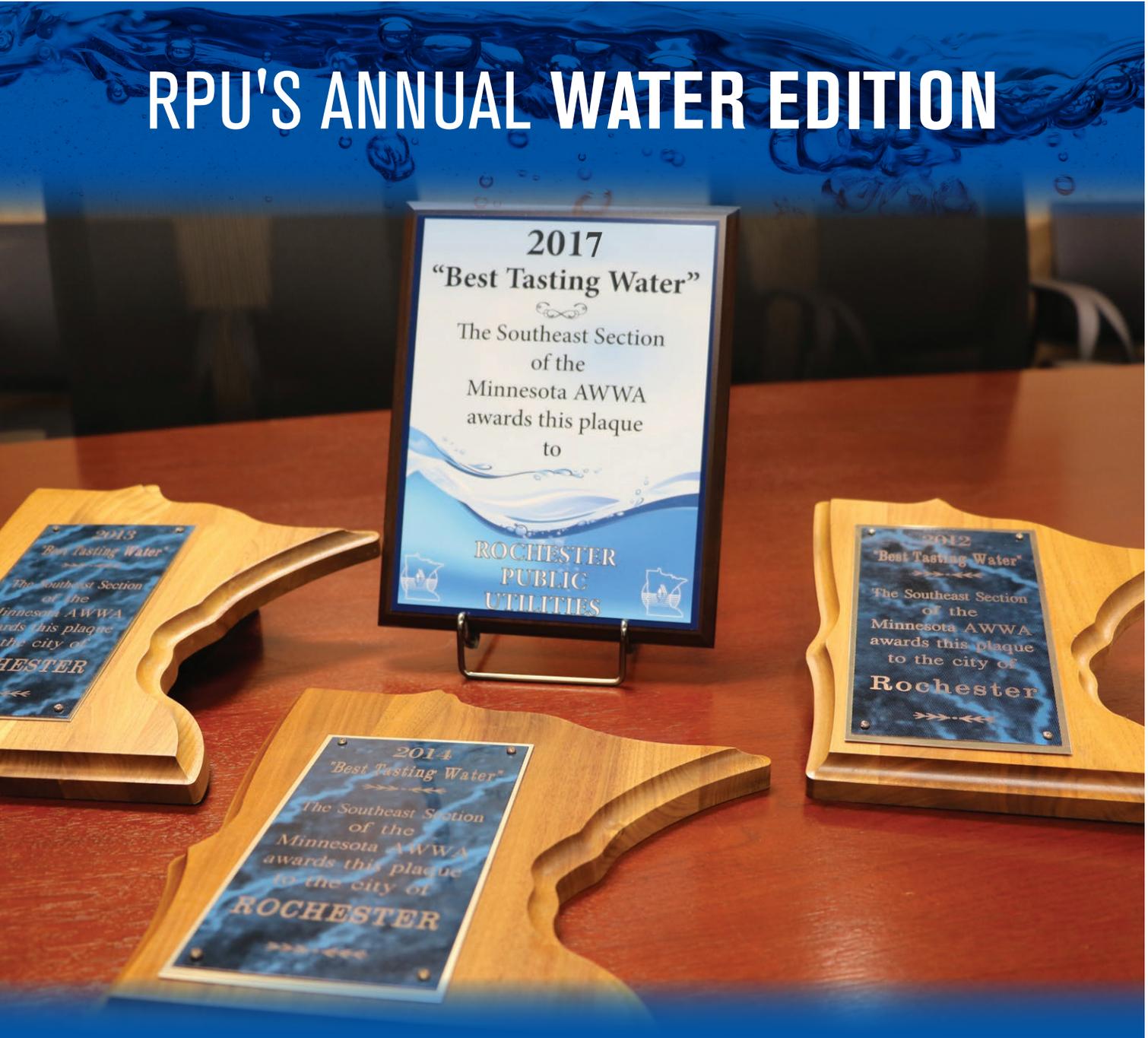


RPU *Plugged In*

RPU'S ANNUAL WATER EDITION



JUST ANNOUNCED

RPU RECEIVES AWARD FOR
"BEST TASTING WATER" FOR 2017!

WHY HOMEOWNERS WITH IRRIGATION SYSTEMS NEED TO REQUEST TESTING THIS SUMMER

An irrigation system can certainly be convenient for watering the yard, but it can also be a cause of water contamination if the backflow preventer isn't tested and working properly.

