

# insight

August 2015

## A Message from GRU General Manager Ed Bielarski



I'm happy to have started a new journey at an organization with such rich history.

GRU has often been on the cutting edge, providing customers with reliable power, the cleanest water possible and the fastest Internet service in the area. I also recognize that there are major challenges we face as an organization and a community.

I may be new to Gainesville, but I've worked in the utility industry for more than 20 years. In that time I've learned that talk is cheap unless followed by action, and that listening (not just hearing) is invaluable. I seek first to understand and then to be understood.

I look forward to getting to know you, listening to you, and working with you to meet our challenges head on and improve our community.

Thanks,  
Ed Bielarski

Visit GRU TV at  
[youtube.com/gru4u](https://www.youtube.com/gru4u)  
to watch a Q&A with Ed.

  
More than Energy

# GRU Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Proposal

GRU's proposed Fiscal Year 2016 capital and operating budget was presented to the City Commission on July 13 and given preliminary approval July 21.

GRU recommended no electric rate increase. However, GRU did recommend a change in the electric residential rate tiers which will mean some residential customers' bills will go up and some will go down.

In November 2014, the City Commission adopted an electric rate goal of one-half of one standard deviation above the mean of all Florida electric utilities. This goal was a major driver when developing the proposed budget.

Additional residential rate recommendations include a natural gas rate increase of \$0.95, and water and wastewater increases of \$2.80 and \$2, respectively (based on industry standard comparisons).

All rate changes are subject to final ordinance approval. A complete copy of the proposal is available at [gru.com/fy16budget](http://gru.com/fy16budget).

## Proposed FY16 Residential Rates

System	Usage Level	July '15 Bill	Base Rate Change	Fuel Change	Proposed FY16 Bill
Electric	1,000kWh	\$140.50	(\$2.40)	0.00	\$138.10
Natural Gas	25 therms	\$31.19	\$0.95	0.00	\$32.14
Water	7,000 gal	\$27.05	\$2.80	0.00	\$29.85
Wastewater	7,000 gal	\$50.75	\$2.00	0.00	\$52.75

*Usage levels based on industry standard comparisons. Electric and gas bills based on Fuel Adjustment of \$0.078/kWh and Purchase Gas Adjustment of \$0.30/therm.*

# Brighter Tomorrow Banquet Honors Scholars

GRU recently awarded four scholarships to aspiring engineers at the 5th annual Brighter Tomorrow Scholarship Banquet.



Kiara Kubo, Catherine Parrish, Zhihong Sun and Aaron Terrell each received \$4,000 to pursue engineering degrees at the University of Florida or Santa Fe College.

The awards were made possible by presenting sponsor Infinite Energy and other contributors.

## Lightning Strikes and Surge Protection

Lightning strikes can cause power surges that may damage your home electronics. While GRU's electric lines are inspected regularly for damage or heat build-up associated with lightning, GRU is not responsible for the electronics in your home.



GRU suggests using surge protection devices that include a connected equipment warranty. However, there are no absolute guarantees against lightning damage. The best way to protect your electronics during a storm is to unplug all power, telecommunications (telephone, coaxial, Ethernet) and antenna connections.

Flickering lights or brownouts may be signs of surge damage. If your lights flicker, call GRU immediately at 352-334-2871. If surge damage is suspected, GRU may work with you to diagnose the problem and advise on repairs.

For more tips and important updates, follow us on Facebook at **GRU4U**.

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## Public Service Announcements

### **Littering is Wrong**

Unsightly littering negatively impacts our community's environment and wildlife. Each person plays a role in keeping Alachua County litter free. Use a litter bag in your vehicle and tarp truck beds and trailers to keep trash off roadways. For more information, call 352-371-9444 or visit [LitteringIsWrongToo.org](http://LitteringIsWrongToo.org).

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### **Gainesville Youth Chorus**

Do you know a child who loves to sing? The vocal and leadership programs of the Gainesville Youth Chorus have helped children become confident performers and leaders for over 21 years. Opportunities are available for emerging young singers, volunteers and community sponsorships. Visit [gainesvilleyouthchorus.com](http://gainesvilleyouthchorus.com) for more information.

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### **Fourth Annual Pink Pumpkin Pedal-Off**

On Saturday, Oct. 10, bike 20, 40, or 62.5 miles through the University of Florida campus and Gainesville's natural wetlands. Registration fees and donations benefit the UF Health Cancer Center's therapy-resistant breast cancer research fund. Rides start at 8:30 a.m. For more information, call 352-262-0310.

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### **Submit a PSA**

GRU offers PSAs to help local nonprofit organizations that support the arts and sciences or provide a community service. Call 352-393-1485 or email [dongesph@gru.com](mailto:dongesph@gru.com) well in advance to schedule a reservation.