

CONNECTIONS



WINTER 2019

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UTILITIES

CEO Message



Dear Friends:
It's hard to believe that 2019 will soon be in the history books. As I reflect back, I am incredibly proud of the men and women who represent New Braunfels Utilities (NBU) and the accomplishments made this past year. More than \$77 million was invested in capital improvement projects to ensure resiliency of vital infrastructure that delivers essential services to our community. We celebrated the ground-breaking of an Aquifer Storage Recovery well field that will help store water for use in

times of drought, and brought the Trinity Treatment Plant online, that supplies an additional 3.74 million gallons of water to the public water supply system. To increase electric reliability, NBU remains focused on continuing to upgrade electric conductors and replacing aging utility poles and underground cable. Indeed, much has been accomplished!

As you read through this issue of NBU Connections, you will find helpful winter conservation tips, learn about NBU's Utility Bill Assistance Program, understand payment options, and learn more about why water and wastewater rate increases were necessary. I hope you enjoy meeting Kristin Martinez and Nick Hidalgo and learning about their roles at NBU. Lastly, it is time to register for the 2020 NBU Kinderschuhe 5K Run/Walk! It is a great way to spend time with friends and family and help support our community's children.

I look forward with anticipation to the new year and the beginning of a new decade. Much has been accomplished, and much is yet to be accomplished. On behalf the NBU Board of Trustees and employees, I wish you joy, peace, and a very prosperous new year!

Sincerely,

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NBU MAIN OFFICE

263 Main Plaza, New Braunfels, TX 78130

NBU SERVICE CENTER

355 FM 306, New Braunfels, TX 78130

OPERATING HOURS

Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
(Main Office and Service Center)

After Hours, Weekends, and Holidays
for OUTAGES OR SERVICE ISSUES

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CUSTOMER SERVICE

☎ 830.629.8400

☎ 866.629.8400 – toll free

☎ 830.606.2074 – metro

✉ customerservice@nbutexas.com

(Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

🌐 nbutexas.com

A product of NBU: Content contributors, Melissa C. Krause, and Pam Quidley with contributions from Alice Wightman, freelance writer with the New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung. **Contributing New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung Staff:** Page Designer, Joanna Bartonek. **Advertising,** Robin Torres. **Ad Creative,** Courtney Lykins, Charlene Hewitt, and Joanna Bartonek. **Copy Editing,** Melissa C. Krause and Pam Quidley of NBU. **Printed by** New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung.

Helping Others Through the NBU Utility Bill Assistance Program

When customers are unable to pay their utility bill, chances are, they are experiencing financial hardship. At times, the next step may be homelessness, or not having anything to eat.

In 2003 the NBU Board of Trustees adopted the Utility Bill Assistance Program and set aside funds to help customers affected by job loss, accidents, medical issues, death, disability, advancing age, and even flooding.

“What is unique about this program is that it is not based on income,” said Wendy Thompson, NBU Customer Service Manager. “It is based on NBU’s defined criteria; hardship.”

The NBU Customer Service staff often recognize a need when customers ask for extensions or payment arrangements. “Customer Service staff are trained to listen carefully to these delicate situations,” said Paula Molina, Assistant Manager of the NBU Customer Service Department.

“Often people see assistance as a handout and don’t feel good about it.”

With the Utility Bill Assistance Program, customers are referred to the New Braunfels Food Bank, who is contracted



Community is what matters.

Utility Bill Assistance

Did you know you can help customers in our community who are experiencing extreme hardship and are in financial need? To learn more about qualifications or to help, visit nbutexas.com/billassist or call 830.327.6000.

with NBU to administer the program. In addition to the administering the NBU Utility Bill Assistance Program, the New Braunfels Food Bank offers many other services that assist our community.

Applicants must qualify for the NBU Bill Assistance program by making an appointment to discuss their needs with a representative of the New Braunfels Food Bank, said Molina.

Applicants who qualify, receive a voucher as payment or partial payment for utility services. No money is exchanged.

“Everyone knows life happens,” said Molina. “Sometimes people just need a little help to get through a rough period.”

Anyone can make a donation to the program through the New Braunfels Food Bank, simply visit nbutexas.com/billassist.

ABOUT THE NBU COVER: Anita Hernandez shops for necessities at the New Braunfels Food Bank Pantry.

“My only income comes from my monthly social security checks. The NBU Utility Bill Assistance program was such a help to me for several months. I am grateful that there are people in our community who want to help people.”

Photo taken by Daniel Rosa.

