RPU Plugged In

Featuring:
- Customer Satisfaction Survey, Q1 2018 Results
- Neighborhood Energy Challenge Workshops
- Overhead Power Line Safety

Tony’s Top 5 Tips Right Now!
Tony’s Top 5 TIPS RIGHT NOW!

From time to time I get stopped by customers with great questions regarding RPU services or products. I figured it might be beneficial to share my top five tips from questions that I’ve gotten over the past few months.

1. **Conserve**
   - There are lots of places to spend more money on things – don’t let it be on your electricity and water. Buy qualifying energy/water-efficient appliances, and then remember to submit your rebate applications to get money back for your purchases. (Find rebates info at www.rpu.org.) Use less energy/water by changing your usage behavior, too. Set your air conditioning at 78 degrees or higher, and water your lawn in the early morning or later evening time to minimize evaporation.

2. **Report Street-Light Outages**
   - Surprisingly, I get a number of questions regarding street-light outages and how to get them fixed. It’s really easy and simple. You can call RPU during business hours at 507.280.1500 or you can go to the RPU website (www.rpu.org) and click on the top right “I want to” yellow box and find “report a street light outage” in the drop-down menu. We can use our GIS mapping programs to identify what street light you are referencing if you can give us a nearby intersection or house number.

3. **Understand Your RPU Bill**
   - I’m a customer and pay a monthly RPU bill just like you, too. As a customer, it is time well-spent to take a few minutes to understand what is on your bill. The areas I get the most questions on are the City of Rochester Charges (residential waste water and residential storm water). RPU bills for those on the RPU monthly billing statement for the city of Rochester Public Works Department.

4. **Don’t Buy Bottled Water**
   - I’ll be honest – I can’t tell the difference in the taste of bottled water and RPU tap water. I’d rather drink my daily amount of water from the tap than spend approximately $20 or more per month for bottled water. It just doesn’t make sense to me to buy bottled water.

5. **Try One LED Bulb This Year**
   - I never bought the early versions of the iPod when they first came out. I stuck to my CDs for a while to see what would happen with the new music technology. Well, when I finally bought an iPod, I was sold after taking some time to get used to it. LED lighting is now the way to go for almost any lighting situation in your home, in my opinion. If you haven’t tried an LED bulb yet, plan to try just one somewhere in your home this year. The lighting is nicer than even a few years ago. They use 70% to 90% less energy than incandescent bulbs, and RPU wants to pay for half the cost by offering a 50% rebate on ENERGY STAR qualifying bulbs.
Customer Satisfaction Survey Q1 2018 Results

94% of respondents were satisfied with RPU as a utility provider.

Value for the money 80%

Efforts to be environmentally friendly 88%

Ease of doing business with RPU 94%

Quality of service to customers 94%

RPU as a utility provider overall 94%

Reliability of power, water, and other services 95%

Other measurements:

Verbatim comments:

“I am grateful that RPU is committed to renewable energy and planting trees for the city of Rochester.”

“Good customer service when I’ve needed it.”

“Doing great! No complaints.”

Areas in which respondents were less than “completely satisfied”:

Rates and fees

Rate comparison mailings

Power outages
Snowbird? Leaving for the Winter?

Make sure your contact information is up-to-date in case of an issue with your water or electric service.

If you are a customer who leaves Rochester for an extended amount of time over the winter, there are a few things you can do to help ensure that your electric and water services are safe and working properly while you are away.

• **Call RPU before you leave to make sure your contact information is up-to-date.** If there is a question regarding your bill or irregular usage is seen at your home, RPU may need to call you.

• **Tell RPU how long you will be away.** A note can be made on your account notifying RPU customer service that you will be away.

• **Put a backup contact on your account.** Adding a backup contact of someone in the Rochester area can help you in the case of a utility emergency. Their name and phone number must be on your account, and they must be noted as an authorized person on your account.

• **Check to see if you are signed up for Service Assured®.** RPU’s underground utility repair coverage could save you expensive out-of-pocket repairs to your electric and water services. Don’t be stuck with a surprise expense while you’re away. (Some restrictions apply.)