Residential irrigation systems have Pressure Vacuum Breakers (PVB's), which serve as a backflow assembly to prevent water back flowing into your home. A recent change in the Minnesota Plumbing code made annual testing mandatory for all backflow assemblies, including PVB's most commonly found on residential irrigation systems.

Backflow is the flow of water or other liquids, mixtures or substances, under positive or reduced pressure into the distribution pipes of a potable water supply from any source other than its intended source. Backflow is caused by either backsiphonage or backpressure. Backsiphonage occurs when a flow of used, contaminated, or polluted water from a plumbing fixture or vessel enters into the public water system, often due to negative pressure in a pipe. Backpressure occurs due to a drop in pressure from the water system. It is important to note that a drop in pressure is out of your control and can occur at any time.

The testing is easy to have done and typically takes less than an hour to perform. A certified tester does need to complete the test. Contact your irrigation system contractor and ask if they have a certified backflow tester, or many local plumbing contractors also have certified testers.

After the test has been completed, the certified tester sends the results to RPU. Testing is required to be completed on an annual basis.

If the certified tester finds that the backflow assembly has failed, normally the company will have a licensed plumber on staff to repair the backflow assembly. If not you will have to have it repaired immediately and then confirmed with RPU.

Visit the RPU website (www.rpu.org) for more information on RPU's Backflow Prevention Program.

Know Where Your House Needs Energy Help?

Register Today!
 May's class is your
LAST CHANCE
 until fall!

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

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



Adjust your lawn mower to the height of 1.5 to 2 inches. Taller grass shades roots and holds soil moisture better than short grass.

CONSERVE & \$AVE



LEAVING TOWN OR MOVING?

In all of the hustle and bustle of leaving town, remember it's important to contact RPU if you will be away for an extended period of time. Whether it's a long vacation, a trip to the cabin, or you're going away for the summer, notifying RPU may protect you from false meter readings, future charges, or possible service issues that could arise while you are away.

If you are a renter or homeowner and are moving away permanently, do not rely on your property manager or landlord to cancel your account. As the primary account holder, you are responsible for your account and will be responsible for additional usage and charges, if left active.

Please make sure to make time to contact RPU customer service to let them know that you will be away from your residence and your account will be noted. Contact us at **507.280.1500**, or stop in at the RPU Service Center during business hours.

Even if you've recently discontinued your landline phone or changed your cell phone number, please contact RPU to ensure your contact information is up to date.

Water Quality Report 2016

Municipal water utilities, including RPU, are highly tested and scrutinized for safety and quality. In accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Act, the testing results over the past year are compiled and made available for the public. Each May, RPU releases the consumer confidence report (CCR) publicly.

This year, we are pleased to announce that water provided by RPU again met all state and federal drinking water standards.

A complete version of the CCR can be found on RPU's web page located at: <http://www.rpu.org/environment/water-quality/>. Questions and requests for a hard copy version of the 2016 water quality report can be directed to Todd Osweiler at **507.280.1589**.



AC Clean + Tune = Efficiency + \$25 Rebate

Regular preventative maintenance is the best way to ensure trouble-free, energy-efficient operation.

Complete a Central Air Conditioner Clean & Tune and apply for a \$25 Rebate!

Visit **www.rpu.org** to download a rebate application with complete terms and conditions; some exclusions apply.



THE UNITED STATE(S) OF WATER

Ongoing access to clean, safe water is critical to our economy, health and way of life. Although we live in different parts of the country, Americans are united in our dependence on water and the infrastructure that connects, protects and supports it.

THE COST OF CLEAN

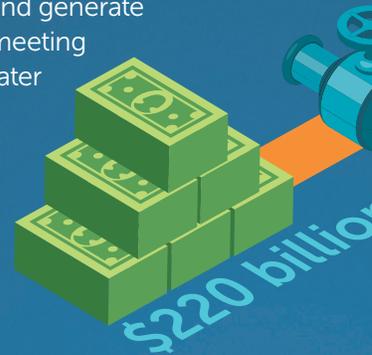
Water is free, keeping it clean, safe, & flowing is not. We must invest in our systems.



\$4.8 trillion to maintain water & wastewater systems

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE INVEST?

We could gain **over \$220 billion in annual economic activity** and generate **1.3 million jobs** by meeting U.S. water & wastewater infrastructure needs.



