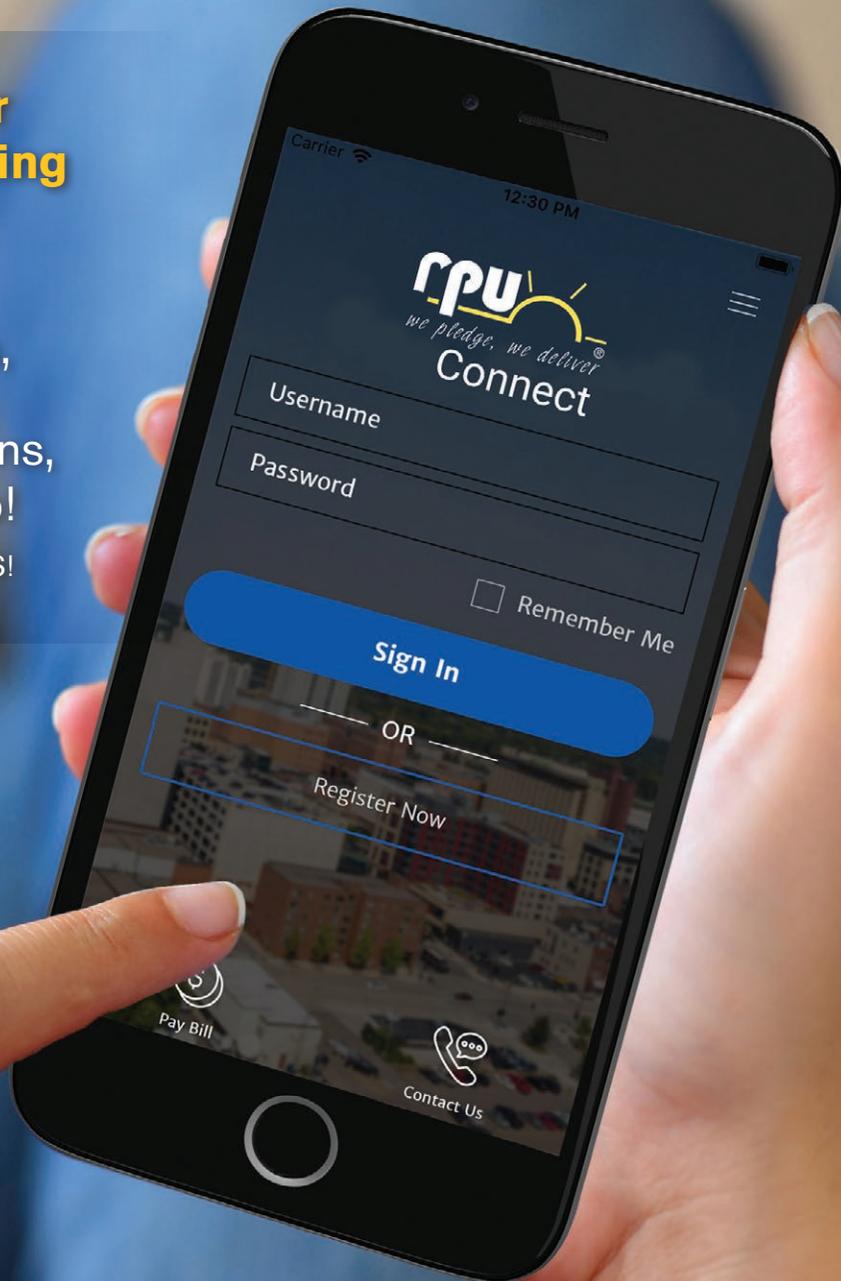


RPU Plugged In

New RPU Customer Experience and Billing System coming later this Fall!

Includes new features, new customer portal with self-service options, and even an RPU app!

SEE PAGE 2 FOR MORE DETAILS!



COMING SOON!

We're excited to announce our new online customer website and mobile app, **RPU Connect**. This new system will provide you with a simpler way to manage your RPU utility services within one screen.



