

RPU Plugged In



RPU'S WATER EXPERTS!

This is the team to thank for clean, safe water every day in Rochester!

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Left to right, 1st row: Donn Richardson, Wade Neubauer, Heidi Andrist, Pat O'Neill, Doug Klamerus, Jon Lenn, Steve Johnson, Duane Bjelland, Rich Rain, Chris DeMarino; **2nd row:** Mike Bucholz, Cary Johnson, Adam Hovden, Roger Horsman, Kris Putzier, Kevin Meyers, Dale Kurtz; **3rd row:** Steve Quandt, Tim Jestus, Ron Kruger, Nick Fitch; **Not pictured:** Matt Brekke, Scott Rendler, Craig Langbehn, Todd Osweiler

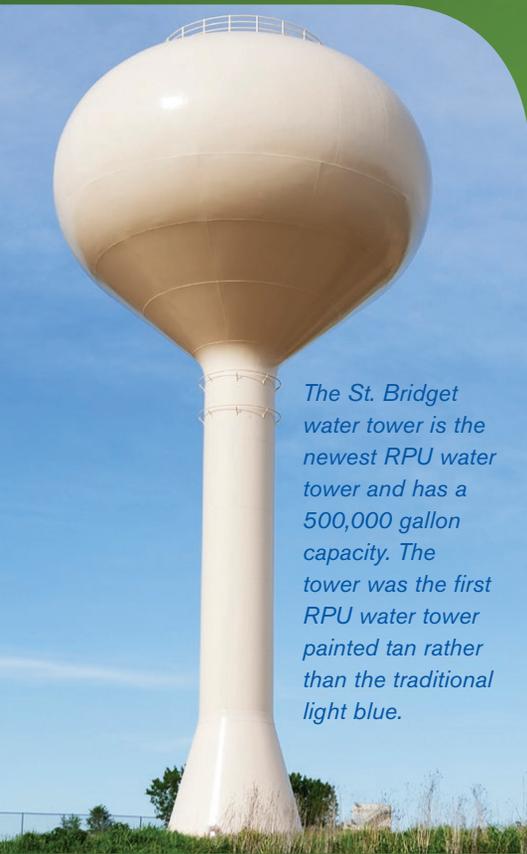
Photo by Josh Banks



An RPU water distribution worker finishes work to repair a broken water main.



The hydropillar in northwest Rochester has a capacity of 3.3 million gallons.



The St. Bridget water tower is the newest RPU water tower and has a 500,000 gallon capacity. The tower was the first RPU water tower painted tan rather than the traditional light blue.

RPU'S WATER EXPERTS!

This is the team to thank for clean, safe water every day in Rochester!

Clean, safe drinking water doesn't just happen. Water has to be delivered to 40,500 RPU customers every day. Infrastructure has to be maintained, tests have to be done, and city growth has to be addressed, which is all done by a dedicated team at RPU.



An RPU water crew finishes up a water main break repair in northeast Rochester.



An indication that there is a water main break, is water spurring up through the street.



Always use caution in and near RPU work zones.

THE UNITED STATE(S) OF WATER

THE MIDWEST*

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.



WE NEED WATER

The average person living in the Midwest uses **116 gallons** of water per day.



WE RELY ON REGULAR SERVICE



Chicago provides **just under one billion gallons** of water and cleans **1.4 billion gallons of wastewater** from the city and surrounding suburbs each day.

LOTS OF NEW TECHNOLOGY EXISTS

Cincinnati is using green infrastructure and sewer separation to prevent more than **1.5 billion gallons** of stormwater and sewer overflows from reaching local waterbodies.

