday, August 20, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Call to Order

Roll Call

Notice of Open Meeting

Approval of Agenda

Public Comment

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of the July 16th Utility Commission Minutes.
2. Approve Utility Departments Cash Disbursement Report and Accounts Payable Report.
3. Outage Reports.

New Business

4. 2025 Utility Audit Presentation by Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP CPA Director Dan La Haye.
5. Consider and take action on the funding for the Storm Water Utility.
6. Consider and take action on the Substation 2 (Water Street) Transformer Purchase.
7. Consider and take action on Electric Lead Lineman proposed updated wage scale.
8. Consider, discuss and take possible action on email sent from Fall River Village President on July 30, 2026, regarding the outstanding arrears owed to Columbus Utilities .

Reports

9. Director's Report Outline.
10. August 2026 Live Lines.

Adjourn

*A quorum of city committees and/or commissions may be present at this meeting. No action will be taken or considered by those committees and/or commissions.



Utility Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 16, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Call to Order

President Michael Thom called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Roll Call

The following members were present: Michael Thom, Joe Hammer, Lori Koenig-Frye, Brook Andler, Molly Finkler, and Jack Sanderson. Sandy Curtis was an excused absence.

Notice of Open Meeting

The meeting was noted as posted.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Finkler, seconded by Sanderson to approve the agenda. Motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Public Comment

Consent Agenda

Motion by Finkler, seconded by Koenig-Frye to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed on a unanimous roll call vote.

1. Approval of the June 18th and July 2nd Utility Commission Minutes.
2. Approve Utility Departments Cash Disbursements Report and Accounts Payable Report.

New Business

3. Annual Election of Commission Officers.
Motion by Hammer, seconded by Andler to approve Michael Thom as President, Sandy Curtis as Vice President, and Jack Sanderson as Secretary. Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.
4. Recognizing Mason Mosher for completion of the Electric Line Worker Apprenticeship Program.
Director Randy Myrum recognized the work by Mason Mosher to complete the apprentice program and become a Journeyman Lineworker. Assistant Director Dalton Hiley spoke of Mason's work for the Utility and presented him with a plaque.
5. WPPI Energy Member Contract Extension presentation by WPPI Energy CEO Mike Peters.
Director Randy Myrum introduced Mike Peters, CEO of WPPI. Mike provided an overview of a proposed contract extension between the Utility and WPPI.

Convene to Closed Session

6. Convene to closed session per § 19.85(1)(c) to consider and take action on employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility, specifically merit pay recommendations for utility department staff.

Motion by Finkler, seconded by Koenig-Frye to convene to closed session. Motion was approved on a unanimous roll call vote.

Reconvene to Open Session

Motion by Finkler, seconded by Koenig-Frye to convene to open session. Motion was approved on a unanimous voice vote.

Reports

6. Director's Report Outline.

Director Randy Myrum provided his report.

7. July 2026 Live Lines.

Adjourn

Motion by Finkler, seconded by Hammer to adjourn at 7:27 pm. Motion was carried by a unanimous voice vote.

*A quorum of city committees and/or commissions may be present at this meeting. No action will be taken or considered by those committees and/or commissions.



Agenda Item Report

Meeting Type: Utility Commission

Meeting Date: August 20, 2026

Item Title: Consider and take action on Financial Reports.

Submitted By: Michelle Kaltenberg, Business Manager

Detailed Description of Subject Matter:

Included in the Financial Reports are the Treasurer's Report and the Cash Disbursements Report.

The Accounts Payable Report will be sent via email on the Wednesday before the Commission meeting.

List all Supporting Documentation Attached:

1. Treasurer's Report
2. The Cash Disbursements Report

Action Requested of Commission:

1. Review and approve the Cash Disbursements Report and the Accounts Payable Report.

COLUMBUS UTILITIES
CASH DISBURSEMENTS REPORT
July, 2026

11-Aug-26

DATE	CHECK NO	NAME	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
16-Jul	25074	A.C. ENGINEERING CO.	\$16,731.66	SUB 3 BUSHING REPLACEMENT
16-Jul	25075	ADVANCED CHEMICAL SYSTEM	\$700.00	QUARTERLY BILLING CHEMICAL SERVICE AGREEMENT
16-Jul	25076	AMBUSH PEST CONTROL	\$120.00	ADMIN BLDG INSECT & RODENT CONTROL & SUBSTATION RODENT CONTROL #4
16-Jul	25077	AMERICAN LEGION POST #62	\$953.00	CEMETERY FLAGS FOR WARRIORS' GRAVES
16-Jul	25078	BASSETT MECHANICAL	\$4,880.00	CUSTOMIZED PROFESSIONAL MAINTENANCE JULY 2026
16-Jul	25079	BORDER STATES ELECTRIC SUPPLY	\$9,038.16	20% RESTOCKING CHARGE FOR RETURNED PRODUCTS, (12) UNDERGROUND JUNCTIONS, INVENTORY OH & UG
16-Jul	25080	CARDINAL EMBROIDERY & SCREEN	\$617.00	FOURTH OF JULY SHIRTS
16-Jul	25081	CITY OF COLUMBUS	\$222,327.43	GO LOAN #4239-03-INTEREST, GO LOAN #4239-03-PRINCIPAL, 2011 CWF LOAN #4239-06-INTEREST, 2011 CWF LOAN #4239-06-PRINCIPAL
16-Jul	25082	CORE & MAIN LP	2,406.49	HYDRANT FLUSHING PRESSURE GAUGE, SOUTHLAND TOOLS SCOOPA 6" SCREEN FOR QUICK CONNECT POLES, VALVE & CURB BOX CLEANOUT GRABBER
16-Jul	25083	Culligan Water Conditioning	218.50	PE-DI RENT 7/01-7/31, DI REGENERATION CHARGE
16-Jul	25084	DORNER	10,758.00	VALVE REPLACEMENT, VOGELSANG PUMP REPAIR AND INSPECTION
16-Jul	25085	FONDY POWERSPORTS, INC.	25,367.54	UTV
16-Jul	25086	FOREST LANDSCAPING & CON	240,345.95	2026 W SCHOOL STREET RECONSTRUCTION PAY REQUEST #1, GRAVEL FOR SCHOOL ST PROJECT
16-Jul	25087	GRAINGER, INC.	35.76	EXHAUST FAN PART IN SODIUM BISULFITE ROOM
16-Jul	25088	HADY ELECTRIC, INC.	10,872.41	INSTALLATION OF NEW MCC BUCKET IN EXISTING SWITCH
16-Jul	25089	HAWKINS, INC	5,438.84	WASTEWATER CHEMICALS, WATER TREATMENT CHEMICALS
16-Jul	25090	HydroCorp, LLC	980.00	CROSS CONNECTION PROGRAM
16-Jul	25091	ICS Medical Answering Service, L	269.80	PHONE ANSWERING SERVICE - E, PHONE ANSWERING SERVICE - W
16-Jul	25092	IDEAL CRANE RENTAL, INC.	1,322.00	4.16KV CONVERSION
16-Jul	25093	INFOSEND, INC.	1,881.91	UTILITY BILL PRINTING AND MAILING - E, UTILITY BILL PRINTING AND MAILING - S, UTILITY BILL PRINTING AND MAILING - W, BILL INSERT(REBATES SUMMER COSTS)
16-Jul	25094	MARTELLE WATER TREATMENT	21,296.00	PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL PILOT PROGRAM
16-Jul	25095	MCMMASTER-CARR SUPPLY CO	208.46	FLAGS/ (2) WI (1) US
16-Jul	25096	MICK FISHER TROPHY & ENGR	90.00	PLAQUE FOR MASON
16-Jul	25097	Midwest Salt	3,626.64	BULK SALT
16-Jul	25098	NCL OF WISCONSIN, INC	526.99	WASTEWATER DAILY TESTING MATERIAL
16-Jul	25099	NORTHERN LAKE SERVICE, IN	456.13	2026 QUARTERLY TESTING WASTEWATER
16-Jul	25100	OpenPoint	1,250.00	MONTHLY SUBSCRIPTION - E, MONTHLY SUBSCRIPTION - W
16-Jul	25101	PACKERLAND RENT-A-MAT, INC	168.03	URINAL REFILLS, MATS - E, URINAL REFILLS, MATS - W, CANCEL SERVICE
16-Jul	25102	PRAIRIE RIDGE HEALTH	1,000.00	DONATION
16-Jul	25103	RESCO	29,848.00	(1) 750 KVA 3P TRANSFORMER
16-Jul	25104	RUEKERT & MIELKE, INC	17,148.41	2025 WWTF PERMIT RENEWAL SERVICES, GENERAL SERVICES WATER UTILITY SERVICES, GENERAL SERVICES WASTEWATER, 2026 RISK AND RESILIENCY UPDATES
16-Jul	25105	SABEL MECHANICAL	17,791.00	4/23/2026 SLUDGE HAULING
16-Jul	25106	STUART C IRBY CO	9,075.20	FIBERCRETE BOX PAD 15X50" OPENING 3 PHASE (3), FIBERCRETE BOX PA, RISER ARRESTER
16-Jul	25107	SUMMIT INFRASTRUCTURE LL	4,345.00	SANITARY LINE I&I SEALING
16-Jul	25108	Superior Chemical, LLC	355.81	HANDY CUBE SENTER PULL BOX (5), BLK LNR (1), SAPHIRE WIPES (1 CASE)
16-Jul	25109	USA BLUE BOOK	342.82	STORAGE CUP 1 PORT FOR YSI-LAB, KIMWIPES DISPOSABLE WIPS (4), ELECTRODE STOORAGE SOLUTIONS (1), SENSOR CAP FOR OBOD
16-Jul	25110	USIC LOCATING SERVICES, IN	2,852.11	LOCATING EXPENSES - E, LOCATING EXPENSES - W
16-Jul	25111	VC3, INC	295.95	NETWORK SECURITY/FIREWALL LIC/SUB-E
16-Jul	25112	WI STATE LABORATORY OF HY	31.00	MONTHLY FLUORIDE TEST
16-Jul	25113	WISCONSIN COPY & BUSINESS	158.10	POSTAGE BASE INK - E, POSTAGE BASE INK - S, POSTAGE BASE INK- W
16-Jul	25114	WISCONSIN RURAL WATER AS	250.00	WRWA TRAINING SCHULZ-HYDRANTS 2026, WRWA TRAINING TANNER-HYDRANTS 2026
16-Jul	25115	WISGUYS AUTO REPAIR, LLC	50.00	TRUCK #23 CHANGED OIL & FILTER BATTERY
16-Jul	25116	WONDRA CONSTRUCTION, INC	11,012.54	2026 HERITAGE WAY WATER MAIN EXTENSION PAY REQUEST NO. 3
16-Jul	25117	PUBLIC SERVICE COMM OF WI	1,525.04	APPLICATION TO CONSTRUCT UPGRADES AND REPLACE ELECTRICAL EQ, TO CONSTRUCT IMPROVEMENTS TO WATER PLANT NO 2
16-Jul	25118	PRAIRIE RIDGE HEALTH	27.00	DRUG SCREEN-W
		SUBTOTAL	\$678,994.68	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE LIST APPROVED AT JULY MEETING
01-Jul	ACH	Farmers & Merchants Union Bank	\$30.00	NSF Fees
16-Jul	ACH-4856	BROOK M ANDLER	\$50.00	MONTHLY COMMISSION SALARY - E, MONTHLY COMMISSION SALARY - W, MONTHLY COMMISSION SALARY - S
16-Jul	ACH-4857	JACK SANDERSON	\$50.00	MONTHLY COMMISSION SALARY - S, MONTHLY COMMISSION SALARY - W, MONTHLY COMMISSION SALARY - E
16-Jul	ACH-4858	Lori Koenig-Fry	\$50.00	COMMISSION SALARY-E, COMMISSION SALARY-W, COMMISSION SALARY-WW
16-Jul	ACH-4859	Michael Thom	\$50.00	MONTHLY COMMISSION SALARY - E, MONTHLY COMMISSION SALARY - S, MONTHLY COMMISSION SALARY - W
16-Jul	ACH-4860	Sandra Curtis	\$50.00	MONTHLY COMMISSION SALARY - E, MONTHLY COMMISSION SALARY - S, MONTHLY COMMISSION SALARY - W
16-Jul	ACH-4861	NAPA AUTO PARTS	\$187.50	CONNECTORS (4), 6 RINGS (1), (1) RATCHET TIE DOWN, OIL DRY (1), OIL GENERATOR AT WP#2
16-Jul	ACH-4862	NIEMANN FOODS, INC	\$734.17	HYDRANT PAINTING, SHIPPING WATER SAMPLES, MAGNETIC TAPE, EXT CORD 80', SEED, FLATWARE, PLATES, DISH SOAP
20-Jul	ACH-4863	CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS	\$100.00	INTERNET ADMIN BUILDING - E, INTERNET ADMIN BUILDING - W
17-Jul	ACH-4864	Elan Financial Services	\$6,994.53	DESK, SMART BOARD, EMAIL SUBS, DRY ERASE BOARD, SCADA PHONE, DESK, SMART BOARD, EMAIL SUBS, FOLDERS, SPLASHTOP SOFTWARE SUBS, SCADA
02-Jul	ACH-4865	FP MAILING SOLUTIONS	\$800.00	POSTAGE -E, POSTAGE -W, POSTAGE -WW
02-Jul	ACH-4866	PAYMENT SERVICE NETWORK	\$3,229.65	CUSTOMER PAYMENT FEE -E, CUSTOMER PAYMENT FEE -S, CUSTOMER PAYMENT FEE -W

