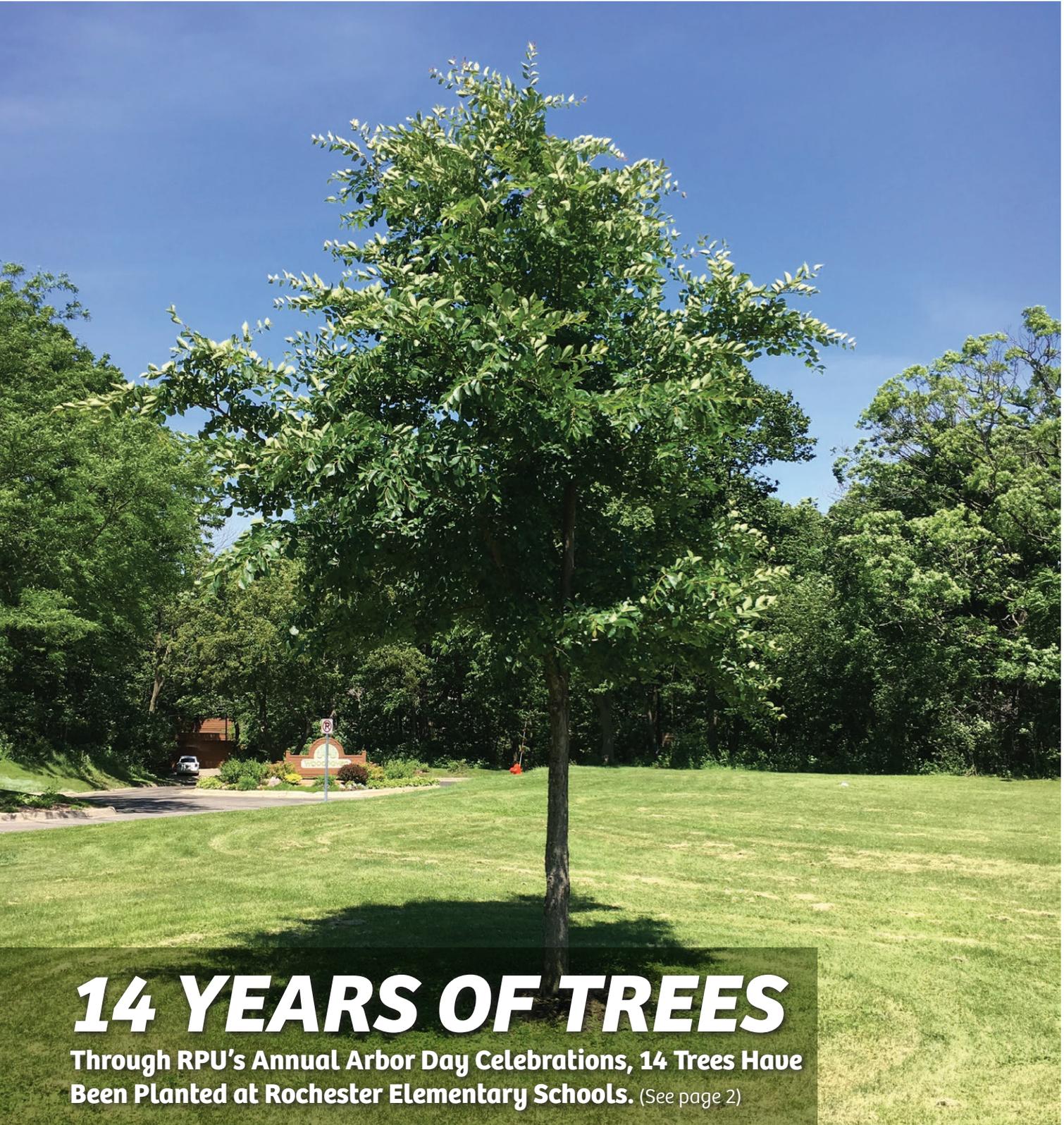


RPU *Plugged In*



14 YEARS OF TREES

Through RPU's Annual Arbor Day Celebrations, 14 Trees Have Been Planted at Rochester Elementary Schools. *(See page 2)*



Pictures of some of the trees that have been planted at Rochester elementary schools over the past 14 years.

