

LELD recycles compact fluorescent bulbs

While energy efficient compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) will help you save money on your lighting costs, they contain small amounts of mercury and need to be disposed of properly. LELD offers a CFL recycling program for our residential customers. There is a box located in the lobby of our Administration Building for customers to dispose of the bulbs properly.



Small businesses may qualify for sales tax exemption on energy costs

Many Massachusetts small business owners — those with five or fewer employees and income less than \$1 million — qualify for a sales tax exemption on their energy purchases. The Department of Revenue has created a short informational video that explains the basics of the exemption and how to claim it by completing [Form ST-13](#). Additional information about the sales tax and other exempt items can be found in the Department's [Guide to Sales and Use Tax](#).



39 Ayer Road • PO Box 2406
Littleton, MA 01460
978-486-3104 • Fax: 978-486-8549

Office hours:
Monday - Thursday 6:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Business Office closed Fridays
email the editor at kgoddard@lelwd.com

One of the 40 Municipal Electric Utilities of Massachusetts...

Four-day workweek, Continued from page 1

for our services. We believe that this program furthers that tradition," he said.

By our example, Danos added, "we are hopeful that the success of our conservation program may inspire other organizations, public and private, to consider the compressed work week as a means of saving energy."

Mercury products disposal available at transfer station

Items containing mercury, such as fluorescent bulbs, thermostats and thermometers can now be disposed of properly at the transfer station. Look for the special bin marked "Mercury." Never randomly dispose of these products, since the mercury can be harmful if not properly managed. With the sponsorship of LELWD, the Highway Department and Covanta Energy, disposal is now allowed during normal hours of operation: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12 noon to 6:30 p.m. and Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

LELD adds another hybrid to fleet

As part of our commitment to conservation, the department recently purchased a second hybrid Ford Escape SUV, which will be used by the meter department. Our meter reader had been driving a Toyota Prius, but found it difficult to access some of his required locations in the small vehicle. The Prius remains in service and will be used as the office staff car, replacing a Ford Taurus. Looking ahead, we hope to add more hybrids as older vehicles are retired.



Senior / disabled discount

The base customer charge is waived for senior citizens (age 62 and over) and handicapped persons. Please call to let us know if you fall within either of these categories and we will gladly remove the charge from your bill.

Watts & Drops

Newsletter of the Littleton Electric Light and Water Departments

Kevin Goddard, Editor

Winter 2009

Power restored after ice storm rips region

In three days' time, Littleton Electric Light Department crews restored power to nearly all of its customers in Littleton and Boxborough, working almost around the clock since the first outages from the December 12 ice storm occurred.



At the height of restoration efforts, 10 line crews were in the field, working to energize main power lines before branching out to secondary and more isolated roadways. Through a mutual aid agreement, crews from Georgetown, Wakefield, Middleton and Marblehead supplemented Littleton line crews, facilitating repair efforts.

Office personnel and other employees manned phone lines and provided updates to customers who had come in to the office, working in shifts to provide uninterrupted coverage over the three days.

General Manager Savas Danos said that he had never seen such devastation to the system in his 26 years at LELD. "We had never encountered anything like this," he said. "The damage was that significant."

Danos lauded department crews and office personnel for their extraordinary efforts. "It was all hands on deck, and they did an outstanding job under very difficult circumstances."

He also thanked customers for their understanding and patience. "I know how frustrating it is for folks to be without power for an extended period of time, so I thank our customers for bearing with as we worked to restore power."

LELWD marks third year of four-day workweek

Schedule saves energy, cuts costs, improves customer service

LELWD has just marked the third anniversary of its adoption of a four-day, ten-hour workweek, in which the departments save energy, lower costs and offer expanded customer service hours.

The schedule utilizes the benefits of both a 4x10 workweek and the traditional 5x8 week, Danos said, by increasing business office coverage from 40 to 43 hours per week and electric and water operations from 40 to 50 hours per week. All employees still work a 40-hour week, with added coverage accomplished through rotations, Danos explained.

Under the schedule, business office hours are Monday through Thursday, 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed Friday.

On the operations front, hours are Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with one water and one electric crew working Fridays. On a rotating basis, Danos explained, the Friday crews work Tuesday through Friday, to eliminate the need for overtime. Having crews in the system significantly enhances response time to outages and emergencies, he said, and reduces overtime pay. Danos emphasized that emergency coverage is unaffected by the program, and remains available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

According to Assistant General Manager Scott Edwards, who spearheaded the program, "**The best green program is one that consistently reduces energy consumption — like the 4x10 workweek — while maintaining or improving productivity and customer service.**"

Danos explained that the departments have realized savings by keeping buildings dark and vehicles garaged for longer periods of time. "As an organization, LELWD has always prided itself on being a progressive utility, using the latest tools and technologies to offer outstanding value

Continued on page 4

LELD rates remain lowest in region

In stark contrast to private utilities, LELD has consistently maintained its status as the region's low-cost electric utility, as its rates remain among the lowest in the state, at more than 37 percent lower the average of private utility companies.