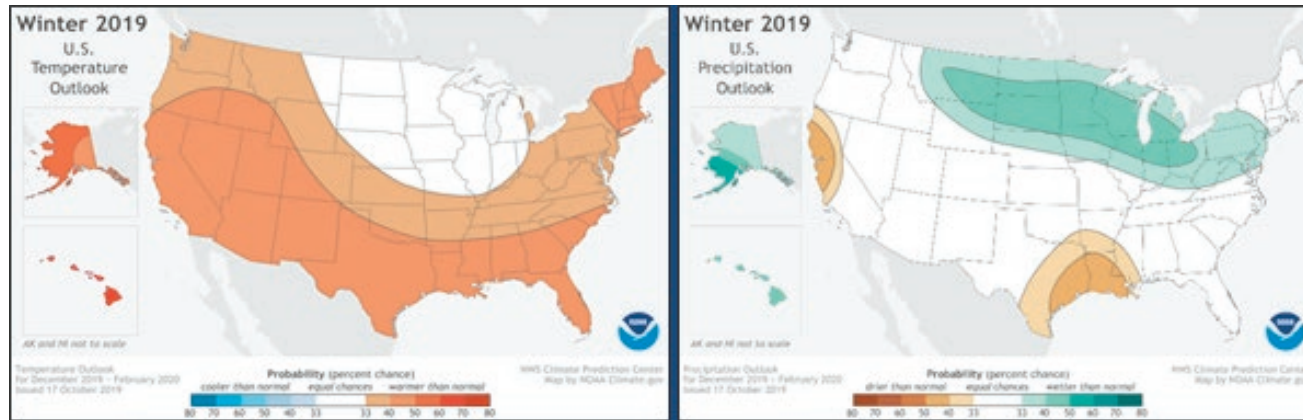


Preparing for Winter Weather is What Matters

New Braunfels Utilities (NBU) customers were asked to conserve energy on “Energy Action Days,” to help reduce strain on the Texas electric grid during summer’s peak demand. As we approach colder temperatures, New Braunfels Utilities is working with the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) to meet the energy needs of our customers. ERCOT is the operator of the electric grid that serves 90 percent of the Texas load.

“ERCOT has studied a range of scenarios and potential risks for the winter season and anticipates that there will be sufficient installed electric generation to meet the needs of customers across Texas,” said Rebekah Crouch, Power Supply Manager. “ERCOT released their final Seasonal Assessment of Resource Adequacy report for this winter on November 7, 2019, which shows more than 82,000 MWs of generation expected to be available this winter to meet forecasted peak demand of 62,257 MWs.”

The winter weather outlook, released by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), is expected to be



warmer and drier than an average winter for New Braunfels. Keep in mind that despite a mild winter expectation, there is still a possibility of extreme cold temperatures occurring; however, they are less likely to be prolonged.

There are a few simple conservation steps customers can take to stay warm, and keep energy usage low during the winter months.

- Set the thermostat to 68 degrees or lower. For every degree warmer than 68, the Environmental Protection Agency cites a three to seven percent increase in energy use.
- Check all doors and windows in the home

and eliminate cold drafts with additional weather stripping or silicone caulking.

- Remember to set ceiling fans to run counter-clockwise, which will redistribute the warm air that has risen to the ceiling.
- Use space heaters sparingly, as they are a common cause for energy usage to spike in the cooler months.

These small steps can help make a big difference. For more helpful tips, contact the NBU Environmental Affairs department at 830.608.8925, or visit nbutexas.com/conservation/assessments to schedule a free home energy performance assessment.

Smart energy conservation is what matters.

Below are some simple steps you can take to help your household save energy – and money – during the winter months. VISIT Nbutexas.com/conservation TO USE OUR ONLINE ASSESSMENT TOOL OR TO SCHEDULE A FREE ENERGY ASSESSMENT.



Get a Little Help from the Sun

- Let the sun provide free heat by opening the curtains on any south-facing windows during daylight hours.
- At night, close the curtains to reduce cold escaping from the window panes.



Seal Up Your Windows

- Tape up clear plastic sheets to the inside of your window frames or buy a DIY window sealing kit available at most hardware stores.
- Heavy drapes or shades will help reduce the chill and catch any drafts.



Adjust the Thermostat

- Set your thermostat to as low a temperature as you can comfortably tolerate. 68° is a good guideline during times at which occupants are at home and awake.
- Install a smart thermostat to automatically change the temperature based on time of day and occupancy.



Make the Most of Your Fireplace

- Unless a fire is burning, keep the damper closed. An open damper can allow warm air from inside the house to escape right out the chimney.
- When the fireplace is in use, ensure proper ventilation by opening the dampers at the bottom of the fire box (or open the nearest window approximately one inch) and close any doors. Maximize your savings by setting the thermostat to 50 or 55°.
- Plug and seal the chimney flue of any unused fireplace.
- Install a heat-exchange system to help circulate warm air from the fireplace throughout the room; install tempered glass on the door of your fireplace.
- C-shaped metal grates will draw cold air into the fireplace and move heated air back out into the room.
- Caulk any gaps around the fireplace hearth.



