

Planning

Taking Advantage of Lower Fuel Prices

Natural gas prices have fallen in the past few years, and thanks to an investment made nearly a decade ago, GRU is using this market shift to save money for customers.

In 2001, GRU repowered a natural gas unit at the John R. Kelly Generating Station to increase its efficiency and take advantage of more environmentally friendly technology.

This unit, known as Combined-cycle Unit 1, did not run as frequently at first because natural gas prices were high. Today, it is a key component to producing cost-effective, reliable energy for customers on a daily basis.

GRU's current fuel mix includes coal, natural gas, nuclear, solar and landfill gas, and biomass will be added in late 2013. Kelly Plant Production Manager Joe Shaw said this diverse portfolio allows the utility to respond to changing market conditions and pass savings along to customers.

"There is only one natural gas pipeline that serves our part of the state. What we saw after Hurricane Katrina were enormous spikes in the cost of natural gas, probably four times what it is today," said Shaw. "Strategically, having multiple fuel types gives us the flexibility to adjust to price volatility and shield customers from huge fluctuations."



Renewable

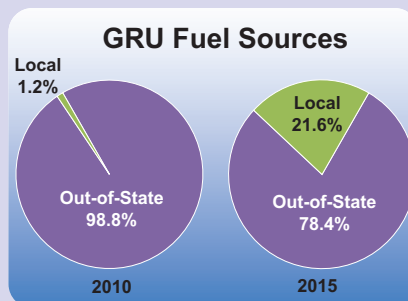
Progress Continues on Gainesville Renewable Energy Center

The site of the future Gainesville Renewable Energy Center (GREC) is beginning to take shape. Since beginning major construction on the biomass generating facility in June, construction crews have been busy excavating and laying foundations.

"There are more than 200 workers on site now, and when construction peaks next year we expect to have around

900," said Josh Levine, development manager for GREC. "Based on an economic analysis of the project, we estimate construction will provide at least \$55 million to the local economy through jobs and materials."

GREC will be fueled by a sustainable, local supply of leftover clean wood waste. When GRU begins purchasing biomass energy in 2013, it will provide Gainesville with increased energy independence by becoming less reliant on fossil fuels imported from other states. In fact, GREC is expected to provide a \$31-million boost to the regional economy annually from ongoing operations.



Save Money Around the Holidays

Tips

Extra cooking, out-of-town guests, decorative lighting and cooler temperatures can add up to a larger-than-usual energy and water bill. These tips can help keep holiday budgets in check:

- ◆ Use LED holiday lights. They are energy efficient, last up to five years and won't turn off if one light burns out.
- ◆ Set heating thermostats to 68 degrees. Stay comfortable by wearing warmer clothes indoors and using an extra blanket at night. Every degree warmer raises the electric bill 4 percent.
- ◆ Use cooler water for laundry. About 80 to 85 percent of the energy used for washing clothes is for heating water. Clothes will be just as clean using cooler water.
- ◆ Lower the water heater's thermostat to 120°F and keep showers to five minutes.

Response

Helping Hurricane Irene Victims

Shortly after Hurricane Irene made its way up the East Coast, a crew of GRU linemen headed north to help Baltimore Gas and Electric Company restore power to nearly 750,000 customers.

GRU sent 20 linemen, 10 bucket trucks, two supervisors and a fleet mechanic to Baltimore for six days. Their assistance was in response to a mutual aid request, which is based on agreements between utility companies to help each other in times of need. The company that requests help pays the expenses.

"No one utility is large enough to deal with the aftermath of a storm such as



Photo courtesy of BGE

Irene. Mutual aid ensures that GRU, along with utilities of all sizes, have the resources needed to restore customers' services quickly and efficiently after severe weather," said David Beaulieu, assistant general manager of Energy Delivery. "When you give help, you get help."

2011 Annual Community Meeting

Customers who attended GRU's Annual Community Meeting in October got an update directly from GRU's leadership team about what the utility is doing to meet the community's immediate and future energy and water needs. The event included formal presentations and offered opportunities to ask questions and get information about a variety of topics.



