



## Thanks to Our Good Neighbor of the Month

Thanks to Axiom for supporting the John Alfred & Oscar Johnson Memorial/ BPU Good Neighbor Fund!

The Good Neighbor Fund, held at the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation, assists our customers who pay on a regular basis, receive no Social Services utility help and who run into a hardship that prevents them from paying BPU bills.

Customers on HEAP, food stamps or Social Security may qualify. Anyone with a good payment record may be eligible. All income levels qualify.

If you think that you may qualify for this aid, call the Salvation Army to make an appointment at 664-4108. The Salvation Army verifies the hardship and the BPU validates payment records.

People wishing to contribute to the Good Neighbor Fund may send tax-deductible gifts to Becky Robbins, communications coordinator, BPU, P.O. Box 700, Jamestown, NY 14702-0700; or to the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation, 418 Spring Street, Jamestown, NY 14701. Customers also may contribute by adding extra funds to their utility bill payment, noting that the extra money is for the Good Neighbor Fund.

Anyone with questions may contact Becky at 661-1680 weekdays.

## Avoid Sewer Back-Ups... If It Happens, Call the BPU

Avoid sewer back-ups!  
Never put fats, oils or grease (FOG) down your sinks, toilets or drains.



Even if grease is followed down a drain by hot water, FOG eventually cools, hardens and forms a plug in sewer lines. Rags, paper towels & tree roots also can stop a line. With nowhere to go, sewage in a plugged line backs up into your building.

**If this happens to you, call the BPU at 661-1660, daytime, and 661-1640 any hour of the night.** Crews will flush the line & advise you if you need a plumber or if it's a BPU matter.

## BPU Electric Charges to Rise in April, Due to New York State Clean Energy Standard



BPU electric customers will see an increase in their energy bills beginning April 1 of approximately three percent, as a result of the State Clean Energy Standard.

The increase will cost the average BPU electric residential customer approximately \$2 more a month.

The Clean Energy Standard includes the state-wide support of three nuclear energy plants which are seen as a bridge to future renewable energy sources that may be used to generate energy. Electric utilities in the rest of the State will be charged what is known as Zero Emission Credits (ZEC) to support the upstate nuclear plants which do not emit carbon dioxide. Throughout the State, utility customers are estimated to pay \$7.6 billion in nuclear subsidies now through 2030.

According to BPU General Manager David L. Leathers, the BPU is required to charge customers \$900,000 in each of the next two years. The state will re-evaluate the program every two years, meaning the ZEC charges may go up or down in the years ahead.

A second program affecting State utilities is Renewable Energy Credit (REC), requiring utilities and other energy suppliers to purchase a targeted number of RECs each year to fund new sources of renewable energy across the state. Utilities with projects that develop renewable energy will pay less in RECs each year. In 2017, the BPU is required to pay only \$3,000, to be spread among our customers.

New York's goal is to acquire 50 percent of its energy from renewable, no-carbon resources by 2030.

## Easy Ways to Pay Utility Bills — Save Time, Credit/Debit Options

As part of the BPU's ongoing efforts to improve customer service, we now offer two new convenient ways for customers to pay without having to make a special trip driving to our offices at 92 Steele Street.

Payments by telephone are available by calling 661-1660, selecting extension or option 3 and following prompts to complete the transaction. Customers may choose English or Spanish options. Payments may be made by credit card, debit card and e-check. Customers also can check on past payments.

Our upgraded online payment system is convenient. Click on the “Pay Online” links at the top of our webpage, [www.jamestownbpu.com](http://www.jamestownbpu.com), or under Quick Links on the homepage, right column. One-time payments may be made online or customers may register for an account to set up regular scheduled payments, to request bills and customer newsletters by e-mail, to review payment history, energy usage and more. Online payments may be made by credit card, debit card and e-check, a service not available at our 92 Steele Street office.

Traditional methods of payment continue at our Customer Service Office, 92 Steele Street, open 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Wednesday and 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday-Friday. Payments are accepted at the City Hall Clerk's

Office and at the Town of Ellicott Office. Customers may pay by check only at drop boxes at the top of the “D” driveway at the



BPU, on Tracy Plaza outside the City Hall entrance, in the Jamestown Police Department vestibule on East Second Street and outside the Town of Ellicott Building.

No private business is authorized to accept payments for the BPU.

## Don't Believe Scammers!



Beware of phone scammers who may call & threaten to disconnect BPU services unless

you pay them immediately. Scammers have called customers this winter, telling them to meet the caller at a local business and pay the utility bill with a store cash card.

The BPU does not accept or demand payments in this way. The only way credit and debit card services can be used to pay your BPU bill is if YOU initiate payments online or if YOU phone the BPU.

**Electric Customers: Earn BPU Rebates for Steps You Take to Save Money on Your Electric Bill!**

Remember that the BPU offers rebate programs for homeowners, landlords and businesses for work done to make homes and commercial and industrial companies more energy efficient.