Locate and Eliminate Leaks

- Cold air can invade your home through gaps or holes around plumbing, recessed lighting, chimneys, exhaust vents, and behind cupboards and closets. Locate the leaks and seal them up.
- Caulk or weather stripping will seal up gaps around doors and windows.



Adjust Your Water Heater

- The recommended temperature is 120°.



Keep Your AC/Heating System Running Efficiently

- Replace the filters on furnaces or heat pumps once a month – or more often if they get dirty.
- Regularly clean the flue on all wood or pellet-burning heaters. Remove carbon buildup by scrubbing the inside of the heater with a wire brush.



Learn more at nbutexas.com/conservation. Or contact the Environmental Affairs at 830.608.8925.



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Adding Vital Infrastructure is What Matters

The New Braunfels community is thriving and growing, and to meet essential needs, new infrastructure and capital improvement projects are underway.

“To meet the current demands, New Braunfels Utilities (NBU) must secure new water supplies, build new water and wastewater projects, and add system capacity,” said NBU CEO, Ian Taylor. “These projects require adjustments to water and wastewater rates.”

New rates for water and wastewater services went into effect November 1, 2019, for NBU customers. Even with the adjustments, NBU rates are very competitive. “New Braunfels Utilities’ rates are 26 percent lower than the average utilities in our region,” added Taylor.

Before increasing rates, NBU cut \$8.5 million from its budget and identified \$21.4 million in new revenue from grants and updated fees on land development.

The rate increases are essential to maintain NBU’s excellent bond rating, and to

ensure water and wastewater rates remain affordable. For customers who primarily rely on water to meet their essential domestic purposes, and do not use water for irrigation, NBU worked to ensure this population would experience minimal impact to their bill. The chart on the next page demonstrates the rate structure, and how NBU compares regionally.

Rates were designed to shift costs to what is driving the need for new supplies, which is generally commercial and residential irrigation use.

New Braunfels Utilities introduced higher usage charges for peak season use (June – September), when demand is greatest. These are stepped down during off-peak months (October – May). Charges are based on each 1,000 gallons used.

“The basic customer charge for those with standard residential meters will stay the same at \$12.80 per month,” said Dawn Schriewer, NBU CFO. This user category



will see an increase of about \$2.40 during peak season use (June – September).

Monthly residential wastewater charges increased by \$3.19, from \$15.31 to \$18.50, while the volume charge rose by \$0.25, from \$4.10 to \$4.35.

New Braunfels Utilities offers free in-home and commercial on-site assessments to its customers who want to reduce overall water use. To schedule an appointment, call 830.608.8925.

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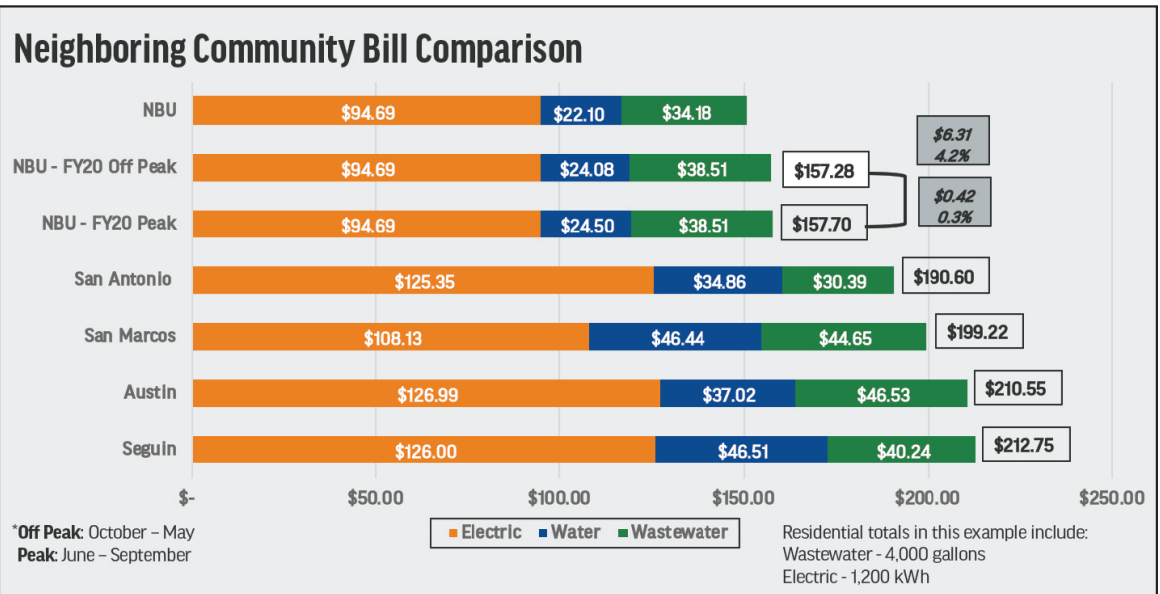
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- \$195 (Family up to 6)