14 YEARS OF TREES

Through RPU's Annual Arbor Day Celebrations, RPU Has Planted 14 Trees at Rochester Elementary Schools

For 14 years now, RPU has visited the elementary school of the annual Arbor Day Celebration poster contest winner. The contest and celebration have become an annual event that the Rochester community and local teachers look forward to each year. Trees have been planted at different elementary schools across Rochester, including the most recent one planted at Jefferson Elementary School last year in recognition of the 2016 Arbor Day poster contest winner Paige Patten.

The trees provide recognition and stand as a reminder of the accomplishments of students from the school, but the trees provide many benefits as well.

As we celebrate the 15th year of our Arbor Day Celebration, we spoke with our partners, Jay Maier of Maier Tree & Lawn and Jeff Haberman of Rochester Parks & Recreation, to list some of the benefits of trees to the Rochester community.

In speaking with these tree experts, here is what they had to say: *"Trees benefit our community in a number of ways. Most of us recognize that we would prefer a home, street, or park with trees, but sometimes it is hard to state why. The things*

you see and feel, like shade, aesthetics, protection from wind, homes for wildlife, fruit production, and screening are most easily recognized because they are right in front of us. But some of the behind-the-scenes benefits are worth noting. Those less noticeable benefits include carbon sequestration (and corresponding oxygen creation, i.e., clean air), lessened peak storm water runoff, increased property values, reduced crime, increased spending on tree-lined shopping areas, and more."

"Additionally, research has shown that people can benefit from trees and green space because of the reduction in stress and anxiety when humans interact with their natural environment and research has shown people heal quicker when they have access to or a view of trees and green space."

If you have trees on your property, make sure to keep an eye on the trimming needs of your trees, however, never try to trim your trees if they are near overhead power lines. Read on for some reasons why RPU trims trees in the community and why you should never trim it yourself.



Paige Patten, 2016 poster contest winner

TOP 5 REASONS FOR RPU TREE TRIMMING

1 Safety. The safety of our customers, the Rochester community, and RPU employees is paramount and tree trimming helps to ensure safety.

2 Reliability. A number of electric outages each year on the RPU system are attributed to trees in overhead power lines or branches coming down on an overhead line. By being proactive with tree trimming, tree-related outages have been shrinking and the duration of the outages have as well.

3 Aesthetics. Keeping tree branches a safe distance from overhead power lines looks cleaner rather than having trees overgrowing the lines.

4 Tree health. By regularly inspecting trees, RPU is able to maintain their health and minimize the number of trees that have to be taken down due to illness or overgrowth.

5 Financial benefits. RPU budgets almost \$1 million annually for tree trimming across the RPU system. This is a significant expenditure, but expenses



Wright Tree Service, a company contracted by RPU, trims trees in NE Rochester near overhead power lines.

could be substantially more if there were injuries, major infrastructure damage, and prolonged outages due to tree overgrowth around overhead power lines.

Join Us!

RPU's 15th Annual

Arbor Day Celebration

Friday, April 28, 2017 • 11am-1pm

Three Links – Silver Lake Park (Rain Location: RCTC's Field House)

Admission is Free!



FREE Food* • FREE Trees* • Giveaways*

Live Music • Family Activities • Poster Contest Winners Awarded

QUESTIONS: Stephanie Humphrey 507.280.1639 • **MORE INFORMATION:** www.rpu.org

*while supplies last

SPONSORING PARTNERS:



Maier
TREE & LAWN
a **DAVEY** company



CO-SPONSORS:



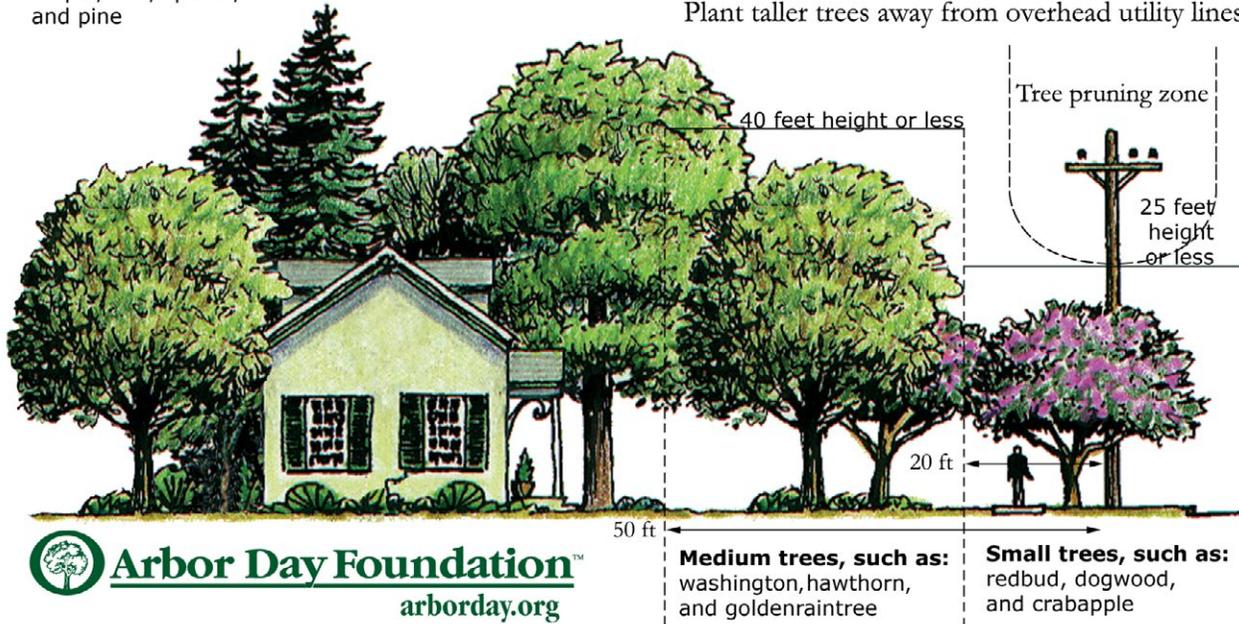
PARTICIPANTS:

Boys & Girls Club of Rochester • Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Olmsted County Environmental Resources • Olmsted Soil & Water Conservation District • Quarry Hill Nature Center
RNeighbors • Rochester Public Library • Rochester Public Works • Zumbro Valley Audubon

Tall trees, such as:
maple, oak, spruce,
and pine

Plant the right tree in the right place

Plant taller trees away from overhead utility lines



The Right Tree in the Right Place

When planting a tree in your yard, it is important to take into account the type of tree you are planting, the location, and the function for the tree. All of these items feed into the Arbor Day Foundation's Right Tree in the Right Place education.

Planting a large tree under or near overhead power lines will require future maintenance of the tree including pruning to an unnatural size and shape or possibly even removal of a healthy tree. Large trees near overhead lines cause a major issue for electric reliability and for safety. **Always consult with your local tree expert or contact RPU before planting trees near overhead power lines.**

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

As you are plotting out your tree plantings, landscaping, or even a new deck or play area, remember to always *Call Before You Dig* this spring. Gopher State One Call is a free utility locating service. Gopher State One Call is an important service to help keep customers and utility workers safe. It's not only quick and easy; it is also your responsibility as a homeowner.

Color Code Chart

The American Public Works Association encourages public agencies, utilities, contractors, associations, manufacturers, and all others involved in excavation to adopt the ULCC Uniform Color Code using the ANSI standard Z53.1 Safety Colors shown below. These colors are used to mark the various underground utilities that may be found during a dig. Flags or paint are examples of materials that are used to mark areas using the colors below.

	Proposed Excavation		Communication-CATV-Fiber
	Temporary Survey Markings		Water
	Electric		Reclaimed Water-Irrigation
	Gas-Oil-Steam-Propane		Sewer

www.gopherstateonecall.org
1.800.252.1166



Partners in Planting

\$20 ARBORIST COUPON

Submit to Maier Tree & Lawn for **\$20 OFF** the purchase of any tree care service.*



Maier
TREE & LAWN

a **DAVEY** company

3930 Hwy 14 E • Rochester, MN 55904
507.286.TREE (8733) • MaierTreeandLawn.com


we pledge, we deliver
CONSERVE & \$AVE

* This coupon is offered in support of RPU's Partners in Planting program. Must be an RPU customer to participate. One coupon per household. Offer valid on arborist services over \$200. Not good with other discounts or promotions. Must be presented at time of sale. Refunds not available.

