

Regular Board of Directors *Meeting Notes*

May 10, 2021

**Approval of a Contract for Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)  
Right of Way Services**

The Board approved a contract with Nelson Tree Service, LLC for CIP Right of Way services.

**Presentation of the Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) for  
Non-Competitive Budgets**

Mr. Gary Miller, General Manager, presented the CIP for all divisions of BTU. The 5-year CIP reflects expenditure increases in both the City and Rural operations. The increase in City is due to additional transmission substation projects and the Rural increase is due to increased projections for feeder construction and distribution replacement projects for system improvement and growth.

**Discussion of BTU's Credit Rating for the City and Rural Systems**

Mr. Will Smith, Chief Financial Officer, reported that both Fitch Ratings and S&P Global Ratings had taken negative action regarding ERCOT market participants and placed BTU City and Rural Systems on a negative ratings watch. S&P Global reaffirmed the A+ rating for BTU's City System and downgraded BTU's Rural System from AA- to A+.

**Presentation of BTU's City and Rural Business Structure**

Mr. Gary Massey, Division Manager of Fiscal Services, gave an informational presentation regarding BTU's City and Rural business structure.

**BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES  
KIOSKS**

BTU Drive Thru – 205 E. 28th St. (Open 24 Hours)  
HEB Grocery – Tejas Center on Villa Maria  
HEB Grocery – Texas Ave. & Hwy 21

**WAYS TO PAY****CASH****CHECK****CARD**

Bring your BTU account number, BTU bill, keycard or reminder letter.

BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES

**BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES**

205 East 28th Street • Bryan, TX 77803

email: ContactBTU@btutilities.com

**www.btutilities.com**

**Hours of Operation**

Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Board of Directors**

Mr. A. Bentley Nettles, Chairman  
Ms. Rosemarie Selman, Vice Chairman  
Mr. Pete J. Bienski, Jr., Secretary  
Mr. John A. Bond  
Mr. Paul Madison, Sr.  
Mr. Greg S. Owens  
Mr. Paul Turney  
Mr. Jason Bienski, Ex-Officio  
Mr. Buppy Simank, Ex-Officio

**General Manager**

Gary Miller

**Executive Directors**

Doug Lyles  
Randy Trimble  
Wes Williams  
David Werley, Chief Business Officer

**Division Managers**

James Bodine  
Nick Cook  
Shawndra Curry  
Ken Lindberg  
Clay Lindstrom  
Gary Massey  
Vicki Reim

**City of Bryan**

Kean Register, City Manager  
Will Smith, Chief Financial Officer  
Bernie Acre, Chief Information Officer

**Important Numbers**

Billing/Collections/Connects  
**(979) 821-5700**  
Electrical Outage/Lines Down  
**(979) 822-3777**  
Distribution/Line Design  
**(979) 821-5770**

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

BryanTexasUtilities



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# Vacation CONSERVATION

**Summer vacation season is in full swing.**

*If you are planning to leave your home for several days, be sure to give your home a vacation as well. Here are a few tips to conserve energy and save you money while you are away.*

## Adjust your air conditioner.

If you are away from home, there is no need to keep the house cool. Set your thermostat between 83-85 degrees to save on your electric bill. While setting the thermostat higher can save you more money, higher temperatures can affect the food in your pantry and can promote the growth of mold and mildew. If you have a programmable thermostat, you can set it to run at 80 degrees for an hour just before dawn to remove excess humidity and cool the house, then return to the higher temperature for the rest of the day.

## Adjust your water heater.

Most water heaters have a vacation setting on the temperature dial. Turning the dial to vacation mode drops the water temperature drastically so you will be conserving energy when no one is home. When you return, simply turn the dial back to 120 degrees and hot water will be available in about an hour.

## Adjust your refrigerator.

Before you leave on vacation, be sure to remove all perishable food, then refill the refrigerator with bottles or containers of water. This will help the refrigerator maintain a constant temperature longer and keep the compressor from constantly cycling on and off. Set the refrigerator dial to 40 degrees and make sure the doors are closed and sealed before you leave on vacation.

## Unplug your electronic devices.

Even if you turn off the television, computers, or other electronic devices, they still use a small amount of electricity. Unplug these devices to ensure they will use no electricity at all.

## Use timers to operate lights at night.

Having lights come on at night can increase your home's security. Use timers to operate indoor lamps or outdoor security lights during nighttime hours only, instead of having lights on for entire days at a time.

## Keep blinds, shades, and curtains closed.

Keeping windows fully covered helps keep out the heat from the sun, especially those windows on the south and west sides of your home. According to the Department of Energy, studies have shown that drapes with white plastic backings can reduce the heat gain from windows by 33 percent.

## Bonus safety tip: Insurance experts advise to resist the urge to post about your upcoming vacation on social media.

Announcing that your home will be vacant increases the chance of a break-in. Instead, post about your trip after you have returned home safely.