Residential Rate Comparisons: LELD vs. Private Utilities				
12 Month Average Rate (July 2007 – June 2008)				
	250 kWh	500 kWh	750 kWh	1000kWh
Comm Electric	\$50.17	\$96.61	\$143.04	\$189.48
Cambridge Electric	50.03	93.20	136.36	179.52
WMECO	47.63	86.72	125.82	164.92
National Grid	44.20	82.26	120.63	158.40
Fitchburg G&E	51.87	100.15	148.42	196.70
NSTAR	50.25	94.07	137.89	181.71
Avg. Private Utilities	49.03	92.21	135.36	178.45
LELD	31.68	58.37	85.05	111.73
LELD vs. average of private utilities	35% lower	37% lower	37% lower	37.5% lower

The latest statistics compiled by the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC), which tracks the rates of both public and private utility companies, show that LELD's residential rates regularly beat the competition. For purposes of comparison, a Littleton customer using 750 kWh per month over the last year had a monthly bill of \$85.05. The same usage in Ayer, served by National Grid, cost \$120.63; while in Acton, served by NSTAR, that usage cost \$137.89.

Danos explained the challenges of power purchasing in a rapidly evolving industry marked by instability and increased market manipulation, but added that "we continue to aggressively pursue agreements that will help us retain our status as the area's region's low-cost provider and look forward to keeping our commitment to competitive rates, outstanding reliability and superior service."



Please keep access to hydrants and meters clear

As long as snow continues to fall, we again ask for your cooperation in keeping access to fire hydrants clear. This is critical to public safety, since it can sometimes be a few days after storms before crews have a chance to clear the snow away

We also ask that you keep a clear path to your electric meter. Should our crews need to access your meter in an emergency situation, time is lost removing snow or trimming shrubbery.

Assistance may be available to help you pay your winter heating bills

The Fuel Assistance Program helps income-eligible households pay a portion of their winter heating bills.

If your gross household income falls within the limits shown on this chart, you may qualify for fuel assistance.

Household Size	Maximum Gross Annual Income
1	\$19,140
2	25,660
3	32,180
4	38,700
5	45,220
6	51,740

For information on how to apply, write or call:
South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC)
Fuel Assistance Program
300 Howard Street, Framingham, MA 01701
(508) 620-1230 - Framingham
1-800-286-6776 - Toll Free outside Framingham

For limited income households not eligible for fuel assistance, contact The Good Neighbor Energy Fund operated by your local Salvation Army at 1-800-334-3047 or visit magoodneighbor.org for more information



Employees Joni Silveria (l) and Sue Gilmore (r) present Thanksgiving baskets to Diann Haduch, treasurer of the Littleton Council of Churches and member of its Outreach Committee. Employees donated three baskets to needy families in Littleton and Boxborough.

LELD supports high school solar project

LELD has earmarked half of its annual \$5,000 math, science and technology grant to the Littleton public schools for the purchase of a golf cart, which students in the advanced engineering class at the high school will convert to solar power through the installation of panels on the cart's roof.

Students expect the cart to be used by the athletic department to transport equipment and supplies to fields that are more remote from school parking, as well as to transport elder spectators having trouble reaching the playing fields.



Students in Littleton High's advanced engineering class pose with the golf cart made possible by LELD's science and technology grant. The roof of the cart will soon be fitted with a solar panel to power the vehicle.

"With a strong interest in solar conversion, this is exactly the kind of project we look to support," said Savas Danos, general manager. "While textbooks and other class materials are always important, we recognize the tremendous value of these more creative projects," he added.



Line crews string lights on the Common in preparation for the town's annual holiday tree lighting, sponsored by the Light and Water Departments and the Littleton Rotary Club.



Employees (l to r) Mae Thompson, Peg Larsen, Erlene Campbell, Sue Gilmore and Judy Hunt gather around a Christmas tree and gifts donated to the Loaves and Fishes "Shop for Your Parents' Day, where the children of food pantry clients select gifts for their families.



Critical equipment

If someone in your family is dependent on critical medical equipment, please let us know so that we may assign priority in the event of an outage; although it is important to note that we cannot guarantee that power will be restored quickly. If a family member requires life-sustaining equipment, you should always consider having a back-up power source in the event of an outage. If you should lose power for an extended period of time and need assistance, please call the Fire Department or 911.



Riding in style

LELD donated a "ride to school" in a bucket truck as an auction item for the recent Littleton Community Boosters fundraiser. Here, lineman Dave Lizotte chauffeurs winner Hayley Anderson and a friend to school, taking the long way so that the girls could enjoy a hot chocolate and donut during the trip.

