

THE VPU QUARTERLY

a newsletter published by Virginia Public Utilities

October 2021

The office will be closed on the following dates:

November 11th
November 25th & 26th
December 23rd at noon
December 24th
December 30th at noon
December 31st

VPU — QUICK NOTES

KNOW THE SMELL OF NATURAL GAS—BE SAFE!

If there is a faint smell of natural gas, call VPU at 218-748-7540.

If in doubt, leave the building immediately & call 9-1-1.

STREET LIGHT OUT?

If you notice a street light that is burnt out or flickering, please call VPU at 748-7540 so that we may get it fixed and keep our streets bright!

Before You Dig,

Contact Gopher State One Call

Dial 8-1-1 or 800-252-1166 or www.gopherstateonecall.org

CHECK YOUR WALL PATCHES

If you have steam heat in your home, or there is active/hot steam in the service line to your home...

Periodically check the wall patch where the steam enters your building for leaks.

If you have a vacant property please check property often, as damage can occur quickly...

Call 748-7540 with questions.



Not Converted?? It May Be a Cold Winter!!



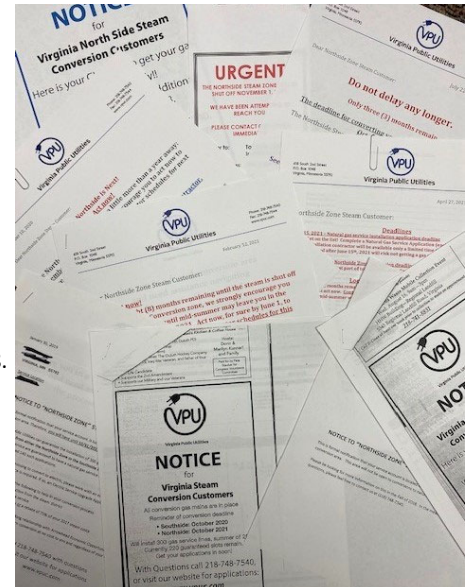
As the Utility approaches the Northside steam conversion deadline, an undercurrent of resistance has begun stirring that needs to be nipped in the bud right away. So, putting it as straight-forward as possible, the Utility will be shutting off the Northside steam system come early November. The people on the Southside can attest that the steam will go off. Last year several people literally did get “Left in the Cold,” and some contractors had to scramble to provide temporary heat. Utility management and its Commission set the October 31, 2021 steam conversion deadline nearly four years ago, knowing that to let it go any longer would cost millions of dollars each year. We cannot afford to miss these dates.

Despite the fact that we have made phone calls and have sent notice after notice, we still have a handful of Northside customers who do not appear to be making progress toward getting converted.

In September, we completed a fifth and final calling campaign to determine exactly who is where in the process. For the most part, these people are so late in the process that it is unlikely they'll get the work completed in time for the shutdown. That said, they may have to find less desirable ways of keeping their house warm.

We began this steam conversion process in December of 2017, and we hit the ground running in the spring of 2018. Many homeowners jumped at the opportunity and exited right away, and for them we are grateful. But there are those who, for whatever reason, did not get around to it. We started our calling program in January of this year, and every other month, we called. Between calling campaigns, we sent notices, placed newspaper ads, and hung doorhangers. Yes, we've heard from homeowners indicating that, at this late date, they are struggling to get contractors to bid their conversion project, and when they do, they complain that the contractors are taking advantage of the situation. These concerns are real, and I can empathize with those who bring them. But through it all I am tempted to point out that this likely would not have happened had they not waited until the last minute.

We will be monitoring the situation from now until October 31, but we will not be backing off from the October 31st date because the remaining 5,000 customers of this Utility will not be happy to carry the roughly \$2 million cost of operating the Northside steam system for some 30 customers.