*Add additional members for additional \$25 per person

Residential Total Bill Impact No Irrigation/ Domestic Use Only - 6,000 Gallons



Using Advanced Technology to Conserve

The New Braunfels Utilities Strategic Water System Management Satellite Leak Detection Program detected 189 underground water leaks in the first three quarters of fiscal year 2019, compared to a total of 178 leaks in fiscal years 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 combined.

That totaled 42,311,837 gallons of water saved, amounting to \$214,627 in avoided costs.

With the installation of smart meters, 37,976 leaks were detected over 24 months, reducing the mean time to repair the leaks from 45 days to 13 days. The average leak

is two gallons per hour, or 48 Gallons Per Day (GPD).

When you do the math: 45 – 13 = 32 days X 48 GPD = 1,536 gallons/leak saved on average. 37,976 leaks x 1,536 gal/leak = 58,331,136 gallons saved. That is \$301,000 in total customer savings!

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Convenient Payment Options

PAYING YOUR UTILITY BILL HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER.

Our goal is to make paying your New Braunfels Utilities (NBU) bill as easy, convenient, and secure as possible. We offer a variety of payment methods.

Payments can be made at our downtown office located at **263 Main Plaza**, or by calling our automated phone payment service at **1.844.863.7360** when paying with Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or E-check. We also offer Western Union Convenience Pay at several area stores including HEB, Pit Stop Food Mart, and ACE Cash Express. You are also welcome to call our Main Office at **830.629.8400** on any business day, Monday-Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to pay by Visa, MasterCard, or Discover.

WAYS TO PAY

- ▶ CASH
- ▶ CHECK
- ▶ MONEY ORDER
- ▶ CREDIT CARD (VISA, MASTERCARD, OR DISCOVER)
- ▶ AUTOMATIC BANK DRAFT OR
- ▶ ON-LINE BILL PAYMENT

PAYMENT METHODS

ACH

ACH (Automated Clearing House) electronic payments are made to or from your account using your checking account information.

Auto-Draft

The Auto-Draft payment option is managed by NBU and allows customers to have their NBU bill automatically deducted from a checking or savings account.

nbutexas.com/Residential/Additional-Services-and-Information/Auto-Draft-Budget-Billing

Direct Mail to NBU

Customers may mail payments directly to NBU by sending it in a self-addressed envelope to New Braunfels Utilities, P.O. Box 660, San Antonio, TX 78293-0660 or 263 Main Plaza, New Braunfels, TX 78130.

Drive-Through

You can pay at the drive-through, located at 263 Main Plaza between our Main office and Naegelin's Bakery.

IVR

IVR (Interactive Voice Response) allows customers to pay using a phone. Either a mobile phone or a landline can be used for transacting through the IVR. Pay 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week by calling our automated phone payment service. Simply call 844.863.7360 to make your payment by Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or E-check.

In Person

Pay in person at the front counter of our Main Office, on any business day, Monday-Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., conveniently located in Downtown New Braunfels at 263 Main Plaza.

Lockbox

Lockbox allows payment by directing customers to a post office box instead of going directly to NBU. New Braunfels Utilities retrieves, processes, and applies payment to the customer account. Simply detach your payment stub from your utility bill and include it along with your check or money order. Mail payments to: New Braunfels Utilities, P.O. Box 660, San Antonio, TX 78293-0660

Night Drop

The NBU night depository is located at 263 Main Plaza between our Main office and Naegelin's Bakery. (no cash payments accepted in the night depository).

Telephone

You can call our Main Office at 830.629.8400 on any business day, Monday-Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to pay by Visa, MasterCard, or Discover.

Western Union

You can choose to use Western Union Convenience Pay Service at participating area stores including HEB, Pit Stop Food Mart, and ACE Cash Express. All you need is your payment stub from your NBU bill and your payment can be made with a check, cash, or money order. Some locations are cash only.

Online

Make a payment from your checking or savings, or with Visa, MasterCard, and Discover. Simply register your account with Customer Connect, where you will also be able to view your account information and make a payment.

nbutexas.com

ENJOY THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS BY REGISTERING YOUR ACCOUNT ONLINE...

Auto-Pay

The Auto-Pay payment option is managed by a third-party Merchant Card Service Provider under contract with NBU and allows customers to have their NBU bill automatically deducted from a checking, savings, or credit card accounts.