20-Jul	ACH-4867	RHYME BUSINESS PRODUCTS	\$2,631.53	IT AGREEMENT-ELECTRIC, IT AGREEMENT-WASTEWATER, IT AGREEMENT-WATER
20-Jul	ACH-4868	WE ENERGIES	\$14.33	119 MIDDLETON ST LIFT STATION
02-Jul	ACH-4869	WEX BANK	\$2,651.19	FUEL-WW, FUEL-W, FUEL-E
28-Jul	ACH-4870	AMERICAN TRANSMISSION CO	\$16,253.00	ADDITIONAL CAPITAL CONTRIBUTION
20-Jul	ACH-4871	CINTAS FIRST AID & SAFETY	\$80.71	FIRST AID SUPPLIES - E, FIRST AID SUPPLIES - W
17-Jul	ACH-4872	FP MAILING SOLUTIONS	\$81.18	POSTAGE METER RENTAL - E, POSTAGE METER RENTAL - S, POSTAGE METER RENTAL - W
14-Jul	ACH-4873	KWIK TRIP EXTENDED NETWO	\$53.15	FUEL
17-Jul	ACH-4874	WE ENERGIES	\$10.21	WASTE WATER PUMP STATION
14-Jul	ACH-4875	WI DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE	\$9,929.01	SALE AND USE TAX
28-Jul	ACH-4876	WPPI ENERGY	\$582,959.66	SHARED METER TECH, WAN, ASSESSMENT, CYBER SECURITY - E, WAN, ASSESSMENT, CYBER SECURITY - W, ELECTRIC MDM CHARGES, WATER MDM CHARGES,
20-Jul	ACH-4877	CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS	\$119.99	INTERNET ELECTRIC SCADA
20-Jul	ACH-4878	RHYME BUSINESS PRODUCTS	\$294.77	PRINTER AGREEMENT-ELECTRIC, PRINTER AGREEMENT-WASTEWATER, PRINTER AGREEMENT-WATER
20-Jul	ACH-4879	WE ENERGIES	\$16.35	GENERATOR ON JAMES ST
20-Jul	ACH-4880	CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS	\$135.00	WASTEWATER SPECTRUM
20-Jul	ACH-4881	WE ENERGIES	\$14.33	WATERLOO ST LIFT STATION
20-Jul	ACH-4882	WE ENERGIES	\$197.67	TREATMENT PLANT
20-Jul	ACH-4883	WE ENERGIES	\$15.39	WESTSIDE SEWAGE LIFT
20-Jul	ACH-4884	SEERA	\$1,907.75	FOCUS ON ENERGY PAYMENT
17-Jul	ACH-4900	VC3, INC	\$297.07	NETWORK SECURTY/FIREWALL LIC/SUB-E
23-Jul	ACH-4901	PRAIRIE POWER CENTER	\$17,208.00	ZERO TURN MOWER
10-Jul	ACH-	CWL Net Payroll	\$41,270.72	Net Payroll for 1st Payroll in July #14
10-Jul	ACH-4850	EFTPS	\$12,450.17	FICA/MED/FED Withholding Payroll #14
10-Jul	ACH-4851	Northshore Bank	\$300.00	Deferred Comp Payroll #14
10-Jul	ACH-4852	WI Deferred Comp Board	\$2,146.47	Payroll Deferral Billing for Payroll #14
10-Jul	ACH-4853	Wisconsin Department of Revenue	\$1,814.93	State Withholding Payroll #14
24-Jul	ACH-	CWL Net Payroll	\$39,970.38	Net Payroll for 2nd Payroll in July #15
24-Jul	ACH-	CWL Net Payroll	\$27,006.09	Merit Raises-2026
24-Jul	ACH-4896	EFTPS	\$13,152.30	FICA/MED/FED Withholding Payroll #15
24-Jul	ACH-4897	Northshore Bank	\$300.00	Deferred Comp Payroll #15
24-Jul	ACH-4898	WI Deferred Comp Board	\$2,034.27	Payroll Deferral Billing for Payroll #15
24-Jul	ACH-4899	Wisconsin Department of Revenue	\$2,019.28	State Withholding Payroll #15
24-Jul	ACH-4901	EFTPS	\$5,210.43	FICA/MED/FED Withholding Payroll #15
24-Jul	ACH-4902	Wisconsin Department of Revenue	\$1,241.58	State Withholding Payroll #15
24-Jul	ACH-4903	EFTPS	\$2,758.19	FICA/MED/FED Withholding Payroll #15
24-Jul	ACH	Investment Pool	\$30,000.00	June Bond Interest Payment
24-Jul	ACH	Investment Pool	\$5,000.00	June Depreciation Payment
24-Jul	ACH	Investment Pool	\$15,500.00	Transfer into LGIP #13 General Fund
24-Jul	ACH	Investment Pool	\$15,460.00	TRANSFER INTO LGIP #9-UTILITY GENERAL FUND
25-Jul	ACH-4885	AFLAC	\$82.42	Employees Aflac Insurance-July
25-Jul	ACH-4887	City of Columbus - Life	\$544.31	Employees Life Insurance - July
25-Jul	ACH-4888	City of Columbus - Health	\$26,848.76	Employees Health Insurance - July
25-Jul	ACH-4889	City of Columbus - Dental	\$1,564.76	Employees Dental Insurance - July
25-Jul	ACH-4890	City of Columbus - Vision	\$179.46	Employees Vision Insurance - July
25-Jul	ACH-4891	City of Columbus - Health Savings Accou	\$2,838.82	Employees Health Savings Account Transfer - July
25-Jul	ACH-4886	City of Columbus - Retirement	\$17,319.36	Employees Retirement - July
25-Jul	ACH-4892	City of Columbus-LTD	\$348.06	Employee LTD-July
24-Jul	ACH-4900	City of Columbus-WRS	\$2,595.90	Employees Retirement - July
24-Jul	ACH-4904	City of Columbus-WRS	\$2,595.90	Employees Retirement - July
25-Jul	ACH-4893	City of Columbus - Assurity	\$723.62	Employees Assurity Transfer - July
25-Jul	ACH-4894	City of Columbus - Champ Plan	\$6,889.92	Employees Champ Plan - July
25-Jul	ACH-4895	City of Columbus-Champ Benefit	(\$5,593.92)	Employee Champ Benefit-July
29-Jul	ACH	Farmers & Merchants Union Bank	\$173.10	ACH Fees
25-Jul	ACH	E3P Transfer	\$1,735.89	E3P TRANSFER
13-Jul	ACH	CDAR Transfer	\$94,570.18	Transfer to CDAR
		SUBTOTAL	\$1,018,247.49	

TOTAL

\$1,697,242.17

APPROVED BY:

DATE:

CITY OF COLUMBUS - COLUMBUS UTILITIES
TREASURER'S REPORT - July 2026

Item #2.

GENERAL FUND (commingled cash) - ACCOUNT #1310

CASH ON HAND - BEGINNING OF MONTH:	\$	2,951,796.66
Receipts:	\$	1,127,878.79
Interest Earned:	\$	988.23
<i>Sub-total:</i>	\$	4,080,663.68
Disbursements:	\$	(1,697,242.17)
Cash on Hand - Month End:	\$	2,383,421.51

NOTE: Conventional utility accounting standards recommend a balance equal to two month's expenses - approx. \$1,400,000 (LGIP & Checking).

UTILITY GENERAL FUND - LGIP #13 - ACCOUNT #1314

CASH ON HAND - BEGINNING OF MONTH:	\$	522,479.25
Receipts:	\$	15,500.00
Interest Earned:	\$	1,645.29
<i>Sub-total:</i>	\$	539,624.54
Disbursements:		
Cash on Hand - Month End:	\$	539,624.54

MRB PRINCIPAL & INTEREST - LGIP #5 - ACCOUNT #1255

CASH ON HAND - BEGINNING OF MONTH:	\$	314,300.52
Receipts:	\$	30,000.00
Interest Earned:	\$	1,008.47
<i>Sub-total:</i>	\$	345,308.99
Disbursements:		
Cash on Hand - Month End:	\$	345,308.99

NOTE: Transfers are made monthly to accrue sufficient funds to make May 1 and November 1 principal & interest payments.

SEWER UTILITY - LGIP #4 - SEWER UTILITY GENERAL FUNDS

CASH ON HAND - BEGINNING OF MONTH:	\$	1,277.88
Receipts:	\$	-
Interest Earned:	\$	3.99
<i>Sub-total:</i>	\$	1,281.87
Disbursements:	\$	-
Cash on Hand - Month End:	\$	1,281.87

SEWER UTILITY - LGIP #11 - COLLECTION MAIN - REPLACEMENT

CASH ON HAND - BEGINNING OF MONTH:	\$	909,628.34
Receipts:		
Interest Earned:	\$	2,839.96
<i>Sub-total:</i>	\$	912,468.30
Disbursements:	\$	-
Cash on Hand - Month End:	\$	912,468.30

WWTP REPLACEMENT FUNDS - LGIP #9

CASH ON HAND - BEGINNING OF MONTH:	\$	227,055.47
Receipts:	\$	15,460.00
Interest Earned:	\$	722.90
<i>Sub-total:</i>	\$	243,238.37
Disbursements:	\$	-
Cash on Hand - Month End:	\$	243,238.37

CW&L RESERVE FUND - F&M - ACCOUNT #1251

CASH ON HAND - BEGINNING OF MONTH:	\$	434,992.74
Receipts:	\$	-
Interest Earned:	\$	-
<i>Sub-total:</i>	\$	434,992.74
Withdrawal from CDAR :	\$	-
Cash on Hand - Month End:	\$	434,992.74

F&M Bank/CDAR 52 Week Certificate of Deposit:

\$170,211.28 Due June 2026 3.70%; \$170,211.28 Due December 2026 4.25%; \$94,570.18 Due July 2027 3.70%

E-3-P ENHANCED ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM - F&M - ACCOUNT #1313

CASH ON HAND - BEGINNING OF MONTH:	\$	143,135.03
Receipts:	\$	1,735.89
Interest Earned (pd semi-annually May/Nov) :		
<i>Sub-total:</i>	\$	144,870.92
Disbursements:		
Cash on Hand - Month End:	\$	144,870.92

CW&L DEPRECIATION - LGIP #6 - ACCOUNT #1266

CASH ON HAND - BEGINNING OF MONTH:	\$	629,358.50
Receipts:	\$	5,000.00
Interest Earned:	\$	1,969.46
<i>Sub-total:</i>	\$	636,327.96
Disbursements:	\$	-
Cash on Hand - Month End:	\$	636,327.96

NOTE: Bond covenants require a "depreciation fund" with recommended balance of \$300,000 to cover plant renewals and replacements.

