Communicating the Value of Public Power

Dave Osburn

Meena Dayak
Raising Awareness of Public Power

Strategic initiative, year 3
Customer Research

For the American Public Power Association

1,600 public power customers

Random national sample

800 phone and 800 digital surveys

Dec 2015–Jan 2016
Only 1 in 5 customers under 55 KNOWS that their utility is community-owned and not-for-profit.
Who Owns Your Utility?

Under-55 perceptions
- Government
- Private company
- Community
- Don’t know

Over-55 perceptions
- Government
- Private company
- Community
- Don’t know
Business Motive Perception

- Making money
- Serving customers
- Don’t know
- Other
WHY RAISE AWARENESS?

The competition is on your customers’ smartphones

Customers want convenience and accountability

They don’t have a sense of ownership

You need to inoculate against bad times
Over to Dave Osburn, OMPA
Raising awareness of public power

2016-17
Branding
Website
Community awareness pilots

2018
Dissemination of turnkey resources
Campaign
Branding: More than a logo

Powering Strong Communities
AMERICAN PUBLIC POWER ASSOCIATION

Powering Strong Communities
**Public Power**

**Affordable**
Public power utilities are not-for-profit entities that provide electricity to customers at the lowest rates. Homes powered by public power utilities pay nearly 15 percent less than homes powered by private utilities. Businesses that get electricity from public power utilities also pay less than businesses that get electricity from private utilities.

**Reliable**
Customers of public power utilities lose power less often. Customers of a public power utility are likely to be without power for just 59 minutes a year, compared to customers of private utilities that may lose power for 133 minutes a year — provided there are no major adverse events.

**Diverse Sources**
Public power generates 10 percent of all electricity in the U.S. and distributes — or sells at the retail level — 15 percent of all power flowing to homes and businesses. Public power utilities buy or generate electricity from natural gas, coal, and nuclear, as well as renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and hydro.

In several regions, public power utilities can buy wholesale hydropower generated from federal dams at costs and pass the savings on to customers. Across the country, public power utilities buy wholesale electricity and other services through joint action agencies to leverage economies of scale and strength in numbers.

**Giving Back**
Click on any state below to find out if your community is served by a public power utility. **Public power utilities that are members** of the American Public Power Association are designated with a special icon.
Recruited 10 small/medium utilities, with help from joint action agencies and state associations

Gauged participants’ public communication needs

Developed customizable tools and templates with feedback

Participants field tested the resources

Utility liaisons spent 4–8 hours a month

Robust toolkit for all members in 2018
## Pilot Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UTILITY</th>
<th>METERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Lindsborg, KS</td>
<td>1,700 meters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenwood Springs, CO</td>
<td>6,200 meters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierre Municipal Utilities, SD</td>
<td>7,000 meters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swanton Village Electric, VT</td>
<td>7,000 meters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wadsworth Utilities, OH</td>
<td>13,000 meters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athens Utilities Board, TN</td>
<td>13,000 meters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radford Electric Department, VA</td>
<td>15,000 meters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitowoc Public Utilities, WI</td>
<td>17,000 meters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Lincoln PUD, OR</td>
<td>39,000 meters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocala Electric Utilities, FL</td>
<td>50,000 meters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TOPICS OF INTEREST

Value of public power
Energy efficiency/smart energy use
Outage info and tips for customers
Rates
Customer service
Bill management
Safety
REQUESTED TOOLS

Social media content
Infographics
Videos
Radio PSAs
Bill stuffers
Newsletter content
Press templates
Campaign themes
SAMPLE RESOURCES
Who owns your electric utility? YOU do!

#PublicPower = Community Power
AVERAGE HOME ELECTRICITY PRICES IN THE U.S.

Public Power = Affordable Power

Community owned utility: 11.5 cents/kWh
Privately owned utility: 13.2 cents/kWh
Content for May