Pay-by-Text

Pay-by-Text is a means of paying your bill via a text message sent from a mobile phone. When charges are due, a text message is sent to the registered customer. To pay an invoice via text, the customer will reply to the invoice message and verify payment authorization. Standard SMS charges are the customers responsibility.

Learn more at: nbutexas.com/Residential/Payment-Options.

One-time payment

After making a one-time payment from the NBU payment portal, you will receive an email confirmation of the transaction but no payment information is saved, and you will not be able to access any account history.

Learn more at: nbutexas.com/Residential/Payment-Options.

Email

Mobile Express is an easy and convenient way to securely view your utility bill online. You also have the option to pay your bill from your mobile device or computer, and to sign up for bill reminders.

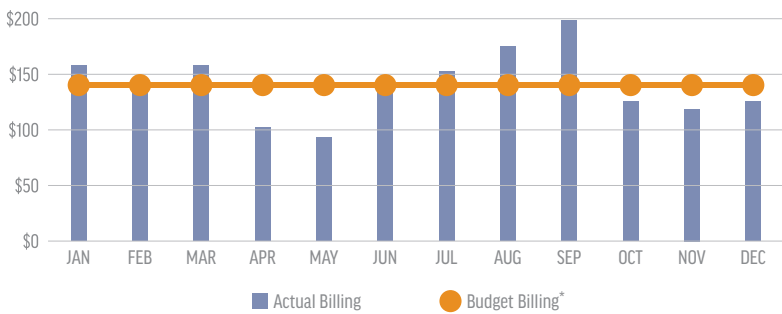
Learn more at: nbutexas.com/Residential/Payment-Options.

BUDGET BILLING

To provide customers with a means of budgeting for utility costs, NBU offers a budget billing program that allows monthly bills to be levelized. Participation in this program is subject to certain conditions.

Learn more at: nbutexas.com/Home/Budget-Billing.

Budget Billing Example



(Numbers are for example only and are not intended to represent actual figures.)

UTILITY BILL ASSISTANCE

The NBU Utility Bill Assistance Program is designed to aid customers who are experiencing extreme hardship and financial need. The New Braunfels Food Bank manages the program for NBU and has an application process. To learn more about this program and ways to assist NBU in this effort, visit nbutexas.com/billassist, or call the New Braunfels Food Bank directly at **830.327.6000**.



nbutexas.com



The Headwaters at the Comal: A Year in Review

If you are driving by the Headwaters at the Comal, at the corner of Klingemann and Lakeview Boulevard, it is easy to miss the transformation taking place. The site is coming to life, literally and figuratively.

The native savanna prairie installation and the improvements along the very first spring run of the Comal River have begun to mature and flourish. The native grasses, wildflowers, and trees are attracting pollinators of many varieties, birds, other small mammals, nesting turtles and, of course, the neighborhood deer! The Headwaters at the Comal staff and volunteers have been busy inhabiting the site as well providing a host of informational programs on a wide spectrum of topics for donors, members, and visitors of all ages to learn, have fun, and connect with nature and our cultural history.

The year began with the continuation of the very exciting “Big Dig”, which involved a researched excavation of 90 cubic meters of soil in three different areas on the grounds, led by an expert team of archaeologists, and included extensive outreach and education focused on the excavation. Volunteers, Graduate students from Texas State University and University of Texas at San Antonio, provided support cleaning artifacts, giving tours, and provided support to staff. The archaeologists found tens of thousands of different materials including very large bison teeth, shells, and rabdotus; tools and spear points from many time periods, and evidence of occupation of the site throughout human contact in this area as evidenced by layers of burned rock middens. A full report of the findings will be available in early 2020.



During the extensive Archaeology outreach, which was attended by nearly 1,000 people, the Headwaters at the Comal hosted multiple private tours, presentations, group meetings, and picnics, thanks to a host of partner organizations sharing their expertise with guests. Experts provided talks on bats, birds, bees, and dragonflies, native plants, aquatic species found in the Comal Springs, water conservation, and recycling – to name a few. Yoga classes, nature walks, and a successful youth “SEAM” or science, engineering, art, and math, series were hosted throughout the year.

Closing the year brought unique opportunities which included a partnership with New Braunfels Utilities and Hydro Nova, Inc., to host a tour for a delegation from the Ministries of Water and Economics of Uganda. Participants from across the country attended the One Water Summit

where they were treated to a field trip of the site. Hosting the second annual Earth Day celebration on Saturday, April 20, proved to be a huge success with more than 450 participants who took advantage of native tree and plant giveaways as they visited many partner organization booths that provided activities and information.

