

PRESS RELEASE

April 28, 2020

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In Ongoing Support for Local Needs, Collection of Previously Approved Rate Adjustments Delayed Additional Month and Other COVID-19 Support

At Tuesday's meeting of the Board of Water, Electric and Communications Trustees, the Board was updated on partnerships with Muscatine Community School District (MCSD) and Muscatine Community College (MCC) to make internet services available to those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic.

MCC allowed a w-fi access point to be mounted to its dorm building behind campus and MCSD set up mounts at Jefferson and Franklin schools. The public can access the internet via these free wi-fi spots from the safety of their vehicles in the parking lots of these buildings.

In support of MCSD's e-Learning program, launched March 13, MPW announced a special student internet package with router service for those households without internet service.

"So many organizations are coming together to support the community in a time of need," said General Manager Gage Huston. "MPW is happy to play a part in supporting our neighbors and friends."

Free premium programming continues courtesy of many content providers. As many as 30 networks normally available to only Select or Preferred customers have been opened up for free previews to all customers. MPW staff have reached out to regional sports networks to negotiate rate relief due to the absence of live sports content. At this time, no rate relief is available, however, MPW will continue to advocate for customers.

Additional relief measures due to the negative impact of COVID-19 have been extended. The postponement of rate adjustments for water and TV services and suspension of disconnects for non-payment and waiver of late fees will continue through the end of May. Rate adjustments were scheduled to take effect April 1 and will now be effective June 1, 2020.

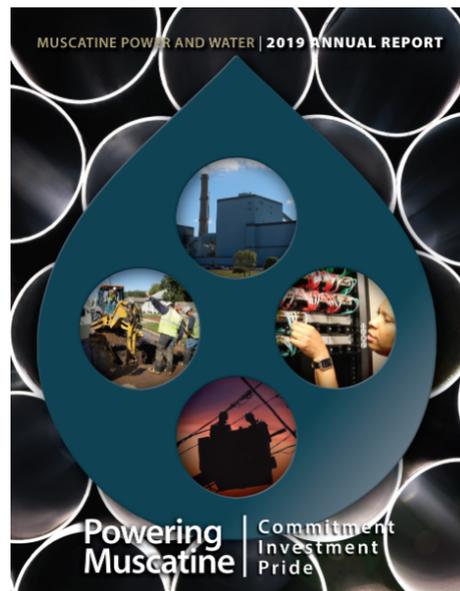
"I cannot adequately express my gratitude to the Board of Trustees," said Huston. "Our community, our customer-owners are distressed in response to the uncertainty of how long COVID-19 will last. Our Trustees have consistently put the community's needs at the center of all decisions."

All updates impacting service, billing and COVID-19 information can be found by visiting www.mpw.org/covid19alerts or calling (563) 263-2631.

Progress on the Fiber to the Home project has been delayed due to COVID-19. National, state and regional guidelines as well as the expected peak of the virus locally will determine the restart of construction. Plans are actively being developed for deployment of crews once conditions change in the area. With COVID related delays, anticipated time to ramp to full construction staffing levels, and typical weather-related impacts which impact construction progress, completion of customer activations is now targeted to be first quarter 2021.

“We, like our customers, are very disappointed with the delay in progress,” said Director of Customer and Technology Experience, Erika Cox. “However, the health and safety of our crews, AEG’s crews, and customers has to take precedence. Once the virus passes, we will ramp back up as quickly as conditions allow. We’re all ready to continue work to connect our community to fiber - the cutting edge of technology for internet and television services.”

The Utility’s 2019 financial audit results were shared at Tuesday’s meeting. MPW received an ‘unqualified opinion’ from auditors Baker Tilly. Additionally, the 2019 Annual Report was presented to the Trustee’s Tuesday evening. The report, published each year, incorporates a fresh look and tone. The Report highlights the significant reinvestment in utility infrastructure to ensure ongoing reliability, ability to meet evolving and growing customer needs and community betterment. Both the Annual Report and audited financial results are posted on MPW’s website at <https://www.mpw.org/customer-care/publications/annual-report>.



In other action, the Board:

- Approved the recommendation to postpone the Award of Contract for the Mississippi Drive Corridor Underground – Cable Pull Contract due to only one bid submitted. Staff will use this time to further validate the bid, attempt to quantify how much premium is built into the bid to complete and present a recommendation to either award as-is, award on a modified basis, or reject the bid and set new dates for work to be completed in 2021.
- Received and placed on file the COVID-19 Financial Scenario Analysis.

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Muscatine Power and Water (MP&W) is a customer-driven, not-for-profit municipal utility, established by the community for the purpose of serving the community responsively, competitively, and responsibly. MP&W provides reliable electricity, high quality water, and state-of-the-art communications services, including internet, video and phone services, to homes and businesses throughout the Muscatine community at rates below state and national averages with outstanding customer service. MP&W is locally controlled and operated for the benefit and betterment of the community.