

# Enhancing the Customer Experience



## CUSTOMER UTILITY ASSISTANCE ENABLED BY TECHNOLOGY

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Michael Faulk

Heidi Slakans



...Memphis  
...UES  
...HALL  
...KE JOIN!

MUSIC  
RECORD

Stax

Memphis  
Records, Tapes & Souvenirs

The Gibson Showcase

ROCK

# STATS

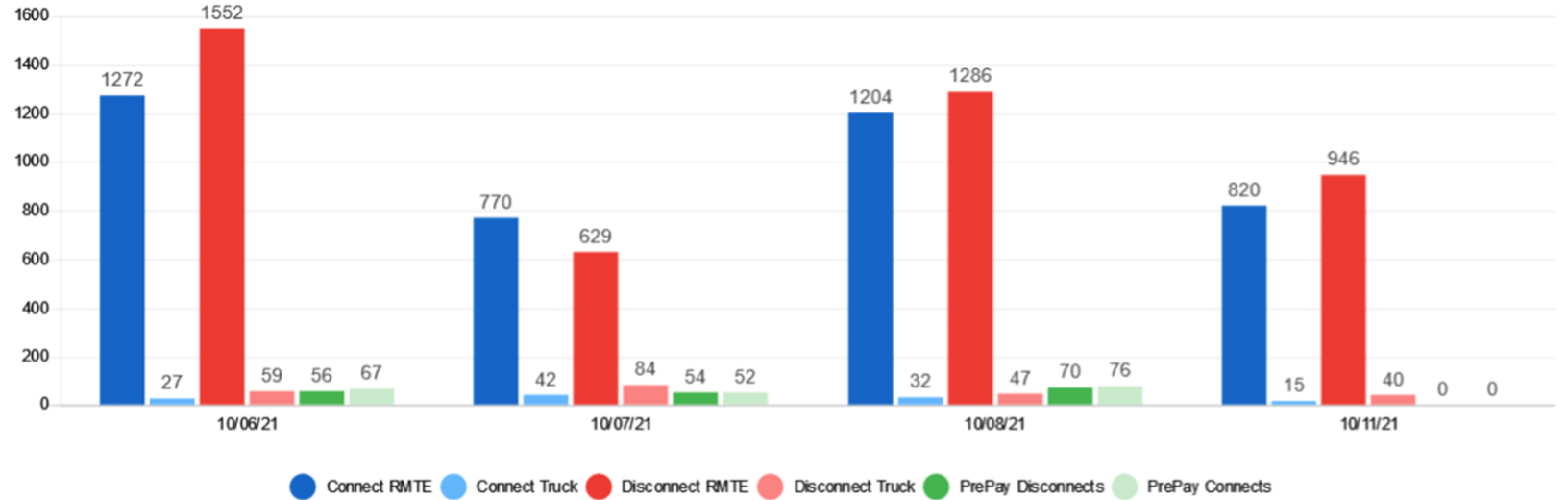
## Employees

2,489

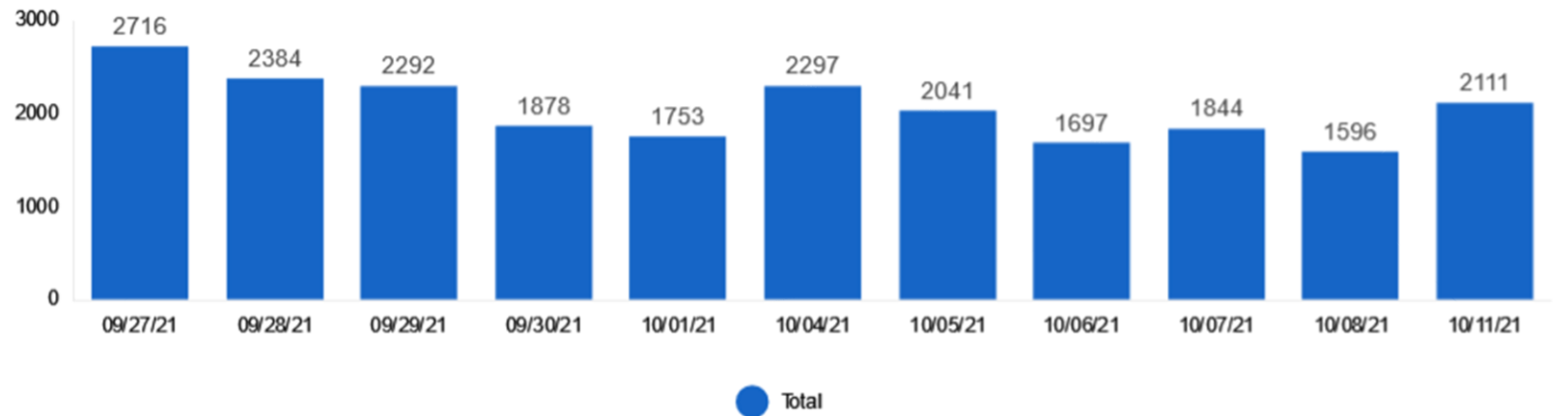
## Customers

430K

Complete - Connect and Disconnect



CIS Payment Arrangements Report

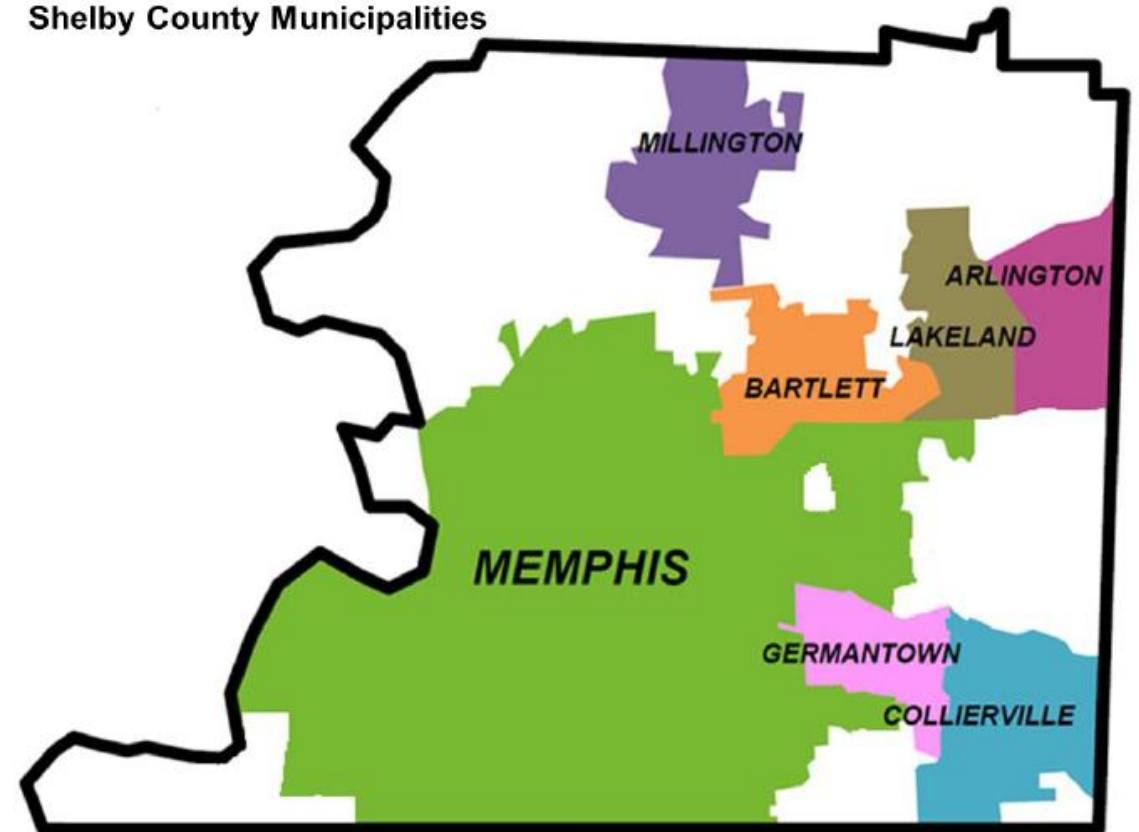


# MLGW SERVICE AREA

MLGW provides electric and gas service to all of Shelby County

MLGW provides water services to all of the Memphis and parts of unincorporated Shelby County, as well as Arlington and Lakeland

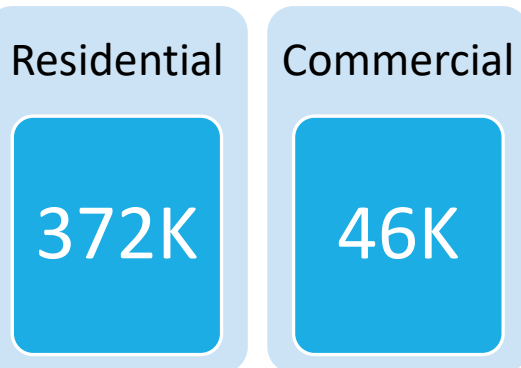
Shelby County Municipalities



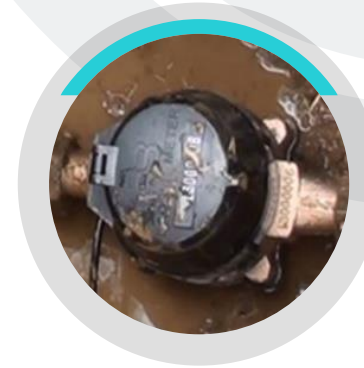
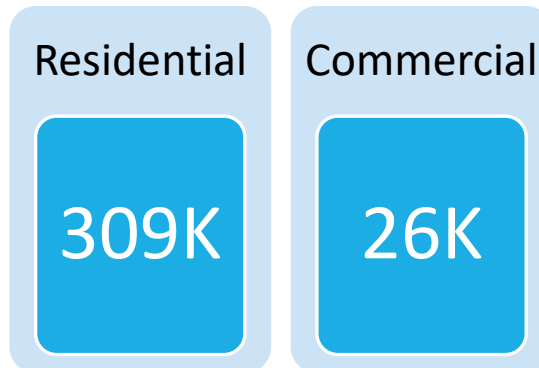
# ONE OF THE LARGEST 3 SERVICE UTILITIES IN THE UNITED STATES