Come enjoy a beautiful piece of nature, right here - near downtown New Braunfels, and breathe in the clean, refreshing smells of the Comal Springs, the heart and soul of New Braunfels and a legacy restoration project just beginning. Follow the Headwaters at the Comal on Facebook and Instagram.

For additional information, visit www.headwatersatthecomal.com, or call 830. 608.8937.

Backflow Prevention Protects Water Supply

New Braunfels Utilities (NBU) is required by the Safe Drinking Water Act, enacted in 1974, to keep contaminants out of public water supplies.

To that end, NBU enforces rules and practices adopted by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality that were designed to keep customers connected to public water mains from accidentally polluting the water supply.

“All NBU service lines — hundreds of miles of pipelines, pumps, and storage tanks — are connected and pressurized,” said James Garvin, administrator of the Cross-Connection Control and Backflow Prevention Program. “It is a closed-loop.”

“As an NBU water customer, you are connected to NBU service lines,” said Garvin. “It is like having a straw into the water supply.”

Under certain circumstances, accidental contamination can occur at any physical entry point to your drinking-water line.

“If someone is treating roses with a pesticide through a sprayer and a water main breaks nearby, that pesticide can be drawn back into your household’s water lines,” said Garvin. “It has the potential to spread into the public water system.”

The most common entry point is a garden hose, but others include water-using systems inside and outside the household: irrigation systems, water lines to swimming pools, hot tubs, and such water features as fountains and ponds. Water softeners, water filtration systems, and toilets are additional points of entry.

“These rules apply to all NBU water customers,” said Garvin. New construction is required to have hose bibb vacuum breakers; however, “do-it-yourselfers” often don’t know about them.

Garvin’s department at NBU conducts free inspections for any NBU customer. “Customers can call for an inspection,” said Garvin. “We will work with customers to determine which backflow devices they need.”



Safe water is what matters.

Cross-connection or backflow can contaminate our water supply and put the community at risk. We each have a responsibility to help reduce the chance of contamination.

For more information about the NBU Cross-Connection Control Program, call 830.608.8880 or visit nbutexas.com/Residential/Backflow-Prevention-Info.

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Community Events Schedule

Make plans to be a part of NBU Kinderschuhe 2020! To check for updates on other community events throughout the winter season, visit <http://www.nbutexas.com/Conservation/Environmental-Affairs-Events>.

January

- 1 New Year's Day: NBU Offices Closed
- 20 Martin Luther King Day: NBU Offices Closed

February

- 17 President's Day: NBU Offices Closed

March

- 7 NBU Kinderschuhe 5K Run/Walk @ Gruene Hall • 7:30 a.m. – Outdoor fundraiser whose proceeds buy shoes for low-income school children 1281 Gruene Road, New Braunfels, TX 78130 Preregister online at nbutexas.com/5k \$25/person, \$30 on race day

Proper disposal is what matters.

Pouring used cooking oil and grease down a sink can be unhealthy and costly. When fats, oils and grease (FOG) are released into the sewer lines, they can seriously degrade the collection system's ability to remove waste. They may also lead to costly home plumbing repairs.

Prevent collection system breakdown and costly outages or repairs by following these simple steps when disposing of fats, oils and grease. Together, we can all make a difference.

Do:

- Dispose of grease in a covered container
- Use strainers to prevent food from going down the drain
- Prewash dishes with cold water before loading dishwasher

Don't:

- Pour oil or grease down your drain
- Dispose of food scraps down the drain
- Use hot water to rinse grease from pots and pans

Receive a free grease collection bag at the NBU Main Office at 263 Main Plaza.

For more information, visit nbutexas.com/fog or call 830.608.8900.



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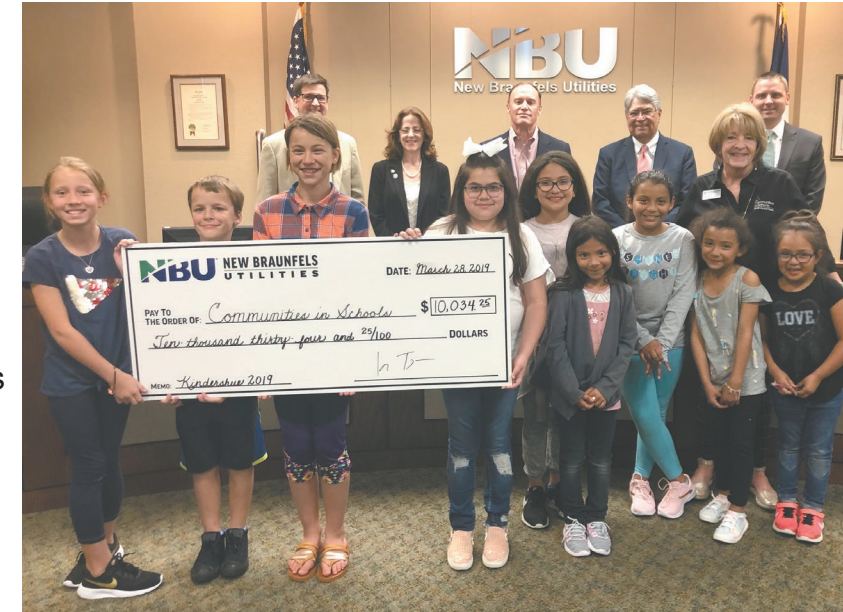
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- ▶ Construction Administration