SEWER UTILITY - LGIP #8 - BOND REDEMPTION/RESERVE

CASH ON HAND - BEGINNING OF MONTH:	\$	512,412.49
Receipts:		
Interest Earned:	\$	1,599.81
<i>Sub-total:</i>	\$	514,012.30
Disbursements:	\$	-
Cash on Hand - Month End:	\$	514,012.30

SEWER UTILITY - F&M SAVINGS - BOND REDEMPTION/RESERVE

CASH ON HAND - BEGINNING OF MONTH:	\$	237,176.72
Receipts:		
Interest Earned (pd semi-annually May/Nov) :		
<i>Sub-total:</i>	\$	237,176.72
Disbursements:		
Cash on Hand - Month End:	\$	237,176.72

WWTP FALL RIVER RESTRICTED REPLACEMENT FUNDS - F&M CDARS

CASH ON HAND - BEGINNING OF MONTH:	\$	1,065,564.23
Receipts:	\$	-
Interest Earned:	\$	-
<i>Sub-total:</i>	\$	1,065,564.23
Withdrawal from CDAR :	\$	-
Cash on Hand - Month End:	\$	1,065,564.23

F&M Bank/CDAR (2) - Interest paid out and deposited to Checking

\$99,1581.43 Due August 2026 3.70%; \$73,982.80 Due September 2026 3.65%

F&M Union Bank-Checking/Savings	0.4% / 0.75%	Local Gov't. Investment Pool	3.68%
Farmers & Merchants Bank - CDARS	3.70%-4.25%		

COLUMBUS WATER & LIGHT CUSTOMER OUTAGE REPORT

SUBSTATION 4 CIRCUIT # 403 DATE 7/6/2026

Item #3.

LOCATION OF FUSE OR RECLOSER HospitalCUSTOMER NAME OR LOCATION HospitalREMARKS Findoff hit Overhead Fiber Line 3 Snapped Primary
Power pole that feeds the hospital
Feeder**PART THAT FAILED**

- 0 None
 1 Numerous
 2 Other-note in remarks
 3 Transmission equipment
 4 Substation equipment
O.H. DISTRIBUTION
 10 Anchor or guy
 11 Arrester
 12 Conductor - Primary
 13 " - Secondary
 14 Connector
 21 Insulator
 24 Metering equipment
 25 Pole
 26 Recloser
 27 Riser or Jumper
 28 Splice
 29 Switch - GOAB
 30 " - Disc.
 31 Cutout - Fused
 32 Transformer - Line
 33 Transformer - Potential

U.G. DISTRIBUTION

- 50 Arrester
 51 Conductor - Primary
 52 " - Secondary
 53 Connector - Bolted
 54 " - Comp.
 55 " - Elbow
 56 " - Splice
 59 Terminator
 60 Transformer - Pad Mount
 61 Transformer - Bayonet Fuse
 62 Metering Equipment

WEATHER

- 1 Normal
 2 Wind
 3 Thunderstorm
 4 Rain
 5 Rain and wind
 6 Fog
 7 Ice
 8 Ice and wind
 9 Snow
 10 Extreme cold
 11 Extreme heat
 12 Extreme storm

CAUSE

- 0 Unknown
 1 Loss of supply
 2 Operating error
 3 Circuit overload
 4 Mis-coordination
 5 Faulty installation
 6 Lightning
 7 Wind
 8 Ice
 9 Cold weather
 10 Hot Weather
 11 Moisture
 12 Contamination
 13 Fire
 14 Extreme storm

FOREIGN OBJECTS

- 20 Vehicles
 22 Trees - tore down
 23 Trees - shorted
 24 Animals
 25 Birds
 26 Underground dig in
 27 Vandalism
 28 Other

EQUIPMENT

- 30 Manufacturing defect
 31 Equipment overload
 32 Electrical failure
 33 Worn out

(use 24 hour time)

TIME OFF 3:15 ON 10:00Number of Calls 1

Number of Customers	Minutes Duration
<u>1</u>	<u>8 hrs</u>

TRANSFORMER FAILURE

CWL# _____ KVA _____

MFG _____ AGE (est) _____

Serial # _____

Arrester ON / OFF Tank (circle one)

ARRESTOR FAILURE

MFR _____ Porc Polymer
 Riser Line Transformer
 (circle all that apply)

DEVICE THAT OPENEDDistributionMain Feeder

Breaker _____ Counter _____

Targets _____

Branch Line

O.C.R. _____ Size _____

Fuse _____ Size _____

Transformer

Fuse _____ Transf. Size _____

ROUTING (initial)Responded By Jeff HechtLine Assisted By Dalton HMason MJaKe BAssisted By Craig SManager Jerry R

Outage File

COLUMBUS WATER & LIGHT CUSTOMER OUTAGE REPORT

SUBSTATION 1 CIRCUIT # 103 DATE 7-13-26
 LOCATION OF FUSE OR RECLOSER 4F/49772
 CUSTOMER NAME OR LOCATION _____
 REMARKS fuse melted at circuit riser due to overload, tied circuits together to split load.

Item #3.

PART THAT FAILED

- 0 None
- 1 Numerous
- 2 Other-note in remarks
- 3 Transmission equipment
- 4 Substation equipment

O.H. DISTRIBUTION

- 10 Anchor or guy
- 11 Arrestor
- 12 Conductor – Primary
- 13 “ - Secondary
- 14 Connector
- 21 Insulator
- 24 Metering equipment
- 25 Pole
- 26 Recloser
- 27 Riser or Jumper
- 28 Splice
- 29 Switch - GOAB
- 30 “ - Disc.
- 31 Cutout - Fused
- 32 Transformer – Line
- 33 Transformer – Potential

U.G. DISTRIBUTION

- 50 Arrestor
- 51 Conductor – Primary
- 52 “ - Secondary
- 53 Connector – Bolted
- 54 “ - Comp.
- 55 “ - Elbow
- 56 “ - Splice
- 59 Terminator
- 60 Transformer – Pad Mount
- 61 Transformer – Bayonet Fuse
- 62 Metering Equipment

WEATHER

- 1 Normal
- 2 Wind
- 3 Thunderstorm
- 4 Rain
- 5 Rain and wind
- 6 Fog
- 7 Ice
- 8 Ice and wind
- 9 Snow
- 10 Extreme cold
- 11 Extreme heat
- 12 Extreme storm

CAUSE

- 0 Unknown
- 1 Loss of supply
- 2 Operating error
- 3 Circuit overload
- 4 Mis-coordination
- 5 Faulty installation
- 6 Lightning
- 7 Wind
- 8 Ice
- 9 Cold weather
- 10 Hot Weather
- 11 Moisture
- 12 Contamination
- 13 Fire
- 14 Extreme storm

FOREIGN OBJECTS

- 20 Vehicles
- 22 Trees – tore down
- 23 Trees – shorted
- 24 Animals
- 25 Birds
- 26 Underground dig in
- 27 Vandalism
- 28 Other

EQUIPMENT

- 30 Manufacturing defect
- 31 Equipment overload
- 32 Electrical failure
- 33 Worn out

(use 24 hour time)

TIME OFF 1733 ON 1830

Number of Calls 1

Number of
Customers

219

Minutes
Duration

60 min

TRANSFORMER FAILURE

CWL# _____ KVA _____

MFG _____ AGE (est) _____

Serial # _____

Arrester ON / OFF Tank (circle one)

ARRESTOR FAILURE

MFR _____ Porc Polymer
 Riser Line Transformer
 (circle all that apply)

DEVICE THAT OPENED

Distribution
Main Feeder

Breaker _____ Counter _____

Targets _____

Branch Line

O.C.R. _____ Size _____
 Fuse _____ Size _____

Transformer

Fuse _____ Transf. Size _____

ROUTING (initial)

Responded By DH, JT

Line Assisted By JB, MM

Assisted By _____

Manager DH

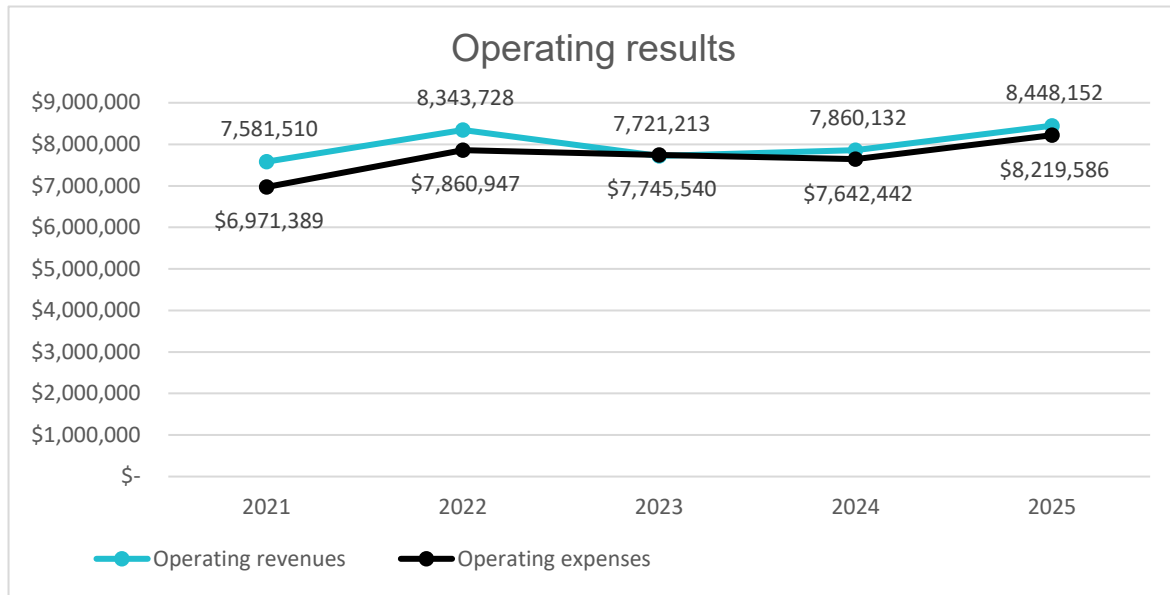
Outage File _____



Columbus Electric Utility

Electric Utility Results

	Current Year	Prior Year
Actual Rate of Return	1.30%	0.80%
Authorized Rate of Return	6.50%	6.50%

