



## BPU Website Offers Customer Info, Resources, and Helpful Tools

With nearly 600,000 user sessions and 1 million page views annually, BPU's website at [www.BPU.com](http://www.BPU.com) is an important platform for communicating and sharing information and resources with utility customers. Surveys and analytics indicate that a large number of customers prefer to use the site as a key information portal, and as a result, BPU is continually updating the site with new features and relevant content to improve user experience.



The award-winning BPU.com has been refreshed and upgraded several times in recent years, including adding responsive design capabilities that make it more mobile friendly. Today, 50% of users access BPU.com from a mobile device, 45% from traditional desktops, and the remainder from tablets.

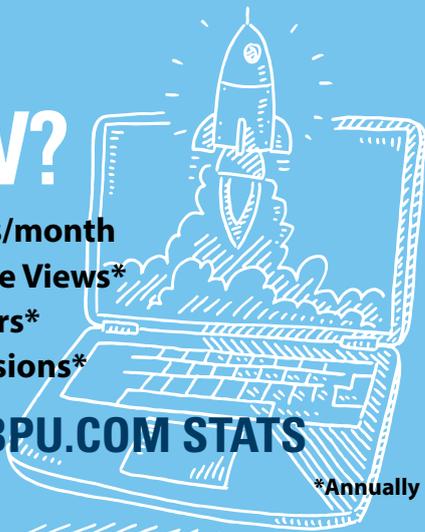
*continued on page 6*

### DID YOU KNOW?

- 48,000 Visits/month
- 908,000 Page Views\*
- 219,000 Users\*
- 575,000 Sessions\*

### WWW.BPU.COM STATS

\*Annually



## Track Utility Usage and Save \$\$ with *Energy Engage* Tool

Start saving water, energy, and money with the *Energy Engage* utility usage portal. This free online resource allows customers to help control their utility bill by providing them with up-to-date electric and water usage and cost information, budgeting alerts, insights into the environmental impact of their usage, conservation tips, and more.

Once customers sign in to their own personal *Energy Engage* dashboard on BPU.com, they'll see their estimated

bill for the month as well as current electric and water usage, in terms of both amounts and dollars. In addition, customers can view usage amounts by day, current billing cycle, or year, and even compare their usage to the previous month. Hour-by-hour breakdowns show when energy and water usage is at its peak. And with the personalized alert tool, they can set an alarm to notify them when they get close to a preset budgeted amount.



*continued on page 6*

## What is the Payment-In-Lieu of Tax (PILOT) and why is it on my BPU bill?



All cities/municipalities charge some form of a PILOT fee. Sometimes called a franchise fee, it's basically the cost private utilities like Evergy (formerly KCP&L) pay to use publicly-owned land for their pipes, poles and transmission lines. The PILOT fee on your BPU bill is similar to the franchise fee paid by private sector utilities.

Though operated as a separate, independent water and electric utility organization, BPU is owned by the Unified Government (UG). As a municipally-owned utility, it doesn't pay property taxes. Therefore, the UG collects the PILOT instead of franchise or property taxes. Under Kansas state law, a city can charge a payment-in-lieu of tax fee in an amount of not less than 4% and not more than 15%. For 2019, the UG has set the rate at 11.9% of electric and water sales of the utility.

All BPU ratepayers are charged the PILOT fee including: 1) tax-exempt property owners; 2) Federal and State Government properties; and 3) wholesale customers located outside the city. Commercial and industrial users account for 60% of the PILOT payments while residential customers pay less than 30%. The PILOT fee is less costly to residential households than the property tax, and property taxes would likely increase without the PILOT. Even with the PILOT fee, BPU electric and water rates remain very competitive. 🏠



**NORM SCOTT**  
President  
BPU Board of Directors

For more than 100 years, BPU's primary mission has been providing quality, safe, and dependable water and electric utility service to the community. Today, BPU services 65,000 electric customers and 51,000 water customers over approximately a 130 square mile area. As a municipal utility, BPU operates as a community enterprise, with the focus being the satisfaction of its customers, transparency, and a commitment to the quality of life in the communities it serves. This has allowed BPU to be recognized as one of the top public utilities in the country.

These efforts continued in 2019, with the utility and staff achieving a number of milestones and accomplishments over the last 12 months. This included: ceasing operations of the generating units at the aging Quindaro Power Station; the transition and hiring of a new General Manager for the utility; and continuing to advance the Rosedale transmission and service project to meet existing and future growth in the area, among other things.

BPU also undertook a number of communications and customer service initiatives in 2019, including: both lobby and online customer satisfaction surveys; expanded social media outreach efforts; new website features like a Chatbot and several self-help videos; and a new "Kids Power" webpage offering free safety and educational resources.

As it prepares for the future, BPU will remain focused on meeting the community's utility needs, while simultaneously working to improve efficiencies and keep costs down. This includes working to ensure that the FY2020 Budget follows outlined budget criteria, with a focus on things that improve customer service, create operating efficiency, improve system reliability, reduce capital and operating costs, and remain within the utility's cost of service.

As our community continues to grow, BPU will remain focused on several strategic underpinnings. These include safe and reliable production facilities and transmission and distribution systems, updating business programs and services to meet the demands of a broad and diverse customer base, ensuring fiscal sustainability, and maintaining a diverse generation portfolio that benefits the environment.

I have served on the BPU Board of Directors since 2015, and have had the privilege of being elected Board President for the last 12 months. I am proud of the accomplishments this utility has achieved in recent years, and the professionalism and commitment of management, staff, and my fellow Board members in their efforts to make BPU one of the top public utilities in the nation. The commitment and support for the community in which they live and work is unwavering, and I'm pleased to have been a small part of this organization and the positive impact it has made in Wyandotte County for more than a century. 🏠

## DID YOU KNOW?

**11,800 BPU customers have signed up for paperless billing, making the GREEN CHOICE to have their bills delivered electronically. Join the paperless movement today! Enroll using your BPU online account, or call 913-573-9190.**



## BPU Recognized for Smart Energy



**SMART  
ENERGY  
PROVIDER**

American Public Power Association

BPU recently earned the Smart Energy Provider (SEP) national designation for its commitment and practices in energy efficiency, distributed generation, environmental and sustainability initiatives, and the customer experience in these disciplines. Only 60 other public power utilities nationwide have received this designation from the American Public Power Association (APPA), and BPU is proud of its "smart energy" efforts to help customers save money and reduce its footprint on the environment. 🏠

# BPU Charity Golf Tourney Raises \$58,000 for Wyco Youth Programs

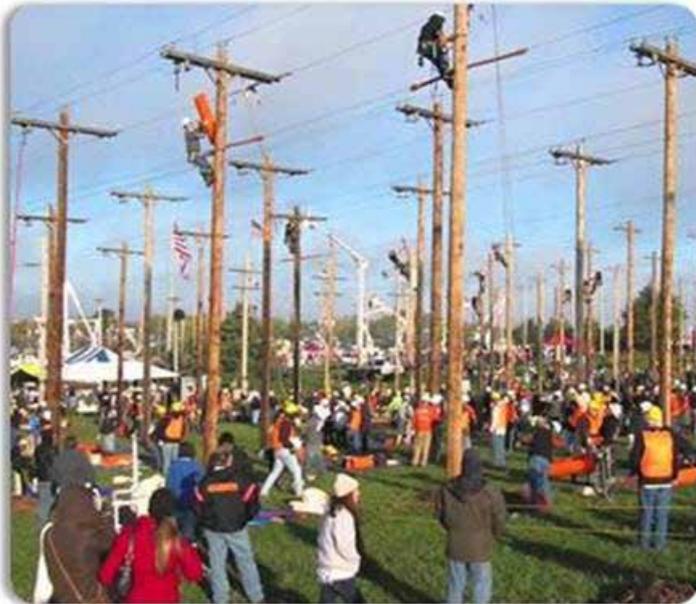


BPU golf tournament organizers present a check for \$19,000 to Theresa Hamilton, Executive Director of Giving the Basics. The KCK-based nonprofit provides children of low-income families access to personal hygiene products like deodorant, shampoo, and toothpaste thru local pantries and schools.

The BPU Employees Charity Golf Corporation recently distributed proceeds from its 2019 BPU Charity Golf Tournament to nonprofit organizations in Wyandotte County. Recipients included the KC Blind All-Stars Foundation/KS State School for the Blind, Giving the Basics, and Young Women on the Move, among others. Donations will be used to create a playground for children who are blind or visually impaired, provide hygiene products to local students, and support healthy behaviors and advocacy skills for young girls in the community.

Hundreds of golfers and volunteers participated in this annual fundraiser held in September, with a record setting amount of funds raised and donated this year. As part of its on-going commitment to the community, BPU employees help plan and host this annual charity event. Since it began in 1992, nearly \$640,000 has been raised for charities and nonprofit organizations that benefit children and youth in Wyandotte County. Next year's tournament is slated for Saturday, September 5, 2020, so mark your calendars now! 📅

## BPU Brings National Lineworkers Convention/Rodeo to KC in 2020



The American Public Power Association (APPA) has selected Kansas City as the site for its 2020 Lineworkers Rodeo and Convention. Scheduled for April 17-18th in Bonner Springs, KS and Kansas City, MO, the event brings together more than 1,500 journeyman, apprentice lineworkers, and others from around the country for several days of training, skill building, and learning.



The Rodeo component is a series of competitions in which 80 Journeyman teams and more than 100 apprentices will compete against one another testing both professional and lineman trade skills. Held on the grounds of the National Agriculture Hall of Fame, the Rodeo itself will be open to the public. Approximately 125 volunteers and 118 judges will be needed to help coordinate the Rodeo, the convention and Expo Hall, and recognition banquet – helping highlight and promote the best of BPU, Wyandotte County, and the entire Kansas City region. 📅

## Satisfaction Survey Results Help Improve Service

BPU recently completed a customer satisfaction benchmark study to better identify the wants and needs of BPU customers, determine enhancements and improvements to customer service processes, improve stakeholder communications, and evaluate the awareness of various utility programs. Comprised of telephone interviews and focus groups with industrial, commercial, and residential customers, results indicate customers are generally satisfied with BPU's electric and water service, in particular, the utility's responsiveness to outages and interactions with field technicians.

There is strong interest in community service activities, as well as the utility's continued focus on environmental and conservation issues. Focus group participants were also asked about customer service practices, billing processes, product offerings, community involvement efforts, etc. It also helped highlight preferred customer communication methods, such as social media vs. direct mail and email vs. telephone.

Key insights showed that customers appreciated that their voices were heard and are interested in engaging with BPU, want convenient ways to pay their bills, relevant information, and more assistance on how to better track their utility usage. Survey results will help further improve the utility's overall customer experience, identify areas for improvement, expansion, and elimination, and allow BPU to better serve the needs of its customers and Wyandotte County as a whole. 📅



# HOLIDAY ENERGY SAVING IDEAS!

The holiday season is a busy and wonderful time of the year with decorating, baking, and visits with friends and family. All of this holiday and winter fun could lead to increased energy consumption, and costs – but these simple tips can help you save electricity during this special time of the year.

## Light up your tree with LED

Whether you like to deck the halls or put up a simple tree, using LED holiday lights is the smart choice for energy savings. LED lights use only 10% of the energy that regular bulbs use. They are also much safer than their incandescent or halogen counterparts because they generate only a fraction of the heat. With LEDs, there's no need to panic if you accidentally leave the lights on overnight.

## Keep it cozy without turning up the heat

Having a home full of loved ones is often the best part of the holiday season. When you have guests over, you can actually turn down the thermostat a few degrees. Why? Because a room full of warm bodies will heat up on its own without running up your heating bill. Keep in mind that for every degree you lower your thermostat, you can save up to 3% on your electric bill.

## Beware of vacation vampires

You might use the holidays as an opportunity to travel, visit family, or go on vacation. Keep in mind that when you leave your home for long periods of time, you might still be wasting electricity. Unplug your electronics before you leave to avoid using “vampire” energy, which is when electricity slowly drains from plugged-in outlets. You should also make sure your large appliances and electronics are turned off completely. Computers and laptops use significant amounts of energy even while they're in sleep mode.

## Practice green gift giving

If you are buying electronics or appliances this holiday season, look for the Energy STAR label to ensure devices have the best energy-saving technology. Buying electronics also presents a good opportunity to use rechargeable batteries rather than disposables. While rechargeable batteries have a higher up-front cost than regular batteries, they end up saving you money in the long run since you won't have to replace them when they die.

## Use your kitchen wisely

Cooking for a crowd? When you've got a big holiday meal to make, you can save energy by baking several dishes at the same time. Your oven will use the same amount of electricity to heat up one dish as opposed to a full rack. There's also no need to preheat the oven for dishes with a long baking time, such as your Thanksgiving turkey or Christmas ham. Just pop your dish in at the beginning and add a couple extra minutes to the timer.

Source: SmartEnergy.com/APPA

## The difference a **bulb** makes

Just how much difference does choosing a different kind of light bulb make on how much you spend on energy? Here's a quick comparison of key stats about incandescent, compact fluorescent (CFL), and light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs.



	INCANDESCENT	CFL	LED
<b>Brightness</b>	800 lumens	840 lumens	840 lumens
<b>Energy used</b>	60 watts	13 watts	9 watts
<b>Cost per bulb*</b>	\$1.49	\$2.49	\$1.37
<b>Yearly energy cost**</b>	\$7.55	\$1.64	\$1.13
<b>Estimated lifespan</b>	1.8 years (2,000 hours)	11 years (12,000 hours)	13 years (15,000 hours)
<b>Total cost over 10 years</b>	\$83.78	\$18.89	\$12.67

\*Prices quoted all come from the same large retailer for comparably sized and style bulbs.

\*\*Assumes use of 3 hrs/day at average public power bundled rate of 11.5 cents/kwh.

## Simple Ways to Lower Your Winter Electric Bill!

- Set your thermostat at 68° F or lower during the day. At night, set the thermostat even lower. You can save 5% on your bill if your setback averages 2 degrees around the clock.
- Utilize the sun's heat to warm your home. Open drapes and blinds on sunny days.
- Close drapes and blinds at night to keep heat inside.
- Use a humidifier. Moist air feels warmer and cuts down on static electricity.
- Use your fireplace sparingly as most of its heat goes up the chimney, and close the damper after each use.



## BPU's Cold Weather Policy

*During the months November through March, BPU will not disconnect residential electric customers for non-payment of bills when the National Weather Service forecasts the temperature will remain at or below 32 degrees Fahrenheit for 48 hours. Water service can be disconnected at any time. This is consistent with ALL other KC metro area utilities.*

## QUICK TIPS!



### CHANGE YOUR FILTER

*Replacing your furnace filter regularly improves air quality, extends the life of your furnace, and can reduce annual energy costs by as much as 15%.*



### TURN DOWN YOUR WATER HEATER

*Heating water can account for 14-25% of the energy consumed in your home. This year, turn down the temperature of your water heater to the warm setting (120° F) – it will save you energy and avoid scalding accidents. And with the average household spending \$400-\$600 annually on water heating cost, an extra 2 minutes in the shower or running the water the entire time you're washing dishes can end up costing you.*

# How to Prevent and Thaw Frozen Water Pipes

Water has a unique property in that it expands as it freezes. This expansion puts tremendous pressure on whatever is containing it, including metal or plastic pipes. Pipes that freeze most frequently are those that are exposed to severe cold, like outdoor hose bibs, swimming pool supply lines, water sprinkler lines, and water supply pipes in unheated interior areas like basements and crawl spaces, attics, garages, or kitchen cabinets.

## Prevent freezing water pipes by doing the following...

- Remove, drain, and store hoses used outdoors. Close inside valves supplying outdoor hose bibs. Open the outside hose bibs to allow water to drain. Keep the outside valve open so that any water remaining in the pipe can expand without causing the pipe to break.
- Check around the home for other areas where water supply lines are located and are in unheated areas. Both hot and cold water pipes should be insulated. A hot water supply line can freeze just like a cold water supply line.
- Consider installing specific products made to insulate water pipes like a "pipe sleeve" or installing UL-listed "heat tape," or similar materials on exposed water pipes. Newspaper can provide some degree of insulation and protection to exposed pipes - even 1/4" of newspaper can provide significant protection in areas that usually do not have frequent or prolonged temperatures below freezing.

## During cold weather, take preventative action...

- Keep garage doors closed if there are water supply lines in the garage.
- Open kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around the plumbing.
- When the weather is predicted to drop below 20 degrees or below, or remain below freezing for an extended period of time, leave a drip of water running from the highest faucet in the house or those served by exposed pipes. Running water through the pipe - even at a trickle - helps prevent pipes from freezing because the temperature of the water running through it is above freezing.

# BPU Website Answers Your Questions

*continued from page 1*

The site uses navigation bars to help sort key information by user interest, such as For Home, For Business, Resources, About Us, and "Kid Power". These webpages provide information on electric and water products and services, educational videos on utility savings and energy efficiency, convenient options to pay bills, utility assistance programs, etc. One new feature recently added includes:

**Chatbot** – BPU.com visitors can now get immediate answers to common questions 24 hours a day, seven days a week via the website's new Chatbot tool. This feature, utilizing a computer program that communicates with the user, can quickly find answers a user types into the Chatbot box, rather than requiring visitors to scroll through the entire site for information. As more customers utilize this new feature, its functionality will be enhanced and become more intuitive and helpful.

Simply click on the Chatbot button at the bottom of every webpage on BPU.com to access this helpful tool!

Additional BPU.com upgrades and another website refresh are planned for 2020, with updated navigation tool, design, and content, and increasing the overall site speed for quicker access. 🚀



# Track Utility Usage and Save with *Energy Engage*

*continued from page 1*



## Energy Engage - Sign Up and Start Saving Today!!

It's simple and easy. Just log in to your account using the "View Bill" button at the top of BPU's home page ([www.BPU.com](http://www.BPU.com)), then enter your account number and sign in by clicking *Energy Engage*. If you don't have an existing self-service account, sign up as a "new user" and have immediate access. There's also a helpful tutorial video available on the webpage on how to get started. If you have any additional questions or need assistance, call 913-573-9190.

## How It Works...

Under a **My Energy** tab, customers are able to see estimated electric usage in dollars, details on how much they've spent on electricity that month, and how much they're estimated to spend when their next bill comes. Under the **Cost** tab, they can see by day and hour, current billing cycle or current year how much electricity they've used. The **Usage** tab shows how much electricity they're using compared to last month, and detailed information on when they're using it. Customers can also click on the **Impact** tab to see how their individual energy usage is affecting the environment. A **My Water** tab works just the same, except it shows water usage with all the same great features as the My Energy tab. 🚰

## Protect Your Appliances! Consider BPU's Surge Protection Service



Homeowners and renters should both understand the importance of protecting valuable appliances used by your family every day. BPU offers a "surge protection service" that will protect your electromechanical appliances against damage from power surges.

BPU surge protection products are designed to provide protection against the entry of a momentary surge at the meter. A surge may last less than a second but could cause considerable damage to washers, dryers, refrigerators, heating and cooling units and other such mechanical or motor driven appliances. In addition to BPU's surge protection service it is recommended that residential customers use adequate "UL Listed" point of use surge equipment to protect sensitive electronics against power surges. Point of use surge protection products should have a minimum rating of 1,900 joules and can be purchased from local electronics retailers.

The BPU surge protection service is available for a low monthly fee of \$4.95. To order this service, go to [BPU.com](http://BPU.com) or call (913) 573-9000. 📞



Rose Mulvany Henry was elected to the Board of Public Utilities, Member-at-Large Position 3, on November 5, 2019. She will be sworn into office at the BPU Board Meeting on Wednesday, January 8, 2020.

## Track Outages in Your Neighborhood Online This Winter

BPU offers a "live" real-time electrical outage map on its website and via mobile device. You can see if an outage has been reported in your area (down to your street level), a summary of affected/restored customers, as well as the number of outage calls reported. To see the map, click on the "Report Outage" button on BPU's home page ([www.BPU.com](http://www.BPU.com)) and follow the link, or go directly to <https://outage.bpu.com/> on your smart phone or computer. 📱



## Free Videos on Kid's Safety, Energy Efficiency Tips, Utility Scams, etc.

To further inform and educate customers, BPU offers a number of short, easily accessible videos to assist residents in their daily lives. This library of more than 50 self-help videos is available for free on BPU's YouTube Channel, with new and updated content being added all the time. Topics cover everything from *Understanding Your BPU Bill*, to *How to Fix a Leaky Toilet*, to enjoying the *Benefits of BPU's Community Solar Farm*. The latest videos include:

### **BPU Electrical Outage Restoration Efforts**

There are specific processes BPU follows during power outages, from diagnosing the problem and restoring power to first responders and hospitals, to working with individual property owners on a case-by-case basis. Safety precautions customers should follow when an outage occurs are also highlighted.

### **Preventing Utility Scams – Don't Become a Victim**

Unfortunately, scam artists are targeting utility customers across the country. From phone calls threatening service termination if money isn't paid immediately, to someone showing up at your door demanding payment – this is a scam! Hang-up or close the door, and always call BPU first at 913-573-9190 if you have any questions. 📞

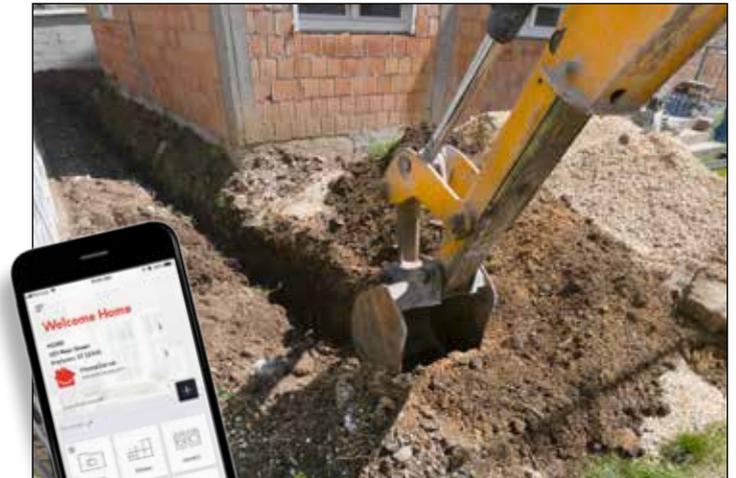


540 Minnesota Avenue  
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
MAIL-SORT, INC

# WHAT'S NEW?

BPU has partnered with HomeServe USA, a provider of home repair services solutions, offering residential customers access to various home repair service plans, including water service line repairs, sewer line repairs, and in-home plumbing plans. Many times such repairs are not covered by a homeowner's insurance policy or by the utility – creating unexpected expenses and the inconvenience of home repair emergencies. Starting at \$3.99 a month, more information about these service plans and a convenient App is available by going to [www.HomeServeUSA.com](http://www.HomeServeUSA.com) or calling HomeServe directly at 1-866-219-2162.



## BPU | BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**NORMAN D. SCOTT**  
President  
Member-at-Large  
[nscott@bpu.com](mailto:nscott@bpu.com)



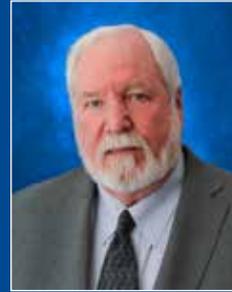
**RYAN EIDSON**  
Vice President  
Member-at-Large  
[reidson@bpu.com](mailto:reidson@bpu.com)



**ROBERT L. MILAN, SR.**  
Secretary  
Member First District  
[rmilan@bpu.com](mailto:rmilan@bpu.com)



**MARY L. GONZALES**  
Member-at-Large  
[mgonzales@bpu.com](mailto:mgonzales@bpu.com)



**THOMAS GRONEMAN**  
Member Second District  
[tgroneman@bpu.com](mailto:tgroneman@bpu.com)



**JEFF BRYANT**  
Member Third District  
[jbryant@bpu.com](mailto:jbryant@bpu.com)

## WHAT NUMBERS TO CALL:

<b>Customer Service</b>	573-9190
Billing Inquiries by phone–7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Friday	573-9190
If your electricity is out	573-9522
If your water service is out	573-9622
If you need service turned on or off	573-9190
<b>Billing questions</b>	573-9190
If you need to make payment arrangements on your bill	573-9145
BPU Job Line	573-6900
BPU Ethics Commission Hotline	271-6337
To request public information	573-9173
If you have administrative questions	573-9000
Heat Pump Hotline	573-9988
If you need a "dig" check for electrical cables or water lines	1-800-DIG-SAFE
Administrative Office Number	573-9000
Contact your BPU Board Member	573-9024

# CONTACT US

### MAIN OFFICE

Kansas City Board of Public Utilities  
540 Minnesota Avenue  
Kansas City, Kansas 66101  
Phone: (913) 573-9000  
Visit our Website at: [www.BPU.com](http://www.BPU.com)

### OFFICE HOURS

**8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday**