FEATURES



MANAGE YOUR ACCOUNT

Manage your RPU account! Update your account profile and contact details.



PAY YOUR BILL

Paperless billing, autopay, and one-time payment options available for fast, easy, and secure payments.



VIEW YOUR USAGE

Compare current vs. previous time periods to help identify consumption patterns and trends.



COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES

Manage communication preferences to receive proactive alerts pertaining to your account.



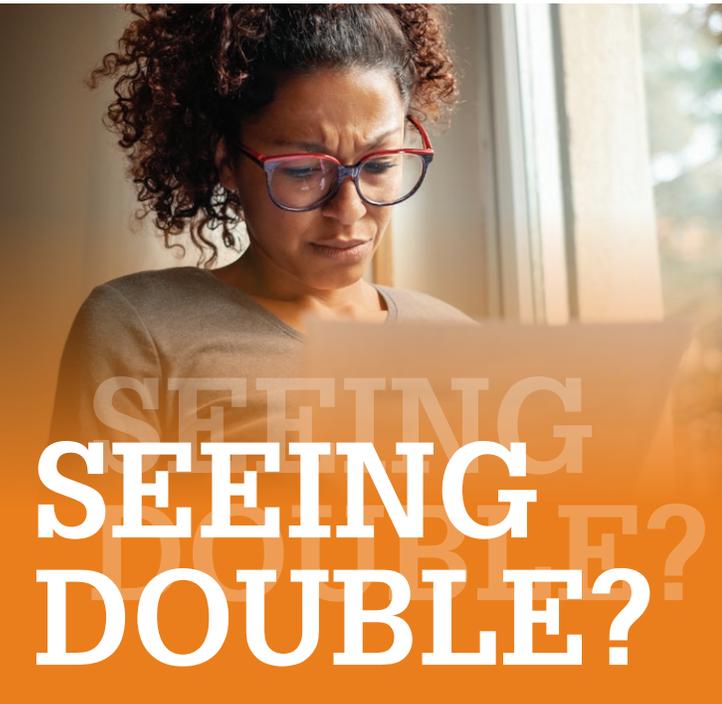
CONNECT WITH US

Send messages to our Customer Relations Team from your mobile device or desktop.



Coming later this fall!
Watch for more information.





SEEING DOUBLE?

You may do a double take when you receive your October billing and see two energy charges. This actually happens twice a year: once in June and again in October. The reason behind the dual energy charge is the change in the rate. As of October 1, the cost per kilowatt drops from eleven cents to nine cents per kWh (kilowatt-hour). This means that part of your usage is prorated at the higher (summer) rate and part of your usage is prorated at the lower (non-summer) rate, hence the reason for two separate energy charges appearing on your bill.

As of June 1, the rate then goes back up to the summer rate. The reason for the rate adjustment twice a year is to accommodate the costs due to the increased usage during the summer months when there is a larger demand for energy. Increased usage in summertime results from higher usage of air conditioners and dehumidifiers.

So, when you receive your October statement, don't fret. It's not a double billing. It's just a prorated adjustment to your bill based on the shift in the rates. The energy customer charge is a flat fee on the billing statement and that will stay the same regardless of how much energy you use.

If you have questions about summer and non-summer rates, contact RPU Customer Relations at **507.280.1500**.

RPU is RP₃

DIAMOND MEMBER

What does that mean for you?



Currently, only 14% of public power utilities hold an RP₃ designation.

An RP₃ designation recognizes the utility for providing its community with:

- 1) High Quality Reliability**
- 2) Safety**
- 3) Workforce Development**
- 4) System Improvement**



An 18-member panel of national public power experts award the RP₃ designation based on the extent to which they meet program criteria:

- **Diamond: 98-100%** (RPU's designation)
- **Platinum: 90-97%**
- **Gold: 80-89%**

3) RP₃ = WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Utilities must describe how they train staff — through webinars, workshops, conferences, college courses, or in-house programs. They discuss how they provide opportunities for staff to network with public power colleagues from across the nation, as well as how they encourage employees to expand their perspective through membership in state, regional, and national committees.