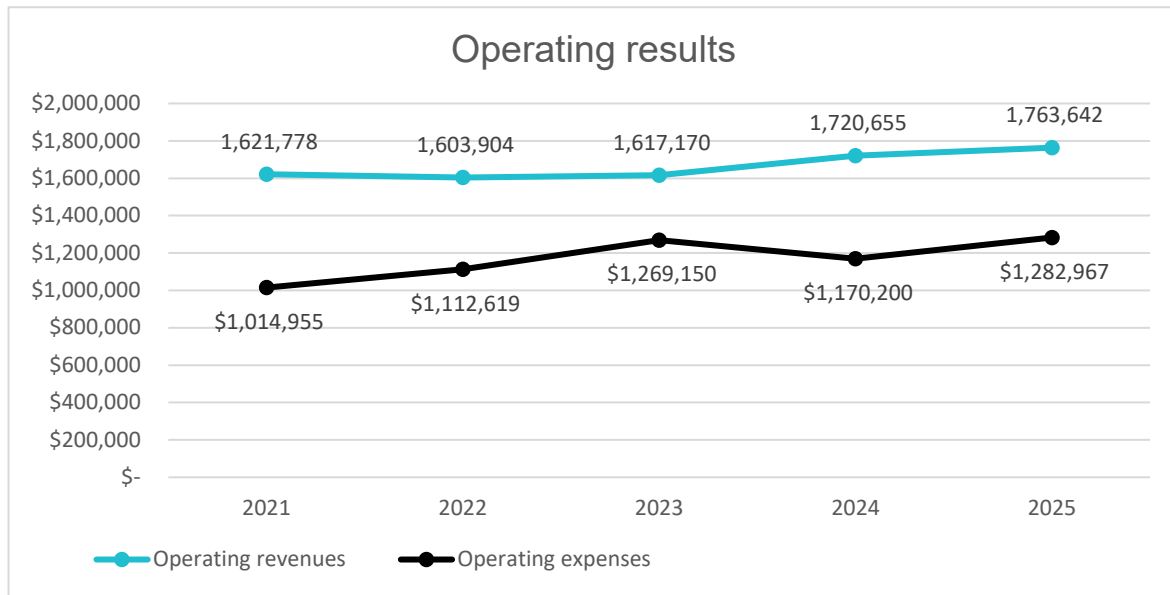




Columbus Water Utility

Water Utility Results

	<u>Current Year</u>	<u>Prior Year</u>
Actual Rate of Return	3.26%	3.99%
Authorized Rate of Return	6.20%	6.50%





Columbus Water and Electric Utilities

Combined Utility Results

Unrestricted Reserves

		<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Year end balance	\$	1,373,216	\$ 1,044,071	\$ 678,478	\$ 791,626	\$ 1,136,900
Months on hand		1.79	1.26	0.87	0.99	1.34

Debt Coverage

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Actual	5.62	5.22	3.88	5.22	5.27
Required	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25

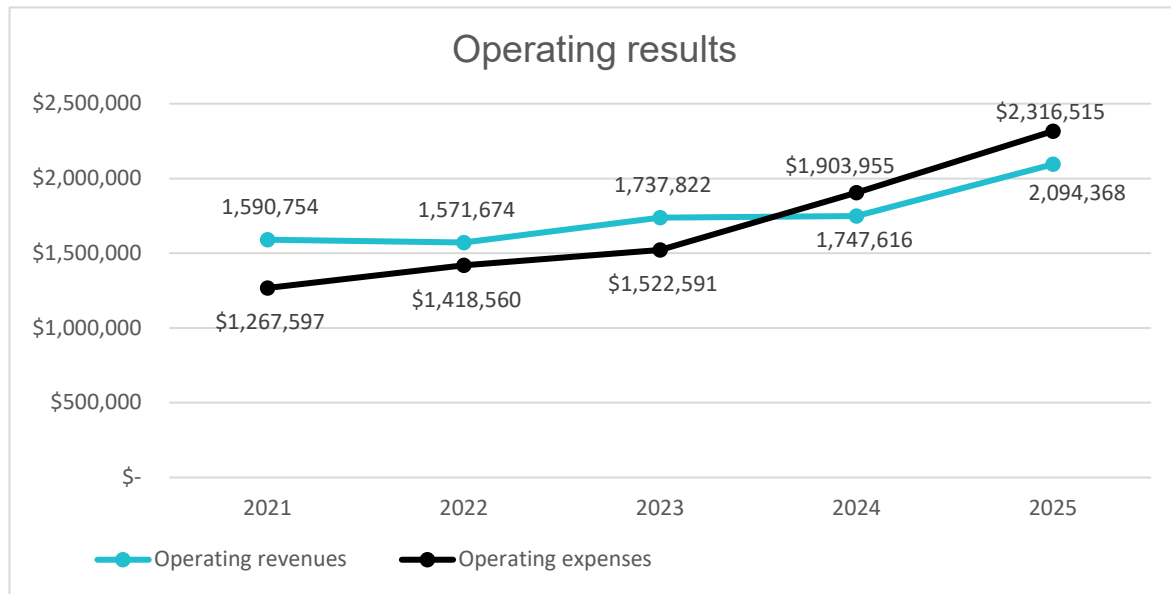
Investment in Capital





Columbus Sewer Utility

Sewer Utility Results



Unrestricted Reserves

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Year end balance	\$ 950,747	\$ 1,084,307	\$ 1,253,872	\$ 1,309,354	\$ 667,486
Months on hand	7.17	8.28	8.66	8.99	3.82

Debt Coverage

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Actual	2.10	1.39	1.46	0.96	0.83
Required	1.10	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25

Investment in Capital



STORM WATER UTILITY

Overview and Considerations for Implementation

City of Columbus
May 19, 2026



 Ruekert • Mielke



1

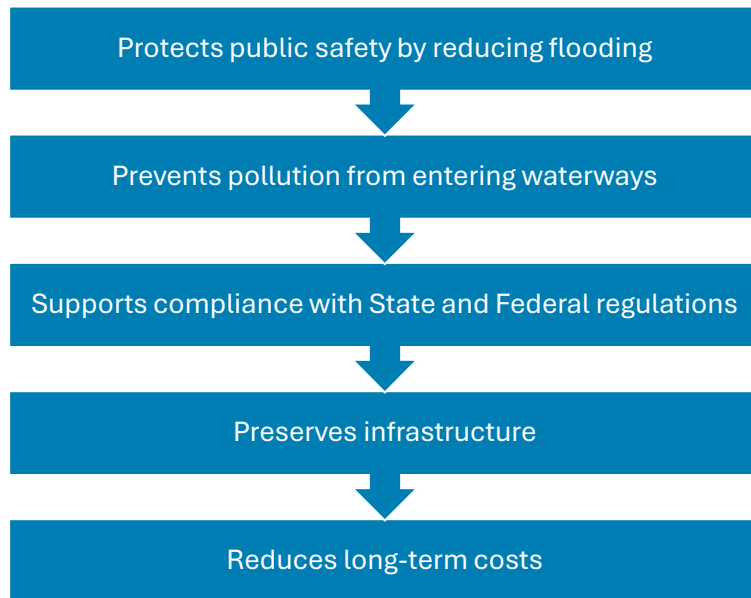
Agenda

- Why does storm water management matter?
- Review the City's current storm water system
- Challenges
- Present Options
- Storm water Utility Status
- Implementation
- Q/A

 Ruekert • Mielke

2

Why Does Storm Water Matter?



3

City of Columbus Storm Water System

Existing Infrastructure

- Miles of pipe
- Miles of channels and creeks
- 16 storm water basins
 - 4 dry
 - 12 wet
- Hundreds of inlets
- Multiple waterway discharge locations

Maintenance Responsibilities

- Sediment control
- Routine cleaning and inspection

4

City of Columbus Storm Water System

History of Projects Completed Since 2021 from priority list

- #19 Gateway Swale
- #46 Ditch / storm sewer for 2023, 2024, 2025 street projects
- #69 Fuller Street Culvert
- #32 Fireman's Park Culvert Removal
- #25 Curb to Warner Street

\$1,378,800

5

Current Challenges

Funding

- Storm water is currently funded out of the City's general fund
- Grants are in high demand and timing doesn't always work

Prioritization

- How does the City decide what to improve?
- Reactive vs. Proactive

Maintenance

- Costs (employee wages, infrastructure, etc.)
- Time spent (Resources available)



6

Solutions?

Do Nothing

- City continues to treat storm water management like it has in the past
- Funding comes from the general fund
- Projects are completed based on what funds are available
- Reactive vs. Proactive

Create a Storm Water Utility Fee

- Funded by residents like water, sanitary, and electric utilities are currently
- Able to complete more projects
- Proactive vs Reactive
- Able to keep on top of maintenance

7

The Story of the Storm Water Utility

2021

- City adopted a storm water utility ordinance
- Referendum failed
 - A user fee was not implemented

What's changed since 2021?

- The City does not need to go to referendum to adopt the fee.
- In 2022, a comprehensive plan was created to identify needs as requested by residents
- In 2023, the Council received a list of top storm water projects
 - 2023-2025, the City has completed a number of storm water projects

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Maintenance Dredging and Culvert Replacement

Replacement of a failing culvert beneath Fuller Street improved drainage capacity and roadway infrastructure.



 Ruekert • Mielke

9

Fireman's Park Culvert Removal

Removed an existing culvert that 2nd Ward Creek was traveling through and daylighted the creek through Fireman's Park.



 Ruekert • Mielke

10

Storm Water Utility

What is it?

- A dedicated municipal funding mechanism that **manages** and **finances** the control, collection, and treatment of storm water runoff.
- Similar to sewer and water utilities – storm water utilities provide a dedicated funding source for infrastructure maintenance, flood control, and water quality compliance.
- Columbus has utility created with no user fee

What are the benefits w/ fee?

- Provides a dedicated funding source for storm water projects.
- Makes capacity in general fund for other CIP projects

How is it Funded?

- User Fee
 - Base fee off of need (Today with 2021 Comprehensive Storm Water Plan)
 - Base fee on predetermined amount (2021 Referendum)



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Funding Scenario #1 – Maintenance Focused

- **Funds annual maintenance activities:**
 - Rotational ditch and channel maintenance
 - Rotational storm inlet cleaning
- **Funding capital work is limited to small targeted fixes**
 - Medium size project every few years
- **Major conveyance and flood mitigation remain deferred**
 - Such as projects the City has been completing
- **Between \$90 and \$120 per ERU annually**



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Funding Scenario #2 – Balanced Program

- Funds full annual maintenance activities:
 - Ditch and channel maintenance
 - Storm inlet cleaning
- Funds one capital project every other year
 - Project will come from ranked priority list
- Builds on completed projects, addresses projects systematically
- Provides a predictable, defensible investment strategy
- Between \$120 and \$150 per ERU annually
- **Recommended for City of Columbus**



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Funding Scenario #3 – Aggressive Capital Program

- Funds full annual maintenance activities:
 - Ditch and channel maintenance
 - Storm inlet cleaning
- Funds one capital project every year
 - Project will come from ranked priority list
- Builds on completed projects, addresses projects systematically
- Provides the fastest reduction in flood risk but has the highest fee impact
- Between \$150 and \$175 per ERU annually



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Funding

ERU Definition

- Equivalent Runoff Unit
 - Average horizontal impervious area of a single-family residential lot within the City of Columbus.
- 2021 Ordinance states 1 ERU = 3,600 square feet
 - Average area at the creation of the Ordinance

Fee Structure

- Single Family Residential billed at 1 ERU
- Two Unit Residential billed at 0.6 ERU
- Multi-Family and Commercial billed at 1 ERU times the total impervious square footage of the lot divided by 3,600 square feet.

When is it billed?

- Annual vs Monthly, both options have pros and cons

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Funding – When is it billed?

