

ROCHESTER PUBLIC UTILITIES

Plugged In

March 2020



2019

Environmental Achievement Award Recipients

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rpu[®]
we pledge, we deliver



Pam and Michael Pagelkopf

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318 Commons:
Bern O'Brien

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Sandy Bauter

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Sheldon King

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Rochester Golf &
Country Club:
Carl Granberg

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Introducing the 2019 Environmental Achievement Award Recipients

We're proud to announce the recipients of the 2019 Environmental Achievement Awards presented by RPU and Olmsted County. The following nine recipients represent a broad range of environmental efforts from local individuals, organizations, and businesses.

1 Pam & Michael Pagelkopf
Nominator: Jo Anne Judge-Dietz
Minnesota Master Naturalist Volunteers, Pam and Michael Pagelkopf, were excited to respond to the call from Sara Holger with Minnesota Project Get Outdoors. In 2011, the Pagelkopfs created a nature-based program for Rochester area preschools called "Nature with Pam and Michael." Their presentations use puppets, animal pelts, skulls, antlers, and horns along with creative games, snowshoeing, and binocular gazing, to engage children with all five senses.

Resourcing with the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (in Olmsted County), the Pagelkopfs created "Touch 'N Feel" in 2018 offering more children a hands-on experience with nature. Pam and Michael are also active in the Minnesota School Forest Program. Since 2010, they have built and delivered 1,172 field desks to 42 School Forest sites across Minnesota traveling 6,800+ miles.

2 318 Commons
Nominator: Kevin Bright
318 Commons is a mixed-use retail, office, classroom, and residential

development located in downtown Rochester. This past year, the facility participated in Rochester's Voluntary Energy Benchmarking Program. Program participants shared their utility consumption data publicly to develop an understanding of energy performance, encourage best-practice sharing, and accelerate the pace of energy conservation projects in Rochester.

318 Commons is the only privately operated facility in the top-20 performing facilities in Rochester. On a square-foot basis, it is consuming less than half of the energy of an average building that participated in the benchmarking program. The facility utilizes high-efficiency boilers, has a two-pipe heat pump system, and conducts regular service checks. 318 Commons also educates its residents on saving energy.

3 Sandy Bauter
Nominator: Terri Dugan
Sandy Bauter has been a member of the Rochester Chapter of the Minnesota Master Naturalists since 2015 and is serving as the treasurer and outreach chair. If you've attended an environmental event in Olmsted County, chances are you've seen Sandy and her spinning wheel of native animal species.

Sandy also volunteers at Quarry Hill Nature Center where she has been a docent since 2016 and assisted with the center's yearlong renovation in 2017/2018. She is a "Weed Warrior," spending many hours controlling invasive species at Quarry Hill Park

and she also volunteers her time driving injured birds to the Raptor Rehabilitation Center in St. Paul.

4 Sheldon King
Nominator: Mark Thein

For the past 100 years, Lake Zumbro has been one of the most popular bodies of water for boaters and anglers in southeastern Minnesota. This 600-acre reservoir is an important local recreational waterbody as well as a source of renewable hydroelectric energy. Over the years, the lake has been under pressure from a zebra mussel infestation to increased sedimentation. The lake was declared an impaired waterway by the MPCA in 1998, and by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2002. In 2001, Sheldon King took notice of the declining state of Lake Zumbro and decided to do something about it. Over the past 18 years, he has been a strong advocate for the restoration of Lake Zumbro. Some of his contributions include:

- Starting Lake Zumbro Forever Inc., with a volunteer board dedicated to restoring and preserving the lake
- Holding legislative nights on the lake and lobbying at the State Capitol for funding
- Starting the Lake Improvement District (LID) to implement assessments on fellow lake residents dedicated to improving its environmental character
- Raising money from public and private entities for restoration work

5 Rochester Golf & Country Club
Nominator: Nick Folk

It takes a lot of water to keep the grass green on a golf course. But, thanks to a recent investment in their facility, the Rochester Golf and Country Club (RGCC) will be using considerably less groundwater. In 2019, the RGCC completed the installation of an extensive drain tile



Community Food Response
Wendy Sempf and Jeanne Thoreson (l-r)

6

Heidi Kass & Kelly Rae Kirkpatrick – Rochester Seed Library

7

Sandy Hokanson

8

Sisters of Saint Francis – Assisi Heights: Sister Ramona Miller and Sister Marlene Pinzka (l-r)

9

system throughout their property. This system collects stormwater and funnels it to an irrigation holding pond. The project has reduced the demand on their deep well by over 60%, saving water and electricity. Playing conditions have improved on the course, making this a win for their business and water conservation.