- Five videos:
  - Did you know you get your electricity from a public power utility?
  - Energy 101: Lighting choices
  - Understanding the Grid
  - Ins and Outs of outlets
  - What is the Smart Grid
- One pager on public power highlighting benefits
- Safety PSA script
# Summer Energy Saver Tips 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>CIRCULATION — Cool &amp; The Fan</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>ROOM TO BREATHE — H.V.A.C.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ceiling and window fans use less energy than ACs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clean the area around outdoor AC units and keep in a shaded area, if possible</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CHANGE ME — The Dirty Filters</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>ATTIC BREEZE — Seals &amp; Ducts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clean or replace AC filters regularly to maximize their efficiency</td>
<td></td>
<td>Check if your attic and walls have proper insulation to keep warm air from coming in and drive hot air out with a whole house fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>LOSING MY COOL — Windows + Doors</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>COLD WATER WASH — The Laundry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Add/repair weatherstripping or caulk around windows and doors to prevent leaks</td>
<td></td>
<td>Use the washer with full loads on cold and avoid using during hottest part of the day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>TURN IT UP — Therm.o.stat</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>WRAP ME GENTLY — Water Heater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program or set to 78°F or higher when you aren’t home and overnight</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reduce the temperature on your water heater and wrap with a specially designed blanket</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>(DON’T) LET THE SUN SHINE IN — The Shades</td>
<td></td>
<td>ENERGY STARS — New Appliances on the Block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keep curtains and blinds closed to block out strong sunlight</td>
<td></td>
<td>Consider upgrading old appliances to energy efficient models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ALL ABOUT THAT GRILL (NO OVEN) — The Outdoor Cooks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use your stove and oven sparingly or cook during cooler times of the day</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pilot Trainees Were Soaring
Efficiency Top 10

Summer Energy Saver Tips 2017

1. CIRCULATION – Cool & The Far
   Closing and windows less energy than it’s.

2. CHANGE ME – The Dirty Filters
   Cleaning or replacing AC filters helps maintain your efficiency.

3. LOSING MY COOL – Windows x Doors
   Always remember to open or close all windows and doors to prevent leaks.

4. TURN IT UP – Therm. stat
   Program it to 78°F or higher for when you aren’t at home and override.

5. DON’T LET THE SUN SHINE IN –
   The Shading
   Keep curtains and blinds closed to block out strong sunlight.

6. ALL ABOUT THAT GRILL (NO OVEN) –
   The Outdoor Cooks
   Use your grill and enjoy something new during warmer times of the year.

7. ROOM TO BREATHE – HVAC.
   Clean the area around outdoor AC units and keep it in a shaded area, if possible.

8. ATTIC BREEZE – Seal & Ducts
   Check for air leaks and ducts have proper insulation to keep your air home coming in and drive hot air out with a whole house fan.

9. COLD WATER WASH – Laundry
   Use the washer with hot loads or cold and avoid using during hottest part of the day.

10. WRAP ME GENTLY – Water Heater
    Reduce the temperature on your water heater and wrap with a special designed blanket.

11. ENERGY STARS –
    New Appliances on the Block
    Consider upgrading old appliances to energy-efficient models!
You lose power less often because your utility maintains strong systems. #PublicPower

**AVERAGE OUTAGE TIME IN THE U.S.**

- **Privately owned utility:** 133 minutes a year
- **Community owned utility:** 59 minutes a year

*When there are NO major adverse events*
## RESULTS OF THE PILOTS

Metrics from 6 out of 9 participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Impressions</th>
<th>Engagements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>2,239,895</td>
<td>119,335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>335% growth</td>
<td>222% growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>111,696</td>
<td>3,073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>114% growth</td>
<td>102% growth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PILOT SUCCESSES: ATHENS UTILITIES, TN

Set up a Facebook, Twitter and Instagram account in June. At the end of the program they had accumulated 475,931 Facebook impressions and 28,408 engagements.
PILOT SUCCESSES: CENTRAL LINCOLN PUD

Did a great job increasing its social presence and taking advantage of all the resources developed. Their most engaging post during the pilot program was of giving back to the community with 2,231 impressions and 163 engagements.
“When we regularly communicate the value of public power, it helps us build goodwill…But we don’t have enough time or resources to do this on our own. **Only one out of 118 public power utilities in Kansas has a full-time communications person.** So it was great to participate in the community pilots. We provided input and got very high-quality materials to share that elicited a **great response from the community.** We look forward to sharing the benefits with all Kansas members after the pilot.”

Greg DuMars, City Administrator, City of Lindsborg

Colin Hansen, Executive Director, Kansas Municipal Utilities Association
CHALLENGES IN PILOTS

Diversity of needs

Staffing — working with city coordinators

Not easy to engage

Gathering metrics on impact

“I don’t like it, I won’t share it”
OPPORTUNITIES

Digital media makes it easier — especially SOCIAL

Our core values

Affordable
Reliable
Community-focused
FOR YOUR MEMBERS
Monthly emails with social media content you can use

SUBSCRIBE
News@PublicPower.org
Resources in multiple formats
Communication plan template
Calendars
Training (DIY videos)
Consulting and speaking
PUBLIC POWER GIVES BACK

Residential customers pay 14% less than customers with privately owned utilities.