Annual

- With the property tax bill as a special charge
- One time payment per year
- Examples: Town of Onalaska (not able to find charge online), Town of Holland (\$55 annually)

Non-Annual

- With the other utility bills (Monthly, Quarterly, etc.)
- Split into lower payments
- Examples: City of Fitchburg (\$26 quarterly), City of Middleton (\$23 quarterly), City of Sun Prairie (\$10 monthly)

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Implementation



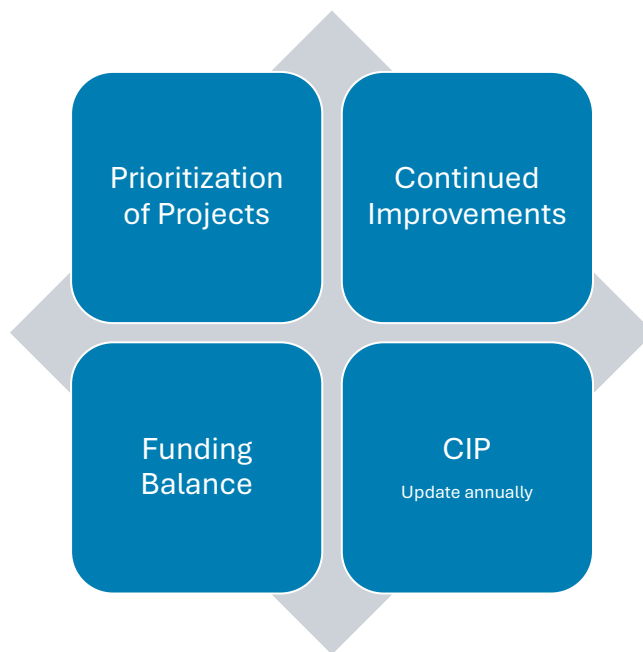
2025 Fireman's Park Culvert Removal

- Establish New project priorities (update 2023 priorities)
- Rate Study & Credit Policy Development
- Public Engagement
- Update Ordinance
- Council Review and Adoption
- Utility Launch



17

Vision for After Implementation



18

Summary

Review of Projects
Completed

What has been
happening in the
community will continue
happening but at a faster
rate with more funding



19

Questions?



20



"Excellence in electrical distribution design since 1981"

SENT BY EMAIL

August 11th, 2026

Columbus Water & Light
Randy Myrum
950 Maple Ave
Columbus, WI 53925

Subject: Substation 2 (Water Street) Transformer Purchase
Letter of Recommendation
C09-25D Spec 4273

Dear Mr. Myrum,

On July 16th, 2026, Forster Electrical Engineering received and publicly read bids for the purchase of a substation transformer for Substation 2 (Water Street). Five bids were received. The project budget allocation for the substation transformer was \$1,730,000.

Refer to the attached bid tabulation for the full results. **Forster Electrical Engineering recommends awarding the contract to Waukesha for a stated bid price of \$1,868,226, with a stated delivery time of Q4, 2028.**

Note: Waukesha offered optional price adders for rigging and assembly of the new transformer, but these services can be obtained more affordably from a local substation labor contractor.

The basis for the transformer evaluation is total ownership costs and best value. Forster has helped procure Waukesha transformers for several utilities, and has good experience working with the manufacturer in the past. Waukesha transformers have a long, proven reputation for providing quality equipment considered "industry standard". Given the bid results, Forster Electrical Engineering believes paying the price premium (\$184,156) for a Waukesha transformer is worth the investment, given that this transformer is anticipated to last 40+ years. For reference, Waukesha transformers have historically come at a \$400,000+ price premium compared to other options. Given Columbus's options, the Waukesha bid offers the best value.

After your review, please be sure to let me know when we can proceed with contracts. A tabulation from the bid is attached for your reference.

Sincerely,

FORSTER ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING, INC.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jacob Feltz".

Jacob Feltz, E.I.T

Copy:

Bruce Beth, P.E.

Attachments:

Bid tabulation

Recommended Bid

BID SUMMARY

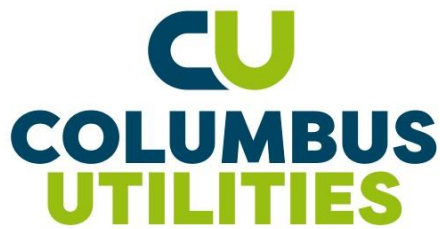
Columbus Utilities

Substation Transformer

Project No. C09-25D, Specification 4273

Bid opened July 16th, 2026

Bid submitted by:	CL Sales/PTT	MC Sales/Waukesha	SEC Electrical Equipment Sales/Niagara	PowerOne/WEG	EUSCO/Virginia
Base Bid	\$1,929,035	\$1,868,226	\$2,052,500	\$2,043,533	\$1,684,070
Transformer Manufacturer	PTT	Prolec GE Waukesha	Niagara	WEG	Virginia
Manufacturer's Rep	Dave Chyla	Rick Stoegbauer	Todd Millpointer	Jim Chaggaris	Bob Jensen
No Load Loss - Guaranteed Max	10.50	10.1	10.5	55.30	10.5
Winding Loss - Guaranteed Max	60.00	68.7	75.5	66.50	52.0
Submittals - days following contract	24 weeks	30 Weeks before ship	40 weeks	18 weeks	22 weeks
Delivery - days following approved submittals	86 weeks	Q4-2028	156 weeks	76 weeks	60 weeks
Bid Bond Received?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



Shared strength through WPPI Energy

950 Maple Avenue
PO Box 228
Columbus, WI 53925
Email: cwl@columbuswaterandlight.com

People You Know ... Service You Trust, Since 1896

Phone (920)623-5912

FAX (920) 623-5923

www.columbuswaterandlight.com

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title	Electric Lead Lineman
Department	Columbus Utilities
FLSA Status	Non-exempt
Wage Range	\$56.67-\$60.95

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES

The Electric Lead Lineman is responsible for directing the daily operation, construction, maintenance, repair, and restoration of the City's electric distribution system. This is a working Lead Lineman position that provides technical leadership, crew supervision, project coordination, and operational support while actively participating in line work. The Electric Lead Lineman exercises independent judgment in the field, ensures compliance with all applicable safety regulations, and assists the Utility Director with planning, system reliability, capital improvements, emergency response, and operational decision-making.

The Electric Lead Lineman reports to the Utilities Director.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Manage daily operations of the electric distribution system, assign and perform work duties with various crewmembers.
- Provide leadership, direction, and technical guidance to the line personnel while promoting teamwork, professionalism, and accountability
- Keeps inventory records, tracks materials used and maintenance records.
- Updates the Utilities Director on the progress and status of assigned projects and assists with distribution planning.
- Maintains a safe work environment.
- Ensures compliance with all safety codes.
- Installs/removes overhead and underground conductors.
- Installation and maintenance of overhead and underground equipment.
- Termination of underground cable and equipment.
- Install streetlights, poles, anchors/guys, and performs tree trimming operations and planning.
- Performs trouble shooting and repairs on the overhead and underground electrical system.
- Installation, inspection, and maintenance of substation equipment.
- Performs routine substation switching operations, inspections, testing, and maintenance while monitoring equipment conditions and system performance.
- Operates backhoes, skid steers, bucket trucks, digger derricks, pickups, compressors, and other equipment.
- Review of various alarms and reports.

- Coordinates emergency restoration efforts during, storms, outages, and other emergency situations.
- Monitor and respond to SCADA alarms, outage notifications, and system operating conditions
- Update and maintain electric system mapping.
- Other duties and responsibilities as assigned.

Item #7.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Thorough knowledge electrical theory and electric distribution systems.
- Strong ability to read electrical maps and schematics.
- Thorough knowledge of electric substations, switching procedures, protective equipment, and system operations.
- Effectively and consistently maintains strong working relationships with employees and the public.
- Ability to climb poles and safely work on and around energized equipment.
- Ability to perform calculations related to the electric utility.
- Must be familiar with lay out of the electrical distribution and transmission systems.
- Ability to prioritize multiple projects while maintain a high level of workmanship and customer service.
- Knowledge of the occupational hazards and safety precautions of the trade.
- Ability to exercise sound judgment during emergency situations with minimal supervision.
- Knowledge and experience with personal computers are required.
- Willingness to assist additional departments within the city as needed.

CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, AND SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

- Preferred minimum of 10 years journey level worker with supervisory experience.
- Required high school diploma or GED and completion of Lineworker apprenticeship.
- Valid Wisconsin Commercial Driver's License - class A.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Project management experience.
- First Aid and CPR certified.
- Must successfully complete pre-employment and random drug and alcohol testing in accordance with DOT regulations.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Work is primarily performed in field, near moving parts and in the outside weather conditions. The employee will be exposed to wet and/or humid conditions, extreme heat, extreme cold and vibration. Requires ability to perform heavy manual labor for extended periods under unfavorable weather conditions.
- The employee may occasionally lift and/or move objects up to 100 pounds. The noise level in the work environment, on occasion, may exceed 85 decibels and requires hearing protection.
- Employee is required to be on stand-by call and report to the Columbus Utilities Operations Facility within 30 minutes of notification.
- Must be available to work nights, weekends, holidays, and extended hours during emergency restoration efforts, planned outages, and severe weather events.
- Must be capable of climbing poles, working from aerial devices, operating heavy equipment, and safely performing work at elevated heights and in confined spaces.

The statements listed above are intended to describe the general nature and level of duties performed by the person hired for this position. These duties are essential to the performance of this job. The position description for the Electric Lead Lineman does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee and is subject to change by the employer as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.



Director's Report Outline

Randall Myrum – Utility Director

Electric Department:

- Mutual Aid to the City of Menasha
- New service installation

Water Department:

- Hydrant Flushing
- System Maintenance

Sanitary Department:

- Collection System Inspections
- System televising and jetting

Dept. of Public Works

- Park repairs
- Storm sewer maintenance

Project Updates:

- School Street Project

LIVELines

Volume 75, Issue 8 • August 2026

EF-3 tornado devastates Menasha, prompts mutual aid

A mile-wide path of destruction tore through Menasha on Monday, July 27, when an EF-3 tornado traveled down a central part of the community, tearing down homes, businesses, and power lines along the way. This was the most powerful tornado to hit the Fox Valley area in more than four decades. Packing a punch with winds of up to 140 mph, it hit Menasha particularly hard, causing significant and widespread damage.

Many homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed, and large swaths of trees were knocked down. More than 60 utility poles were impacted, including those supporting

two of ATC's transmission lines. Two substations were also damaged. All of the 9,500 customers of Menasha Utilities (MU) lost power.

MU's own Water Filtration Treatment Plant took a direct hit from the tornado, while employees inside took shelter and could see the tornado damage unfold via security system cameras.

MEUW immediately worked with Menasha Utilities and coordinated a Mutual Aid response, reaching out to nearby municipal utilities to seek crews and trucks. Mutual aid is a core value among MEUW's member utilities. When one community is impacted by disaster, others step up to help restore power and sup-



Milwaukee Journal Sentinel photo

port recovery efforts. At least 80 linemen from 25 Wisconsin municipal utilities contributed their skills at various points, with many other utilities offering to help.

Restoration efforts were hampered by the sheer volume of debris, with many roads unpassable and with access to poles and wires limited. Broken poles, tree limbs, downed

wires, and materials from damaged homes and buildings, among other things, needed to be cleared before crews could even begin to assess and restore the system. Additional challenges were caused by the amount of vehicle and foot traffic in the area, with people either seeking assistance or simply viewing the damage.

Continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Educating lawmakers about public power priorities is essential

Page 3

What municipal utilities need to know about bankruptcy practices

Page 4

MEUW News Monitor

Pages 8

Wisconsin Utility News Digest

Page 10



Top photo: Drone footage shows the widespread and significant damage to homes and businesses near Plank Road in Menasha after a mid-day tornado impacted the community. **Bottom photo:** Dozens of linemen and other utility personnel posed for a photo as the sun rose for another full day of clearing debris, rebuilding power lines, and restoring electric service to the community.

Municipal Electric Utilities of Wisconsin's mission is to **strengthen and unify community-owned utilities**. Since 1928, MEUW has been the trade association for Wisconsin's 81 public power communities and is affiliated with the American Public Power Association (APPA) — www.publicpower.org

Continued from page 1

"I've never seen anything like this," said MEUW Director of Safety Services and Operations Mike Czupryny. "I've been part of several storm and hurricane Mutual Aid events, but I've never seen this much damage before. The crews had a lot of obstacles in front of them, but they all worked together so well and made it happen."

Thanks to the efforts of MU employees and Mutual Aid crews, power had been restored to 90% of the area and to 80% of customers within a week of the devastating storm. Many of the remaining customers incurred damage that will need to be addressed before reconnection can occur. Crews will remain as long as needed, as the community shifts from emergency response to long-term recovery.

Menasha Utilities' General Manager Melanie Krause said, "Please extend a huge thank you to all those that have responded to Mutual Aid and continue to support us." ●



Crews from 25 municipal utilities provided mutual aid support to Menasha Utilities

Cedarburg
Clintonville
Columbus
Gresham
Hartford
Juneau
Kaukauna
Kiel
Lake Mills
Manitowoc
Marshfield
Medford
New Holstein
New London
Oconomowoc
Oconto Falls
Plymouth
Shawano
Sheboygan Falls
Sturgeon Bay
Sun Prairie
Two Rivers
Waunakee
Waupun
Wisconsin Rapids

Associate members rush to contribute supplies for restoration, recovery effort

Having strong connections to vital supply lines is essential for municipal utility operations. True to form, many MEUW Associate Members immediately jumped in to help during storm recovery in Menasha. Phone calls and offers started coming in almost immediately, and they've brought equipment, tools, trucks, chainsaws, food and drink to support the crews working on restoration. Among those contributing:

- Milwaukee Tool delivered a truck filled with chainsaws and tools;
- Altec, Inc. provided extra bucket trucks for utility crews to use; and
- Irby coordinated with Bell Pole & Lumber to bring in 40 much-needed poles.

MEUW Associate Members are suppliers and service providers who have paid membership dues in support of those connections. In the July edition of *LIVE LINES*, we featured the names of these Associate Members in appreciation of their participation. MEUW truly values these partnerships and appreciates the support they routinely provide for our public power utilities.



This map shows the scope of the damage and the scale of power outages that affected the City of Menasha in the aftermath of the July 27 tornado. GPS mapping was replaced with old-fashioned paper maps and markers to plan repair work.

Timeline of events in Menasha tornado response

Monday July 27

Severe weather with strong winds moves through the Fox Valley region, spawning a mid-day tornado that affected large portions of the City of Menasha.

The tornado takes out poles and transmission lines serving the Menasha Utilities (MU) substation; the entire Menasha community loses power.

MEUW begins mobilizing crews to provide mutual aid in Menasha.

By late Monday, crews from 11 MEUW member utilities are onsite helping assess the damage and clear extensive debris.

ATC crews replace poles and lines, restoring the feed to the Menasha substation.

Tuesday July 28

Many roadways in and around Menasha are blocked by fallen trees and debris; crews focus on clean up and setting poles.

Gov. Tony Evers declares a State of Emergency.

Wednesday July 29

Power began to be restored to Menasha residents able to accept electric service.

MEUW calls for additional mutual aid crews to plan for a weekend of storm recovery.

Thursday July 30

Gov. Evers tours the damaged sites in Menasha and activates the National Guard to assist with debris removal, traffic and safety support.

Clean-up is expected to take weeks, with recovery lasting months and years.

On July 28, the National Weather Service confirmed an EF-3 tornado, with wind speeds up to 140 mph that traveled 12.1 miles, reached a maximum width of 1,500 yards, and was on the ground for 26 minutes. The powerful storm is believed to be the strongest to impact the Fox Valley in more than 40 years.

Educating lawmakers about public power priorities is essential

By Tyler Vorpapel

While we're still in the middle of summer, with primary elections right around the corner and the general election approaching in November, now is the perfect time to start planning for our 2027 advocacy activities. That includes the annual American Public Power Association (APPA) Legislative Rally in Washington, D.C., and MEUW Day at the Capitol in Madison next spring.

This November's elections will determine control of the House and Senate, both of which are currently held by slim Republican majorities. Here in Wisconsin, we'll also have a new governor and new legislative leadership, regardless of which party holds the majority.

Wisconsin has always had outstanding representation at APPA's Legislative Rally, and your advocacy continues to make a difference. Last year's message to Congress

about protecting tax-exempt municipal bonds as a financing tool for utility infrastructure clearly resonated. When the

APPA Policy Makers Council (PMC) met with members of Congress in Washington, D.C., in July, lawmakers immediately recognized the issue and reaffirmed the importance of preserving these bonds for our utilities.

Another key topic was the critical role the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) plays in

helping utilities request and provide mutual aid. Given the storms we've experienced in recent months, there is no shortage of real-world examples to share about why that support matters.

Wisconsin has maintained a strong voice on the PMC, with three members currently serving on the 40-person national council. Kaukauna Utilities Commissioner Lee Meyerhofer recently served as chair, and Cedarburg Light &

Water Utility Commission President Andy Moss was just elected second vice chair, putting him in line to lead the

committee. (He edged out Marshfield's Mike Eberl in what I'm told came down to a coin flip.) The PMC — made up of local government leaders from municipal utilities across the country — meets each summer in the nation's capital to reinforce the same priorities raised during the Legislative Rally: maintaining affordability, protecting municipal bonds, ensuring electric reliability, advancing energy permitting reform, and supporting FEMA. These follow-up meetings help keep public power's issues front and center with Congress throughout the year.

Your participation in these advocacy opportunities truly makes a difference. I encourage you to join us at the APPA Legislative Rally in Washington, D.C., Mar. 1–3, 2027, and consider bringing your mayor, council members, commissioners, or key utility employees to help tell our story. And if you know someone in your local government or on your commission who would be a good fit for the PMC, please let me know. The more voices we have at the table, the stronger and more united our message becomes.



Tyler Vorpapel is MEUW's Director of Legislative and Regulatory Relations. He can be reached at tvorpapel@meuw.org



Wisconsin was well represented when APPA's Policy Makers Council gathered in D.C. in July. Joining the meetings with lawmakers were (from left) Lee Meyerhofer (Kaukauna), MEUW's Tyler Vorpapel, WPPI Energy's Joseph Owen, Mike Eberl (Marshfield), and Andy Moss (Cedarburg)

**Friends of
PUBLIC
POWER**

MEUW is built on the foundation that municipal electric utilities deserve a voice in happenings at the Capitol in Madison. For 95 years, our association has championed policies and advocated to preserve the public power model. Increasingly, money is a channel for political participation. Through Friends of Public Power, the political action committee and conduit managed by MEUW, the association directs financial resources to support in-state legislative candidates who have signaled their support for public power and the electric-utility industry. Many of these same politicians have shown a willingness to listen to and learn about the issues that matter to MEUW and its member communities. Like other trade associations, we recognize the importance of political giving and developing good relationships with key lawmakers. Dollars raised are directed to both Republican and Democrat candidates in races for the Wisconsin Assembly and State Senate.

To learn more about MEUW's political giving, please visit www.meuw.org/fpp. ●

What municipal utilities need to know about bankruptcy practices



By Nicholas Bratsos
Boardman and Clark

As utility revenues come under pressure from delayed and missed customer payments, municipal utilities in Wisconsin are increasingly attentive to broader economic and financial trends that can affect customer solvency. Bankruptcy filings nationwide have been trending upward in recent reporting periods, with total filings increasing by more than 13% year-over-year through March 31, 2025.¹ Nationally, there were 542,529 total bankruptcy cases in the year ending June 30, 2025, with Chapter 7 filings accounting for over 330,000 of those cases and more than 8,400 Chapter 11 filings.² These figures reflect sustained financial pressure on both residential and commercial utility customers.

Within Wisconsin specifically, bankruptcy data from the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin shows continued activity across both individual and business cases, including regular monthly Chapter 7 and occasional Chapter 11 filings throughout 2025,³ underscoring the very real potential for municipal utilities to encounter insolvent customers entering bankruptcy.

Rules for Commercial and Nonresidential Deposits

Wisconsin's regulatory framework provides municipal utilities with tools to manage risk and secure payment for utility service. Under the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW) rules, utilities may require deposits from commercial accounts as a condition of providing service:

- Electric utilities may impose commercial and farm deposits pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code, § PSC 113.0403, authorizing deposits based on factors like credit history and risk of nonpayment.
- Water utilities serving non-residential accounts likewise may require security deposits under § PSC 185.361, allowing utilities to obtain financial assurances ahead of service initiation or continuation.

These deposit authorities enable municipal utilities to obtain security in advance that can mitigate the impact of subsequent customer defaults — a particularly salient point for larger nonresidential customers whose financial instability may precede or presage potential bankruptcy filings.

Forms of Guarantee and the Intersection with the Bankruptcy Code

Section 366 of the Bankruptcy Code is meant to balance utility providers' general right to refuse to do business with a debtor post-petition and a debtor's need for utility ser-

vice. Congress attempted to strike this balance by protecting debtors from utility shutoffs for the first few weeks after filing, but also giving utility providers a special right to "adequate assurance" of future payment while a bankruptcy case is pending.

Historically, prior to enactment of the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act (BACPA) in 2005, bankruptcy courts frequently considered a debtor's pre-petition history of timely utility payments in assessing what constituted adequate assurance of payment. For example:

- In *In re Best Products Co.*, 203 B.R. 51 (Bankr. E.D. Va. 1996), a bankruptcy court accepted a deposit equating to one-half of an average monthly bill as adequate assurance where the debtor had regularly paid utility charges and had no pre-petition default.
- In *In re 499 W. Warren Street Associates Ltd. Partnership*, 138 B.R. 363 (Bankr. N.D.N.Y. 1991), a court approved a deposit equal to one month's average billing based on the debtor's solvency and expected ability to meet post-petition obligations.
- In *In re Spencer*, 218 B.R. 290 (Bankr. W.D.N.Y. 1998), where prepetition defaults were part of the record, a two-month average billing deposit was upheld as adequate assurance.

These pre-BACPA decisions reflected a flexible judicial inquiry into a debtor's payment history and prospects for future payment.

The landscape shifted significantly post-BACPA with the adoption of 11 U.S.C. § 366(c). In Chapter 11 cases, under Section 366(c)(3)(B)(ii), bankruptcy courts are prohibited from considering *pre-petition* timely payment history in determining whether a utility's requested adequate assurance of payment is reasonable. This statutory bar means that even customers with historically reliable payment patterns cannot rely on that history to forestall additional security requirements post-petition.

Post-BACPA cases emphasize that if a Chapter 11 debtor fails to provide adequate assurance within 30 days of filing, the utility may alter, refuse, or discontinue service. 11 U.S.C. § 366(c)(2). While courts can, upon notice and hearing, modify a utility's demand for assurance, they may not weigh pre-petition security absence, prior timely payments, or the availability of an administrative expense priority in determining what constitutes adequate assurance. In Chapter 11 cases, utilities may also use security deposits provided before the petition date to satisfy delinquencies without separate notice or court order.

Adequate assurance is not the same as an absolute guarantee of payment. But utility providers are empowered to demand what they believe is adequate

Continued on page 5

^[1] <https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/data-tables/2025/06/30/bankruptcy-filings/f>

^[2] <https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/data-tables/2025/06/30/bankruptcy-filings/f>

^[3] <https://www.wieba.uscourts.gov/bankruptcystatistics/2filing>

FERC orders new reliability standards for AI data centers, other large loads

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has directed the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) to develop mandatory reliability standards for large computational loads, including AI data centers, cryptocurrency mining operations, and other high-density computing facilities.

Issued on July 16, the order requires NERC to file new or revised Reliability Standards by Dec. 31, 2026, along with proposed registry criteria identifying which computational-load entities will be subject to mandatory compliance. NERC must also submit a Phase II work plan for additional standards by March 1, 2027.