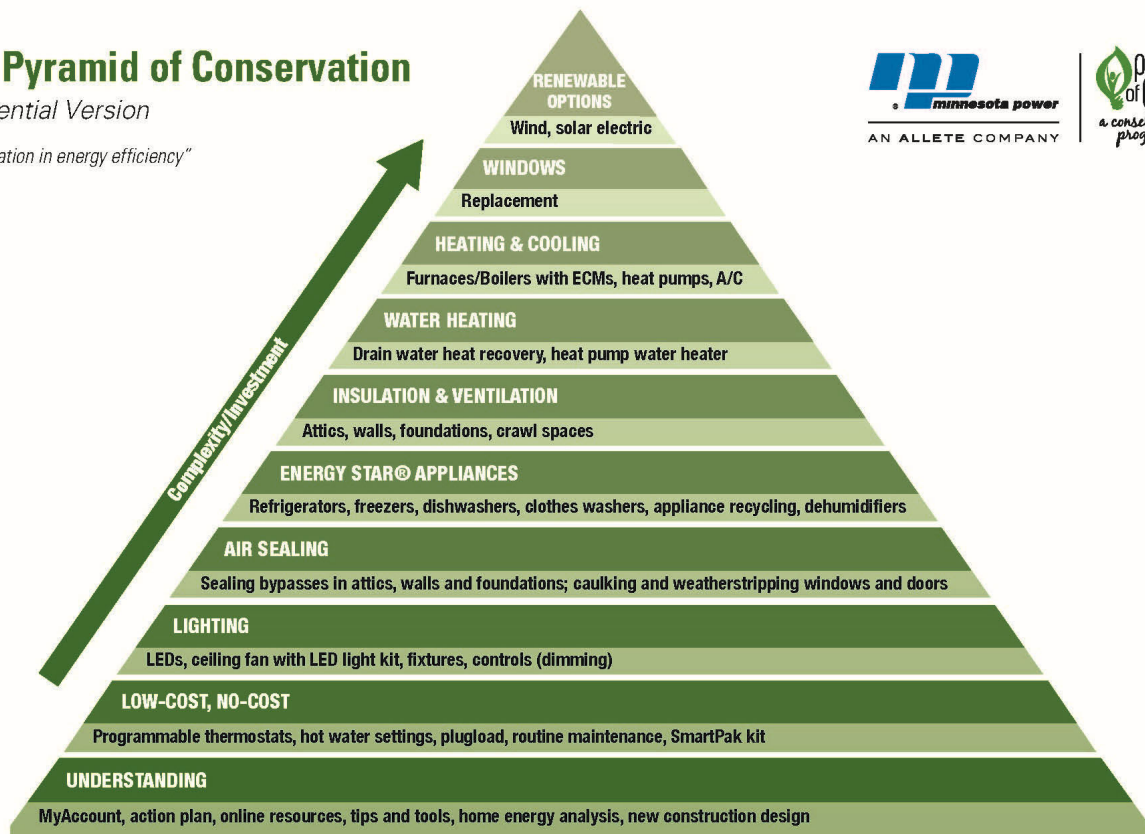


Don't Be Left Out In the Cold !

The Pyramid of Conservation

Residential Version

"A foundation in energy efficiency"



www.mnpower.com/EnergyConservation

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Conservation—where do I begin?

The choice to be more energy efficient may be clear, but the starting point can be more difficult to determine. The Pyramid of Conservation is designed to help you prioritize steps and develop an action plan that's right for you. By establishing a foundation in energy efficiency and gaining a better understanding about how you use energy, you can more effectively work your way up the pyramid.

Residential Programs

Rebates for Energy-Efficient Products – Access rebates for installing energy-saving products, such as those mentioned below, in your home.

- ENERGY STAR Appliances
- LED Lighting
- Central Air Conditioning (CAC)
- New Forced-Air Furnace with Electronically Commutated Motor (ECM)
- ECM Furnace and CAC Combo
- Mini Split Air Source Heat Pumps
- Programmable Thermostat
- High Efficiency Water Heater

Commercial Energy Services

Work with our Utility Conservation improvement program to maximize energy efficiency in your business. Energy specialists are eager to assist with recommendations to cut energy costs, prioritize economically viable projects, and maximize local rebate opportunities. All for free. Commercial conservation services can be tailored to any size business, from a small retail location to a multi-facility campus. Contact our local utility representative at:

Frontier Energy
(651) 341-7975 or FrontierEnergy.com