



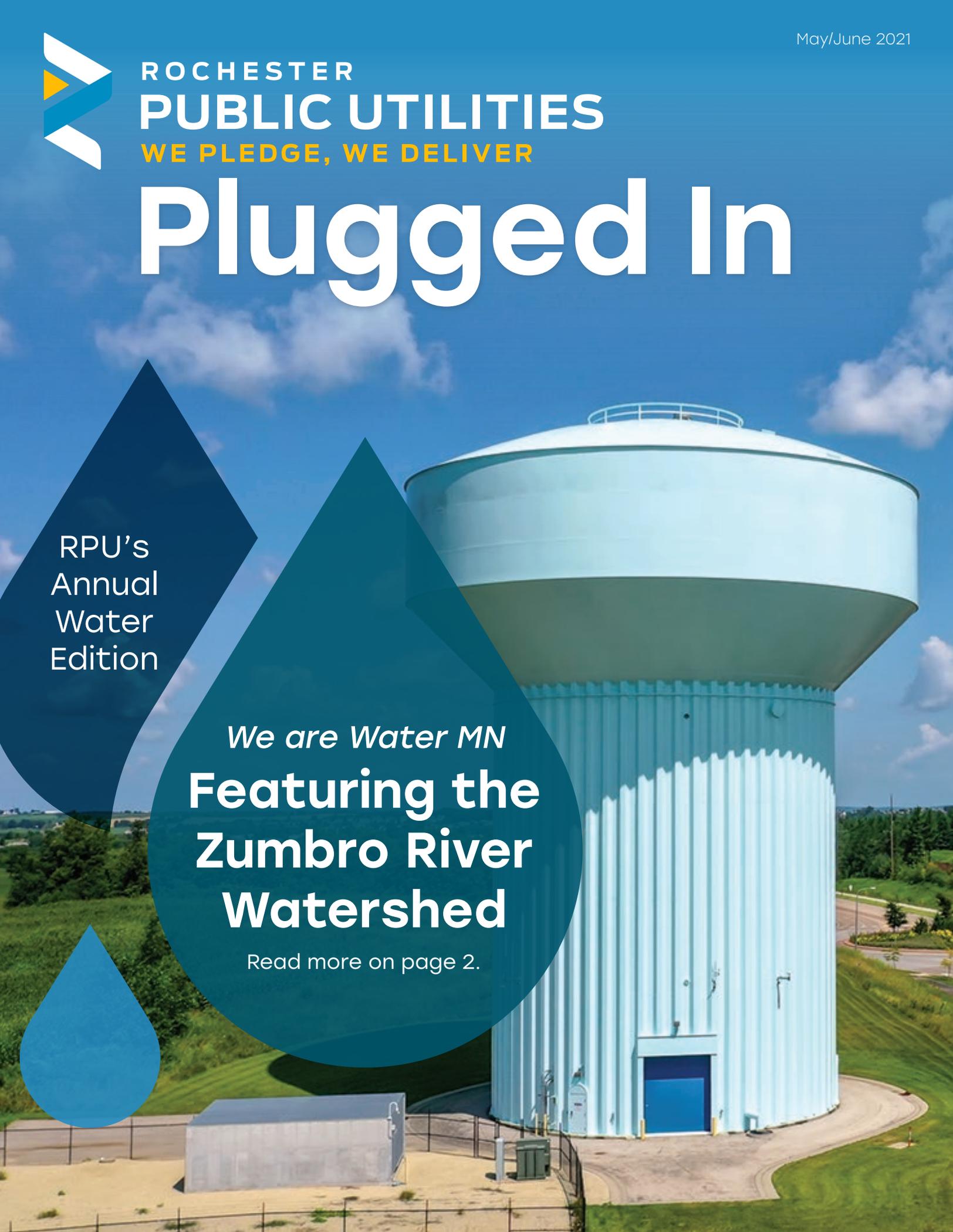
ROCHESTER
PUBLIC UTILITIES
WE PLEDGE, WE DELIVER

Plugged In

RPU's
Annual
Water
Edition

We are Water MN
**Featuring the
Zumbro River
Watershed**

Read more on page 2.