6 Community Food Response

Nominators: Pastor Anjanette Bandel, Jean Mortenson

Community Food Response's (CFR) mission is to help mitigate hunger in Rochester and the surrounding communities. Since 1993, CFR volunteers have been "rescuing" prepared food from restaurants and grocery stores that would have otherwise ended up in the garbage. The organization has operated out of Bethel Lutheran Church since the program began, with a second location opening at the Exchange Co-op in 2017. There are no income or residency restrictions to receive food at either location.

CFR has over 40 food donors, and over 900 volunteers pick up food, open, sort, and distribute it at both locations. In 2019, the organization collected approximately 125 tons of food and provided over 89,000 meals.

7 Heidi Kass & Kelly Rae Kirkpatrick – Rochester Seed Library

Nominators: Kendra Ryan, Anna Richey

Heidi Kass and Kelly Rae Kirkpatrick have a passion for helping people grow their own food. In the spring of 2018, they collaborated with staff and volunteers from the Rochester Public Library (RPL), UMN Extension,

Rochester Garden and Flower Club, and the History Center of Olmsted County to create the Rochester Seed library. Residents with a library card could "check out" up to 10 packets of seeds per year. The volunteers spent the rest of 2018 working with the community to understand what types of seeds were in high demand.

By 2019, the group had packaged over 8,500 seed packets with 44 varieties to choose from. RPL was a crucial partner, serving as the fiscal host and obtaining grants to buy seeds and promote the program. It's also the home for the Seed Library, which opened on March 2, 2019. Nearly 700 unique cardholders checked out seeds and more than 400 community members participated in seed-related programs. The library will distribute seeds in 2020.

8 Sandy Hokanson

Nominators: Terry and Joyce Grier

Sandy Hokanson has been a member of the Zumbro Valley Audubon Society for the past 10 years, and a wildlife artist for over 30 years. She is a professional graphic designer who volunteers her talents to create wildlife trail signs, with an emphasis on birds. You can find her signs at parks in Rochester, Olmsted County, and beyond. Complete with captivating photographs, vibrant artwork, and helpful graphics, these educational displays rival anything you could find at a large zoo or nature center.

Within the Zumbro Valley Audubon Society, Sandy has served as a board member and as the organization's president. She has used her creative skills to design and maintain the organization's website and Facebook

Pictured on the cover are the 2019 Environmental Achievement Award Recipients and Nominators.

The Environmental Award trees are each handcrafted by RPU's own Lani Towne.

page. She leads field trips and assists with monthly bird walks at Quarry Hill. Sandy also organizes the Nature Art Show at Quarry Hill Nature Center, donating a portion of the event's proceeds back to the Nature Center.

9 Sisters of Saint Francis – Assisi Heights

Nominators: Angela Gupta, Jean Rynda

The natural landscape of Assisi Heights provides a peaceful haven in the middle of an ever-growing city. Deer, wild turkey, and numerous other animal species can be spotted on the property, in an area known as the "Green Space." Thanks to a proclamation of Conservation Easement this past July, much of this land along with the Motherhouse, Chapel, and Wilson House will be preserved in its current condition – 72 acres total. This decision by the Sisters of Saint Francis represents a shared mission to strive for justice and reverence for all of creation.

Members of the Environmental Team at Assisi Heights have collaborated with the Conservation Corps of Minnesota and Iowa, as well as the Friends of Indian Heights Volunteers to clear invasive buckthorn and garlic mustard from the property. The Sisters use solar energy and other energy-saving technology in their building. They also maintain a large kitchen garden and raise bees.

Thanks for Visiting Us at the Rochester Area Builder's Home Show



Pictured l-r: Stephanie, Mikki, Jess, Bria, and Lani.

The RAB Home Show is always something RPU employees look forward to. It's a great opportunity for us to connect with our customers and to hear about how we can help them with their electric and/or water service.

If you weren't able to make it to the show, you can always connect with us via phone, mail, email, social media, or just stop by the RPU Service Center in person!