The action reflects growing concern over the rapid expansion of large electricity users whose power demand can change almost instantaneously, creating voltage and frequency disturbances that threaten grid reliability.

“Certain large loads like data centers and crypto mining operations ... have the potential to change their demand almost in-

stantly,” FERC Chairman Laura Swett said. “This rapid fluctuation causes voltage stability issues that threaten grid reliability.”

FERC's order formalizes work NERC had already begun through its Large Loads Working Group, which has spent the past two years studying the reliability risks associated with emerging computational loads. Earlier this year, NERC issued its highest-level Essential Action Alert requiring utilities and other registered entities to take immediate steps to improve modeling, protection, and operational practices related to these facilities.

While FERC did not prescribe the specific technical requirements, the new standards will include proposed registry criteria identifying which computational-load entities should become subject to NERC's mandatory reliability framework.

Utilities, grid operators, and developers should expect increased regulatory oversight and new reliability requirements aimed at ensuring rapidly growing loads from AI can be integrated without compromising the stability of the Bulk-Power System. ●

Bankruptcy practices

Continued from page 4

assurance where a debtor is at risk of defaulting on its payment obligations.

Moreover, provision of adequate assurance does not prevent a utility from terminating service to the debtor or the estate if post-petition payments for utility services are not made after the statutory waiting period. Such a termination must follow the procedure prescribed under non-bankruptcy law for the disconnection of utility service.

For municipal utilities, this statutory framework underscores that adequate

assurance is evaluated independently of past payment practices, focusing instead on the security necessary to protect the utility from the ongoing service risk.

Offsets, Letters of Credit, and Security Instruments

Municipal utilities commonly obtain letters of credit, cash deposits, surety bonds, or similar guarantees. Under Section 366(c) (4) a utility may recover or set off against a security deposit provided prepetition without notice or court order. This provision can be particularly valuable to municipal utilities in addressing post-petition delinquencies while retaining rights to adequate assurance going forward.

In sum, the bankruptcy code provides mechanisms to protect municipal electric and water utilities for post-petition payments. Before a petition is filed, municipal utilities with commercial customers with payment issues should obtain deposits or guarantees consistent with PSCW rules. These protections remain intact even if the customer subsequently files a bankruptcy petition. ●

Nicholas Bratsos is an attorney with Boardman and Clark law firm in Madison. He joined the firm in March 2026, and his practice includes municipal and construction litigation, dealership law, and commercial disputes.



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LIVELines

Official monthly publication of **Municipal Electric Utilities of Wisconsin, Inc.**, the statewide trade association representing the interests of Wisconsin's public power providers since 1928.

This e-newsletter is distributed to more than 1,200 utility professionals and leaders throughout Wisconsin and the Midwest on the first Tuesday of every month.

LIVE LINES has been published continuously for many decades and provides useful information, news on emerging utility issues and legislation, updates on events, training programs and member services, as well as engaging feature stories spotlighting utilities, communities and leaders.

Reader comments and suggestions are welcome — send by email to news@meuw.org

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An archive of past issues of *Live Lines* is available at www.issuu.com/meuw

APPA signs White House Ratepayer Protection Pledge

American Public Power Association (APPA) President and CEO Scott Corwin on July 23 participated in a White House event to reaffirm public power utilities' commitment to ensuring customers are not burdened with costs caused by infrastructure investment to meet growing data center demand.

"We are pleased to be a signatory to the Ratepayer Protection Pledge on behalf of public power, which aligns with our position that other utility customers should not bear the brunt of the costs of serving data centers," said Corwin. "It reinforces our long-standing focus on energy affordability and reliability for public power utility customers."

Public power utilities are already acting to protect their customers. Many have adopted, or are developing, rates, terms, and conditions for new large-load customers.

APPA said it appreciates the Administration's recognition of the importance of protecting electric customers from the costs of serving large data centers.

In early March, the White House hosted an event with seven major hyperscaler AI companies where they signed the Ratepayer Protection Pledge containing specific actions to help protect other electric ratepayers. To learn more about the pledge, see this [White House fact sheet](#).

To learn more about what APPA is doing to advance affordability, review the [Public Power Affordability Agenda fact sheet](#). ●

September event will focus on energy affordability

The Customers First Coalition (CFC) will host its annual Power Breakfast on Tuesday, Sept. 15, in Madison. The forum will bring together policymakers, energy leaders, and stakeholders to discuss energy affordability and to explore the key factors driving rising energy costs in Wisconsin.

Presenters are expected to discuss how global fuel markets, infrastructure investment, and customer usage influence energy bills, and how effective utility regulation helps manage these pressures. The event will be held at the Premier Park Hotel in downtown Madison. Learn more [here](#).



MEUW is a founding member of CFC, which was originally formed more than 25 years ago, and has helped to shape energy policy that promotes consensus among Wisconsin's energy stakeholders and produces sensible solutions to today's energy challenges. MEUW President and CEO Tim Heinrich is currently serving as Chair of the CFC Board of Directors. To learn more about CFC, visit customersfirst.org. ●



Public power utilities across the U.S., including the 81 operating in Wisconsin, celebrate **Public Power Week** the first full week of October every year to help customers and stakeholders understand how they can better engage with their community-owned utility and benefit from all its offerings. MEUW member utilities have access to sample resources and templates to spread the word and help celebrate in their hometowns. Details are available [here](#), along with a link to additional resources available from APPA. This year's events will happen Oct. 5–9.

Recent storms are reminder to refresh your mutual aid plan

Every MEUW utility has access to a customized guidebook to help prepare for and manage a mutual aid event when it's needed. The Mutual Aid Community Resource Guide is available [here](#) (member login is required).

The Resource Guide was developed based on lessons learned and feedback from past mutual aid events and includes various tools necessary for a well-coordinated mutual aid response, including roles and responsibilities, key contacts, and pre-planning details for critical facilities, lodging, and meals. The guidebook is a Microsoft Excel document with multiple tabs, which allows for everything to be kept in a single location and makes it easy to update. The guidebook's comprehensive Table of Contents is linked to each form for quick access, and each tab is formatted for simplified printing. ●

Submit ideas for topics and presenters at 2027 Electric Operations Conference & Expo

The annual gathering of municipal utility and electric cooperative employees from across Wisconsin is set for Jan. 13–14, 2027, and event organizers are working to identify topics and presenters to make the event informative and worthwhile for all who attend. The focus of the 2027 event is resilience and reliability — hallmarks of energy service. Utilities, suppliers, and consultants are invited to submit ideas they can present to conference attendees during a large-group general session (30 minutes or less). This will be an opportunity to showcase a project or share important insights by presenting information about a compelling and relevant topic of interest to leaders in utility operations. The "Call for Presenters" form is available [here](#). The deadline to submit an idea is Friday, Sept. 11.

In case you missed it ...

DNR alerts utilities to be vigilant amidst ongoing cybersecurity threat

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recently contacted public water and wastewater utilities to take immediate steps to protect programmable logic controllers (PLCs) from an ongoing cyber threat targeting internet-connected devices. The advisory follows reports of successful attacks in neighboring states that disrupted system operations.

Utilities are encouraged to review the affected PLC manufacturers, ensure devices are not directly accessible from the internet, verify current security updates, and report any suspected incidents to the Wisconsin Statewide Intelligence Center (WSIC).

For more information and recommended actions, review the advisory on the federal government's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's [website](#).

Members' NEWS

Fisher Kotnick recently joined New Holstein Utilities as an Apprentice Lineman.

Send us your news! Tell MEUW about new hires, promotions, retirements, honors, and awards, so those tidbits can be shared in MEUW member communications. Simply send an email to news@meuw.org to share your news.



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MEUW NEWS Monitor

Wolf promoted to new role to support strategy, execution



MEUW has promoted Sharon Wolf to a new role as Director of Communications and Member Engagement. She first joined MEUW in March 2023 as Manager of Communications and Events, bringing with her extensive experience in the utility industry. The promotion recognizes Sharon's efforts to support MEUW's strategic priorities and the Board of Directors' efforts, including enhancing member communication and engagement. She continues to report directly to President and CEO Tim Heinrich.

Basics of Utility Rate Setting course to be offered Sept. 22

Join your peers for this new one-day workshop on the basics of utility rate setting, including cost-of-service and rate design. Members have consistently expressed interest in a foundational session on electric rate setting, and this training is designed to meet that need. The full-day workshop will provide practical insights for municipal employees, as well as help local utility commissioners and governing body members gain a clearer understanding of the rate-making process. The training is planned for Tuesday, Sept. 22, in Mauston. Information about registration is available [here](#).

Accounting & Customer Service Seminar is Sept. 23

You won't want to miss MEUW's annual one-day seminar that brings together municipal electric utility staff with a focus on accounting and customer service topics. Attendees receive updates on regulatory and legislation that affect their utilities and compare best practices to improve their operations. MEUW's Accounting and Customer Service

Committee assists MEUW staff in putting together the day's program to address industry topics. This year's seminar is planned for Wednesday, Sept. 23, in Mauston. Additional information and registration are available [here](#).

Utility Planning and Risk Management class set for Oct. 7

As part of MEUW's professional development programming, we're launching a new one-day course to focus on utility planning and risk management. Taught by experienced engineer, Dave Krause, this training will explain the basics of strategic and operational planning, why planning matters, and how well-thought-out plans and careful assessments of risks can contribute to long-term success. The class will be held in Mauston on Wednesday, Oct. 7. Registration and details about the class and instructor can be found [here](#).

Associate Member renewal time is almost here!

Having strong connections to vital supply lines is essential for municipal utility operations. MEUW Associate Members are suppliers and service providers who have paid membership dues in support of those connections. The Associate Member year runs from Oct. 1–Sept. 30 each year. Current Associate Members can expect to receive renewal information in the coming weeks. Full details about the Associate Member program and the benefits available are [here](#).

Member Roundtable sessions kickoff late next month

MEUW will once again host Member Roundtables around the state in September and October, providing local utility leaders an opportunity to connect and network on topics of interest to public power. Members are encouraged to attend one of the five scheduled sessions, along with their utility commissioners or elected officials, to receive updates and participate in roundtable discussions. Planned locations and dates are:

- Tuesday, Sept. 29: Bloomer
- Wednesday, Sept. 30: Juneau
- Thursday, Oct. 1: Hartford
- Thursday, Oct. 8: Clintonville
- Thursday, Oct. 15: Richland Center

While there is no cost, advance registration is required. Each session will begin at 9 a.m. and wrap up by 1 p.m. Registration is available [here](#).

Tuesday, Aug. 11
is primary election day
in Wisconsin



A fast-moving, severe thunderstorm impacted the community of Eagle River on the morning of July 27, bringing a lot of lightning strikes and quarter-sized hail. The 45-mph winds toppled trees and took down six poles, impacting more than 300 customers. MEUW activated a mutual aid event, and crews from five municipal utilities answered the call. With the help from crews from Clintonville, Marshfield, Medford, New London, and Wisconsin Rapids, service to nearly all Eagle River Light & Water customers was restored by 1 a.m. July 28 with service fully restored to the remaining customers by 2 p.m.

MEUW Employee Spotlight: Brian Johnson reflects on five years

This is the first in a series of articles (thanks to a suggestion from MEUW's recent communications review) to help members learn more about the MEUW team. In this article, MEUW Regional Safety Manager Brian Johnson offers reflections on his first five years providing support for MEUW members.

In July, I celebrated five years of service with MEUW. While this milestone is certainly meaningful, it has also provided an opportunity for reflection. I feel incredibly fortunate to work alongside such outstanding people not only within my region, but across the entire state.