VALUE OF WATER



- **60%** of Americans are in favor of paying more to invest in water infrastructure.
- **23 to 1 =** return for U.S. public health from early clean water investments.

THE THREE R's

Every drop is cleaned, reused, recycled, & returned to the environment.

- The average American sends between **66–182 gallons** of wastewater to the system each day.
- **34 billion gallons** of water are treated each day by U.S. water treatment plants.

RETURN ON



Every new water sector job adds another **3.68** to the economy.



American Water Works Association

SOURCE: bit.ly/2mrFZTH



Water Environment Federation
the water quality people™



GOING GREEN, SAVES GREEN

30%–60%: the amount of \$ saved by treating stormwater at its source with green & traditional infrastructure.

AGE AT-A-GLANCE



Average age is
60–130 years old.



800,000 miles
of water pipes

700,000 miles
of wastewater pipes

INVESTMENT



Every \$1 spent on infrastructure
generates \$6 in returns.

WHERE'S THE WATER?

The average American
uses 100 gallons of
water daily.



Commercial Customer Corner

Water-Saving Tips for the Irrigation Season

Spring is here, and soon the grass will be growing like crazy. Summer is just around the corner and now is a great time to take a look at some water-saving ideas for the upcoming irrigation season:

- Set your irrigation system to water during the coolest parts of the day to prevent evaporation (early morning being the best time).
- Adjust sprinklers to water lawn/landscape areas only, avoid having overspray onto sidewalks or roads.
- Install moisture sensors on irrigation systems. This will help prevent overwatering.
- Avoid watering on windy days.
- Use soaker hoses or trickle irrigation for trees and shrubs. This assures you are putting the water exactly where you want it.
- Aerate turf to encourage movement of water to the root zone.
- Use mulch around shrubs and plants to reduce evaporation and minimize weed growth.
- Replace grass with native ground cover, which requires less watering and is more drought resistant.
- Sweep or use a blower to clean paved areas rather than hosing them off with water.

If you currently have an irrigation system, or are considering installing or updating one in the near future, keep in mind that RPU offers rebates on rotating sprinkler nozzles* as well as weather-based irrigation controllers.** Clean water is not an endless resource. By conserving it, you'll reduce your operating costs and contribute to the community.

CONSERVE & \$AVE®



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* A list of qualifying sprinkler nozzles can be found at www.rpu.org
** Must be WaterSense® labeled

STORM WATER TODAY

DRINKING WATER TOMORROW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO KEEP IT CLEAN.
The rain and snowmelt that travel across all the surfaces of our city is called **storm water**. It moves across rooftops, yards and roads until, years later, some of it reaches another **destination - your tap**.

STORMWATER TODAY, DRINKING WATER TOMORROW

The rain and snowmelt that travel across all the surfaces of our city is called stormwater. It moves across rooftops, yards, and roads until, years later, some of it reaches another destination – your tap.

Do you see the dirt from construction sites? How about the garbage in creeks and the litter in parking lots? Think of the oil stains on the road and the excess fertilizer on your lawn. Imagine the invisible or microscopic chemicals you can't see.

When rain and snowmelt travel across the land, this storm water will dissolve and collect these pollutants and carry them into our surface water and our groundwater. This is the same water that Rochester Public Utilities (RPU) pumps from deep wells to provide you with drinking water. RPU has tested the age of our well water and knows that it can be less than 50 years old! That means chemicals on the ground can reach our water supply within our children's lifetime.

How Lead Gets in Drinking Water

Lead can enter drinking water when service pipes that contain lead corrode, especially where the water has high acidity or low mineral content that corrodes pipes and fixtures. The most common problem is with brass or chrome-plated brass faucets and fixtures with lead solder, from which significant amounts of lead can enter into the water, especially hot water.

Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have lead pipes, fixtures, and solder. The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) has reduced the maximum allowable lead content – that is, content that is considered “lead-free” – to be a weighted average of 0.25% calculated across the wetted surfaces of pipes, pipe fittings, plumbing fittings, and fixtures and 0.2% for solder and flux.

Corrosion is a dissolving or wearing away of metal caused by a chemical reaction between water and your plumbing. A number of factors are involved to the extent, to which lead enters the water, including:

- the chemistry of the water (acidity and alkalinity) and the types and amounts of minerals in the water,
- the amount of lead it comes into contact with,
- the temperature of the water,
- the amount of wear in the pipes,
- how long the water stays in pipes, and
- the presence of protective scales or coatings inside the plumbing materials.