Phone: 507.280.1500

Mail/In person: RPU Service Center, 4000 East River Road NE, Rochester, MN 55906

Email: customerservice@rpu.org

Social Media:

- Facebook - [rochesterpublicutilities](https://www.facebook.com/rochesterpublicutilities)
- Twitter - [@rpualerts](https://twitter.com/rpualerts)

2020 HOLIDAY LIGHT Recycling Wrap Up

RPU customers answered the call again this year and brought in 2,922 pounds of holiday lights that will be recycled and kept out of the landfill!

Started back in 2011, the holiday light recycling program has recycled 20,464 pounds of holiday lights. The goal of the program is to provide an easy way to responsibly discard old, inefficient holiday lighting and to promote the benefits of purchasing energy-efficient LED holiday lighting options.

HOLIDAY LIGHT RECYCLING

Year	Pounds Recycled
2011	4,500
2012	2,037
2013	873
2014	1,493
2015	1,578
2016	2,042
2017	1,820
2018	3,199
2019	2,922
TOTAL	20,464



What will you do with the money you save?



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, March 7, 2020 • 10-11am OR
Tuesday, May 19, 2020 • 6:30-7:30pm**

Northrop Community Education Center (*free childcare available*)



MINNESOTA ENERGY RESOURCES **rpu** we pledge, we deliver CONSERVE & SAVE

TO REGISTER:

Call: 888.734.6365

Email: sbootscamp@mncee.org

Learn more: www.rpu.org

RPU Commercial Customer Corner:

Top 10 Underused Technologies for Saving Energy

High-efficiency technologies can't save energy if they aren't used. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has identified promising but underutilized devices, and ranked them by their potential to save energy. The top 10 are listed below. By implementing these technologies, you can follow the example of the most innovative organizations and save on your energy costs.

1 Task lighting allows you to decrease overhead lighting and reduce overall lighting energy use by 15% to 25% when used strategically. Adding controls provides the potential for even more savings.

2 Condensing boilers are equipped with enhanced heat exchangers that extract heat energy from exhaust gases to increase combustion efficiency by 10% or more. These boilers work well with hot water systems operating at lower temperatures.

3 Connected and smart thermostats give you remote control over your heating and cooling systems from any internet-enabled device. These thermostats program themselves based on occupancy and sensing outside data, such as outdoor ambient temperatures.

4 Geothermal heat pumps use the constant temperature of the earth to provide high-efficiency heating and cooling. Geothermal systems can reduce cooling energy use by up to 50% and energy used for heating by up to 40%.

5 High R-value windows feature triple panes, spectrally selective coatings, and thermal breaks that reduce thermal loss and solar heat gain, which can save on heating and cooling costs.

6 Aerosol duct sealant can reduce energy losses and save time by sealing the entire duct system using an automated process. When applied in a number of U.S. naval facilities, the energy savings ranged from 7% to 50%.

7 LED lighting is now cost-competitive with fluorescent and high-intensity discharge (HID) lamps in both indoor and outdoor applications. The advantages of LEDs include energy efficiency, long operating life, inherent dimming, and compatibility with controls.

8 Computer power management settings automatically put computers in sleep mode or other low energy-consuming states without interfering with user productivity. One facility with 50,000 computers implemented this technology and reduced energy costs by 40% — a savings of \$1.8 million per year.



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

CONSERVE & \$SAVE®



Pictured in the photo include representatives from Ronald McDonald House, Mayo Clinic, Knutson Construction, Harris Mechanical, and RPU.

The Ronald McDonald House received rebates from RPU in January for energy-efficient purchases and upgrades including air-cooled chillers, lighting, and variable frequency drives.

• kW savings is 5.48 • kWh savings is 34,038

9 Occupancy/vacancy and daylight sensing allows dimming or turning off lighting when not needed. Some LED tubes have this sensing capability built in. Simply remove your legacy fluorescent tubes, replace them with these sensing LED tubes and program them with a mobile device.

10 Magnetic bearing HVAC compressors with variable-frequency drive control have excellent part-load efficiency; they save energy because chillers operate at part-load most of the time. Demonstrations by the Navy Technology Program showed cooling energy savings of 40% to 60%.

See DOE's ENERGY STAR® Building Upgrade Manual for more innovative ideas on how you can improve the energy efficiency of your facility.

If you have any questions about any of these technologies, please contact your RPU representative.