The programs are outlined on our website at [www.jamestownbpu.com](http://www.jamestownbpu.com) by clicking the Energy Efficiency Opportunities icon on our home page. Brochures about each program are available at BPU Customer Service, 92 Steele Street.

Questions also may be directed to BPU Energy Efficiency Coordinator Dan Reynolds at 661-1646. Dan is always prepared to advise customers

about our programs and energy efficiency in general.

Residential rebate programs include home energy audits with rebates available to customers who make energy efficiency upgrades that are suggested by the audit. The State provides free home energy audits to New Yorkers who earn less than \$102,000 a year. The BPU offers a subsidized audit to customers over that income level.

Our attic insulation rebates assist electric customers who insulate their




home attics. Rebates pay for a portion of the insulation itself, not for the labor costs involved.



The ENERGY STAR residential program awards rebate credits for those who install certain, new energy efficient products in homes. Examples of such products are windows, entry doors, skylights, central air conditioning units, through the wall a/c units, geothermal heat pumps, HVAC Heat Pumps, Heat Pump Water Heaters and Wifi-enabled thermostats.

Questions about these and commercial programs? Call 661-1646.

**Residential Recycling Credits during Vacations** **Year-round Options Replace Clean-up Weeks**




If you're heading out for a vacation, *longer than two billing cycles*, and *you've built up a good recycling record*, you could receive your solid waste rebate for the months you are away.

To qualify, you need to complete a "Solid Waste Statement Attesting to

Being Away from Home" form at BPU Customer Service. The form also may be found on our website: [www.jamestownbpu.com](http://www.jamestownbpu.com) on the Solid Waste tab or under "Publications" on the home page. You also may call to have a form mailed to you at 661-1651, 661-1680 or 661-1660.

Be rewarded for your recycling record!



The BPU no longer offers clean-up weeks, but provides alternatives for Solid Waste customers **all year**.

**Each week, customers may discard one extra item weighing up to 40 pounds**, similar in size to a standard bag of trash. Examples of these items include a small table, straight-back chair, a lamp or fan. Call the Garbage Hotline at 661-1651 before placing an item at the curb if you need clarification of what you may discard in this way.

**Every week of the year, we offer special item collection** for large or electronic items with an appointment and fee. The fee

covers the cost to take an item to the landfill or transfer station. Examples of such items include: refrigerators, large mattresses, couches, tvs, microwaves and computer monitors. It is recommended that appointments be set up two days prior to the regular garbage day by calling the Garbage Hotline at 661-1651. Three items collected in one appointment will be discounted.

Solid waste guidelines are listed on the back of our 2017 recycling calendar. Remember that we recommend lidded garbage cans. Eight standard-size garbage bags are the limit for collection each week. Bags in excess of the limit will be charged \$3/bag.

**Prevent Frozen Pipes with These Tips**

Here are some tips to help avoid frozen water pipes over the winter:

Keep garage doors closed if there are water supply lines in the garage. Open kitchen & bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around the plumbing, especially if there is an outer wall in the cabinet.

Keep the thermostat set at the same temperature both in the day and the night. By temporarily suspending the use of lower night-time temperatures, you may incur a higher heating bill, but you can prevent a more costly repair job if pipes freeze & burst.

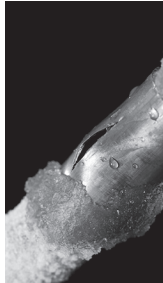
If the weather is very cold outside, let the cold water drip from the faucet served by exposed pipes. Running water through the pipe — even a trickle — helps prevent pipes from freezing.

If you go away during cold weather, leave the heat on in your home, set to a temperature of no lower than 55 degrees Fahrenheit.

Wrap pipes nearest exterior walls with insulation or heating tape.

Heat your basement and consider weather-sealing your windows.

Water expands as it freezes, putting tremendous pressure on whatever is containing it, including metal or plastic pipes. No matter how strong the pipe may be, expanding water can cause pipes to break. Pipes that run against exterior walls and water supply pipes in unheated interior areas like basements, crawl spaces, attics or garages all are subject to freezing.



*Tips courtesy of the American Red Cross*

**PAY CLOSE ATTENTION DRIVING NEAR WORK ZONES, EMPLOYEES**



The BPU urges motorists to slow down and pay special attention when driving around utility vehicles and work zones.

We want to keep you, our employees and other outdoor workers safe. We all want to go home the way we started out each morning!

A month ago, a man working as a flagman in nearby Warren County, Pennsylvania, was struck and killed by a vehicle when he was flagging traffic in the daytime. We want to prevent that from happening here in the Greater Jamestown Community.

BPU workers set up safety work zones when they are working in the streets or near traffic. Employees, such as Solid Waste workers, cannot set up a coned work zone but they wear "safety yellow" as do other BPU workers. Naturally, they attempt to be careful in or near the streets, but it's everyone's job to look out for them, should they make a mistake, stepping out into traffic without looking.

When you see work zones marked with cones and signs or workers dressed in safety yellow, that is your warning to slow down and be alert.

Please slow down and pay close attention when driving in work zones. Let's not be distracted by texts and phones.