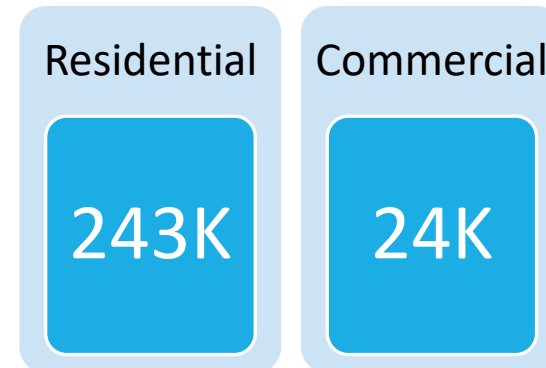
**ELECTRIC**



**GAS**

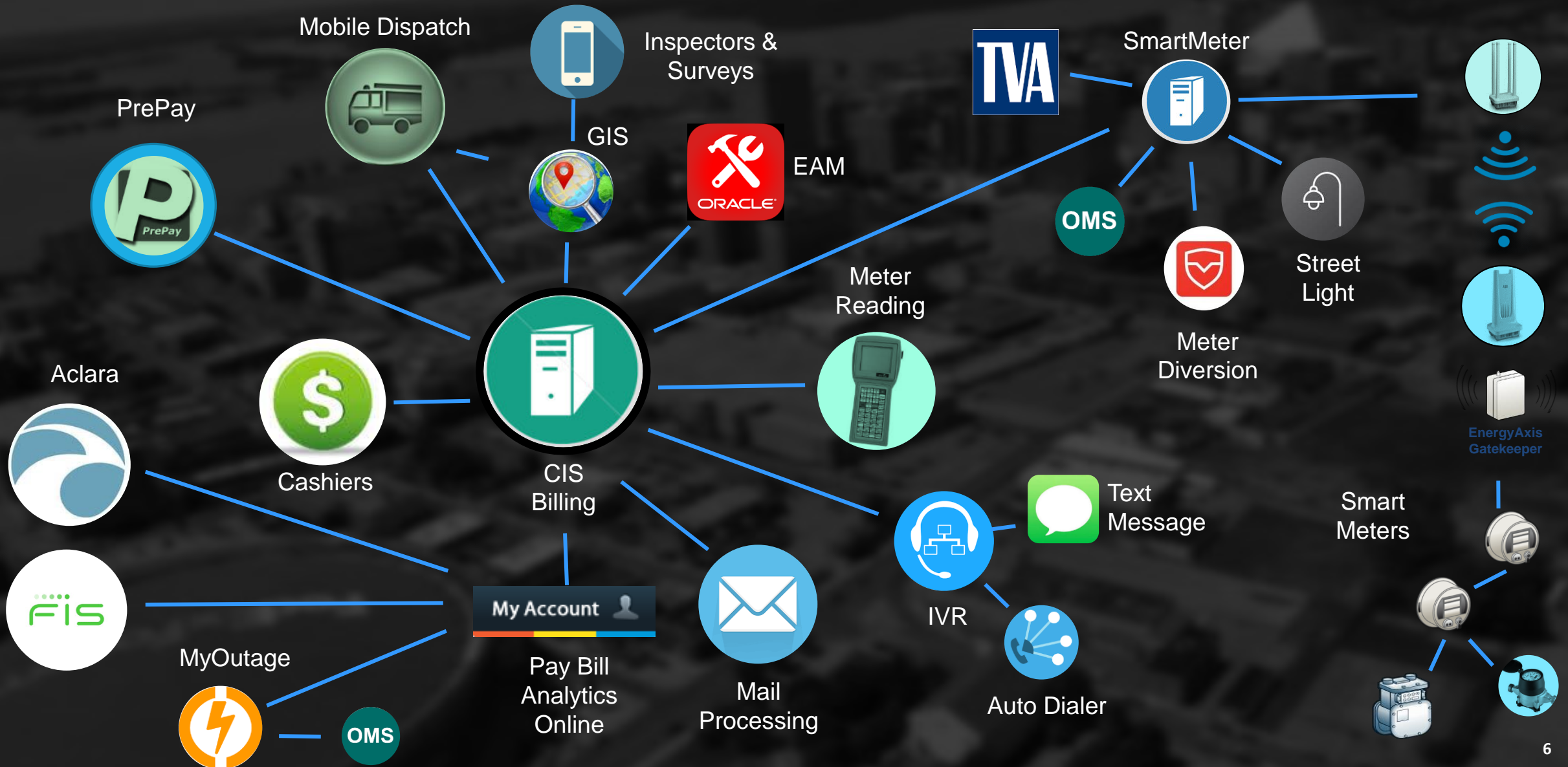


**WATER**



## SMARTMETERS

# IS APPLICATION NETWORK



# WHAT DO WE NEED TO COMMUNICATE?

## Outages

Impacting customers homes and businesses

Planned / Unplanned

## Appointments

Impacting customer's services and personal schedules

## Correspondence

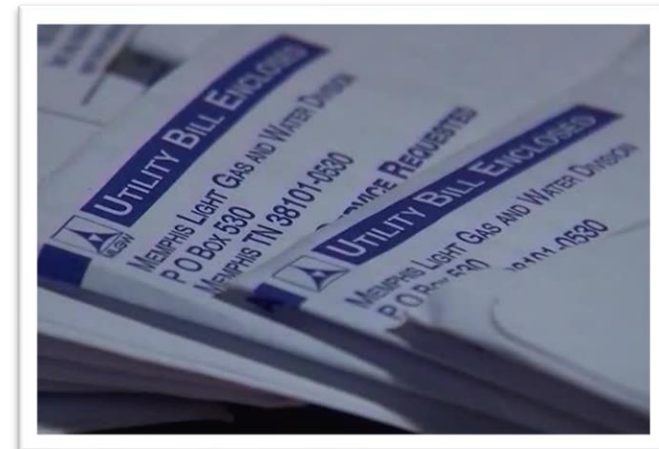
Impacting customer bills, cutoff notices, documents

## Reminders

Payment Reminders

Cutoff Notices

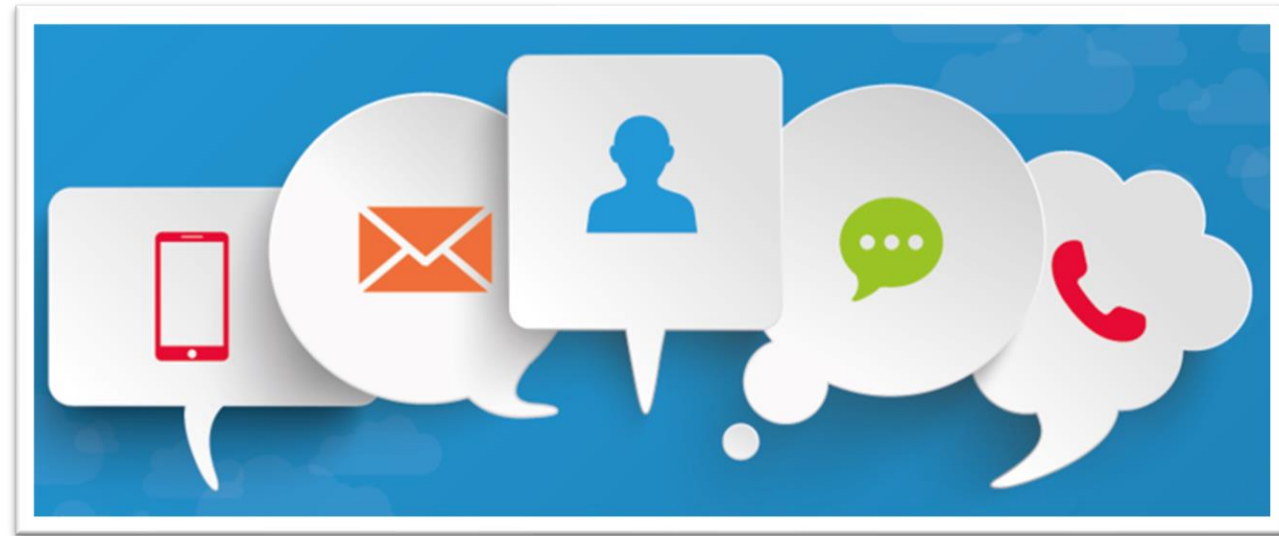
## Utility Assistance



# MULTIPLE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

When a customer needs help urgently, it's not uncommon to see the same inquiry coming in across **multiple communication channels**