Commercial customers pay 10.7 cents per kwh vs. 11.4 cents per kwh with privately owned utilities.

Public power utilities contribute to local governments through:
- Payments in lieu of tax (41%)
- Gross receipts tax (24%)
- Free/reduced cost electric services (7%)
- Other taxes and fees (6%)
- Use of employees (3.8%)
- Vehicles, equipment, materials, and supplies (1%)

Public power pays 33% more back to the community than private utilities.

Every year, a medium-size public power utility puts an average of $2 million back in the community.

Sources: Averages based on American Public Power Association 2014 survey data for the public power utilities in the United States.
WHERE DOES MY ELECTRICITY COME FROM?

By MIA M. LILJEDAL
Managing Editor & Communications Director, American Public Power Association and Author of "Energy 101"

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I FLIP A SWITCH?
It may seem like magic, but electricity has traveled a long way to get to your house. Let’s go on a field trip behind the scenes.

OK, BUT DOES SOMEONE PRODUCE THE POWER? WHERE AND HOW?
Power is fed into transmission networks from power plants or generators. These lie in all large factories where your electricity is made. Generators get energy from many sources — natural gas, coal, wind, nuclear energy, solar, wind — and convert it into electrons that contain electricity.

But unlike manufactured goods, power isn’t easy to pack, ship, and store. It’s more like use it or lose it. Power travels from the generators through transmission lines to local lines to your house very quickly, in seconds.

DO ALL THOSE WIRES AND POLES HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT?
Local lines bring the power into your house. Before that, transformers in your neighborhood have reduced the high voltage so it’s safe for you. These transformers are usually found at locations managed by your electric utility.

How does electricity get into the local lines?
Local lines get power from the high-voltage transmission lines that hang between tall metal towers. Transmission lines bring the electricity from faraway power plants. Transformers near the power plants increase the voltage of the power because high-voltage power is better for long-distance travel.

Can I make my own power? That would be cool.
You can make your own power with a small wind turbine, a backup generator, or rooftop solar panels. rooftop solar is popular over the sunniest states in the nation. Since you can’t store energy for a long time, you still need to buy power from your electric utility and stay connected to the grid.

DO YOU KNOW?
Your electric utility is a public power utility. You and your neighbors own the utility and the government helps to run it for you. Your utility tells you power at the lowest cost because it cares about your community.

Did you know?
The power lines in your community are connected to a big network of transmission lines, called an interconnection. It’s like a highway that helps electricity travel easily to different parts of the country. Interconnections create many more for power to travel.

Did you know?
Your public power utility is like a good friend. It not only sells you electricity but also can help you save on things you buy, how to use electricity responsibly, and how to save money.

#PublicPower
10 Things to Consider Before You Go Solar

Before you install solar panels on your roof, figure out how much energy you are using and see if you can reduce use. The more energy-efficient the home, the less solar you have to install.

If you have a solar garden in your community, it may be cheaper to buy in to than to install your own rooftop solar. Yes, along with many others in your community, you can invest in the solar garden and get a share of the energy output.

If you're in the way you want to go, be sure to fully understand the costs and risks of buying or leasing. For example, you may not be able to transfer leased rooftop solar panels when you sell your home, especially if the new owner doesn't want them.

Most solar systems operate autonomously, and if you have enough rain, you don't have to worry about panel cleaning. Schedule an annual inspection to search for damage or wear to the panels and the surrounding infrastructure.

What if your rooftop solar produces more power than you want? You may be able to sell excess power back to your utility. Ask about your utility’s net metering policies and rates.

See if you can use less energy

Check if your state offers tax credits or other incentives. Research any grants or low-interest opportunities that make going solar even more affordable.

Community solar or rooftop?

There are many variations of the community solar model but all are proven to be more cost-effective than your own solar. Costs are shared and the return is higher. Community solar can create jobs and make your community a better place to live and work.

Why community solar?

Ask your rooftop solar vendor about the highest efficiency bit for your panels or tracking arrays to help panels follow the sun as it moves. Remem-ber, solar panels can be installed on your roof, on the ground, or integrated into your building.

Buy or lease?

No matter who you get solar power from, be sure to talk to your electric utility. You'll get the best advice on options and prices. Plus, you'll learn how you can still connect to the grid for power when the sun isn't shining.

