

Summer 2008

The Hartselle



Connection

Serving Hartselle's People, Building for Hartselle's Future

Hartselle Residents Asked to Conserve Energy

Over the last two years, we have had several increases from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in the overall price that Hartselle Utilities and ultimately, our customers, pay for electricity. The reasons for these increases include the rising cost of fuel; the drought, which limited TVA's ability to produce electricity through inexpensive hydropower; and growth in the seven-state TVA region, which has caused demand for electricity during certain times of the day to outstrip TVA's generation capacity.

When TVA cannot generate enough of its own power to meet demand, it must buy electricity on the open market at a rate that is much higher than the cost to generate it. TVA is developing additional power generation, but that will not be available for at least four more years. In the meantime, the indicators are that electric rates will continue to increase.

There are steps we can take right now to help fight the problem: if citizens across the Tennessee Valley reduce the amount of electricity we use – especially during peak times of the day – it will reduce the amount of power TVA must purchase on the open market. Hartselle Utilities and other power distributors are working with TVA to develop energy efficiency programs for businesses and consumers.

These programs will focus on three areas: conservation, which is using less energy; efficiency, which is using energy smarter; and avoiding energy use during peak times – generally hot summer afternoons and cold winter mornings – when the demand is highest and power is most expensive to produce.

Long-term, we need to reduce the amount of energy we use during all hours of the day. Initially, our goal is to lower demand for electricity during peak times; this is where our efforts will have the most immediate effect.

We will provide information on energy efficiency programs as they become available. Right now, I'm asking everyone to think about how you use energy. Some of it is common sense – turn off lights when you don't need them, don't keep your home or office cooler than necessary. When you can, shift your energy use away from peak times. For example, don't run the dishwasher or do laundry between 4:00 and 6:30 in the evening; wait until later if possible.

At the Hartselle Utilities office, I have asked our staff to think about how they use energy. Do you really need that light? If so, fine. If not, turn it off.

If you haven't already done so, I also encourage you to complete a free *energy right* Home E-Valuation audit from TVA. This survey can be completed online at www.energyright.com or you can call HU at 773-3340 and we will mail one to you. After you complete the survey you'll receive a detailed report with suggestions on ways to save energy and money.

We are not asking anyone to cut their energy use to the point that you are uncomfortable. Just be wise about how you use your energy. By doing so, you'll save money on your next electric bill, and, in the end, we'll all benefit.

Ferrell Vest
General Manager

Automatic Bank Draft: The Easiest Way To Pay Your Utility Bill

Are you tired of writing a check to Hartselle Utilities each month? By enrolling in our Bank Draft Plan, you will never have to worry about late utility bills again – and it will save you money on postage or trips to Hartselle Utilities.

How does it work? It's simple: the amount of your bill is automatically deducted from your bank account on the day it is due each month. If your due date falls on a weekend, your bill is paid on the Friday before your due date. The transaction will appear on your bank statement as a payment to Hartselle Utilities.

You still receive your utility bill each month as usual, and your due date does not change. The message "Paid by Bank Draft" will appear on your bill.

To enroll in the program, all you need to do is complete an enrollment form and bring it or mail it to HU along with a voided check. It takes about two minutes to enroll, and costs absolutely nothing. Plus, you can cancel at any time with a phone call.

For more information and to request an enrollment form, call HU at 773-3340 or send an email to Customer Service Manager Terri Harris at tharris@hartselleutilities.com.

TVA Fuel Cost Adjustment for July: +1.8%

The FCA affects only the electric portion of your HU bill. It is adjusted quarterly and can be a credit or debit to allow TVA to recover, when necessary, increases in purchased power and fuel-related costs.

The FCA for April was 4.19%. However, cautions HU Accounting and Finance Manager Bob Sittason, average electricity use for the summer is much higher, so the impact of the July FCA will be felt more than the April increase.



Microbiology students from Calhoun Community College ask HU Wastewater Treatment Plant Lead Operator Glenn Byrum questions during a tour of the plant.

Students Tour Wastewater Treatment Plant

In April students from two Microbiology 220 classes taught by Dr. Don Collier at Calhoun Community College toured the HU Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). WWTP Lead Operator Glenn Byrum gave the students an overview of the plant, which treats an average of 2.4 million gallons of wastewater each day.

“We explained to the students how microorganisms – we call them ‘bugs’ – are a key part of our treatment process, and how we work to keep a balance between the different kinds of bugs,” Byrum said. There are three types of bugs that feed on the organic matter in the WWTP’s treatment process: mesophilic, psychrophilic, and thermophilic, he explained to the students. Plant operators must work to keep a good balance between each type of bug, oxygen levels and the amount of solids during processing, Byrum said.

“By showing the students the different processes that wastewater goes through from the time it enters our system as influent until leaves as effluent into the creek, they were able to see and smell the difference in the water during each stage of treatment,” he said.

The students, most of whom are a part of Calhoun Community College’s Nursing Program, were also given a tour of the WWTP lab, where samples from different parts of the plant are analyzed according to regulations specified by ADEM and EPA. Plant operators regularly test for ammonia, TSS (total suspended solids), fecal matter, BODs (biochemical oxygen demand), chlorine, and pH levels.

“I’ve enjoyed speaking to these classes,” Byrum said. “They were very respectful, and asked very good questions.”

Additional student groups are scheduled to tour the WWTP this fall and winter, and HU welcomes classes interested in learning more about wastewater treatment. For more information, call Sewer System Superintendent Robert Wright at 773-5712 or email rwright@hartselleutilities.com.

We Need Your Phone Number

There are times when HU needs to contact customers, either to inform them of scheduled service interruptions or questions regarding an account. For this reason, it is imperative that we have an up-to-date telephone number for you or someone who can contact you in an emergency. Please take a moment to complete the form below and return it with your next HU bill.

NAME: _____ ACCOUNT #: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

If you prefer, you can send an email with the above information to tharris@hartselleutilities.com.

Draft Capital Improvement Plans Presented to HU Board

Over the last year HU has conducted a series of studies of all four departments: electric, natural gas, water and wastewater. The purpose of the studies was to review and assess the current state of each system, and to catalog repairs and improvements needed.

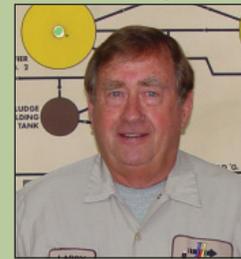
HU staff has used the results of these studies to develop a five-year Capital Improvements Plan for each system.

“I asked the staff to create a list of projects for each system that will allow us to make needed improvements and come into compliance with federal and state regulations,” explained HU General Manager Ferrell Vest. “A key factor is that the project list and time frame for completing each project must be within our available resources.”

The result is a living document that can be reviewed annually to determine whether goals have been met and if circumstances warrant changing the plan, Vest said.

The CIP is currently being reviewed by the HU Board.

Staff Changes at WWTP



Narmore

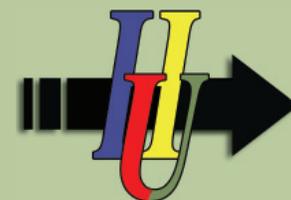


Byrum

Larry Narmore is retiring August 1, after 12 years as the chief operator of HU’s Wastewater Treatment Plant. Glenn Byrum, currently WWTP lead operator, will be the new chief operator.

Based on the volume of wastewater treated at HU’s WWTP, the chief operator is required to hold an Alabama Grade III Certified Wastewater Operator license. Byrum recently received his Class IV license.

“This is going to be a big job to step up to,” Byrum said. “It is going to be the biggest challenge that I’ve had in my career. I can’t wait.”



Hartselle Utilities

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