RPU and Rochester Parks & Recreation 2017 Tree Planting Event

RPU lineworkers and members from Rochester Parks & Recreation will be planting appropriate types of trees near or under overhead power lines later this month in NE Rochester. Forty (40) trees will be planted along 11th Avenue NE between 3rd Street and 14th Street NE.

A number of different species of small trees will be planted including: Crabapple, Prairiefire, Crabapple Royal Rain Drops, Eastern Redbud, Ivory Pillar Lilac, Plum Tree, and Serviceberry. Thank you to Jim Whiting Nursery & Garden Center for their help with this event.



RPU lineworkers and Rochester Parks & Recreation staff planted boulevard trees in NW Rochester to kick-off RPU's Arbor Day Celebration in 2016.

Partners in Planting

\$10 NURSERY COUPON

GOOD FOR \$10 TOWARD THE PURCHASE OF ANY TREE PRICED AT \$75 OR MORE, FROM JIM WHITING NURSERY OR SARGENT'S GARDENS.

Must be an RPU customer to participate. One coupon per household. Must be presented to nursery at time of sale.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____ Email: _____

Type of tree purchased: _____ Size of tree purchased: _____ Planting distance from house: _____

On which side of your home will you be planting the tree? north south east west



www.jimwhitingnursery.com
3430 - 19th St NW • 507.289.3741



www.sargentsgardens.com
7955 -18th Ave NW • 507.289.0022
1811 - 2nd St SW • 507.289.6068





Buyer Beware ...

If It Sounds Too Good to Be True, It Probably Is

Recently, one of RPU's energy experts attended a local "free seminar dinner" to learn about their advertised energy saving products. These products, they claimed, could save customers up to 50% of their energy usage.

Questionable products such as thermal blankets, refrigerant additives, and solar attic fans were all suggested at this seminar. Quick calculations of the energy savings showed that some of these products could possibly show energy savings,

but the time that it would take to see a payback in energy savings would be well beyond 100 years or more. Additionally, some products may actually lead to more energy use and early equipment failure.

Use caution if you attend one of these seminars or if you are considering purchasing one of these products. Call RPU at **507.280.1500** if you have questions regarding energy savings or products claiming to save energy.

RPU Commercial Customer Corner

Are You Ready to Make Some Energy Efficiency Improvements?

RPU wants to partner with you to help you implement energy-saving solutions for your business. By Partnering in Energy Solutions, you can reduce your energy use and save money in monthly operating costs. Whether you are considering retrofitting your existing building or considering new construction, it makes sense to be sure your business is as energy efficient as possible. This is how our Partnering in Energy Solutions (PIES) program can help. We make sure you are connected with engineers, vendors, and contractors who will help you identify, design, and install energy-efficient improvements.

Once the energy-efficient improvements have been identified our PIES program financing can help fund the project by offering 0% interest loans, up to \$25,000 for qualified customers.*

RPU designed the PIES program to connect you with expert resources, our Energy Solutions Partners (ESPs). A list of ESPs can be found on RPU's website or by contacting one of RPU's Energy and Environmental Advisors. These ESPs will:

- Analyze your current and future energy usage and needs.
- Propose cost-cutting changes in your energy use, as well as energy-efficient upgrades to your equipment.
- Provide payback analysis of suggested improvements.
- Assist with the purchase and/or implementation of suggested improvements.
- List and apply for all available RPU Conserve & Save® rebates.
- Assist with applying for PIES financing.

* Additional terms and conditions apply.