- IVR / Phone
- Text
- eMail
- Online chat
- Social media

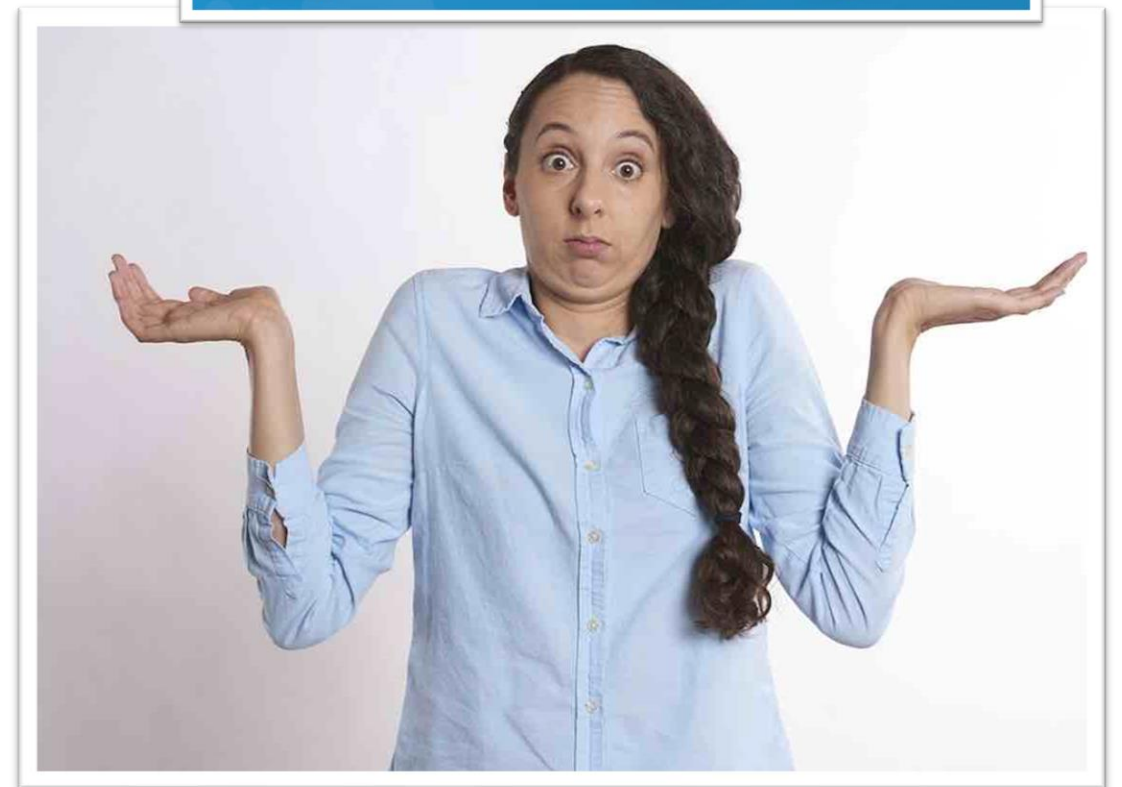
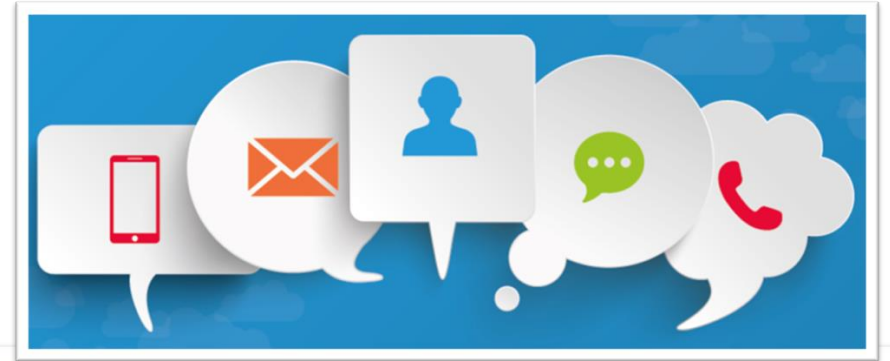




# CONFUSED CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

**This multi-pronged approach  
can create confusion and delays**

Impacts your ability to provide a  
rapid response at a time when  
the customer needs it most



# TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGES / DECISIONS

## Challenges

- Missed calls, Long Hold times
- Missed appointments meant starting the process all over again
- No immediate feedback from customers
- Reduce Call in the Call Center (Community Offices Shutdown)

## Upgrade or Replace?

Replaced legacy system for a more modern approach

Created New Environment for My Account

- Drive improvements to customer experience
- Consolidate workflows
- Increase efficiencies
- Provide safer environment for workers in the field

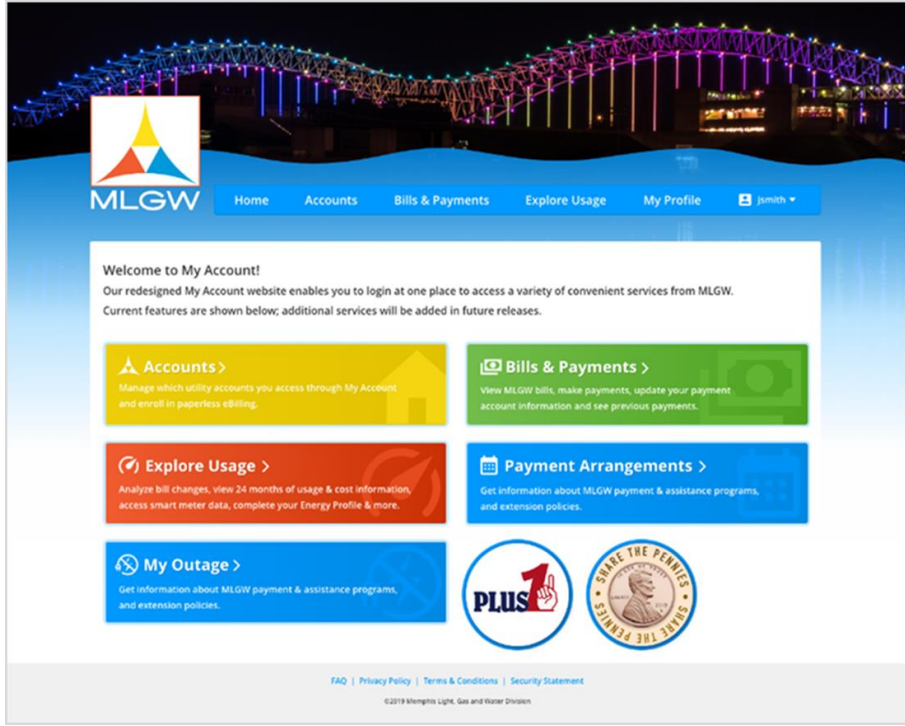
**IVR**

**Text, Autodialer, Chat**

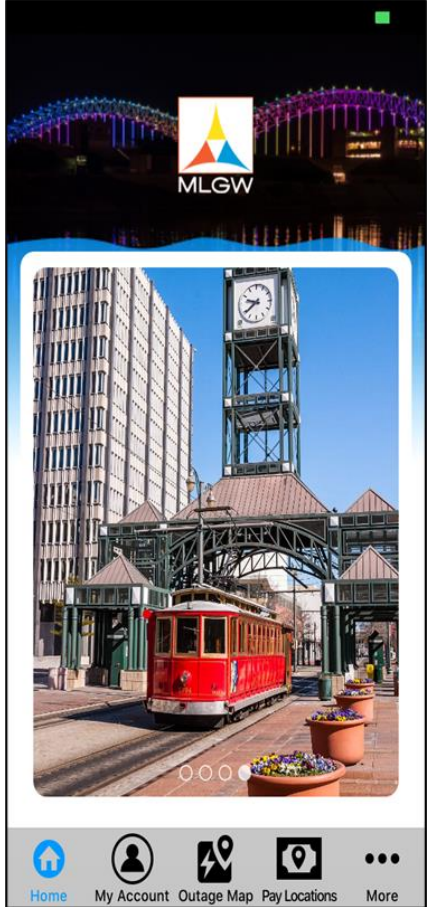
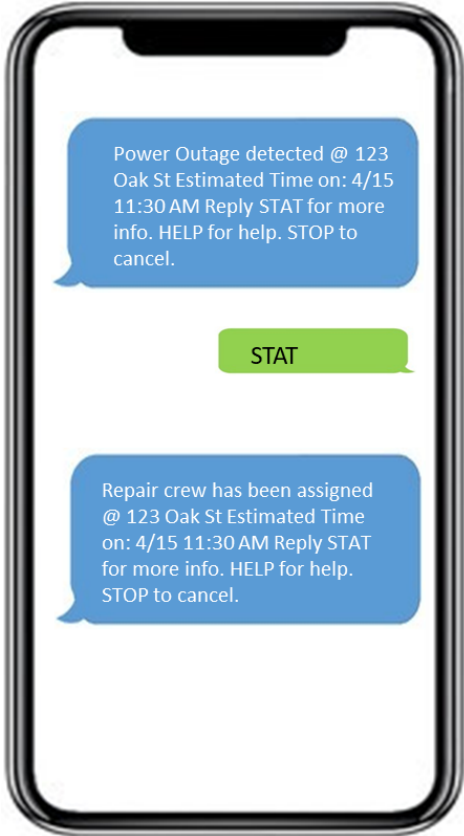
**Mobile Dispatch**