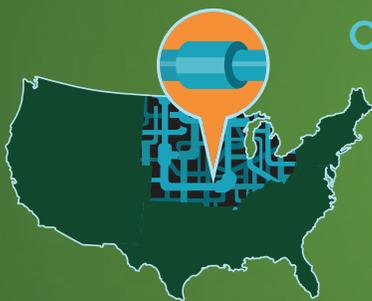


PROVIDING WATER ISN'T FREE



People who live in the Midwest pay an average of **\$4.45 per 1000 gallons** of drinking water, and **\$5.48 per 1000 gallons** of wastewater they use. In some cases, the true value of water can be as high as **\$30 per 1000 gallons!** **

OUR SYSTEMS ARE AGING



Most major Midwestern cities installed their first drinking water pipes in the **late 1800s** and their wastewater systems date back to the **Civil War**. Most of their current systems date to the **post-WWII era**.

WHAT WE CAN SAVE



6 trillion gallons of water, wastewater and stormwater is lost each year in the U.S. to faulty, aging or leaky pipes.

WHAT WE MUST DO

Invest in water, wastewater & stormwater! In the Midwest, they need **\$280 billion** just to modernize their drinking water systems.



WE CAN DO THIS

60% of Americans say they are willing to pay more for water.

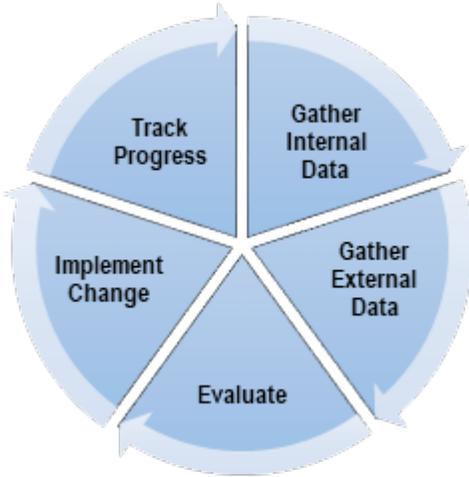


DID YOU KNOW?

Michigan borders 4 of the 5 Great Lakes and its 3,288 miles of coastline is second only to Alaska.



RPU Commercial Customer Corner: Benchmarking: What Is It, And How It Can Help With Energy Efficiency.



Energy efficiency is more than converting your lighting to LEDs or installing some variable speed drives, it's about looking at the whole picture and managing all of your energy points. We all know that you cannot manage what you don't measure, and one sure way to know

if all of your efforts are paying off, is to compare your energy use to similar facilities through benchmarking.

Benchmarking is a comparison of a building's performance metrics over time, to those within the same business sector. It is an excellent way to assess building performance as a whole, uncover new areas of improvement, and support future energy-saving goals. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency created the ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager, a free online tool that allows you to measure and track energy and water consumption, costs, and the carbon footprint of your building. The established database contains the real data measured from actual buildings, making it more robust than statistically derived numbers, thus comparing apples-to-apples. It facilitates information collected from various government facilities, energy-efficiency programs, utilities, building owners, and private companies.

Some of the records needed for the database include: energy usage for at least one year, location and climate zone, building classification (residential or commercial), building type, and total square footage.

Recently, Mayor Norton and the DMC Economic Development Agency launched a Voluntary Energy Benchmarking program for businesses and building owners interested in tracking their energy consumption, and identifying ways to save money on utility bills. Growing the database will result in more precise comparison results, allowing owners and occupants to understand their building's relative energy performance, helping to identify opportunities to cut energy waste, and also driving the market to recognize and reward energy efficiency.

By adding your building's energy information to Portfolio Manager, you'll be joining 40% of U.S. commercial buildings already benchmarked, including half of the Fortune 100® companies. This makes Portfolio Manager a powerful resource for comparing and tracking your building's energy performance against the best.

RPU encourages all of our commercial customers to see what benchmarking can do for them. There are no costs to benchmark besides the monthly labor it takes to input your utility bills. To make it even easier, you can reach out to us with any questions or to request a usage history file, which you can then easily upload to your Portfolio Manager.



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OUR WATER REBATES

Make a Splash!

Clothes Washers up to \$125

High Efficiency Toilets \$25

Rain Barrels \$10

Weather-Based Irrigation Controllers \$75

Look for the Energy Star®, Energy Star® Most Efficient, and WaterSense® labels. These products are certified to use at least 20 percent less water, save energy, and perform as well as or better than regular models.

Plus, you can apply for a rebate from RPU!

Download a 2019 Water Efficiency Rebate Application with complete terms and conditions at www.rpu.org.

Look for



CONSERVE & \$AVE®

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Monthly Tip for Plugging into Savings!



Get ready for warm weather! Keep the outdoor part of your central A/C unit clean to help it operate more efficiently. Seeds, grass clippings, dust, and brush growing too close to your condenser can clog it and make it work harder.



rpu
we pledge, we deliver®

CONSERVE & \$AVE®

Water Quality Report 2018

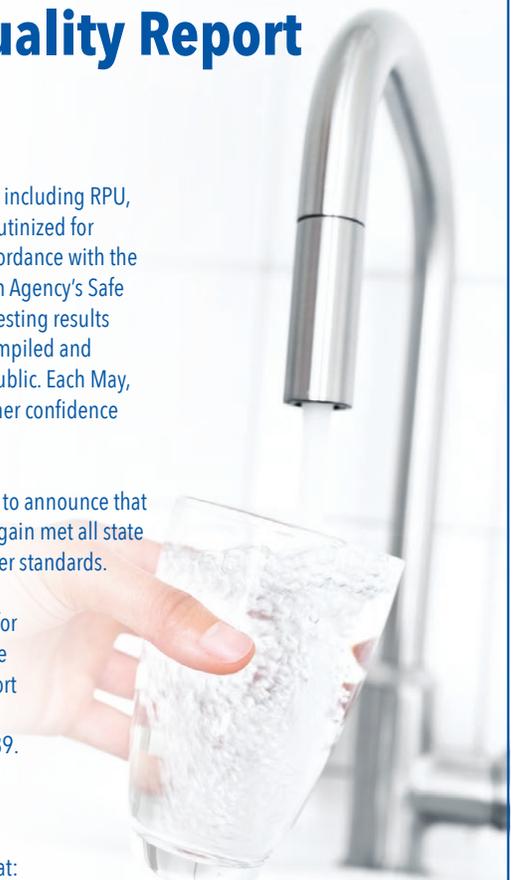
Municipal water utilities, including RPU, are highly tested and scrutinized for safety and quality. In accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Act, the testing results over the past year are compiled and made available for the public. Each May, RPU releases the consumer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

Questions and requests for a hard copy version of the 2018 Water Quality Report can be directed to Todd Osweiler at 507.280.1589.

A complete version of the CCR can be found on RPU's web page located at:

www.rpu.org/education-environment/water-quality.php





HOLD THE SALT!

Chlorides in Our Water Resources

Minnesota is known for its natural resources including lakes, rivers, and streams. However in recent years, water quality experts have been growing more concerned with the amount of chlorides in our rivers and lakes, including those in southeast Minnesota. Most of us are familiar with chlorides in the form of salt used for seasoning our food; however, the majority of chlorides are entering our waterways from road salt and from home water softener use. Simply put — these chlorides are reaching our waters — and fresh water fish (and other aquatic life) do not do well in salty water.

Most of Rochester's homes have water softeners that remove hardness (dissolved minerals, primarily calcium, and magnesium), which are responsible for scale build up on appliances/ dishware, difficulty in getting soap to lather, and water flavor. The water softener process releases chlorides into the wastewater system for treatment; however, wastewater plants are not designed to remove chlorides, and as a result, they are ultimately discharged into the waterways. While there are technologies that can remove chlorides

from wastewater, they are incredibly expensive and ultimately would increase wastewater rates for everyone.

The other major source of chlorides comes from deicing products used on roadways, parking lots, driveways, and sidewalks to make travel safe. When the snow and ice melt, chlorides used in deicing wash into storm drains and make their way into area lakes and rivers.

Thus the City of Rochester is asking for your help to reduce chloride use. Here are a few simple things you can do:

Water Softeners

- Adjust your water softener (the manufacturer can provide instructions). This will reduce chlorides and save you money by reducing the amount of salt you need to buy.
 - › Calibrate your softener to 17 grains per gallon, which is the hardness of Rochester's water supply.
 - › Reduce the frequency of regeneration cycles to once a week on a timed softener.
- Consider replacing your old water softener with a newer, more efficient model that regenerates based on a sensor or flow meter.

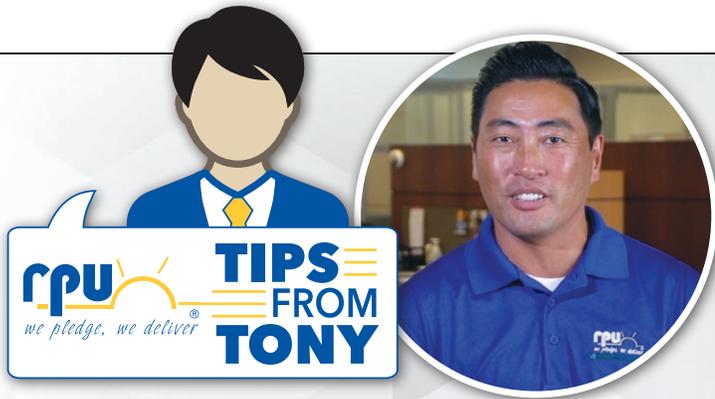
Deicing Products

- 1. Shovel** – Clear walkways before snow turns to ice. Apply salt only if needed.
- 2. Scatter** – Use salt only where critical. Aim for 3 inches of space between salt granules.
- 3. Switch** – Salt doesn't melt ice below 15 degrees, use sand instead for traction.
- 4. Sweep** – Clean up leftover salt, sand, and deicer to save and reuse as needed.

With your help we can reduce chlorides that end up in our lakes and streams, and preserve the Minnesota natural resources we all enjoy.

What About My Drinking Water?

Chlorides in Rochester's drinking water are very low today. However, we must remember that our groundwater is replenished by surface water, and the actions we take on the surface could have drastic effects on groundwater quality in the future. Make an effort today to introduce less salt into the environment to help keep Rochester's drinking water salt free for future generations!



Fire Hydrants Do Break, But What Happens When They Do?

Each winter a number of hydrants are broken or damaged due to contact from a plow or vehicle. If that's the case, then why don't we see water spraying high into the air when they break? I get that question from time to time.

Today, RPU uses fire hydrants that have a valve underground that allows water flow when it is needed. If the hydrant head is hit or broken off, the hydrant has a flange that allows it to break off, avoiding additional damage to the water line.

The hydrant fix is not cheap, however. Labor, parts, and a new flange can cost up to \$350 each. Make sure to call RPU if you see a broken hydrant, so it can be assessed and repaired in case there is a fire emergency requiring water service.



So I'm sorry to break it to you — the water flying high into the air is more of a myth or a scene from a movie, than actual reality — for RPU anyway.



It's time to schedule a **SPRING CLEANING!**

Complete a Central Air Conditioner Clean & Tune and apply for a

\$25 REBATE!

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

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

Need a new air conditioner? We have a rebate for that too!

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RPU SERVICE CENTER Holiday Hours

The RPU Service Center will be closed on:

Memorial Day
Monday, May 27

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RPU tap water has been voted the Best Tasting Drinking Water for 2019 by the Southeast Section of the Minnesota American Water Works Association. This marks the sixth year that RPU has won this distinction. RPU previously won the award in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017, and now in 2019.

RPU tap water is a great, inexpensive source for drinking water. By drinking tap water and using a reusable water bottle, you help keep thousands of plastic bottles out of landfills too!

According to **earthday.org**, Americans purchase about 50 billion water bottles per year, averaging about 13 bottles per month for every person in the U.S.! By using a reusable water bottle, you could save an average of 156 plastic bottles annually.

If you haven't yet, try out a water bottle filler this month and see how easy they are to use.