Kinderschuhe 5/K Walk Run

March 7, 2020, is the 16th annual Kinderschuhe 5K Run/Walk, a family-oriented outdoor activity that makes a difference in the lives of hundreds of children.

Kinderschuhe means “children’s shoes” in German. Proceeds from registration fees, and event sponsorships, are dedicated to the nonprofit, Communities in Schools of South Central Texas, which buys shoes for children in need.

New Braunfels Utilities (NBU) holds this event every year in historic Gruene, Texas, where participants race to the finish line or take a leisurely stroll to see the sights. “This is one of our favorite volunteer activities,” said NBU CEO, Ian Taylor. New Braunfels Utilities has



donated approximately \$92,000 toward the program since 2004. More than 500 people of all ages participated in 2019.

“There is every level of competition you could look for in a 5K,” said Taylor. “Door prizes, sausage wraps, and trophies for competitive runners are all part of this popular event.”

Register today for the 2020 Kinderschuhe at nbutexas.com/5k.

2020 Census

Every ten years the U.S. Constitution requires a count of America’s population — called a census. This spring the United States will conduct its 24th decennial census throughout all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other island territories. Everyone living here is required to participate in the 2020 Census.

For the first time people can respond online — by smartphone, tablet or computer — as well as by mail. Confidential by law, information collected by the census is vital to the New Braunfels community.

“Population counts are used to plan for local needs, such as schools, housing, and infrastructure,” said Melissa C. Krause, New Braunfels Utilities’ Director of Communications and External Affairs.

Most important, this count determines how many representatives Texas has in Congress and boundaries of Congressional and state legislative districts. Billions of dollars in federal aid to states and communities are decided by this data.

“We encourage everyone to participate; so we can get a complete count,” said Krause.

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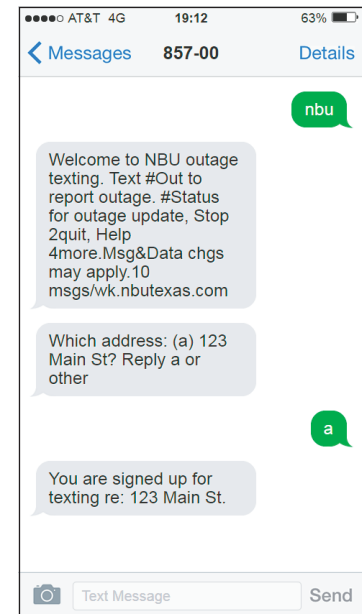
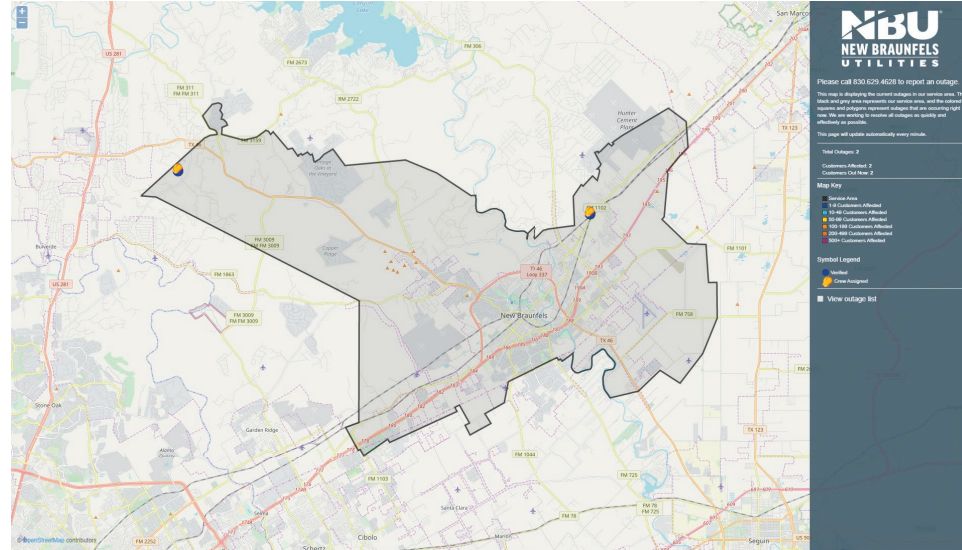
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During a Power Outage - Being Informed is What Matters