**MyAccount**





# GIFT OF COMFORT



# MY ACCOUNT

## New Application Launched JAN 2020

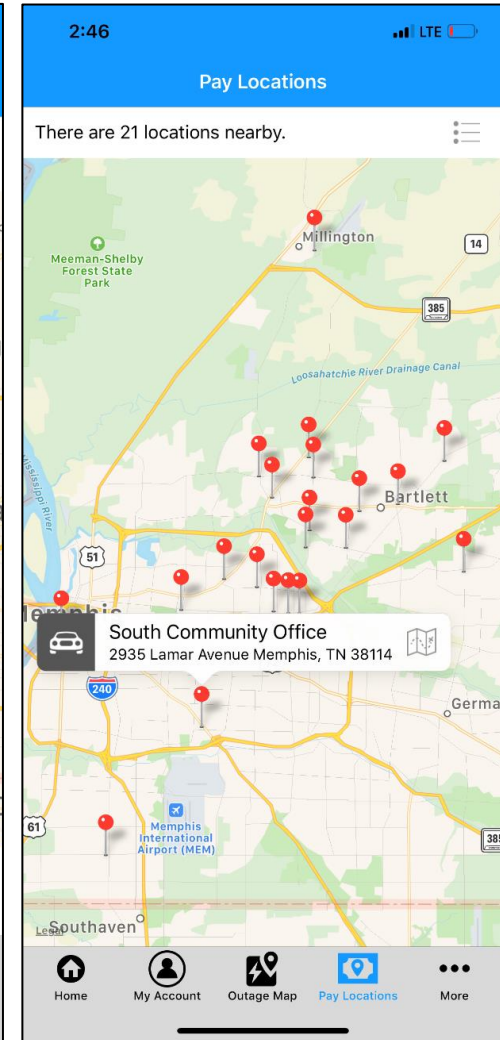
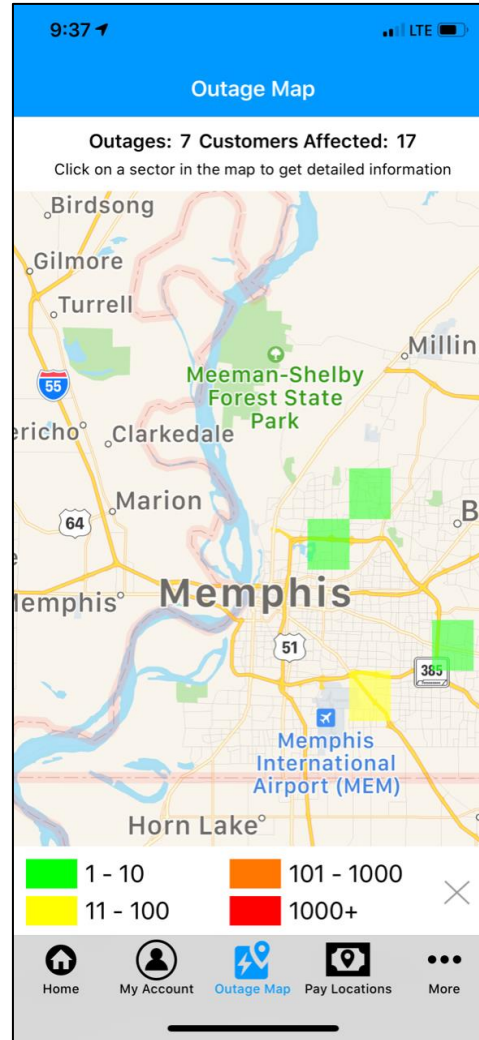
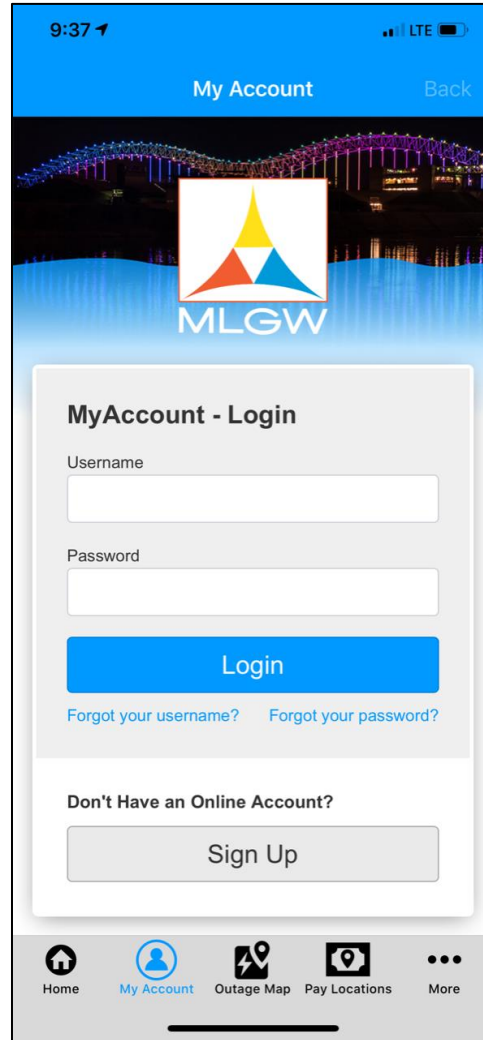
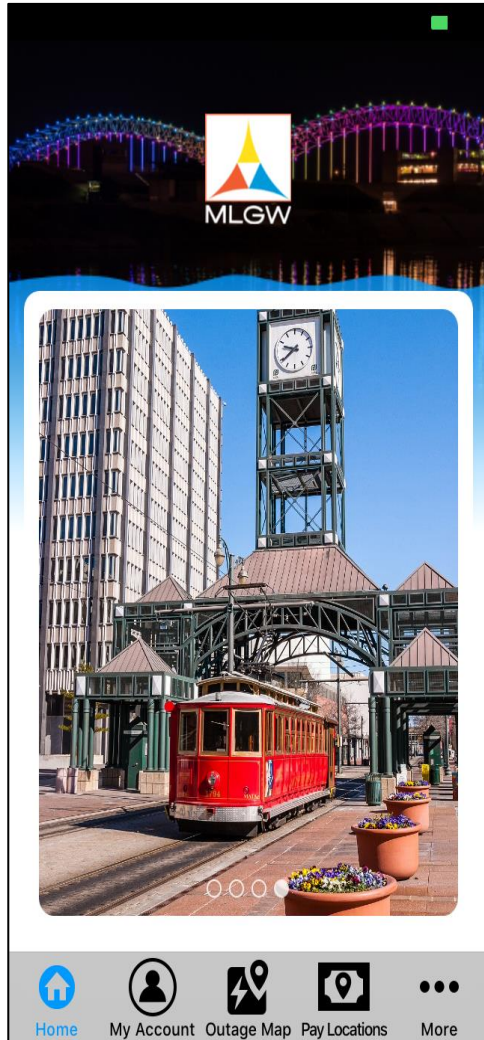
The screenshot shows the MLGW My Account web application interface. At the top, a dark blue header contains the text "Welcome to My Account!" on the left, a mail icon, the user name "mdfaulk", and a "Sign Out" link on the right. Below the header is a navigation bar with a blue background and white text for the following menu items: "My Account", "Accounts", "Bills & Payments", "Explore Usage", "Payment Arrangement", and "My Outage". The main content area features six large, colorful buttons with icons and text:

- Bills & Payments** (Green button): "Make payments, enroll in Auto Pay, update your methods of payment and view MLGW bills & payments."
- Explore Usage** (Blue button): "Analyze bill changes, view 24 months of usage and cost information, access smart meter data, complete your Energy Profile and more."
- Accounts** (Yellow button): "Manage your utility account(s) and enroll in paperless eBilling and text alerts."
- Payment Arrangement** (Orange button): "Request a payment arrangement to extend bill due date."
- My Electric Outage** (Red button): "Obtain electric outage information and report an outage to MLGW."
- My Application for On Track** (Light Green button): "Start a new On Track application."

At the bottom of the page, there are two circular logos: "PLUS 1" and "SHARE THE PENNIES".



# MOBILE APP



TOUCH ID



FACE ID



# MY ACCOUNT – PLUS1

- The Plus1 addition to MyAccount will make it easier for customer to make donations and will be automated in the CIS billing application
- Pays for utility services for people in need.
- This will eliminate paper, mail and back office processing by the MLGW team.

A screenshot of a web application interface showing a "One Time Donation" modal form. The form has a title bar with "One Time Donation" and a close button (X). Below the title bar, there is a "NO" button and a text prompt: "Yes, I would like to make a one-time donation to Plus-1." Underneath, there are three radio button options: "\$1", "\$5", and "\$10". Below these is another radio button option: "Other amount (Please Specify)". To the right of this option is a text input field with a "\$" symbol. At the bottom right of the form is a blue "Submit" button. In the background, a table is visible with columns for "Name" and "Address". One row shows "Mark Buckman" and "1379 Calumet Farms Dr, Collierville". A "One-Time Donation" button is visible next to this row.

# MY ACCOUNT – SHARE THE PENNIES

- The Share the Pennies addition to MyAccount will make it easier for customer to make donations and is automated in the CIS billing application
- This is a voluntary program that provides weatherization grants for low-income homeowners
- This will eliminate paper, mail and back office processing by the MLGW team

### Share the Pennies ✕

123 Oak St, Memphis

Status: **Enrolled**

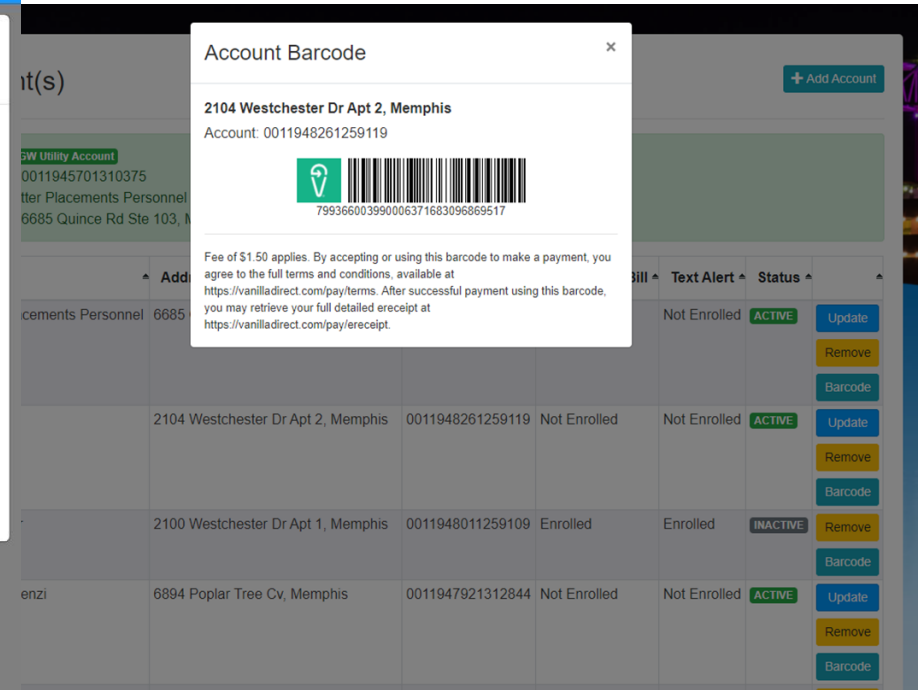
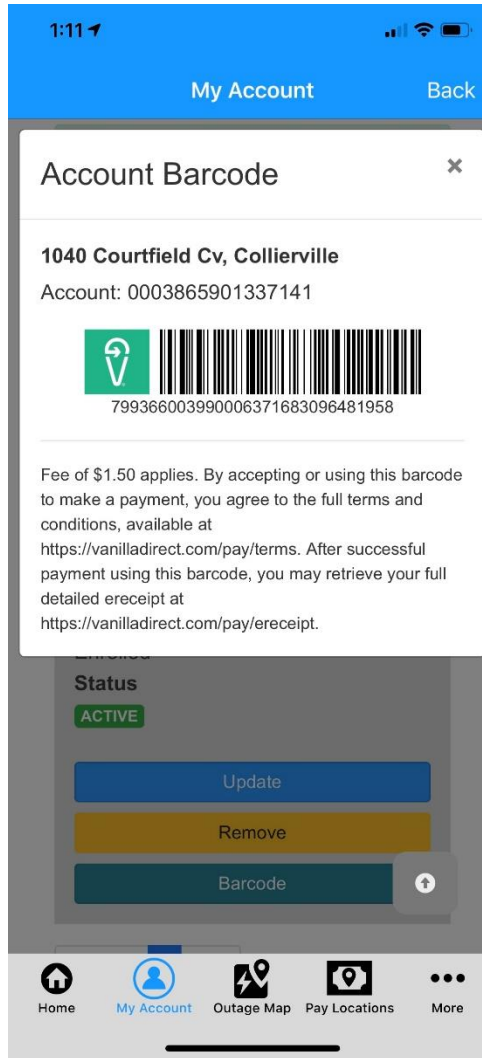
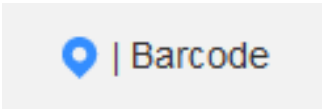
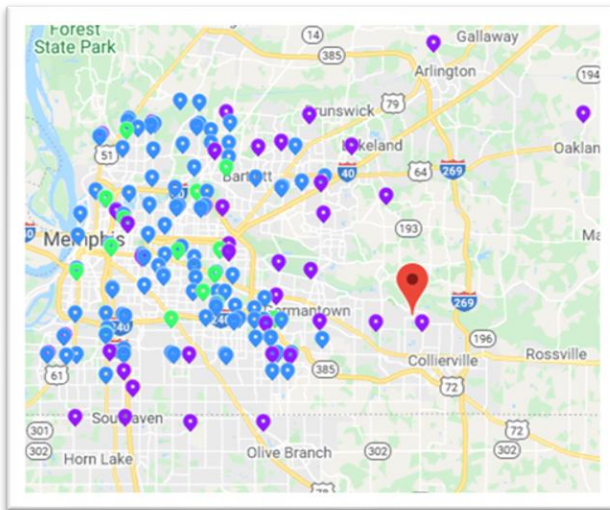
**YES** I would like to help fund grants for low-income energy-efficiency and weatherization improvements.

**Share the Pennies**  
HOME WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM



# MYACCOUNT BARCODE PAYMENTS

Customers can now use a barcode in the MyAccount app make payments at Dollar General and Family Dollar





# GIFT OF COMFORT

- The program provides a means for individuals in the community to make a payment towards a customer's utility bill as a gift
- The process will require information about the customers so the payments can be applied to their account



# GIFT OF COMFORT PROJECT PLAN



Idea



Accepted



Project Charter



Project Development and Timeline



Coding



Testing- Dev



Testing- UAT



Production Migration



# OLD GIFT OF COMFORT PROCESS

## FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS TO GIVE A GIFT OF COMFORT:

- Complete the gift form and trim off the gift acknowledgement to send to the recipient.
- Attach a check or money order made payable to MLGW Gift of Comfort in the amount you wish to give.
- Mail the form and check to MLGW.

Your gift will appear in the form of a credit on the recipient's MLGW bill. You can also download the Gift of Comfort form at [www.mlgw.com/giftofcomfort](http://www.mlgw.com/giftofcomfort).



To give a **GIFT OF COMFORT**, complete this form and send to:

Memphis Light, Gas and Water  
P.O. Box 388  
Memphis, Tennessee 38145

Be sure to enclose a check or money order (payable to MLGW Gift of Comfort) for the amount of your gift. Your gift will appear as a credit on the recipient's MLGW bill.

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Your Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
(if needed for verification)

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
(optional)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient's Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(cannot be a P.O. Box)

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Gift \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## GIFT OF COMFORT

A payment was made to your MLGW account for the following address:

\_\_\_\_\_

In the amount of

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

This Gift of Comfort was given by \_\_\_\_\_

*Great for all Occasions*  
**GIFT OF COMFORT**



A utility assistance program offered by MLGW that provides a means for individuals in the community to make a payment towards a customer's utility bill as a gift.



# ON MLGW.COM

The Gift of Comfort application is located on the main mlgw.com web page

The screenshot displays the MLGW website homepage. At the top, there is a weather widget for Memphis showing 22° on Wednesday. To the right is a search bar and social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, Email, YouTube, and Instagram. A navigation menu includes links for My Account, Residential, Commercial, Builders, Community, Social, About, and Contact. Below the navigation, there are contact numbers for Outages, Billing Questions, and Emergencies, along with an 'En Espanol' link. A banner for 'Winter Weather - Energy and Safety Tips' is present. The main content area features a 'My Account' button, a 'WEB CHAT' button, and a large promotional banner for 'DON'T WAIT. APPLY NOW FOR UTILITY ASSISTANCE.' with the MLGW logo. Below the banner are several service tiles: 'Memphis Germantown OUTAGE CENTER', 'PAYMENT OPTIONS', 'GIFT OF COMFORT GIVE A GIFT ONLINE', 'COVID-19 UTILITY ASSISTANCE', and 'Service Improvement Plan'. On the right side, there is a social media feed with a tweet and a 'Follow' button. At the bottom, there are links for 'Important Dates' and 'Latest News', a chat bubble saying 'Hi! How are you doing?', and another 'WEB CHAT' button.



# MY ACCOUNT MOBILE APPLICATION

The MyAccount mobile application will prompt the customers about the program and take them to the web page if they want to know more information about it



# GIFT OF COMFORT WEB SITE

- The new page had information about the program
- Allows customers to send pdf form
- Allows customers to use the NEW online process



Resi... / Assi... / Gift Of Comfort



#### Memphis Light, Gas and Water's "Gift of Comfort" let's you make a utility payment as a gift

The program gives individuals, businesses or organizations the chance to make a payment towards a customer's utility bill as a gift.

We have made it easier with a new online payment option.

All you need is a debit or credit card and the customer's:

- First initial
- Last name
- Street number of their address
- Example: J DOE 1244

[Click here](#) to give a Give of Comfort online.

The gift will appear in the form of a payment on the recipient's MLGW bill. We also will send the customer a letter notifying them of the Gift of Comfort. The giver can either remain anonymous or download the Gift of Comfort form and give it to the recipient.

[Click here](#) to download the form.

If you prefer writing a check, you can still download, complete and return the form to MLGW.

# GIFT OF COMFORT PROCESS

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Payment received by donor and sent to MLGW via API

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Payment applies to customer's account instantly

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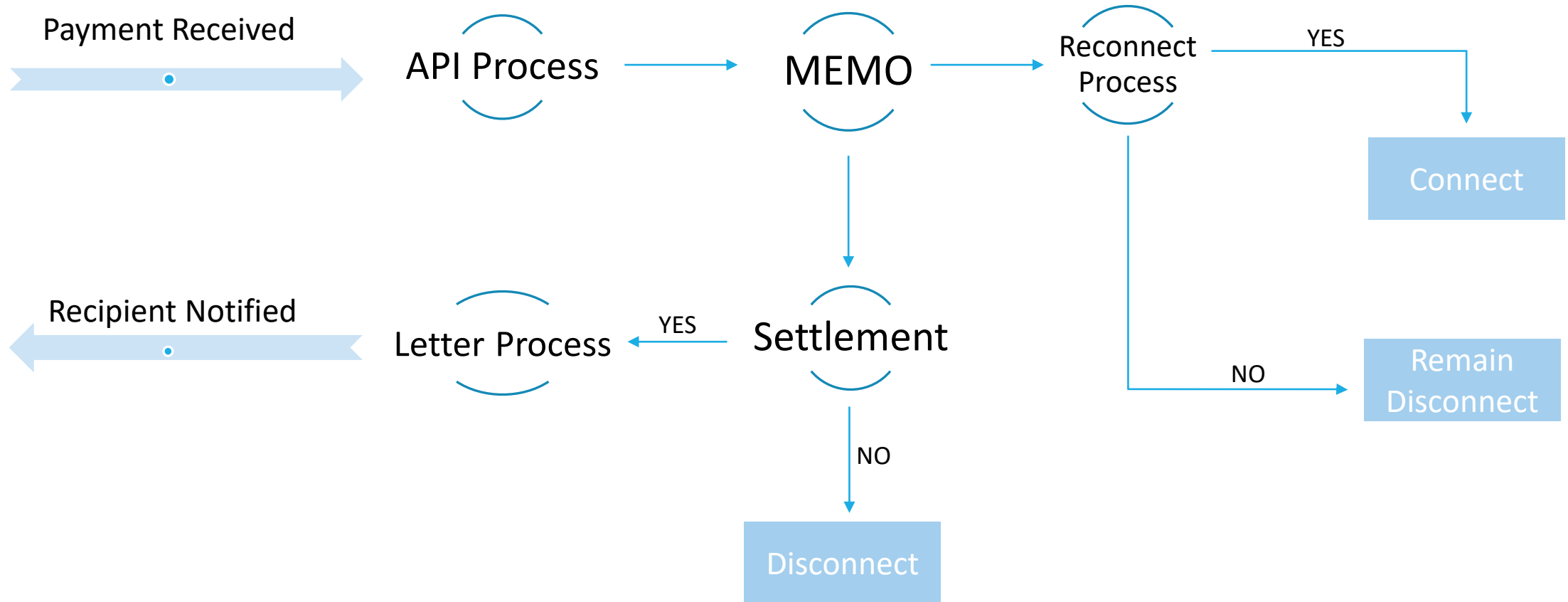
Cut off process runs to remotely activate customer

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Processing time: **Seconds**



# GIFT OF COMFORT PAYMENT PROCESS





# HOW GIFT OF COMFORT WORKS



## GIFT OF COMFORT



[CONTACT US](#) | [EXIT](#)

Authenticate

Enter

Verify

Confirm

## Payment Request Submitted

Thank you for your donation. The payment below has been submitted.

Please [print this page](#) out or make note of the Reference ID.