• **Ensure your RPU bill is forwarded to your winter location.** Having your bill forwarded to your winter location is as easy as calling RPU customer service and leaving your winter address with them.

Contact RPU customer service Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at 507.280.1500.

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**WATER CONSERVATION**

**Monthly Tip on Saving From the Tap!**

Use a pool cover to help keep your pool clean, reduce chemical use, and prevent water loss through evaporation.

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**ENERGY CONSERVATION**

**Monthly Tip for Plugging into Savings!**

**SUNLIGHT SAVER**

Summer sunlight can heat up your home quickly, making your air conditioner work harder to keep your home comfortable.

To save energy and money this summer, close the shades on the south and west side of your home during the daylight hours.
**MMUA Tom Bovitz Memorial SCHOLARSHIP WINNER**

For the second straight year, a Rochester high school senior has been selected as the first place winner of the MMUA Tom Bovitz Memorial Scholarship Contest. Eric Chestolowski, a senior at Lourdes High School, attended the June RPU Board Meeting to meet the Board and Steve Downer from MMUA (Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association).

The top four recipients were from the municipal utility communities of Willmar, Grand Rapids, Elk River, and Rochester.

*Pictured (Left to Right): RPU General Manager Mark Kotschevar, RPU Board President Brian Morgan, Eric Chestolowski, and Steve Downer MMUA Associate Executive Director.*

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**FREE Neighborhood Energy Challenge Workshops Coming Soon!**

Discover your energy conservation potential by attending an upcoming Neighborhood Energy Challenge (NEC) workshop.

NEC continues to be a popular offering for customers looking for ways to be more energy efficient with their energy use in their homes. Many great tips, tools, and ideas are offered, along with the opportunity to have a discounted home-energy audit conducted.

For questions regarding the Neighborhood Energy Challenge or to sign up, contact Stacy Boots Camp at 888.734.6365 or sbootscamp@mncee.org.

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**UPCOMING NEC DATES:**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2018**
6:30-7:30 p.m.
Northrop Community Education Center – Room 308
201 8th St NW

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2018**
10-11a.m.
Northrop Community Education Center – Room 308
201 8th St NW

*Workshop dates and locations subject to change.*
OVERHEAD POWER LINE SAFETY

1. Locate all overhead power lines.
2. Keep self and equipment 10 feet away from all overhead power lines.
3. Do not touch anything that is in contact with the power line.
4. Beware of fencing near power lines.
5. Carry ladders and other equipment horizontally.
6. Lower equipment apparatus before driving.
7. Never spray water near power lines.
8. Stay at least 35 feet away from fallen power lines.

ESFI.org
www.facebook.com/ESFI.org  www.twitter.com/ESFIdotorg  www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg
Former Rochester Public Utilities (RPU) Director of Power Resources/Customer Relations Wally Schlink received the James D. Donovan Individual Achievement Award at the American Public Power Association’s (APPA) National Conference in New Orleans, LA.

The James D. Donovan Individual Achievement Award recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the electric utility and public power industry.

“We congratulate Wally on this much-deserved award that recognizes his valuable contributions to RPU, the citizens of Rochester, and the broader public power community,” said Mark Kotschevar, General Manager for Rochester Public Utilities.

Schlink was active with the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (SMMPA) along with serving on numerous boards, including the APPA board of directors, the APPA DEED board, and the Engineering and Operations section. He began working at RPU in June 1997 and retired in March 2018, finishing a 20-year career with the largest municipal utility in Minnesota.
CALLING FOR NOMINATIONS!

Environmental Achievement Awards are given annually for outstanding environmental achievement in Olmsted County. Nominations are sought for individuals, families, youth, organizations, or businesses in any or all categories:

- Climate Change
- Conservation
- Education
- Energy
- Renewables
- Sustainable Food Production
- Water
- Other

DOWNLOAD A NOMINATION FORM AT WWW.RPU.ORG.
DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 5.

Photo by Martin Larsen