## BTU | Spotlight

*Meet the Family:*

**MPS  
EGG  
FARMS**




MPS Egg Farms has been family-owned and operated for six generations, dating back to 1875 when Daniel Strauss built a water-powered grain mill along the Eel River in North Manchester, Indiana. His business grew and evolved from selling animal feed to coal and ice, and even a little moonshine at times. After Daniel's great grandson, Donald (Don) Strauss joined the family business in 1950, the company expanded its horizons. In 1960, Don purchased a Purina feed franchise that provided feed for many of the area egg farmers. Close proximity to the egg business prompted Don to realize that the industry was seeing increased consolidation and vertical alignment of processes. Noticing this trend, Don decided to make the business more efficient by providing in-house feed. After collaborating with the Manwaring family to expand operations into egg production, Midwest Poultry Services (MPS) was born.

In subsequent years, MPS began raising its own laying hens and built one of the world's first automated egg farms. This novel and innovative design housed about 300,000 birds, a large amount for the time but small in comparison to today's farms that are home to over a million birds. After marrying into the family in 1983, Bob Krouse further expanded and improved technologies for MPS over the next few decades. The turn of the millennium brought about change in the egg production industry with more and more consumers preferring cage-free options. This led to the conversion of MPS' original location in Indiana, Sunnyside Farms, to a full cage-free operation.

Bob's sons, Dan and Sam Krouse began their tenure at MPS in the mid-2010s, thus comprising the sixth generation of family leadership. Expansion and growth led to a name change from Midwest Poultry Services to MPS Egg Farms in

2019. The new brand better reflects the geographic reach of the business, which now spans from the eastern seaboard to Georgia to Colorado and into Texas. In 2020, MPS Egg Farms acquired Feather Crest Farms which has locations outside of Bryan in Kurten and to the east in Center, TX. "The Feather Crest Farms opportunity made sense as it was also a multi-generational family-owned operation that shared many of the same values and commitments that we hold as central principles," said Sam Krouse, MPS Egg Farms Vice President of Business Development.

With the acquisition of Feather Crest Farms, Bryan Texas Utilities (BTU) welcomed the MPS Egg Farms family into Texas and our close-knit Brazos Valley community. MPS Egg Farms is excited for the opportunity to expand their reach further across the nation, while providing the utmost service to their customers. The business largely supplies to retailers, both large and small grocery stores, around the country. "Our mission is to be the top value producer of eggs for our customers. Value in producing a great source of protein at a great price point, standing behind honesty and integrity, and treating team members like family," Krouse said.

When asked how energy plays a role in their business, Krouse said, "Energy is a huge part of what we do. We have to keep the chickens cool and comfortable, especially in Texas." Not only does MPS Egg Farms need energy to keep the chickens comfortable, they also need energy to power the mostly automated processes of egg collection and preparation for sale. Nationwide, MPS Egg Farms has 11 million laying hens, producing over 9 million eggs per day. MPS Egg Farms is not just forward thinking in the egg production industry, but also the energy sector. They have a solar facility located at one of their Midwest farms that



Photos courtesy of MPS Egg Farms

has a carbon sequestration level equivalent to taking 201 cars off the road. Another sustainable practice MPS Egg Farms employs is the drying of manure. The waste is loaded onto a conveyor belt system that uses existing airflow from the barn's ventilation fans to dry the manure. Dry manure contains little ammonia, has little odor, and is an excellent organic fertilizer. Each dozen of eggs produced now requires 26 percent less feed, 32 percent less water, and 63 percent less greenhouse gas emissions than at their start over 50 years ago.

As BTU is vertically integrated, owning all aspects of electrical service including generation, transmission, and distribution systems, MPS Egg Farms is vertically integrated as well. They purchase day-old baby chicks, called pullets, from a vendor and grow them out with their own in-house produced nutritious feed mix. The hens start laying eggs around 19 to 20 weeks old and are moved into the layer houses so their eggs can be collected. As one would assume, younger chickens tend to lay small and medium sized eggs, while more mature chickens lay large or jumbo sizes. Peak egg production of about one egg per day per chicken is reached around 24 weeks old. After eggs are laid, they are moved via a conveyor belt system to be candled, weighed, washed, graded, packaged, and shipped. The candling process involves using a light to see inside the egg to make sure there are no impurities. Eggs are weighed to be sorted into the sizing categories and graded for quality for consumers per the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines. The U.S. grading system is AA, A, or B and indicates the quality of the egg's white, yolk, and shell. U.S. Grade AA and A are sold whole in stores for consumers while U.S. Grade B eggs are typically used in liquid, frozen,

or dried egg products because they have thinner whites or show some staining on the shells. Eggs are washed to remove any dirt or manure, refrigerated, packaged, and shipped to retailers to the tune of 24 truckloads per day. Did you know that most people in the U.S. keep eggs refrigerated while most Europeans do not wash or refrigerate eggs? They claim that the eggs' shell cuticle preserves the contents from contaminants. However, U.S. studies indicate that the egg quality is much better if refrigerated.