### Payment Details

Reference ID:	377980079052
Authorization number:	141676
Date and time:	10/15/2021 09:17:46 (CDT)
Gift of comfort id:	146BSLAKANS
Donor type:	Individual
Donor name:	Heidi Slakans
E-mail address:	hslakans@mlgw.org
Payment method:	Master Card *****7264
Payment amount:	\$5.00

Make Another Payment

Exit





# GIFT OF COMFORT FEEDBACK


 MLGW Gift of Comfort


Thank you for purchasing a Gift of Comfort




  
Results:  
What was the purpose of the gift: Assist a person in need  
On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being very easy, how easy was it to make the online Gift of Comfort purchase: 1  
Would you recommend the Gift of Comfort to family and friends as a gift option: Yes  
How did you learn about the Gift of Comfort: Other  
Comments/Recommendations : I can't see a way to make the online Gift of Comfort purchase: 5  
Email Address:  
Comments/Recommendations : I can't see a way to make the online Gift of Comfort purchase: 5  
Email Address:  
Comments/Recommendations : I can't see a way to make the online Gift of Comfort purchase: 5  
Email Address:

  
Results:  
What was the purpose of the gift: Assist a person in need  
On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being very easy, how easy was it to make the online Gift of Comfort purchase: 5  
Would you recommend the Gift of Comfort to family and friends as a gift option: Yes  
How did you learn about the Gift of Comfort: Other  
Email Address:  
Comments/Recommendations : Our church, St. Brigid Catholic Church, used to have to go to Kroger to pay on MLGW bills for those in need who contact us. A member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul at St. Anne Highland discovered Gift of Comfort and talked about it at one of our monthly meetings. It makes helping others so much easier. Kudos to MLGW for creating this website!

  
Results:  
What was the purpose of the gift: Assist a person in need  
On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being very easy, how easy was it to make the online Gift of Comfort purchase: 5  
Would you recommend the Gift of Comfort to family and friends as a gift option: Yes  
How did you learn about the Gift of Comfort: MLGW Website  
Comments/Recommendations : Great tool to help those in need  
Email Address:

  
Results:  
What was the purpose of the gift: Assist a person in need  
On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being very easy, how easy was it to make the online Gift of Comfort purchase: 5  
Would you recommend the Gift of Comfort to family and friends as a gift option: Yes  
How did you learn about the Gift of Comfort: MLGW Customer Care  
Comments/Recommendations : Great tool to help those in need  
Email Address:

  
Results:  
What was the purpose of the gift: Assist a person in need  
On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being very easy, how easy was it to make the online Gift of Comfort purchase: 5  
Would you recommend the Gift of Comfort to family and friends as a gift option: Yes  
How did you learn about the Gift of Comfort: Other  
Comments/Recommendations : It has made it much easier to assist those in need through our helpline at our St. Vincent de Paul Conference. We love it!

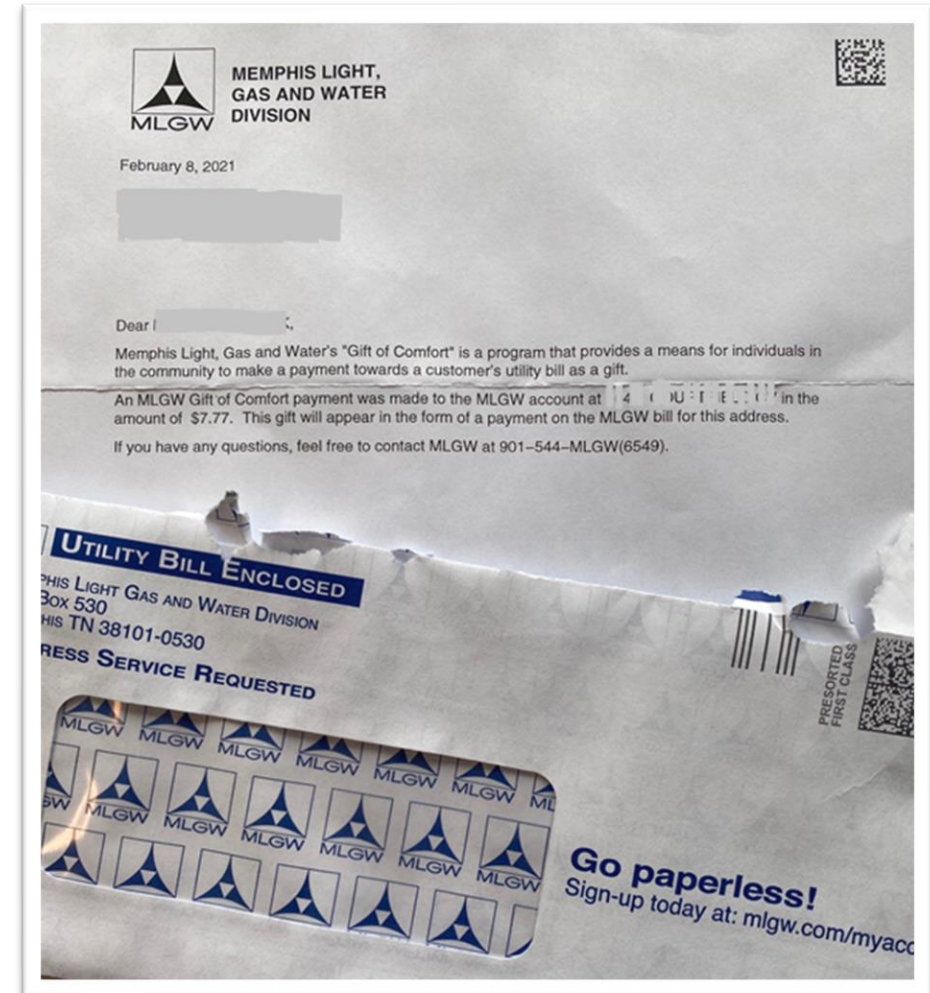
- Television
- Social Media
- MLGW Website
- MLGW Customer Care Center
- Other

Email Address:



# LETTER TO THE CUSTOMER

A letter will be sent out to the customer letting them know that a gift was made to their account



# CONTINUES IMPROVEMENT

Sending a personalized  
Message *2021*

Applying Recipient Full  
Name *2021*

Making Gift Of Comfort As  
a Recurrent payment. *2022*

Applying Text message  
*2022*



# STATS

## 2020 Gifts Given

**\$16,548.48**

Amount Paid

**72**

Households Served

## YTD Gifts Given

**1,009**

Total Gifts

**\$178,237.75**

Total Amount of Gifts



## Monthly Gift of Comfort



# MYACCOUNT - ON TRACK



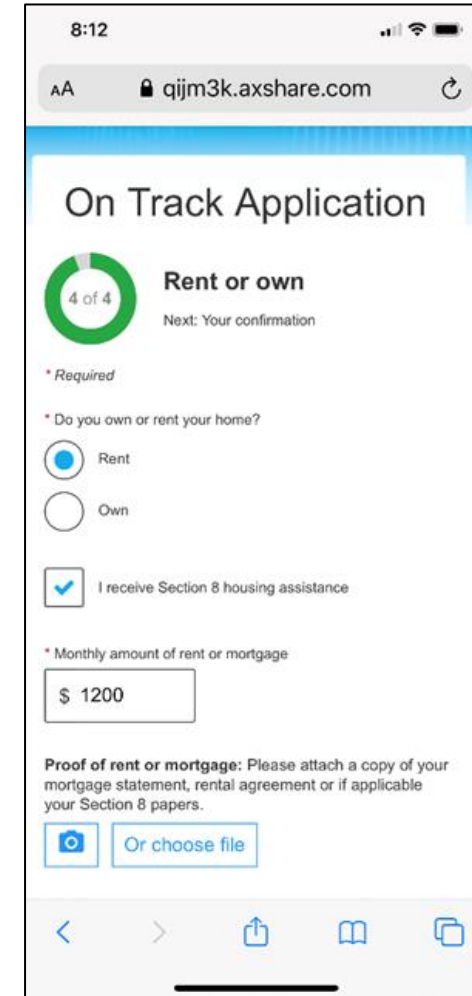
**On Track is designed to help residential customers with limited incomes to manage debt and pay off their bills over a period of time. The program focuses on education, financial management and social services assistance.**

**On Track participants are eligible to receive:**

- One-on-one assistance from an MLGW service advisor
- Information on budgeting and saving energy at home
- Deferred billing plans (DEFB) for up to three years
- Deposit credited back to the account after successful completion of program
- Social services referral

**On Track participation is free, but to qualify for the program customers must have:**

- A utility bill more than \$600
- Only one active account
- Steady income not exceeding 200% of the federal poverty guidelines or steady income and impacted by COVID-19 pandemic
- Customers who have graduated from On Track or have been removed from the program within the past three years are ineligible.
- Customers who have filed bankruptcy within the past six years are ineligible.
- Customers enrolled in the MLGW Life Support program or have an MLGW Life Support payment plan are ineligible..
- Customers enrolled in the PrePay program are ineligible.



# ADMIN APPROVAL

- Allows back office to see submitted forms and review attachments
- Users can request customers updated information or additional documents
- Admins can request more information, reject, approve and download the application
- Application and attachments will be zipped up and archive on department secured drive

Will this be a whole new admin environment or folded into an existing environment?

Global header and navigation for selected admin site/environment

Once an application is approved or rejected, should the attachments continue to be stored? If so, in which system?

