

AUSTIN UTILITIES NOW

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CITY SERVICES



January 2019

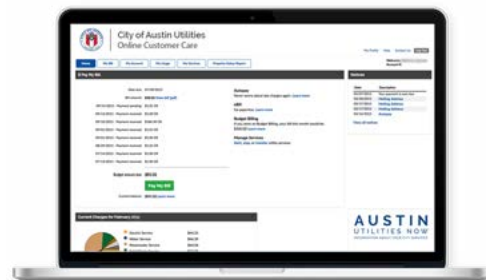
A new look for the utility customer care portal

Customers who pay their bills online through the City of Austin Online Customer Care portal — **coutilities.com** — will notice some improvements.

As of December, the site has a fresh, new look. We streamlined the log-in process and optimized the site for a better experience on smartphones and tablets. We also made it easier to find answers to your payment questions.

a new vendor, Paymentus, to offer more “quick pay” options for customers who pay their bill via credit card. You’ll find a lower transaction fee, and you can view bill images electronically while making a payment. You’ll even be able to set up convenient, recurring credit card payments.

If you have any questions, please contact COA Utilities Customer Care at **512-494-9400**.



In addition, we’ve partnered with



Conserve water in the winter and save all year!

Did you know you can lower your wastewater costs for the next year by conserving water now? Your water meter measures your monthly water use, but there is no meter on your wastewater line. To calculate your wastewater fee, Austin Water monitors your water usage during three consecutive winter billing periods and bases the fee on the daily average use during these months. The monitoring periods occur between mid-November and mid-March. Since water usage during these months is generally only inside household use, it’s a good measure of the volume flowing through your wastewater system. You can lower your wastewater costs for the next year by conserving water use during these billing periods.

Here’s how to conserve water during these periods:

- » **Fix leaky toilets and faucets.**
- » **Don’t water outside in fall and winter months; turn off automatic irrigation systems.**
- » **Wash only full loads in your dishwasher and washing machine.**
- » **Take shorter showers — place a timer in the bathroom.**
- » **Look for the WaterSense® label when buying new water-using appliances and fixtures.**

Check your bill or go to **austinwater.org** to find the specific dates for your wastewater averaging period.



Telltale signs of electrical problems in rentals

If you’re moving into a rental property, you should go through a checklist to see if the electrical wiring, circuits and outlets are safe and functioning properly. Turn on all the lights and wait a few minutes. Have the lights dimmed or flickered? Are the on/off switches warm to the touch? Does the microwave or air-conditioner or heater unit cause the lights to flicker or dim? Is there a burning smell or buzzing noise? Any of these warning signs can mean electrical problems.

Enjoy rebates for home energy improvements



Resolve to upgrade your home energy efficiency for the New Year with Home Performance with ENERGY STAR®! For houses more than 10 years old, you could enjoy rebates, greater comfort and healthier indoor air quality while reducing your carbon footprint.

Plus, these whole-house changes can save you as much as 20 percent

on your summer energy bills:

- » **Replacing inefficient, incorrectly sized HVAC equipment**
- » **Correcting poorly designed, uninsulated, leaky air ducts**
- » **Sealing air leaks and weather-stripping doors**
- » **Adding attic insulation and solar shading**

Through April 15, enjoy potential savings of up to \$2,400 for a limited time when you complete recommended energy upgrade measures through Home Performance with ENERGY STAR.

This includes a \$200 manufacturer discount on certain air conditioning units and heat pumps and a seasonal \$200 rebate from Austin Energy for qualifying projects. Ask your Home Performance participating contractor about:

- » **Their seasonal \$200 contractor discount**
- » **Loans available to qualifying Austin Energy customers for a limited time from Velocity Credit Union, with interest rates as low as 1.99 percent**

To get started, call **512-482-5346** or visit austinenergy.com/go/house.

Don't wait for a storm, register for Outage Alerts

Although ice and snow are not common in Austin, they do occur. And when they do, they may affect power lines. Austin Energy offers **Outage Alerts** to improve communication with our customers during power outages.

Outage Alerts is a text notification system that enables two-way communication via SMS messages during outages. Once registered, customers can report outages by simply texting the word "OUTAGE" or "OUT" to Austin Energy. Then Austin Energy will provide regular updates about estimated restoration times and crew status until the power is back on. Outage Alerts are available in English and Spanish.

Here's how to sign up for Outage Alerts:

1. **Text REGISTER or just REG to 287846 ("AUSTIN" on a phone keypad).**
2. **Enter the phone number associated with your account OR your City of Austin utilities account number when prompted (If texting from phone number associated with your account, skip this step).**
3. **Enter your ZIP code.**
4. **Enter Y to agree to Austin Energy Outage Alert Terms and Conditions.**

Winter tips to help lower electric bills



If you're looking to lower your electric bill during this cold-weather season, take these tips into consideration:

- » **Set your thermostat at 68 degrees. Each degree higher uses 3 percent more energy.**

- » **Lower your thermostat when you leave home. You'll use much less energy to heat the house while you are away.**
- » **Let the sun shine in. Open curtains and shades on eastern and southern windows during the day to let in more heat, then close them in the evening.**
- » **Add insulation to water heaters and hot water pipes to save energy and money. This is inexpensive and easy.**
- » **Caulk and weatherstrip windows and doors. This simple and inexpensive improvement prevents drafts.**

Find more energy efficiency tips at austinenergy.com/go/tips.

Free trees for Austin area residents



Reduce your home's energy use, cool down your yard and grow something good to eat. NeighborWoods is giving away 4,600 trees to Austin area residents. Large shade trees, ornamental trees and fruit and nut trees are ready to join your family this planting season.

Here's how you can get a tree:

- » **Find a giveaway event to attend at treefolks.org/event.**
- » **Sign up for home delivery service at treefolks.org/nw or call 512-443-5323.**

TreeFolks staff will help you choose the best tree for your needs and space. All trees are in the 5-gallon size.

NeighborWoods is a partnership between TreeFolks and the City of Austin to lower summer temperatures and reduce energy consumption by investing in tree canopy cover for Austin-area neighborhoods.

Si gusta recibir este folleto en español, llame al Ciudad de Austin utilidades al 512-972-9523.

Customer Service Phone: 512-494-9400

24-Hour Power Outage Reporting: 512-322-9100 | 24-Hour Emergency Water Service: 512-972-1000

North Austin Utility Customer Service Center (Walk-in Center): 8716 Research Blvd., Ste. 115

Rosewood-Zaragosa Neighborhood Center (Walk-in Center): 2800 Webberville Road, Ste. 110

