

# AUSTIN UTILITIES NOW

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CITY SERVICES



October 2022

## Untangling trees from power lines



power lines and equipment. Tree trimming cycles throughout the city consider the health of your trees while supporting public safety and reliable electricity.

### Here's your quick tree checklist:

- » **Are your trees near power lines?** Electricity from a power line can flow through items that get too close, like ladders, tools, tree branches and even body parts. Never work near power lines or trim tree branches within 10 feet of a power line yourself. Get expert help and stay safe.
- » **Do you see tree trimming experts working on trees in or near your neighborhood?** Show appreciation from a distance. Never approach a crew working near power lines.
- » **Do you want to plant a new tree?** Plant trees in the best location to avoid future contact with power lines.

Fall is the time to plant trees, but did you know Austin Energy's team of tree experts trims trees all year to keep our community safer?

In Austin, issues with trees, vegetation and weather cause more than one out of every three power outages. During windy and stormy weather, swaying and broken tree limbs can rub, contact or damage power lines, causing outages, hazardous conditions and fires.

Thankfully, Austin Energy's Vegetation Management team works with crews on removing and trimming trees that pose a risk to

If you have an issue with a tree near a power line, call **512-494-9400** or request tree trimming services at [austinenergy.com/go/trees](https://austinenergy.com/go/trees). Want to learn more about planting trees and finding free trees? Visit [treefolks.org/get-a-tree/neighborhoods](https://treefolks.org/get-a-tree/neighborhoods) for details.



## Don't let a DUI haunt you

Are you ready for a spooky Halloween? We can't wait to see all the bone-chilling, hair-raising bats, monsters and critters in Austin this year, but there's one phenomenon too haunting for even this eerie holiday.

This Halloween, don't let a DUI haunt you. Drinking and driving endangers not only your own safety, but everyone around you. In addition to putting lives in danger, a DUI can cost you as much as \$17,000 in fines alone, aside from the damage you could cause to property and lives. Leave the spooky scares up to the monsters, and when you're drinking, know your options for a safe ride home, including rideshare, public transit and more.

Visit [austintexas.gov/gethomesafe](https://austintexas.gov/gethomesafe) for more resources.



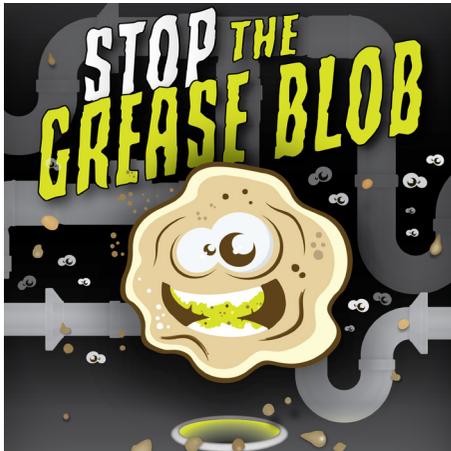
## Harmful algae in Austin's water — what's your lawn got to do with it?

The nitrogen and phosphorous in fertilizer wash into our creeks and lakes and contribute to harmful algae growth. You can grow a healthy lawn without landscape chemicals! Instead of using fertilizer, aerate the soil and apply compost. Use this treatment once — or ideally twice — per year during the milder spring and fall temperatures:

- » **Be sure the grass is recently mowed**, water the area the day before and clearly mark irrigation heads.
- » **Use a core aerator machine to remove plugs of soil.** This creates channels for air and water in the soil to support the roots of the turfgrass.
- » **Apply 1/8 to 1/4 inch of compost.** This will slowly break down and release nutrients, so you don't need to fertilize.

Improve your lawn, protect our environment and save money! Get information on rebates, free landscaping tools and more at [growgreen.org](https://growgreen.org).

# Help Austin Water stop the



## grease blob!

### Examples of FOG include:

- » Meat fats.
- » Sauces and gravy.
- » Cooking oils (canola, corn etc.)
- » Yogurt.
- » Butter/margarine/nut butter.
- » Mayonnaise/salad dressing.

### FOG should never go down the drain! Instead, to properly dispose of FOG:

- » Use a paper towel to wipe grease from pots, pans, plates and utensils prior to washing.
- » Scrape food scraps into the trash, not the sink or garbage disposal (unfortunately, very greasy and oily food cannot be composted).
- » Use a sink strainer to catch food particles.
- » Collect cooking oil or grease in a coffee can, empty milk carton or similar container (preferably with a lid so it doesn't pour out).

Toss containers of collected FOG in your trash bin. Find out more at [austintexas.gov/department/grease-blob](http://austintexas.gov/department/grease-blob).

Pouring cooking oil or grease down the drain sticks to the insides of pipes and creates a gooey, gross grease blob. The more you feed it, the bigger it gets until it's a monster of a clog. Help stop the grease blob from causing the need for expensive repairs, foul odors and sanitary sewer overflows.

Fats, oils and grease (FOG) come from a variety of animal fats and/or vegetable oils. Many solidify at lower temperatures and create an icky grease blob.



## Become a Zero Waste Block Leader

Are you passionate about sustainability and zero waste? Become a Zero Waste Block Leader (ZWBL). ZWBLs offer their time and knowledge to their friends, families, neighbors and online communities. The City of Austin supports their efforts with tools and accurate information. Help us reach our goal of being zero waste by 2040! Learn more at [austintexas.gov/ZWBL](http://austintexas.gov/ZWBL).

## Fall Shred Day returns!

The Austin chapter of ARMA is resuming the annual Fall Shred Day on Saturday, Nov. 19, from 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m. With identity theft on the rise, it is important to dispose of sensitive personal records carefully and securely. These include banking, tax and even medical records. Please check [austinarma.com/shred-day](http://austinarma.com/shred-day) for location and additional information.

### Shredding requirements are:

- » Dry paper only.
- » Must be packed in cardboard boxes no larger than 24in x 24in x 36in with fitted lids or securely closed box flaps. Please do not tape boxes shut.
- » Documents packed in hard plastic bins, plastic bags or any other form of storage container will not be accepted.

All shredded material and cardboard boxes are recycled. Monetary donations are accepted, with proceeds going to the Austin ARMA Chapter and a local charity, Operation Turkey.

Weather or other conditions may cancel the event, so please check [austinarma.com/shred-day](http://austinarma.com/shred-day) regularly for updates, including the day of the event. For additional questions, please contact Austin ARMA via email at [austinarmachapter@gmail.com](mailto:austinarmachapter@gmail.com) or leave a message for a return call at 512-937-3347.

## Building Safer Spaces

Austin Public Works maintains public right-of-way areas, like medians. But many residents don't know they're responsible for maintaining some right-of-way spaces, too! This includes sidewalks that are in front of your property or business. Obstructed sidewalks can prevent people from using the path and might force some to enter the street or turn around. Right-of-way areas are for everyone's use! Learn more at [austintexas.gov/cleartherow](http://austintexas.gov/cleartherow).

Si gusta recibir este folleto en español, llame a los Servicios Públicos de la Ciudad de Austin 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

East Austin Utility Customer Service Center (Walk-in Center): 2800 Webberville Rd.

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

South Austin Utility Customer Service Center (Walk-in Center): 1901 W. William Cannon Drive, Ste. 100

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