To address leaching of lead in drinking water, the Environmental Protection Agency issued the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) under the authority of the SDWA. One requirement of the LCR is corrosion control treatment to prevent lead and copper from contaminating drinking water.



Corrosion control treatment means utilities must make drinking water less corrosive to the materials it comes into contact with on its way to consumers' taps. RPU uses a blended polyphosphate solution of 0.5 ppm for corrosion control treatment by coating the water distribution system and household piping to prevent the leaching of lead and copper into the drinking water. RPU has been compliant with the LCR since it started in 1990. Below is a table that shows RPU's compliance under the LCR for the past three sampling sessions. The Action Level for Public Water Suppliers is 15 parts per billion (ppb) for lead and 1,300 ppb for copper.

	2010	2013	2016
Lead (ppb)	5	6	4
Copper (ppb)	809	660	952

Visit RPU's website to learn more about lead in drinking water at www.rpu.org/education-environment/water-quality.php.

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/lead.html>

<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>

Rochester has 32 water supply wells that pump groundwater back to the surface for our use. RPU has studied each well and identified the area that contributes water to the well.

Pollutants can travel a few feet or many miles to reach our water supply. What we do on the land impacts our water. For a future with clean drinking water you can:

- ✓ Dispose of hazardous chemicals at the Olmsted County Hazardous Waste Facility.
- ✓ Bag and tie your trash bags to prevent unintentional litter.
- ✓ Pick up pet waste and dispose of it in the trash.
- ✓ Take your car to the carwash rather than washing it in the driveway.
- ✓ Catch vehicle leaks with drip pans and dispose of it in the trash.
- ✓ Use lawn chemicals in moderation.
- ✓ Keep chemicals, lawn clippings, and leaves off hard surfaces and out of storm sewers.
- ✓ Apply phosphorous-free fertilizer in the fall at the correct rate and never before a rain.
- ✓ Plant a rain garden to receive runoff from your roof.



4000 East River Road NE
Rochester, MN 55906
507.280.1500
www.rpu.org

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
Bluespire



Look for Bottle Fillers!

One of the hot accessories lately has been the reusable water bottle. By using reusable water bottles, you are able to still drink refreshing RPU tap water, but you also save money and reduce waste.

Bottle fillers are becoming more popular in public spaces where regular drinking fountains used to be found. The bottle fillers make it easier to fill a reusable water bottle and reduce spilling, and also show you a real-time count of how many water bottles have been kept out of landfills because of the use of the bottle filler.

RPU WATER BY THE NUMBERS

32 Number of RPU Wells in Active Use

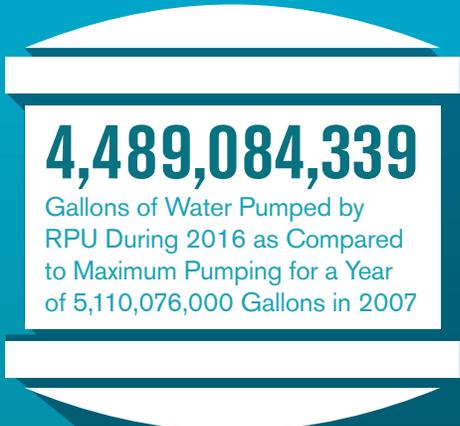
24 Largest Diameter Water Main in Inches

165 Tallest RPU Water Tower in Feet

596.5 Miles of Water Main Owned by RPU

395 Depth of Shallowest RPU Well in Feet

1,045 Depth of Deepest RPU Well in Feet



20 Number of RPU Water Storage Facilities in Active Use

1887 Date of Construction of RPU's Oldest Water Main in Service

16,950,000 Gallons of Water Storage in RPU's System

19,847,000 Most Water Pumped in One Day During 2016 (August 3rd)

1924 Date of Construction of Historic St. Mary's Water Tower (no longer in service)

7,060 Number of Fire Hydrants in RPU's Distribution System

100,000 Volume of Storage in Gallons of RPU's Smallest Water Storage Facility

3,300,000 Volume of Storage in Gallons of RPU's Largest Water Storage Facility

**RPU SERVICE CENTER
Holiday Hours**

Closed on:
Memorial Day
Monday, May 29