GRUSM
More than Energy

GRU Customer Service
352-334-3434
1.800.818.3436 toll-free
www.gru.com

Save Water now, Save Money all Year

Customers can save on next year's wastewater bills by using less water this winter. That's because for most residential customers, wastewater is not a metered service. Instead, wastewater charges are based on either the amount of water used during a particular month or a customer's "winter max." GRU uses whichever amount is lower.

Winter max is determined by water consumption that appears on the January and February bills. Depending on when your meter is read, this consumption will be based on the amount of water used in December, January or February.

"Limiting water use during this time by fixing leaks or watering the lawn less can keep a home's winter max low and provide substantial year-round bill savings," said Amy Carpus, GRU conservation analyst.

Savings



Steer Clear of Holiday "FOG"

Holiday cooking produces a lot of fats, oils and grease – "FOG" – which can clog pipes and ruin festivities with backed-up drains and toilets.

Never pour fat, cooking oil or grease down the drain, even with a garbage disposal. Instead, pour it into a metal can, let it cool, and throw it in the trash. Or to recycle vegetable oil for use as biodiesel fuel, call Alachua County Recycling at 352-334-0440.

"Fat, oil and grease not only clogs pipes in the home but are the single largest cause of spills in GRU's wastewater system. These avoidable spills can negatively affect local waterways and increase maintenance costs," said Tony Cunningham, GRU supervising environmental engineer.

Tips



Electricity Monitoring Service Generates Savings

Large businesses using GRU's load-profiling service are seeing significant savings. Local publishing company Naylor, LLC, reduced its overall electricity use by 39 percent and peak demand by 13 percent, providing average bill savings of \$10,000 to \$15,000 per month. The load-profiling service collects data through special meters to show how much electricity is being used each day and what times usage is highest.

"Based on our load profile, we were able to make simple, yet significant adjustments to save money," Naylor Facilities Manager Lynn Hammond said.

Beyond the direct benefits seen by businesses that use the load-profiling service, the service helps reduce costs for all customers by lowering peak energy needs of the entire GRU electric system, reducing the need to run higher-cost peaking generation units.

The load-profiling service is best suited for large business customers that spend \$5,000 or more a month on electricity per meter. Interested businesses should call 352-393-1460.



Innovation

Dudley Farm Historic State Park Sugar Cane Boil

See cane syrup being made at an original 1880s cracker farm. Come Saturday, December 3 from 9 AM to 3 PM for historical demonstrations, crafts, wagon rides, games, farm animals, music and food. Admission \$8 per vehicle. 18730 W. Newberry Road. 352-472-1142. www.friendsofdudleyfarm.org.

SHINE Counselors Available to Assist Elders

Medicare's annual election period will close on December 7—earlier than past years. Anyone new to Medicare, choosing a supplement, needing free counseling, assistance, or the location of the nearest "Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders" (SHINE) site, should call 1-800-96 ELDER (1-800-963-5337).

15th Annual Holiday Traditions Concert

Celebrate the sound of the holiday season with area youth musical groups when STOP!® CHILDREN'S CANCER presents Holiday Traditions: A Musical Celebration, on Sunday, December 11, at 4 PM. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$6 for children. Call 352-377-2622 or visit www.StopChildrensCancer.org.



The Messiah Sing Along

The Gainesville Civic Chorus invites all to join them December 17 in singing Handel's "Messiah" at 7 PM at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 100 NE 1 Street, Gainesville. Admission is free to everyone. For more information, call 352-372-2691 or visit www.gcchorus.org.

Talking Gators Toastmasters Club

The Talking Gators meet Tuesdays at 5:45 PM in Room 1031, UF Entomology Building, 970 Natural Area Drive, east of the Performing Arts Center. Meet members and learn about Toastmasters. It is a fun, positive atmosphere for public speaking and leadership. Visit www.toastmasters.org or call 352-870-2267.