Whether it is lighting the Christmas tree, preparing a meal, or just getting ready for a hot shower, it is comforting to know that at the push of a button or a flip of the switch, the power will be there to make things work. However, there are times when the power is temporarily unavailable. New Braunfels Utilities understands the importance of keeping its customers informed during those times, and offers customers access to the outage viewer map and a texting notification service, making it easy to stay informed.

be affected, and if crews are actively working in the area. To ensure privacy, the level of zoom is restricted to show only a high-level area. Once power is restored, the icons are removed from the outage viewer map.



The outage viewer map is linked to NBU's Outage Management System. Once an outage is confirmed and verified by NBU's Control Center operators, the map is updated with icons to indicate the location of the outage, how many customers may

Customers are encouraged to enroll in text notifications service by texting "NBU" to 85700. When the phone number is correctly linked to the customer account, the customer will receive a message asking to confirm the address. If the phone number being used is not associated with an account, the customer will need to call customer service at 830.629.8400 during business hours, or 830.629.4628 after-hours, to update their phone number. Once enrolled, text **#out** to report an outage, **#status** to receive an update for an existing outage, or **stop** to quit receiving messages.

There are a variety of ways NBU receives outage notifications:

- Electric meters will send a message that it has lost power;
- Customers may call 830.629.4628 to report an outage;
- Customers may text #out to 85700;
- Customers may notify the NBU Control Center at 830.629.4628.

Our teens are drowning in stress, anxiety, and depression.

SAVE A LIFE

THE OPPORTUNITY

Lifeguards funding assists non-profits that provide suicide prevention programs to lower the number of teens experiencing depression, self-harm, and suicidal thoughts and actions. Join concerned people, area non-profits, McKenna Foundation, and the New Braunfels Community Foundation in addressing this teen suicide crisis in Comal County. Will you be a lifeguard?

DONATE & LEARN MORE: [LIFEGUARDSFUND.ORG](https://lifeguardsfund.org)

Employee Spotlight



NICK HIDALGO
Control Center Operator II

New Braunfels Utilities provides all three services essential to modern living: electricity, water, and wastewater.

Its complex operations are closely monitored in the Systems Control Center, in which Nick Hidalgo as a Control Center Operator II, spends 12 hours a day in front of a wall of computer monitors.

His job is to make sure the hundreds of miles of electrical distribution lines, water mains, and sewer pipes are working properly, along with electrical substations, treatment plants, storage tanks, lift stations, and well fields that are connected in each separate network. "We have extensive training on all three networks," said Hidalgo, who has worked in this demanding job for more than seven years.

Hidalgo describes it like being a traffic controller, because "everything flows through us."

"When there is an outage, I know I can get a crew out there quickly," said Hidalgo. "And I feel a lot of satisfaction about that."



KRISTIN MARTINEZ
Resource Conservation Representative

Kristin Martinez sees her job as an educator. A Resource Conservation Representative, she advises people on how to save water and electricity through on-site assessments offered for free to customers of New Braunfels Utilities.

"When you know better, you do better," she says, quoting one of Oprah Winfrey's favorite phrases.

Martinez came to the job through her community work and the stewardship she showed with her large family. "We are mindful of the water we use, and how much electricity we use. We have a big footprint," she said. "I think it is our job to reduce that - at least a little bit."

A certified Master Naturalist, Martinez volunteers with the Headwaters of the Comal with its children's programs and with the NBU SAFEhaven program. In her spare time, she coaches children's soccer and is active in her church.

Martinez's favorite project is the yearly Earth Day Celebration, in which NBU partners with Westside Community Center to organize an environmentally-oriented festival for families. "We teach the little ones, so they can 'know better, do better' too," said Martinez. "After all, they are tomorrow's community."



Participants who register by February 27, 2020 are guaranteed a 2020 Kinderschuhe T-Shirt.

All proceeds are dedicated to Communities in Schools, to help purchase shoes for children in need.

Registration: 7:30 a.m.
5K Run/Walk Start: 8:30 a.m.
Kids' 1K Fun Run Start: 9:30 a.m.

Pre-Register - By February 27, 2020: \$25
Day-Of Registration: \$35
Kids' Fun Run: Free

Be a part of the Kinderschuhe Corporate Challenge!

- Only five participants needed to qualify
- Teams will be entered into a drawing for a \$100 gift card
- Find out more at NBU5k.com

REGISTER ONLINE AT NBU5K.COM OR ATHLETEGUILD.COM.

BENEFITING:



PRESENTED BY:

