

July 2018



Independence Day

Was HMU established on July 4, 1776? In a way, yes. Americans by birth, history and heritage are a fiercely independent lot. There has always been a sense that we as a people have the ability and confidence to control our own destiny as individuals and a country. *"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."* Fifty-six men threw off the shackles of tyranny imposed by a foreign monarch on behalf of 13 fledgling states when they pledged *"...our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor"* to establish *"...free and independent states"*. Independent from day one.

Yet, the founding fathers knew that individual liberty and self-determination required cooperation and a group effort. A quote attributed to Benjamin Franklin goes something like *"We must all hang together or most assuredly, we will all hang separately."* meaning the group must collaborate and act in a common mission and in the best interests of all. If selfish interests became greater than the good of the group, each individual would likely, and literally, be put to death.

What does a history lesson on the founding of our country have to do with establishing a utility? Plenty. It's against this historical and cultural background of independence that what would, eventually, become HMU was established. It's a belief of independence that sets a municipal utility apart from an investor owned utility. The core essence of a municipal utility is communal independence through dependence on each other. The Declaration of Independence was signed barely 114 years before discussions began in Harlan on establishing an electric and water utility. Confidence in determining individual and community fate was likely high. The belief of *"We can do this. We know what is best for us. We will control our future. We will not be beholden to outsiders."* may have been common by visionaries. *Free and independent.*

Citizens expressed the belief in independence in 1891 when the electric and water utility were established, in 1952 when they voted to establish a gas utility and again in 1995 when they established a telecommunications utility. There is a consistent historical thread of independence running through Harlan's history. Time and time again; *Free and independent.*

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Quick Tips

SUMMER EFFICIENCY

July is typically the hottest month of the year in Iowa. Air conditioners try and keep up with keeping us cool and removing summer humidity.

Practice summer energy efficiency. HMU offers rebates for installing new high efficiency central and window air conditioners.

AUTO PAY

AutoPay is quick, easy and free. Set up your utility bill to be automatically paid through your checking, savings or credit card account. No more late payments. No more writing out and mailing or dropping off a check. More peace of mind knowing it's one less thing to worry about each month. See us for details on setting up AutoPay.

DRAWING WINNERS

Congratulations to Ruthe Pattison and Janet Fink; our drawing winners at the Municipal Celebration.

Independence Day

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A municipal utility is independent from all others in its operations and philosophy. Through its Board, management, and employees, HMU operations are totally focused on Harlan. Not most days, not some days, EVERY day. All financial and labor resources are dedicated to you and nowhere else. We act and perform independently from any other utility or provider.

A municipal utility is independent in its governance. Through the years, HMU has relied on fellow citizens serving as Board members to guide its progress. It's been the local business owner, laborer, mechanic, electrician, pharmacist, machinist, engineer, banker, insurance agent, dentist, funeral director, attorney, photographer, and others at the strategic helm. All Board members are Harlan citizens working together for communal interest and not personal gain. *Hanging together.*

As the United States of America celebrates 242 years of Independence, the principles and concepts of freedom, liberty, self-determination, and working together for the common good still survive not only in our country but in simple everyday things like HMU.



Harlan's premier provider
of electric, gas, water
and telecommunications.

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Follow us!



Gas Survey coming in August

As part of our natural gas awareness plan, we conduct a telephone survey of our customers every three years. During the month of August, you may receive a phone call from a company identifying themselves as CFR stating they are calling on our behalf.

THIS IS A LEGITIMATE SURVEY and we ask that, if called, you take about 5-7 minutes to answer questions on our natural gas safety outreach. This federally mandated survey is important to us to maintain compliance with all regulations.

In order to perform an adequate survey of all our customers, CFR will need to reach a large number of men and women from all age groups as a broad representation of our customer base. So, if you are called, we do ask that you please take the time to answer the survey questions.

Dispute Resolution

The Iowa Utilities Board requires that all utilities in the state publish an annual notice advising customers of their right of appeal on certain complaints and where a qualified utility representative can be reached. The following is a required notice to HMU customers:

Customers of Harlan Municipal Utilities who desire assistance in the resolution of a complaint may ask for the customer service representative at:

Harlan Municipal Utilities
2412 Southwest Avenue
Harlan, Iowa 51537

or call HMU at (712) 755-5182
Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If your complaint is related to electric or natural gas service disconnection, safety or renewable energy, and Harlan Municipal Utilities does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Board.

By Mail:

Iowa Utilities Board
Customer Service
1375 E. Court Ave., RM 69
Des Moines, IA 50319-0069

By telephone or FAX:

Toll free: 1-877-565-4450
Fax: 1-515-725-7399

By eMail: customer@iub.iowa.gov

Online: <https://iub.iowa.gov/how-to-file-complaint>