(Learn more about RP₃ in the next issue of Plugged In!)

Utility Payment Arrangements Available for Military Service Personnel

When a household member has been ordered to active duty, for deployment or for a change of duty station, some customers may find it hard to pay their utility bills. Minnesota Law protects military personnel from shut-off if they cannot pay their bill in full. To qualify for this protection, you must enter into and keep reasonably current with one of the payment plans described below.

- ▶ If your household income is below the state median household income, pay 10% of your household's gross monthly income toward your RPU bill.
- ▶ If your household income is above the state median household income, make and keep a payment plan.
- ▶ If you receive energy assistance, pay 10% of your household's gross monthly income toward your RPU bill.

The full statute description for Minnesota Statute 325E.028 can be found on the state of Minnesota website <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/pubs/>.

If you would like to sign up for payment arrangements or have questions regarding the "Military Service Personnel Disconnection Law," please contact RPU Customer Relations at **507.280.1500**.

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! Learn more at www.rpu.org.

Saturday, November 16, 2019 • 10-11am

Northrop Community Education Center

Free childcare available.

TO REGISTER: Call: 888.734.6365 • Email: sbootscamp@mncee.org





Dredged sediment is discharged at the disposal site, where the sediment settles out and clean water is returned to the lake.



One of the two dredges in action – dredging in King’s Marina.

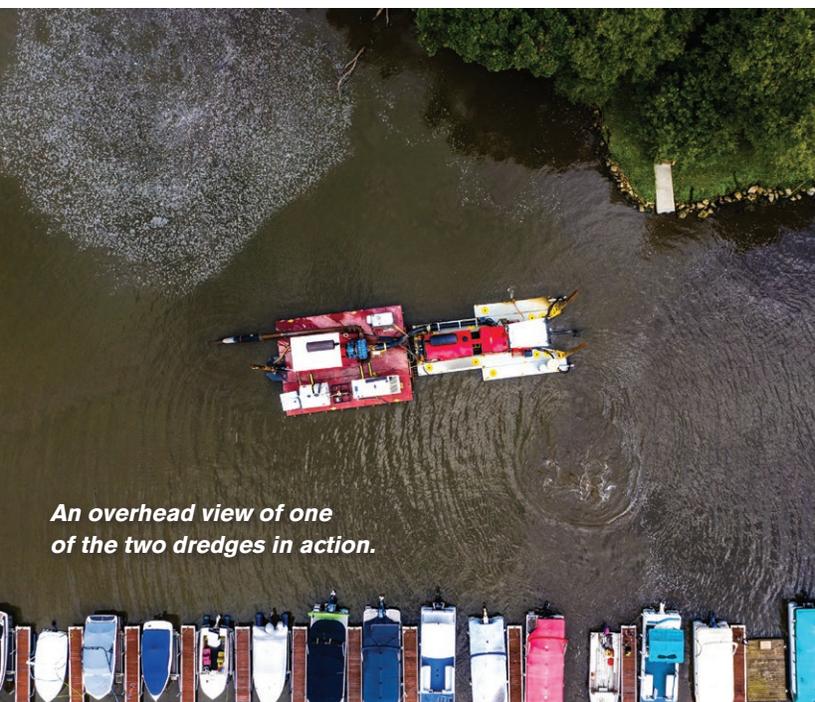
Lake Zumbro Dredging PROJECT UPDATE

The Lake Zumbro Dredging Project is coming along well, despite some weather and rainfall at the beginning of the project earlier this year. RPU committed \$1.167 million toward the project.

- Approximately 300,000 cubic yards of sediment has been dredged.
- Approximately 200,000 cubic yards of sediment is still to be removed.
- Five areas have been dredged, with four areas of the lake to be dredged in October.
- Dredging is scheduled to be completed by early November.