Fellow the sun

Talk to your utility

What to do with excess power

Learn what to do with excess power

Understand the savings

Look at your electricity bill now. Calculate how much you are saving by producing your own solar power. Your utility can help — just call them.
PRACTICE ELECTRICAL SAFETY:
DON’T OVERLOAD YOUR HOME

Nearly 50,000 fires in the U.S. are caused by electrical failures or malfunctions annually, resulting in more than 400 deaths, 1,500 injuries and $1.4 billion in property damage. Help lower your risk of electrical fires. Here’s how:

OVERLOADED WARNING SIGNS

PREVENT OVERLOADS

- Never use extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliances.
- Only plug one heat-producing appliance into a receptacle at a time.
- If you have too many outlets in your home, hire a qualified electrician to upgrade your home and let us review.
- Power strips only add additional outlets; they do not change the amount of power being received from the circuit.
- Use appropriate wall outlets for lighting fixtures.

Share this infographic with your customers. Email News@PublicPower.org to request a copy or visit PublicPower.org/NewspowerPublicPower-Magazine to find this digital edition.

This infographic was produced with content from Electrical Safety Foundation International.
WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Encourage members to use our resources
Engage on the Public Communications listserv
Invite us to speak and train on communications
Tell us about other needs

Email: News@PublicPower.org
CAMPAIGN TIME!

#PublicPower
FROM OUTSIDE OUR INDUSTRY

Ice Bucket Challenge
Give a Squat 4 Pain
Love the Gums You’re With
ICE BUCKET CHALLENGE

• Raised more than $100 million to find a cure for ALS
• 17 million+ people uploaded their challenge videos to Facebook, watched 10 billion times by 440 million people
• **Started by people** not by an organization
• Example of **social media’s** “amazing ability to connect people and spread ideas”
#GiveASquat4Pain

- Campaign of the American Chronic Pain Association
- Squat, Donate, Inspire
- Post on social media and challenge others
- Empathy
SQUAT

Assume the squat position and hold it for as long as you can---longer than your friends. You'll start to feel the burn, but that's the point.

DONATE

While your legs still hurt, visit theacpa.org and make a donation. Be generous, your pain will go away in just a few minutes.

INSPIRE

Challenge others to complete a wall squat by sharing yours on social media. Don't forget to include #GiveASquat4Pain in your post.
The American Chronic Pain Association

Like This Page · September 1, 2017 · 📣

The Collegium team challenging their colleagues to give a squat for pain #GiveASquat4Pain

For #PainAwarenessMonth, show us how long you can hold a wall squat in support of people living with chronic pain.

Step 1: Share your photos and videos with #GiveASquat4Pain.
Step 2: Tag 2 others to complete the challenge!
Step 3: Donate today: https://theacpa.org/giveasquat4pain/
A specialist to make your gums feel special.

There’s only one person with the expertise and know-how to help you keep your relationship with your gums on solid ground. Your local periodontist. Visit facebook.com/GetToKnowYourPerio and take the first step to taking commitment.

The American Academy Of Periodontology
Support for the Love the Gums You’re With Campaign has been provided in part by the AAP Foundation.
Periodontal disease is incredibly common. But the good news is, it's entirely preventable!

Want a model mouth? It all starts with a periodontist!

Have you given your gums the love they need today? It's simple if you know the steps.

#LoveYourGums#FindAPerio
#StartFlossing#PerioTips
LOVE THE GUMS YOU’RE WITH

- American Academy of Periodontology national consumer awareness campaign
- Almost half of American adults 30+ suffer from periodontal disease
- Brush, floss, get an annual evaluation
- Celebrity spokesperson: Chris Harrison, host of ABC’s “The Bachelor,” the love guru
- Member toolkit and resources
ELEMENTS OF CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

- Actionable
- Shareable
- Measurable
- Memorable
PUBLIC POWER CAMPAIGN

How can we address diverse priorities?
How can we relate to our publics, esp. the millennials?
How can we stand out from the crowd?
How can we assess impact?
What distinguishes us?

COMMUNITY
Shine Awards

Have a project in mind to improve and revitalize local neighborhoods? Apply for a Shine award!
Eligible project categories:

- beautification
- energy efficiency
- STEM education
- neighborhood improvement
SHARE YOUR IDEAS

Theme
Cause
Measurement

Contact me: MDayak@PublicPower.org