Plugged In
January 2020

A LOOK BACK AT 2019!
READ MORE ON PG. 2

COMMERCIAL CORNER:
Is Your Rooftop Unit Ready for Winter? | pg 6
Thank you for your business and we look forward to serving you in 2020!

2019 was a great year for RPU! Not only did we start down the path of 100% renewable energy, but we also laid the groundwork for many other important steps in RPU’s future. RPU water engineers started work on a new well in NW Rochester, infrastructure continued to be evaluated and upgraded as needed, and our tree-trimming efforts continued to better ensure that vegetation wouldn’t interfere with electric service when wind, snow, and ice storms come through Rochester.

And that’s just a few of the things we did last year. Take a look at photos of some of the other important work we did in 2019.

Thank you for your business and we look forward to serving you in 2020!
Is Your Home Protected?

If you don’t have RPU’s underground utility repair coverage, Service Assured®, you could get stuck paying thousands of dollars out-of-pocket to repair your damaged underground water or electric services. For only $2.99 per month*, you can rest assured that you won’t be hit with costly repair bills if your underground electric or water service breaks!

Are there really parts of my electric and water service that I own as the homeowner?

Yes, as a homeowner you own a number of components necessary for getting electric or water service into your home. Without having a professional contractor or RPU Service Assured® coverage, you may be left without service. (See Figures 1 and 2.)

My home is fairly new. It can’t happen to me, right?

The age of your home may not matter when it comes to what is underneath the ground. Weather, soil, and frost can play a big part in the disruption of underground utilities.

Can I get coverage on just one utility?

Yes, for $1.99 per month you can cover only one of your utilities, but cover both for just $1 more!

I get mailers selling a similar coverage for utilities. Does that coverage have anything to do with RPU?

No, RPU’s only underground utility repair coverage is Service Assured®. Other companies send out mailers and postcards advertising services to cover underground utilities for $5.49 per month or more. Protecting underground utilities should be left to the professionals who work with these utilities every day such as RPU’s electric line workers and water operators. If you choose to go with a third-party company, RPU strongly recommends investigating their work record and their contract fine print. Buyer beware.

Where can I get more details on Service Assured®?

All of the information on Service Assured® can be found on the RPU website www.rpu.org. This includes terms and conditions, pricing, and diagrams of what is owned and maintained by the homeowner, and what is owned and maintained by RPU.*

Visit www.rpu.org to review complete Terms and Conditions. To determine if your home qualifies, or if you want to enroll in Service Assured®, call us at 507.280.1500. A pre-inspection of your water and/or electric service is required before enrollment can be completed. When one of our employees comes out to do the inspection, they will bring the enrollment form with them for you to complete.

* Contact us to determine your eligibility; some exclusions apply. Visit www.rpu.org to review complete Terms and Conditions.
2020 RPU Board Meetings

Be a part of the decision-making process at RPU by attending a board meeting.

Where: All RPU Board Meetings are held at the RPU Service Center, 4000 East River Road NE, Rochester, MN 55906 (unless an alternate location is otherwise noted on the RPU website).

When: Utility Board meetings are regularly scheduled on the last Tuesday of the month (see calendar below for exceptions) at 4 p.m. (unless an alternate time is noted on the RPU website).

Learn More: Board meeting information can be found on the RPU website, www.rpu.org, under the ‘About RPU’ tab.

Utility Board Meeting Dates
✓ January 28
✓ February 18
✓ March 24
✓ April 28
✓ May 19
✓ June 23
✓ July 28
✓ August 25
✓ September 29
✓ October 27
✓ November 10, 24
✓ December 15

Meet RPU’s Board Members in next month’s Plugged In!

WATER CONSERVATION

Monthly Tip on Saving From the Tap!

Don’t use running water to thaw food. For efficiency and food safety thaw food in the refrigerator.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Monthly Tip for Plugging into Savings!

Outlets and switches on exterior walls are a commonplace for cold air to leak into your home. Consider adding insulators to these outlets and switches to help reduce heating costs and increase your comfort!
Tell an RPU employee how he or she made a positive impact in your life by providing exceptional service. Did they go above and beyond your expectations? Did they spend the extra time with you to ensure you were satisfied with your RPU services and offerings? Maybe someone just made your day special somehow? We want to hear how, and we want to let the employee and their supervisor know!