One of the two dredges in action – dredging in King’s Marina.

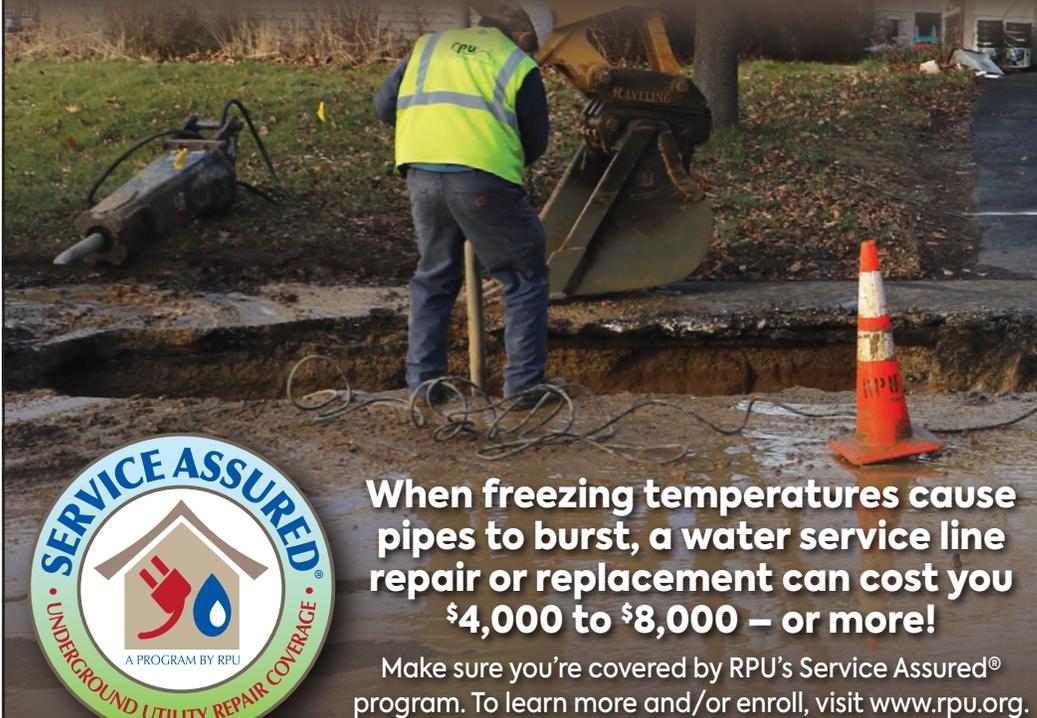


An overhead view of one of the two dredges in action.



An overhead view of sediment as it is discharged at the disposal facility.

Don't Let a Broken Pipe Break Your Bank!



When freezing temperatures cause pipes to burst, a water service line repair or replacement can cost you **\$4,000 to \$8,000 – or more!**

Make sure you're covered by RPU's Service Assured® program. To learn more and/or enroll, visit www.rpu.org.

"What a relief! Very thankful that we had Service Assured® coverage. RPU just took care of everything. \$3 a month is a pretty nominal cost compared to the cost of replacing and digging up one of those [underground water] pipes."

*- Richard Bennett
Service Assured® Customer*



Service Assured® costs \$1.99 per month for water service coverage and only \$1.00 more to cover your underground electric service also. Contact us to determine your eligibility; some exclusions apply. Visit www.rpu.org to review our Terms & Conditions.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Monthly Tip for Plugging into Savings!



Hunt Vampire Power with a Kill A Watt® meter! Learn how much energy and money can be saved by replacing, unplugging, or using a smart power strip. RPU has Kill A Watt® meters that you can use in your home for free! Call 507.280.1500 to reserve one today!



CONSERVE & \$AVE®

WATER CONSERVATION

Monthly Tip on Saving From the Tap!



Let your lawn go dormant (brown) during the autumn. Dormant grass only needs to be watered every three to four weeks, less if it rains.