The egg production industry has seen many changes and challenges recently. The COVID-19 pandemic challenged MPS Egg Farms to keep up with increased demand while many more consumers were staying home and cooking homemade meals. Some producers that largely supply restaurants suffered during the pandemic, but Krouse said, "It will be interesting to watch as Americans transition into venturing out more for food and entertainment." Moving forward, the egg production industry is undergoing a shift in market trends. The once specialty sector of cage-free options has grown into a highly sought attribute for retailers. In fact, Krouse estimates that around eight states will have mandates requiring cage-free sourced eggs in the next five years. MPS Egg Farms is ready to meet their customers' needs with their family values as a guiding light. Krouse says that the egg production industry is a great industry in which to run a business. All but one of the major egg producers in the United States is family-owned. "At the heart of what every egg producer does is animal husbandry. We want to take care of all the animals entrusted to us, while providing an excellent product for our customers." Krouse said.





BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES



BRYAN TEXAS  
**LEGENDS**  
EVENT CENTER







## AGGIELAND'S PREMIER INDOOR SPORTS & EVENT CENTER IS INCHING CLOSER TO REALITY



The City of Bryan was scheduled to break ground on the 122,300-square foot indoor facility at Travis Bryan Midtown Park on June 29.

Members of the Bryan City Council were to be joined by representatives from Destination Bryan, SpawGlass, PBK Sports and Sports Facilities Companies to celebrate the ceremonial groundbreaking of the facility that will put Bryan on the map as a destination for indoor events.

The Legends Event Center will feature a large indoor court/event space with space for up to 16 volleyball/8 basketball courts that can be used for a variety of activities, including gymnastics and wrestling meets, meetings, pickleball tournaments, archery and cheerleading competitions, boxing and soccer matches, dance and martial arts competitions, e-gaming conventions, trade shows, markets and other special events. The facility also will include concessions, an arcade, party rooms, an e-sports room, turf space and a flex space for smaller events.

The ultimate purpose of the center is to fill a need that is not met in the community – to create a one-of-a-kind venue unmatched anywhere nearby and increase tourism spending in Bryan. But the facility also will be available to local residents. City staff anticipate there will be designated times for residents to use the facility, and that the party rooms and flex space will be heavily used by Bryan residents.

The facility will be located on the northwest side of the lake, further to the northern edge of the park. Construction has already begun and is expected to be complete in late 2022. The facility is expected to open in winter of 2022.





# Summer Safety Tips FOR KIDS

It is summertime in the Brazos Valley. Kids are out of school, and families are getting together for more outdoor activities. Here is a list of summer safety tips to help the kids stay safe around electricity this summer:

- **Keep kites and balloons far away from overhead wires.** Instead, fly kites in an open area far away from power lines. If the wind blows the kite toward a power line, let go of the string. If a kite gets tangled in a power line, do not allow anyone to touch the string and call BTU at 979-822-3777. BTU will dispatch a crew and safely remove the kite from the lines.
- **Water and electricity do not mix.** Keep electrical devices far away from pools, hoses, and sprinklers. Immediately unplug any electrical device that becomes wet, and never plug in a device that is wet or is in contact with a wet surface.
- **Do not climb trees that are near power lines.** If a tree limb contacts the power line, it can energize the entire tree, shocking anyone touching the tree. Even branches that are close to power lines can be dangerous, as electricity can "jump" through the air.
- **Stay away from ground-mounted green transformer boxes, utility poles, guy wires, breaker boxes, and meters.** If the lock on a transformer box is broken or missing, call BTU to let us know. Never attempt to climb a utility pole, play on transformer boxes, or pull on guy wires.
- **Be sure your kids know to stay far away from downed power lines.** Always assume the line is energized, and call 911 immediately to report a downed line.
- **Lightning can strike as far as 10-20 miles from a thunderstorm.** If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be in danger of being struck by lightning. So, at the sound of thunder, get somewhere indoors as quickly as possible. Remember the saying, "when thunder roars, get indoors."
- **Stay away from electrical substations.** If a ball or pet happens to get inside the substation fence, do not attempt to climb the fence. Call BTU at 979-822-3777 to let us help.

## BONUS SUMMER TIPS FOR KIDS - AND EVERYONE ELSE!

- Use sunscreen anytime you are going to be outdoors. Apply sunscreen with Sun Protection Factor (SPF) 30 or higher and re-apply every three hours or immediately after swimming.
- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after outside activities to prevent dehydration. Do not wait until you are thirsty to drink water. Fruit, such as watermelon and grapes that are high in water content, can provide hydration and also be a healthy snack.





## CITY OF BRYAN Celebrating 150th Anniversary

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the City of Bryan's official incorporation on Nov. 29, 1871. That's 150 years of history to celebrate, and we are taking the opportunity to tell the stories of how Bryan has grown – through the people, places and things that shaped the community.

Visit [150.bryantx.gov](http://150.bryantx.gov)  
to learn more about these stories.



**B CITY OF BRYAN**  
The Good Life, Texas Style.™

**150**  
1871 YEARS 2021