Please fill out the form below and mail it to us, drop it off at the RPU Service Center, or give it directly to the employee. You can also keep this form until you meet an RPU employee who you want to give a “Pat on the Back”. If you don’t get their name, please explain the details of your interaction and we will do our best to find them. We truly appreciate your time and feedback!

Sincerely,
RPU’s more than 190 dedicated employees

This winter, give a deserving RPU employee a warm “Pat on the Back”!

Your name ________________________________________ Phone (________) ____________________
Address __________________________________________ Email ______________________________
RPU Employee Name (or description/job title) _______________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Date of Exceptional Service___________________________ Location ___________________________
Why does this RPU employee deserve a “pat on the back”? ______________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Packaged rooftop units (RTUs) are the workhorses of building climate control. They provide heating and/or cooling to about half of the commercial buildings in the United States, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Despite their importance, RTUs are often left out of sight and out of mind, with little thought given to regular preventive maintenance.

RTUs are constantly exposed to weather conditions that can result in wear and tear on equipment. This is especially true in winter, when cold air, snow, and ice can damage system components and reduce overall performance. In a seven-year study of a shopping mall, neglected maintenance of RTUs resulted in a 30% decline in efficiency and a 28% increase in peak demand.

**Reaching the Top**

It’s important that your rooftop unit operates at peak performance all winter long, and provides efficient cooling when warm weather returns. These actions can help make that happen:

- Check electrical wiring and tighten connections.
- Inspect belts for tension, alignment, and overall condition.
- Test refrigerant pressure and check oil levels.
- Check the heat exchanger for rust, cracks, or leaks.
- Conduct a thorough operational check of controls and adjust as needed.
- Check dampers. If they are open too far during cold weather, your heating system must work harder to heat the extra outside air coming in.
- Inspect and clean coils, blowers, fans, and motors.
- Measure airflow for optimal performance.

Don’t take shortcuts when maintaining your rooftop unit. Shortcuts may save a little now, but will cost you much more over the long-term in higher energy bills, reduced comfort, and equipment repairs.

**Raising the Standard**

If your RTU is older or in need of repair, replace it with a new, energy-efficient model. Consider a unit that is ENERGY STAR® certified and ASHRAE 90.1 compliant. ENERGY STAR models are up to 10% more efficient than standard units and may qualify for utility rebates. ASHRAE 90.1 compliance means the system meets or exceeds the requirements of this widely used building energy standard. For questions and more information on equipment efficiency, contact an RPU Account Representative today.

**RPU Commercial Customer Corner: Is Your Rooftop Unit Ready for Winter?**

Jan Blevins
Commercial Account Representative
jblevins@rpu.org
507.280.1578

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

Josh Mason
Energy and Environmental Advisor
jmason@rpu.org
507.280.1588

Anna Basimamovic
Energy and Environmental Advisor
abasimamovic@rpu.org
507.280.1565

RPU Is #COMMUNITYpowered

Being connected to and supporting the community that we work and live in are key principles to being #CommunityPowered. This past fall, RPU employees pledged and donated $16,128 (of their own money) to the United Way of Olmsted County! That money will go to help and support people and organizations in and around Rochester!

Our Customer Relations Team was also out in the Rochester community bell ringing for the Salvation Army during the holiday season. This is the team that you see or talk to at the RPU Service Center when you stop in or call RPU.
Celebrating the 100-Year Anniversary of Lake Zumbro Hydroelectric Dam!

We apologize for the inconvenience...

We would like to thank you for your patience and support during our transition to RPU’s new customer care system, RPU Connect.

We recognize the wait times in our Service Center, as well as on the phone, have been longer than usual. Our dedicated Customer Relations Team wants to provide you with the best possible service, leaving you with a great customer experience. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Again, thank you for your patience and understanding.
Find out how much you could save on your utility bill! Attend our next FREE energy efficiency workshop and qualify for a $50 home energy audit!

Saturday, January 25, 2020 • 10–11am
Northrop Community Education Center (free childcare available)

TO REGISTER:
Call: 888.734.6365
Email: sbootscamp@mncee.org
Learn more: www.rpu.org

What will you do with the money you save?
EDUCATION FUND? VACATION? LEISURE TIME?