As I look back on my time in this position, I realize how much I have grown professionally and personally. That growth has not come primarily from advanced safety courses or additional certifications. Instead, it has come from learning that effective leadership requires not only being a teacher, but also being a student. I have learned the value of listening to and learning from our membership. The diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of our members represent an incredible source of knowledge that has expanded and strengthened my own understanding. For a long time, I failed to recognize the depth of that resource. Once I did, I began to appreciate the tremendous opportunity to learn from those I serve.

Reflections from Five Years in Safety Leadership

Leadership involvement strengthens safety culture. Conducting field audits alongside leaders is far more effective than conducting them independently. I have learned that when leadership actively participates in the audit process, it not only reinforces the organization's safety culture but also elevates accountability among employees. More importantly, it sends a clear message that working safely is an expectation that is fully supported by leadership.

Approach matters as much as the message. The individuals I work with are professionals and experts in their respective fields. When difficult conversations are necessary, I have learned that how I communicate is just as important as what I communicate. Presenting information with respect and professionalism can determine whether the message is accepted or rejected. Respect is essential for building trust, maintaining credibility, and fostering long-term relationships.

Presence has value. Being present may seem like a basic part of the job, but I have learned that it carries significant value. I do not always have to speak about safety when spending time with crews in the field. Simply being there as a Safety Manager demonstrates commitment and support. In many cases, meaningful safety discussions arise naturally, even when safety is not the initial topic of conversation.

Follow through on your commitments. When someone asks a question that cannot be answered immediately, it is important to follow up and provide an answer as promised, even if it is not the answer they hoped to hear. Consistently doing what you say you will do builds credibility and strengthens relationships.

Reliability and accountability are foundational to effective leadership.

Be willing to admit mistakes and apologize. One of the most important lessons I have learned is the value of humility. I recall conducting an audit where I discussed several observations with a crew on-site. Later, in my written report, I included additional concerns that

had not been discussed during our conversation. The crew was understandably frustrated. Looking back, I could not blame them. I immediately returned to speak with them, apologized, and assured them I would handle situations differently moving forward. That experience reinforced a critical lesson: trust is the foundation of everything we do as safety professionals. Without trust, safety programs, conversations, and initiatives lose their effectiveness. Trust is not just important in this role, it is everything.

As I begin my sixth year with MEUW, I am grateful for the lessons learned, the

relationships built, and the opportunities to continue growing. The greatest realization from these past five years is that the most valuable knowledge often comes from the people around us. When we remain humble enough to listen and learn, we become better leaders, better partners, and better safety professionals. ●



Brian Johnson joined MEUW on July 1, 2021, bringing more than 20 years' experience in operations, manufacturing, quality, safety, and training. A native of Eau Claire, he also worked as a business development manager for Safe-Fast, where he worked with customers and trained them on the latest OSHA safety rules. He also previously held roles with TTM Technologies, Great Northern Corporation, and Hutchinson Technology. Brian earned an associate's degree in supervisory management from Chippewa Valley Technical College. He lives in Altoona with his wife, Jamie, and has three adult children and two grandchildren.

Fun Facts about Brian:

I'd eat that ... "raw oysters"
Best new thing ... "weed flame thrower"
Bring back ... "the mullet"
Favorite game ... "golf"
Book I'd recommend ... "The OZ Principle"
Hidden talent ... "I'm a mean dancer!"

Wisconsin UTILITY NEWS Digest

Coal plant extension orders draw long-term cost concerns

Gov. Tony Evers is urging the Trump administration to stop using emergency orders to keep aging coal plants operating beyond their planned retirement dates, arguing the policy could cost Wisconsin ratepayers an estimated \$117 million over the next several years. The administration says the extensions help maintain grid reliability and reduce the risk of blackouts, while consumer advocates and environmental groups contend the plants are expensive, unnecessary, and increase electricity costs.

The Citizens Utility Board of Wisconsin has joined legal challenges to the federal orders affecting coal plants in Michigan and Indiana, arguing that costs are being unfairly passed on to utility customers across the Midwest, including parts of Wisconsin. Consumer advocates say long-term utility planning is a better approach than relying on repeated 90-day emergency orders and warn the policy could further increase electric bills that are already rising faster than inflation.

Nieto appointed Chair of NARUC Committee on Consumers and the Public Interest

Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) Commissioner Kristy Nieto was recently appointed to serve as Chair of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) Committee on Consumers and Public Interest. NARUC is a non-profit organization founded in 1889 whose members include the governmental agencies that are engaged in the regulation of utilities and carriers in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The NARUC

State appellate court upholds constitutionality of Act 10

A Wisconsin Court of Appeals has upheld the constitutionality of Act 10, overturning a 2024 Dane County Circuit Court ruling that found the law unconstitutional. The appeals court determined the legal issues had already been addressed in previous state and federal decisions that upheld the law.

The lawsuit argues that Act 10's distinction between public safety employees — who retained collective bargaining rights — and other public employees violates the Wisconsin Constitution's equal protection clause. The unions challenging the law are expected to appeal, sending the case to the Wisconsin Supreme Court, where a liberal majority is expected to hear the case and issue the final ruling.

Committee on Consumers and the Public Interest brings together commissioners from across the nation to focus on the evolving role state commissions play in protecting consumers and upholding the public interest. The Committee fosters dialogue exploring ways to ensure fair and affordable utility service to support informed regulatory decisions, public participation, and improved consumer education and communication.

Lightning suspected in death of tree-trimming contractor

An out-of-state employee working as a subcontractor for We Energies died on July 27 following a suspected lightning strike. The 31-year-old from West Virgin-

ia was performing tree-trimming work in Whitewater. Emergency responders found him suspended approximately 60 feet above the ground; he was pronounced dead at the scene. Investigators found no evidence of contact with energized power lines and noted that storms were moving through the area.

State regulators deny request to reconsider finance requirement for data-center rates

The three-person PSC has declined to reconsider financial-guarantee requirements for certain hyperscale data center customers, effectively ending a June 10 petition from We Energies and developers. The approved rules require customers with credit ratings below A-, including Oracle, to provide cash or lines of credit to protect utility ratepayers. No commissioner moved to reopen the case by the July 9 deadline.

Milwaukee-based We Energies, the state's largest investor-owned utility, said the requirements add cost and reduce flexibility, potentially discouraging investment and job growth in Wisconsin. Oracle, which is challenging the rate structure in court and estimates the change could increase the annual cost by about \$100 million, said it remains committed to paying its full energy share and providing protections against ratepayer risk.

Consumer and environmental advocates welcomed the decision. The Citizens Utility Board of Wisconsin and Clean Wisconsin argued that Oracle's credit profile, debt, and exposure to a possible AI-sector downturn justify strong safeguards. They said weakening collateral requirements could shift unnecessary financial risk to We Energies customers. ●



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Municipal utility customers are maximizing energy savings

Wisconsin's municipal electric utilities had a strong year with Focus on Energy in 2025. Participation data for the year, verified against the independent 2025 evaluation report released in May, shows that public power customers generated more energy savings per project and squeezed more value out of every incentive dollar than the statewide average.

Higher Savings per Project

Residential municipal electric utility customers who completed a Focus on Energy project achieved an average of 7,628 kWh in lifecycle savings per project, the total energy the upgrade or technology saves over its full useful life, compared to 7,417 kWh statewide. Both figures come close to covering a full year of a typical Wisconsin home's electricity use, but the public power number edges ahead, about 11.6 months of coverage versus 11.3 months statewide. The pattern holds up once non-residential programs are folded in as public power customer projects saved an averaged 36,505 lifecycle kWh, enough to cover roughly four and a half years of a typical home's electricity use, compared to 36,089 kWh statewide. Demand savings followed suit, with these projects trimming 0.35 kW on average, more than 7% ahead of the 0.33 kW statewide figure.

Generated savings in 2025 tells a similar story. Across the full portfolio, public power customers' 2025 projects saved enough electricity to power roughly 6,170 homes for the year, compared to about 56,960 homes statewide.

More Energy Saved Per Dollar

The sharpest contrast shows up in the energy saved per dollar spent. Across the full portfolio, every incentive dollar paid to municipal electric utility customers returned roughly 110 kWh of lifecycle savings, compared to about 100 kWh statewide, nearly 10% more value per dollar spent. Residential

programs widen the gap: incentive dollars spent on public power customers returned 69 lifecycle kWh apiece, versus 57 kWh statewide, a 22% difference. The same incentive budget simply went further for these customers than it did for the state as a whole.

Program popularity: similar tastes, different emphasis

The same three offerings topped the participation list both statewide and among municipal electric utility customers: free energy saving product packs, heating and cooling equipment discounts, and smart thermostats. Free packs were a clear fa-

vorite, but played an even bigger role for public power customers, making up about 83% of residential participants in municipal utility territory compared to 77% statewide. Easy, no-cost participation clearly resonates with this group.

Beyond Pack participation, the two groups diverge a bit. Municipal electric utility customers made proportionally less use of the HVAC discount offering, about 10% of residential participants versus 16% statewide. Trade Ally Solutions offerings like heating-and-cooling upgrades and insulation and air sealing, which drew roughly half the participation share in municipal utility territory

that they did statewide. On the flip side, public power customers showed up more often in Focus' new homes program. Residential New Construction participation was more than double the statewide share, and commercial and industrial participation among municipal electric utility customers landed at roughly 1.3 to 2 times the statewide share. This signals a relatively strong engagement given the size of this customer base.

For municipal electric utility customers, the 2025 numbers point to a simple takeaway: Focus on Energy dollars go far in public power territory. Every project completed, and every incentive dollar spent, delivered more energy savings than the statewide average, savings that add up to real energy and cost savings flowing back into public power communities. ●



Public power customers generated more energy savings per project and squeezed more value out of every incentive dollar than the statewide average.

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Mutual Aid Hotline

When you need help, call MEUW – 24 hours a day, seven days a week – for help coordinating mutual aid assistance

1-844-MEUW-911
(1-844-638-9911)

Calendar of Events

T Sept. 8	Monthly Safety Call — 7:15 a.m.
T Sept. 22	Basics of Utility Rate Setting — <i>Mauston</i>
W Sept. 23	Annual Accounting & Customer Service Seminar — <i>Mauston</i>
T Sept. 29	Member Roundtable — <i>Bloomer</i>
W Sept. 30	Member Roundtable — <i>Juneau</i>
Th Oct. 1	Member Roundtable — <i>Hartford</i>
T Oct. 6	Monthly Safety Call — 7:15 a.m.
W Oct. 7	Utility Planning & Risk Management — <i>Mauston</i>
Th Oct. 8	Member Roundtable — <i>Clintonville</i>
Th Oct. 15	Member Roundtable — <i>Richland Center</i>
T Nov. 3	Monthly Safety Call — 7:15 a.m.
T Dec. 1	Monthly Safety Call — 7:15 a.m.
W Dec. 2	Leading Through Coaching — <i>Mauston</i>

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LIVELines Classifieds

MEUW is pleased to promote job openings with its member utilities across Wisconsin. New positions are regularly added to our website — check them out [here](#) or use your smartphone to scan the QR code below. Here are some current opportunities available:

New Lisbon Utilities — [Clerk / Treasurer](#)

New London Utilities — [Journeyman Line Mechanic](#)

City of Stoughton

[Director of Finance / Comptroller](#)

[Utility Automation SCADA Specialist](#)

Jefferson Utilities

[Customer Accounts Clerk](#)

[Billing Clerk](#)

When your utility is hiring, be sure to email the job posting to office@meuw.org.



Did you Know?

This year's summer season may seem a little longer than usual — at least on the calendar. With Memorial Day having marked the "unofficial" start of summer on May 25 and Labor Day landing

on its latest possible date, Sept. 7, the stretch between the two holidays in 2026 is the longest the calendar will allow. The date phenomenon gives us a total of 106 calendar days of traditional summer, compared to just 99 days in 2025. The result is a unique chance to enjoy an extended summer period.



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