2020 MMUA Tom Bovitz Memorial Scholarship Award

A local high school senior could get up to \$2,000 to attend a post-secondary educational institution from the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association (MMUA). Here's what they need to do.

- Entries are to interpret one or more aspects of the theme, "Municipal utilities: Good for all of us." This applies to municipal electric and natural gas utilities. Judges will look particularly for originality and the relevance of the theme to the writer and his/her city.
- High school seniors are eligible. Those eligible must be, or have as a legal guardian, a customer of an MMUA-member municipal electric or gas utility.
- Essays are to be original and from 500 to 750 words, typed and double-spaced.
- All essays should include a cover page with the writer's name and address.
- An independent person or body may be designated to select the winner of the local essay. If there is an independent body selecting the winner and they do not know who wrote which essay, relatives of utility personnel are eligible to enter the contest.

- Deadline for submitting essays to Tony Benson at RPU is **March 27, 2020**.

Resource Materials

Rochester Public Utilities *IS* the best resource for information and printed materials.

Do not solely rely on the RPU website and information from the internet. Local resources and interviews will provide you with more detailed information on your utility background, operations, and goals. Contact Tony Benson at RPU **507.280.1534** as a resource if needed. You may also want to visit www.mmua.org and www.publicpower.org.

One local essay selection will be forwarded to MMUA for statewide judging. If a local winner is selected for an award prize, the local utility will contact the student directly.



Do Not Fall Victim to a Utility Scam Call

Please be vigilant and mindful of utility scams. Scams come in many forms, but the one we are made aware of the most is the phone scam. Never offer financial or bank information over the phone, unless you prompted the call to RPU at **507.280.1500**.

Imposters are calling RPU customers stating that their utilities will be shut off unless immediate payment is made over the phone by credit card or pre-paid debit card. These calls can happen at any time of the day or night.

Beware – with phone technology today, the caller ID show RPU's customer service line (**507.280.1500**). This is not how RPU operates, and remember, RPU would never call with this threat.

RPU will never request bank or secure information from you over the phone unless you ask to discuss



your account. The RPU representative will then ask for information to identify who you are and that you are authorized to speak on behalf of the account.

What to do if you receive a scam call:

- If someone calls threatening to cut off your power if you don't pay, hang up!
- Call RPU at **507.280.1500** to report the scam.
- Never give personal or financial information to an unknown caller.
- Remember that RPU will never use threatening language or make forceful demands for payment.

This type of scam is not just seen in Rochester. Utilities throughout the nation deal with scam calls as well. Please share this information with friends and family to help ensure that they don't fall victim to a phone scam.

Come and Have a Bushel of Fun!

At RPU's 18th Annual

Arbor Day Celebration

Friday, April 24, 2020 • 11am-1pm

Three Links – Silver Lake Park

FREE ADMISSION!

- FREE Food, Trees & Giveaways (while supplies last)
- Live Music & Family Activities
- Poster Contest Winners Awarded

QUESTIONS: Stephanie Humphrey 507.280.1639

MORE INFORMATION: www.rpu.org

SPONSORING PARTNERS:



ENERGY CONSERVATION

Monthly Tip for Plugging into Savings!



Don't leave your mobile phone plugged in overnight. It only takes a couple of hours to charge.



CONSERVE & \$AVE

WATER CONSERVATION

Monthly Tip on Saving From the Tap!



If you use a low-flow showerhead, you can save 15 gallons of water during a 10-minute shower!

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RPU Service Center Holiday Hours

RPU will be closed until 9:30am on March 5 for RPU's Employee Recognition Event.

Social Media:

- rochesterpublicutilities
- @rpuoutages @rpualerts
- Rochester Public Utilities
- blog.rpu.org
- RPU TV

Mobile App:



Customer Service: 507.280.1500

Toll-Free: 800.778.3421

Pay By Phone: 855.631.3643

(toll-free • no fee • 24 hrs)

Electric Emergency:

507.280.9191 (24 hrs)

Water Emergency:

507.280.1500 (8am-5pm)

507.280.9191 (5pm-8am)

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Connect with your RPU account... anytime, anywhere!



If you have questions or need help transferring your existing online account or setting up a brand new one, our Customer Relations Team is happy to assist you! Please call us Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm at 507.280.1500. We also have helpful videos at www.rpu.org.