For questions regarding our PIES program, contact one of our Energy and Environmental Advisors:



Dirk Bierbaum
Energy and
Environmental Advisor
dbierbaum@rpu.org
507.292.1225



Jan Blevins
Commercial Account
Representative
jblevins@rpu.org
507.280.1578



Dru Larson
Energy and
Environmental Advisor
dlarson@rpu.org
507.280.1607



Abe Luhmann
Energy and
Environmental Advisor
aluhmann@rpu.org
507.280.1559

CONSERVE & \$AVE®

POWER OUTAGE EMERGENCY PLAN

As much as we try to keep the power on, there are circumstances that can cause the power to go out for minutes, or even days. What is your plan for you and your family if you were to lose power? Here are some things to consider:

Have RPU's outage line in your cellphone or easily accessible to report your outage – **507.280.9191**.



Back-up location – Do you have a list of friends or family in the area that you could go stay with, if necessary? Even if your home is heated by natural gas and the electricity is out, you will not be able to heat your home because the fan on your furnace is powered electrically.



Cellphone charged – If bad weather and strong winds are in the forecast, keep your cellphone charged in case the electricity goes out.



Keep refrigerators/freezers closed – According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, food left in a closed refrigerator/freezer should be safe for no more than four hours. Keep the door closed as much as possible. Discard perishable foods that have been above 40 degrees Fahrenheit for more than two hours. http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/refridg_food.html



Flashlights/batteries – Keep flashlights and new batteries in an accessible location to provide some light and safety.



Medical conditions – If you or someone you know has a medical condition and they rely heavily on electricity for medical equipment, seek medical attention early rather than waiting for the electricity to come back on at your home.



Garage doors – If you have an electric garage door opener and the power goes out, it may be difficult to find the release cord in the dark. Consult your garage door opener manual and find out how to release the opener in case the power goes out. This will allow you safe and easy access to opening your garage door even without power.



Safety – Never go near downed power lines or wires. Power lines can still stay energized even if they are lying on the ground. Call RPU immediately at **507.280.9191** if you ever see a downed power line and keep others away from the area.

Do you know where your house needs energy help?

Find out with RPU's Neighborhood Energy Challenge!

1. Attend a FREE Energy Workshop:

Thursday, May 11, 2017 • 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Northrop Community Education Center | 201 8th St NW | Room 316

2. Schedule a Home Audit for Only \$50

Receive FREE "First Step" Water and Energy Saving Products

3. Get Expert Help

With "Next Step" Efficiency Improvements



MINNESOTA ENERGY RESOURCES
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CONSERVE & SAVE

TO REGISTER:

Contact Stacy Boots Camp

888.734.6365

sbootscamp@mncee.org

Learn more: www.rpu.org



WATER CONSERVATION

Monthly Tip on Saving From the Tap



Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Instead, compost vegetable food waste and save gallons of water every time.

CONSERVE & \$AVE

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we pledge, we deliver



AWARD WINNERS

Electric – Outstanding projects in the field of energy efficiency, conservation, electricity, or electrical technology.

1. Middle School Winner – *Does the temperature of a solar panel affect its output* by Sohumi Joshi – Friedell MS – Grade 7
2. High School Winner – *A Novel Photosynthetic Microbial Fuel Cell with Interchangeable Solar Compartments* by Daniel Fleury – John Marshall HS – Grade 12

Water – Outstanding project in the field of hydrology, hydrogeology, groundwater protection, or water conservation.

1. Middle School Winner – *The effects of hard water on detergent* by Sofie Locati – Lincoln – Grade 7
2. High School Winner – *An Innovative Solution for Water Filtration in Third World Countries* by Rohan Patel – Mayo HS – Grade 10

Be Sure to Join Us!
RPU's 15th Annual Arbor Day Celebration

Friday, April 28, 2017
 11 am–1 pm
 Three Links – Silver Lake Park
 Rain Location: RCTC's Field House
 Admission is Free!

*See full details inside on page 3.

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An aerial view of the Rochester Regional Science & Engineering Fair

Photo by Josh Banks.

RPU Supports the Rochester Regional Science & Engineering Fair

RP.U. employees were excited to be a part of the Rochester Regional Science & Engineering Fair by giving away special RPU awards for “Outstanding projects in the field of energy efficiency, conservation, electricity, or electrical technology” and “Outstanding project in the field of hydrology, hydrogeology, groundwater protection, or water conservation.” The fair was held on March 3 at the Rochester Community and Technical College Fieldhouse.