CONSERVE & \$AVE®



RPU Commercial Customer Corner:

How Do I Pay for Energy Efficiency Upgrades?

So you would like to improve the energy efficiency of your business, but the upgrades are expensive. How do you justify the cost? There are quite a few options and opportunities out there.

PIES Financing

PIES is an acronym for Partners in Energy Solutions. It connects customers to ESPs (energy service providers) that can help them implement energy conservation measures. This program is available to RPU commercial customers that qualify for Conserve & Save® rebates. Financing amounts of up to \$25,000 are available at 0% interest and are paid monthly on your RPU bill. Amounts up to \$5,000 are paid over 12 months and from \$5,000 to \$25,000 are paid over 24 months. There is a small administration fee of \$300 to set up the financing for funding under \$5,000 and a fee of \$500 for projects over \$5,000.

- 0% financing
- Up to \$25,000 available
- Payments made monthly on your RPU bill
- Administration fee of \$300 for financing under \$5,000 and \$500 for financing over \$25,000
- Must contact RPU for pre-approval

For more information on PIES, contact an RPU representative.

PACE Financing

PACE financing is an acronym for Property Assessed Clean Energy. This is a program established by the state to assist commercial customers in upgrading their facilities. This program allows for large capital projects to be financed over a much longer period of time.

- 100% financing with no money down
- Extended finance terms – up to 20 years
- Payments rolled into a special tax assessment
- First payment made in May of the following year
- Payments may be transferred to new owners in case of sale
- Cash Positive – for qualifying projects – the energy savings should exceed the loan payments

For more information on PACE, visit www.minnpace.com.

Grants

Grants are another excellent opportunity to help pay for projects. Usually these are funds that don't need to be repaid, but there may be some extra qualifiers.

CERTs (Clean Energy Resource Teams) Seed Grants are one of these opportunities. Every two years, CERTs

seeks applications for limited financial assistance for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects requiring technical assistance.

Project funding can support technical assistance services (i.e., labor costs only, such as for a consultant, design professional, installer, or student labor) for projects in each of the seven Minnesota CERTs regions.

- Grants typically range from \$500 to \$5,000
- Encourages community-based clean energy projects
- Spurs projects that are highly visible and replicable
- Provides a forum for community education

For more information on the CERTs Seed Grant, visit www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/seedgrants.



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Where to Find RPU

Find us on social media for the latest RPU news and updates!

- @rpuoutages for outage information
- @rpualerts for RPU news and general information
- Rochester Public Utilities



RPU SERVICE CENTER Holiday Hours

The RPU Service Center will be closed on:

- Thursday-Friday, November 28-29 for Thanksgiving

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What You Should Know About the Minnesota Cold Weather Law and Winter Bills

RPU's objective is to ensure that residential customer accounts are protected during the cold weather period and to follow the requirements of Minnesota Statute 216B.097.

Minnesota Statute 216B.097 states that a municipal utility must not disconnect and must reconnect the utility service of a residential customer during the period between October 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit and all of the following conditions are met:

- 1) The household income is at or below 50% of the state median income. RPU may verify income on forms it provides or obtain verification of income from the local energy assistance provider. A customer is deemed to meet the income requirements of this clause if the customer receives any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50% of the state median household income;
- 2) The customer enters into and makes reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household. "Reasonably timely payment" means payment within five working days of agreed-upon due dates;

- 3) The customer receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.

To be protected from service disconnection during the cold weather rule period, customers are required to complete an application which is available by contacting RPU. Before disconnecting service to a residential customer during the period between October 15 and April 15, RPU will provide the following information to the customer:

- 1) A notice of proposed disconnection;
- 2) A statement explaining the customer's rights and responsibilities;
- 3) A list of local energy assistance providers;
- 4) A form on which to declare an inability to pay; and
- 5) A statement explaining available time payment plans and other opportunities to secure continued utility service.

Contact information for the local energy assistance provider is:

Three Rivers Community Action
800.277.8418
www.threeriverscap.org