WE ARE WATER



We are Water MN Featuring the Zumbro River Watershed

City of Rochester Public Works Environmental Services, Rochester Public Utilities, and our partners are excited to bring *We are Water MN* to our community to help us explore and examine local water issues and our relationship with water. We'll be offering a main exhibit, companion exhibits, and public events with a water theme this March–June. Up-to-date details are on our website www.wearewaterrochestermn.com.

We are Water MN reveals the central nature of water in our lives by exploring how we relate to water—how we use water, how water unites communities, how water affects every element of life, and how we care for our water and protect water for the future. Visitors reflect on local stories and the meaning and experiences of water in Minnesota with space to add their own stories. Combining learning and sharing in this way strengthens Minnesotans' relationships with water and increases participation in water stewardship activities.

This traveling exhibit examines water issues statewide and in local communities through personal stories, histories, and scientific information. It strengthens Minnesotans' relationships with water, exposes visitors to new perspectives, and increases participation in water stewardship activities.

A companion exhibit exploring Groundwater in Southeast MN featured at 125 Live opened on March 11. Groundwater in Southeast MN begins as water from rain and snowmelt that soaks into the soil and moves into the rock layers below. The rock layers create formations that can hold water, known as aquifers or reservoirs. Minnesotans use the groundwater stored in the aquifers for drinking water. Drinking water wells pull the water from underground to the surface.

Our events calendar includes public events that explore the history and current practices of wastewater treatment in Rochester, stormwater best management practices in urban and agriculture land use, and ways to protect and conserve our drinking water resources.

MHC's project partners for *We are Water MN* are the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS), and the Minnesota Departments of Agriculture, Health, and Natural Resources. These



We are Water MN Rochester Art Center

Open in-person through May 9
Take a virtual tour at
www.wearewaterrochestermn.com

partners connect host communities to resources and information, learn from host communities, and provide opportunities for host communities to learn from and with each other.

We are Water MN is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities and with money from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund that was created with the vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008.

HYDRANT FLUSHING

this Spring and Summer

Hydrant flushing is a vital maintenance activity to clean and flush the city's water mains. Fire hydrants are opened to move a large volume of water at a higher-than-normal velocity through the system. This important maintenance procedure mobilizes particles and minerals that settle over time and flushes them out of the pipes resulting in better water quality. Although it may appear to waste water, the process is part of a routine maintenance program necessary to maintain the integrity of the water system and allows us to ensure the hydrants are in proper working order.

Hydrant flushing may cause periods of discolored water. The water will remain safe to use and will generally clear within a few hours after flushing is completed. If you

notice discolored water in your home or business, run the water at the hose bibs outside for a few minutes, then run the cold water inside until the water is clear.

If possible, do not do laundry while flushing is taking place. If you notice your laundry has been stained, do not dry. Rewash the load using a stain/rust remover, which can be provided free of charge by calling RPU at **507-280-1500**. Do not use bleach on stained laundry as bleach will set the stain.



TIPS FROM TONY: SOLAR CONTRACTORS

RPU has been made aware of solar contractors soliciting door-to-door around Rochester, promising possible financial and conservation results. RPU does not endorse or work exclusively with a solar contractor, but our energy experts make these recommendations if you encounter a door-to-door solar contractor:

- Ask to see their current City of Rochester peddler's license which gives them permission to solicit door-to-door.
- Verify their qualifications, ask for credentials and references, and get multiple quotes from other contractors.
- NEVER share personal or RPU billing information.
- Contact RPU Customer Care at 507-280-1500 with questions on solar rebates and interconnection.



TIPS FROM TONY



Visit www.rpu.org for more information on solar energy.



BE AWARE OF RPU WORK ZONES THIS SUMMER

RPU work zones are set up to keep RPU field crews and the community safe. The RPU work zone signs and cones are set up anytime that RPU is doing field work in or near traffic, or where pedestrians may be.

Please use caution when driving near work zones, and stay outside of coned-off RPU work zones this summer. RPU field crews and their families thank you for your attention to this important message!

How to Request Water Repairs Under Your Service Assured® Underground Utility Repair Coverage



For our customers who have signed up for Service Assured, congratulations—you've taken the first step to protecting yourself from expensive repairs to your water service line.

To maintain your water service and expedite a needed repair, please perform the following steps:

- Familiarize yourself with Figure 1 showing what portions of your water service are covered by Service Assured.
- Document the location of the repair. A picture can be very helpful in diagnosing the needed repairs before a service technician arrives.
- Call RPU at **507-280-1500**. We will dispatch one of our pre-approved plumbing contractors to complete the repairs. Please have the following information available to provide to your RPU Customer Care Advisor:
 - Identify yourself as a Service Assured Customer.
 - Include your name, address, and phone number that you can be reached at.
 - Share the location and a brief description of the leak/break, and the urgency of the repair.
- RPU will contact a plumber based on the timeline of the needed repair, oftentimes the same day.

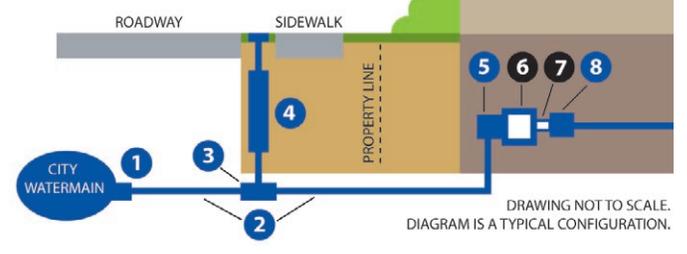
Why Can't I Use My Own Plumber?

RPU has pre-approved plumbing contractors based on response times, service level, and cost. We have

FIGURE 1 Water Service

SERVICE ASSURED® covers from 1 to 7

- 1 Corporation Stop (CUSTOMER OWNED)
- 2 Service Line (CUSTOMER OWNED)
- 3 Curb Valve (CUSTOMER OWNED)
- 4 Curb Box (CUSTOMER OWNED)
- 5 Angle Stop (CUSTOMER OWNED)
- 6 Meter (RPU OWNED)
- 7 Meter Tail (RPU OWNED)
- 8 Full Flow Gate Valve (CUSTOMER OWNED)



established great working relationships with these contractors to provide timely repairs at an acceptable cost to maintain the low rate of coverage for our customers.

If you have not yet signed up for Service Assured,* please join the many customers who were saved from expensive repairs by contacting a RPU Customer Care Advisor at **507-280-1500** or visit www.rpu.org.

* Service Assured® Underground Utility Repair Coverage is also available for your residential underground electric service.

2020 Water Quality Report



Water Quality Report 2020

Municipal water utilities, including RPU, are highly tested and scrutinized for safety and quality. In accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), 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 webpage located at: www.rpu.org/environment/water-quality. Questions and requests for a hard copy version of the 2020 Water Quality Report can be directed to Todd Osweiler at **507-280-1589**.



Partners in Planting 04/21

\$20 ARBORIST COUPON

Submit to Maier Tree & Lawn

\$20 OFF THE PURCHASE OF ANY TREE CARE SERVICE*

In support of RPU's Partners in Planting Program. Must be an RPU customer to participate. One coupon per household. *Offer valid on arborist services over \$200. Not good with other discounts or promotions. Must be presented at time of sale. Refunds not available.



Maier
TREE & LAWN

a **DAVEY** company

3930 Hwy 14 E • Rochester, MN 55904
507-286-8733 • MaierTreeandLawn.com



**ROCHESTER
PUBLIC UTILITIES**
WE PLEDGE, WE DELIVER

One of our **CONSERVE & \$AVE** programs.
Learn more about Partners in Planting at www.rpu.org.

Partners in Planting 04/21

\$10 NURSERY COUPON

Submit to Jim Whiting Nursery & Garden Center or Sargent's Gardens

\$10 OFF ANY TREE PRICED \$99 OR MORE

In support of RPU's Partners in Planting Program. Must be an RPU customer to participate. One coupon per household. Offer valid on any tree priced at \$99 or more. Regularly priced trees only. Not good with other discounts or promotions. Must be presented at time of sale.

Jim Whiting

Nursery & Garden Center

www.jimwhitingnursery.com
3430 19th St NW • 507-289-3741



SARGENT'S

www.sargentsgardens.com

7955 18th Ave NW 1811 2nd St SW
507-289-0022 507-289-6068



**ROCHESTER
PUBLIC UTILITIES**
WE PLEDGE, WE DELIVER

One of our **CONSERVE & \$AVE** programs.
Learn more about Partners in Planting at www.rpu.org.

Neighbors Chipping In

Helping customers with utility assistance
Caring enough to donate
Sharing with an open heart

As part of our commitment to the Rochester community, Rochester Public Utilities (RPU) is pleased to offer **Neighbors Chipping In**. The purpose of this program is to accumulate and disburse funds to struggling individuals and/or families within our community.

It's easy to participate in our voluntary program with a recurring monthly donation. You can either:

- 1) Round up your utility bill, or
- 2) Add a specific amount.

Three Rivers Community Action will allocate the funds to income-qualified RPU customers. You may discontinue your monthly donation at any time by calling RPU Customer Care at 507-280-1500 or emailing customer care@rpu.org.

Your gift of a few extra cents can go a long way towards helping others in need within Rochester! To support **Neighbors Chipping In**, complete the attached enrollment form and mail it to RPU.

Thank You!

Neighbors Chipping In ENROLLMENT FORM

I choose to support **Neighbors Chipping In** by enrolling in the following recurring monthly donation:

Round Up At Billing

Donation On Bill:

\$1.00 \$5.00 \$10.00 \$15.00 Other amount: \$ _____

Last Name (As It Appears On Your Account)

First Name (As It Appears On Your Account)

RPU Account Number

Service Address

Mailing Address (If Different than the Service Address)

City

State

Zip

Contact Phone Number (with area code)

Phone Type:

Home

Cell

Other: _____

Email Address

How did you hear about **Neighbors Chipping In**? Social Media Radio TV Utility Website Utility Representative

Utility Newsletter Rochester Public Transit (bus) Other _____

SIGNATURE: By signing below, I am allowing RPU to increase my bill on a monthly recurring basis at the option I've chosen above. I know I may discontinue my donations by contacting RPU Customer Care.

Customer Signature

Printed Name

Date

MAIL TO: RPU Customer Care, 4000 East River Road NE, Rochester, MN 55906-2813 **OR EMAIL TO:** customer care@rpu.org

05/21 PI

Why Backflow Testing Is Important to Protecting Rochester's Water Supply

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 (PVBs), which serve as a backflow assembly to prevent water from back flowing into your home. A recent change in the Minnesota Plumbing code made annual testing mandatory for all backflow assemblies, including PVBs 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.

Testing must be done by a certified backflow tester and typically takes less than an hour to perform. Contact your irrigation system contractor and ask if they have a certified backflow tester; many local plumbing contractors also have certified testers.

After the test has been completed, the certified tester sends the results



to RPU. Homeowners are required to perform backflow testing 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.

RPU'S DISTRIBUTED GENERATION RULES ANNUAL DISCLOSURE

In compliance with Rochester Public Utilities Distributed Generation Rules, Rochester Public Utilities (RPU) is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers that satisfy the conditions as a qualifying facility. RPU is obligated to provide information regarding rates and interconnection requirements, free of charge, to all interested customers upon request. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility.

Any disputes over interconnection, sales, and purchases relative to qualifying facilities should be brought to the RPU Board for resolution. Rochester Public Utilities Distributed Generation Rules and associated documents can be found on the RPU website at www.rpu.org. For further information, customers can contact RPU at 507-280-1500.

LAST WORKSHOP UNTIL FALL!

FREE Online Energy Efficiency Workshop

Tuesday May 18 • 6:30-7:30pm

You'll qualify for a \$50 home energy audit, valued at over \$400! Learn more at www.rpu.org. Register to receive an email link to join the class. **Call or email Stacy:** 888-734-6365 • sbootscamp@mncee.org



One of our **CONSERVE & \$AVE** programs.



4000 East River Road NE
Rochester, MN 55906
507-280-1500
www.rpu.org

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
Bluespire



RPU Service Center Hours will be 8am-5pm, M-F starting on May 3.

RPU Service Center Holiday Hours | The RPU Service Center will be closed on:

- Monday, May 31, Memorial Day
- Monday, July 5, Independence Day Observed

Social Media:

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

Mobile App:



Customer Care: 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)



It's time to get
CHARGED UP
about Electric Vehicles!

Learn more at www.rpu.org



507-280-1500

Images may be from ©iStock and/or ©Fotolia.
©2021 Rochester Public Utilities