## On Track Application: Smith, Jane

[Approve application](#) [Reject application](#) [Return to applicant for more info](#) [Download application \(PDF\) and all proof attachments \(ZIP\)](#)

### Your account

Approve account information

Referred by: **Firstname Lastname**

MLGW account number: **1234567890000**

Name on MLGW account: **Smith, Jane**

Street address: **123 This Street** Suite / apartment / unit number (optional):

City: **Memphis** State: **TN** ZIP: **38103**

Phone: **(901) 555-1212** Preferred phone (optional):

Email: [jsmith@email.com](mailto:jsmith@email.com)

### Members of your household

[Open PDF](#)

Approve	Name	Relationship	DOB	Proof	Upload proof
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smith, Jane	Self	01/01/1990	<a href="#">Proof 1</a> <a href="#">Proof 2</a>	<a href="#">Drop file here to upload</a> <a href="#">Or choose file</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Verylongnamehere, John	Partner	01/01/1989	<a href="#">Proof 1</a>	<a href="#">Drop file here to upload</a> <a href="#">Or choose file</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smith, Tom	Child	01/01/2010	<a href="#">Proof 1</a>	<a href="#">Drop file here to upload</a> <a href="#">Or choose file</a>

[Approve application](#) [Reject application](#) [Return to applicant for more info](#) [Download application \(PDF\) and all proof attachments \(ZIP\)](#)

# UTILITY ASSISTANCE



**Shelby County's Community Services Agency (CSA)** distributes funds for utility assistance. CSA provides emergency and non-emergency assistance. Customers who have already applied for utility assistance between October 1, 2017-2020 are able to apply online ([shelbycountycsa.org](http://shelbycountycsa.org)) if in the CSA database. First time or returning customers who applied before October 1, 2017, cannot apply online at this time and should apply by mail or email. Customers who are currently disconnected or pending disconnection should print and complete the application and place it in the dropbox along with all supporting documentation for the fastest response. The utility application drop box is at 3772 South Hickory Ridge Mall, #516 Memphis, TN 38115.



The **Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association (MIFA)** provides one-time, emergency utility assistance through MLGW's Plus-1 and Memphis Emergency Assistance programs. Applicants must live in Shelby County and may be eligible for assistance every two years after proving a crisis occurred within the last 90 days. Eligibility is not based on income, but preference is given to those off work for medical reasons. Applicants must provide proof that they can cover the remainder of the bill. Apply [mifa.org/applyonline](http://mifa.org/applyonline).

All MIFA Emergency Services (ES) inquiries, (telephonic and email) will be centralized to the new ES Helpdesk: [emergencyserviceshelpdesk@mifa.org](mailto:emergencyserviceshelpdesk@mifa.org) or (901) 529-4538. MIFA will have someone respond with a call or an email within 2 business days. There is also an option to receive assistance with an application if having difficulty accessing or completing one online.



**City of Memphis** provides \$1 million and partners with MLGW, MIFA and the Department of Human Services to provide a low-cost, efficient approach to screen and identify eligible participants for the City's Utility Assistance Program. Applicants are screened by the Department of Human Services or MIFA and may be eligible for up to \$500 in assistance. Applicants need to provide their Disconnect Notice to the Department of

Human Service via the office drop box, mail, or online if the customer has created an online account for their case.

Last Updated	Amount Paid YTD 2020-2021	Household Served 2020-2021
10/5/21	\$17,458,303.93	59,389

### CSA Utility Assistance - Program Year 2019 - 2021

CSA	Utility Assistance Summary	Eligibility Requirements
<p>Donut chart showing the distribution of funds for CSA Utility Assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolution Amount: \$28,147,490.30</li> <li>Amount Paid: \$12,529,728.49</li> <li>Pending Approval: \$7,722,595.46</li> <li>Money Remaining: \$7,895,166.35</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$28,147,490.30</b> Resolution Amount</p> <p><b>\$12,529,728.49</b> Amount Paid</p> <p><b>\$7,722,595.46</b> Pending Approval</p> <p><b>\$7,895,166.35</b> Money Remaining</p> <p><b>46,743</b> Household Served</p>	<p>Eligibility Requirements</p> <p><a href="#">Shelby County CSA Website</a></p>

### City of Memphis (MIFA and DHS) - Program Year 2019 - 2021

City Of Memphis	Utility Assistance Summary	Eligibility Requirements
<p>Donut chart showing the distribution of funds for City of Memphis Utility Assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolution Amount: \$2,000,000.00</li> <li>Amount Paid: \$1,369,872.41</li> <li>Pending Approval: \$53,087.06</li> <li>Money Remaining: \$577,040.53</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$2,000,000.00</b> Resolution Amount</p> <p><b>\$1,369,872.41</b> Amount Paid</p> <p><b>\$53,087.06</b> Pending Approval</p> <p><b>\$577,040.53</b> Money Remaining</p> <p><b>\$3,364.00</b> Household Served</p>	<p>Eligibility Requirements</p> <p><a href="#">MIFA Website</a></p>

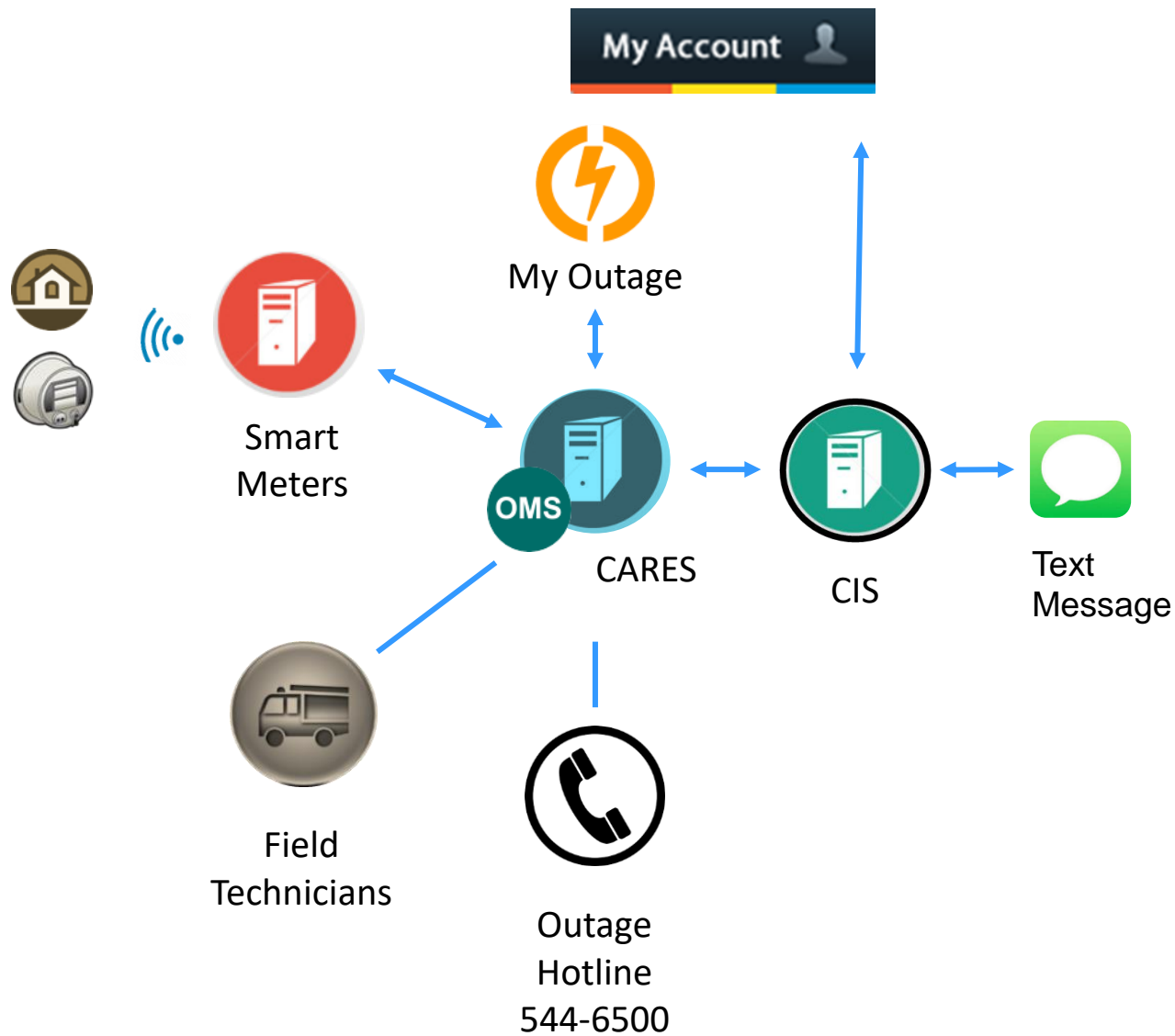




# OUTAGE MESSAGING

MLGW





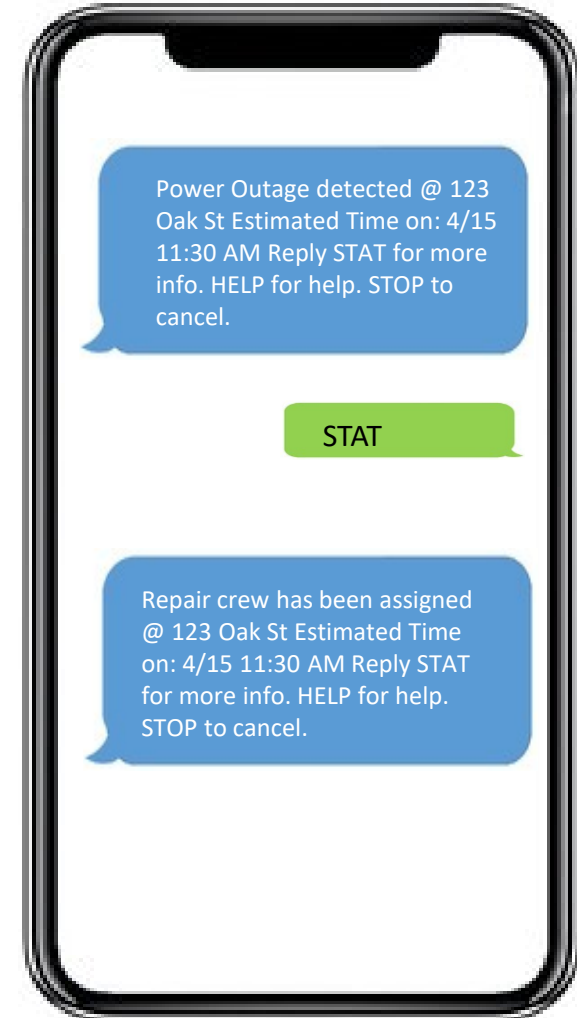
# Outage Reporting Channels

There are 4 channels of outage information feeding into the CARES/OMS area.

1. MyAccount – My Outage
2. SmartMeters
3. Field Technicians
4. Outage Hotline
5. Text In Outage (Phase 2)

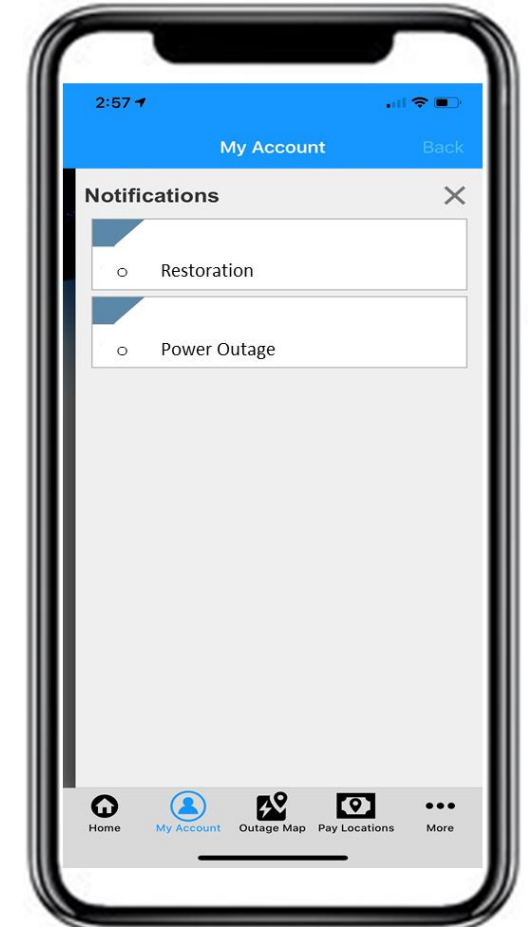
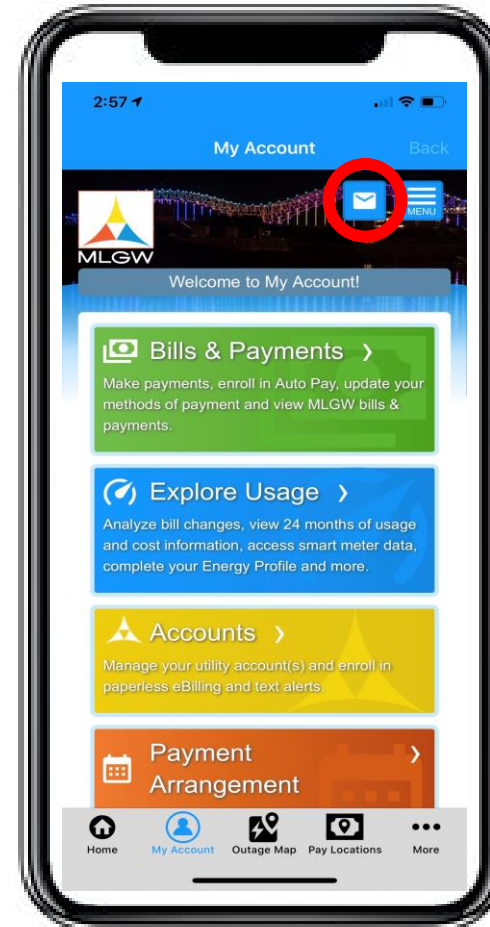
# OUTAGE / RESTORATION COMMUNICATION

- CARES will determine if the customer is out and then notify the customer of the outage
- The customer can reply STAT to receive the estimated time of restoration



# MY ACCOUNT- NOTIFICATION CENTER

- MyAccount has a new feature in the last release that will allow MLGW to post messages to the application.
- This will accommodate all types of customer communication and Outages will be one of the first
- The notifications will be sorted by date time and notifies the customer of the event
- There is more information about the event when the customer clicks on the notification



# MOBILE DISPATCH

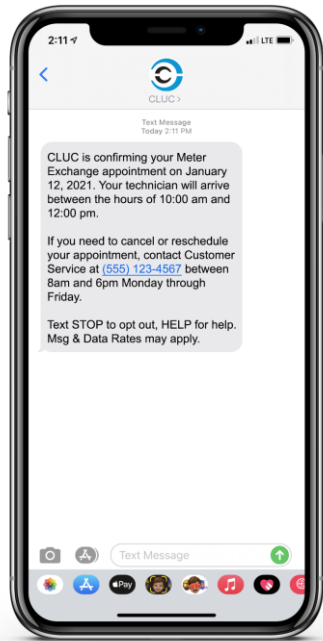
- 300 trucks equipped with rugged Toughbooks
- Areas include:
  - Customer Service
  - Revenue Protection
  - Meter Shops
  - Facility Locators
  - Trouble Shooters



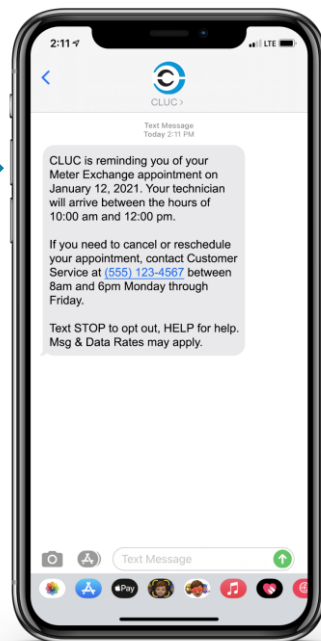


# CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS WORKFLOW

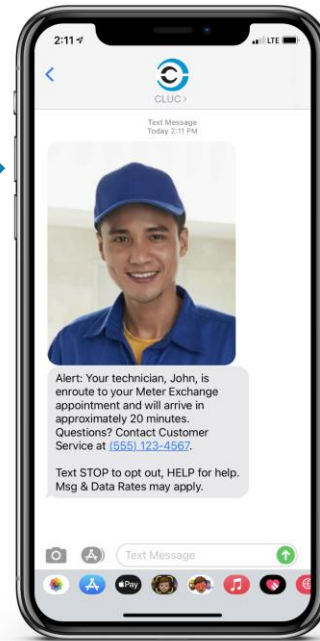
## Appointment Confirmation



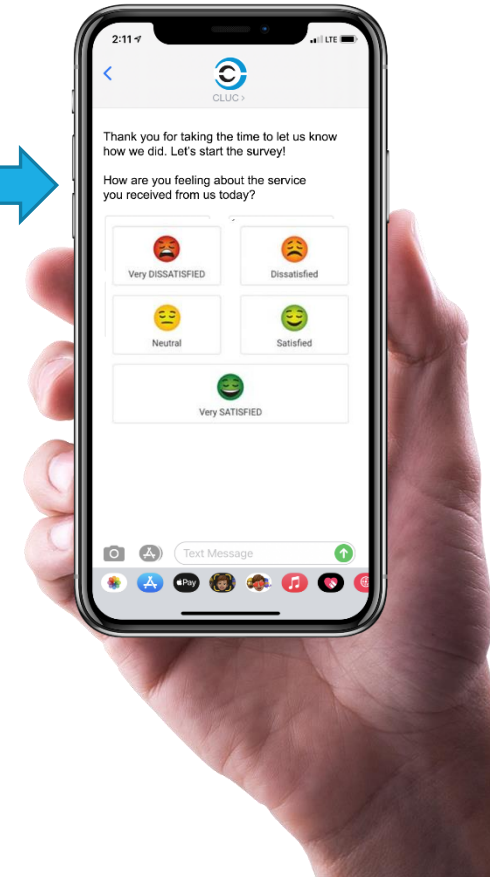
## Appointment Reminder



## Appointment Enroute Notification



## Appointment Feedback / Survey



# CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT - SURVEY

## Customer satisfaction, conversational voice, surveys

At or immediately after the time of service

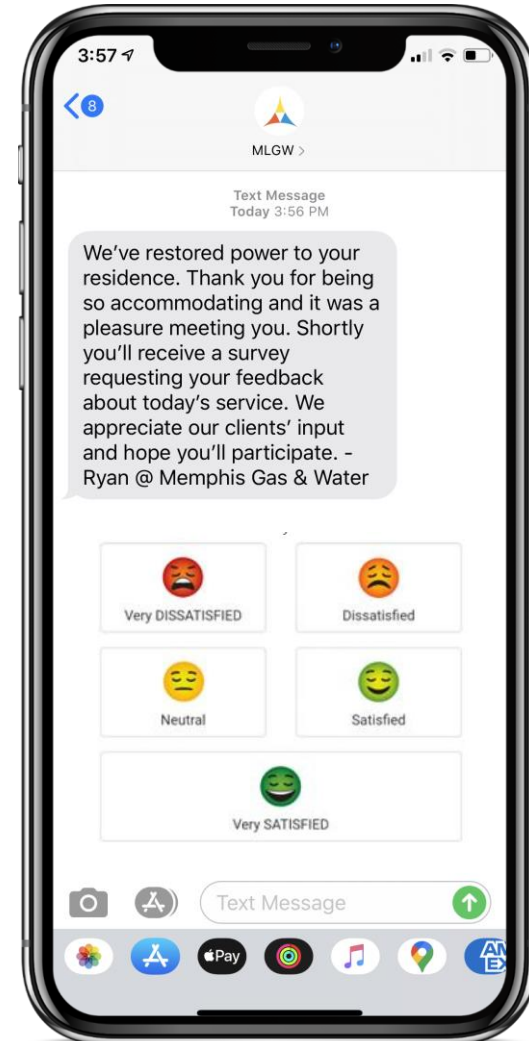
- Input is fresh and reflective of the experience

## Surveys configured by job code

- Triggered on work order completion
- Sent through customer's preferred medium
- Questions align with type of call and individual customer
- Additional questions presented if there was a negative experience

## Survey results logged and aggregated

- To show overall CSAT averages
- With ability to drill into specifics



# ENHANCE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE - ROADMAP

- Automate Start/Stop/Transfer Service
- Provide more CIS information on My Account
- Integrate My Account and PrePay
- Integrate My Account and Bill Analysis tool
- Provide other forms (15) to be filled out on My Account
- Planned Outage Communication
- Text In Outage





# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

All of these steps need to occur seamlessly for an **efficient and positive digital customer experience**





**THANK YOU**

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