



# 2024 Customer Relations Operations Board Presentation

**March 25, 2025**

Presented By:

Patty Hanson

Raquel Hellman

Josh Mason

Mikki Valere



## CUSTOMER RELATIONS

*Director of Customer Relations  
Patty Hanson*

### Manager of Marketing and Energy Services

Josh Mason

Matt Davidson

Stephanie Humphrey

Alex Pruett

Caleb Scheel

Jake Shones

Open

Open

Open

### Manager of Customer Care

Mikki Valere

Abderrazak Bari

Leslie Blanck

Angela Bryant

Lynnette Fay

Paul Merchlewitz

Heather Nordine

Linda Pickens

Cory Porisch

Sara Treichel

Jamie Ward

### Communications

Raquel Hellman



# Customer Relations Focus

## Goal:

Delivering exceptional customer service, promoting energy conservation, and enhancing community engagement.

## Key Services:

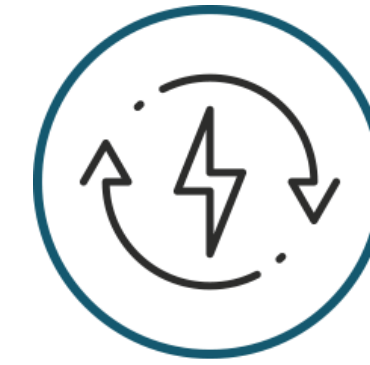
Accessible and responsive support for billing inquiries, service requests, and financial assistance. Guidance on energy efficiency programs and demand response initiatives.

## Customer Empowerment:

Proactive outreach digital communication, and multilingual support. Empowering customers with knowledge and resources to manage energy consumption.

## Commitment to RPU's Strategic 5 R's:

Reliability, Rates, Responsibility, Relationships, and Reputation



**RELIABILITY**



**RATES**



**RESPONSIBILITY**



**RELATIONSHIPS**



**REPUTATION**

# Customer Care Team



# Customer Care Essential Functions

## **Respond to Inquiries**

- Address all types of customer service inquiries.

## **Service Applications & Requests**

- Process utility service applications and field requests promptly.

## **Billing & Payment Support**

- Explain billing, credit, and collection procedures.
- Provide information on optional services and energy management.

## **Account Management**

- Create and maintain customer account information.
- Monitor accounts for delinquencies and offer payment arrangements.
- Review credit history for deposit requirements.
- Analyze irregular consumption patterns.

## **Cash Management**

- Process payments and prepare daily deposit batches.
- Reconcile accounts and balance customer payments.



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# **CUSTOMER CARE METRICS (2024)**

## **Customer Calls Received:**

66,408 Inbound calls handled by the team

## **Outreach Calls Completed (Collections and Customer Care):**

15,149 Proactive outreach calls to customers

## **New Customer Move-ins:**

8,172 New customers welcomed

## **Existing Customer Move-In/Transfers:**

19,230 Transfers for existing customers

## **Total Payment Transactions Handled:**

52,239 Transactions processed, totaling \$21,255,114

## **Language Line Access:**

5,445 Minutes of multilingual support via Language Line

# Enhancing Accessibility and Inclusion for all Customers

## **Language Line Services:**

We use Language Line for real-time interpretation, offering support in multiple languages for clear communication.

## **Language Pay Differential Pilot:**

One of our customer care advisors is certified to listen, speak and translate Arabic.

## **Kiosk Language Preferences and Transactions:**

In addition to English and Spanish, we've added Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, and Somali to our kiosk.

Language preferences: 2,758 in English, 448 in Spanish, 17 in Arabic, 9 in Chinese, and 3 in Somali.

The kiosk has processed 1,288 transactions, totaling \$266,535.





# Marketing & Energy Services – Overview

## Department Mission:

Cost effectively achieve annual energy and water savings goals while meeting customer expectations.

## Key Focus Areas:

- Energy & Water Efficiency
- Renewable Energy
- Electrification
- Demand Response & Optimization
- Community Engagement & Education
- Sustainability Initiatives



**SMART  
ENERGY  
PROVIDER**

American Public Power Association

**2022-2027**

**CONSERVE & \$AVE™**



# Marketing & Energy Services Team

## Team Structure

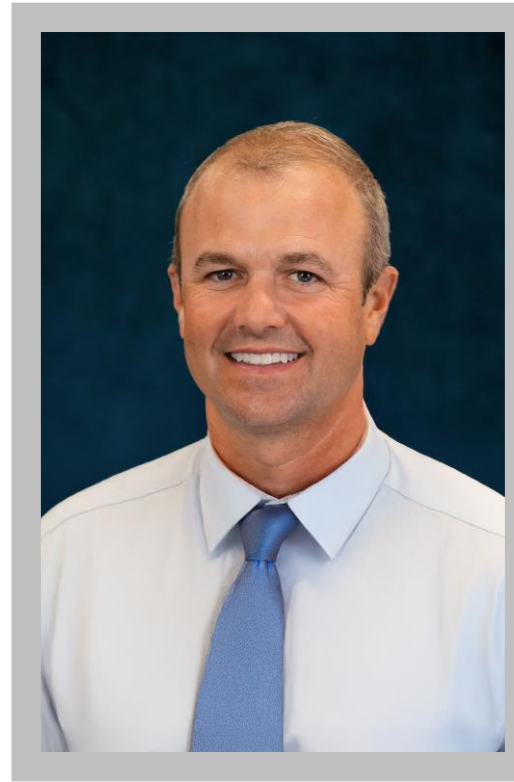
1 Manager of Marketing & Energy Services

2 Residential Energy Advisors:  
54,000 customers

3 Commercial Energy Advisors:  
5,000 customers

2 Marketing Assistants:  
12,000 rebates/year

1 Project Engineer  
Administer over 45 programs



Josh Mason  
Manager of  
Marketing & Energy  
Services



Stephanie Humphrey  
Residential Energy  
Advisor



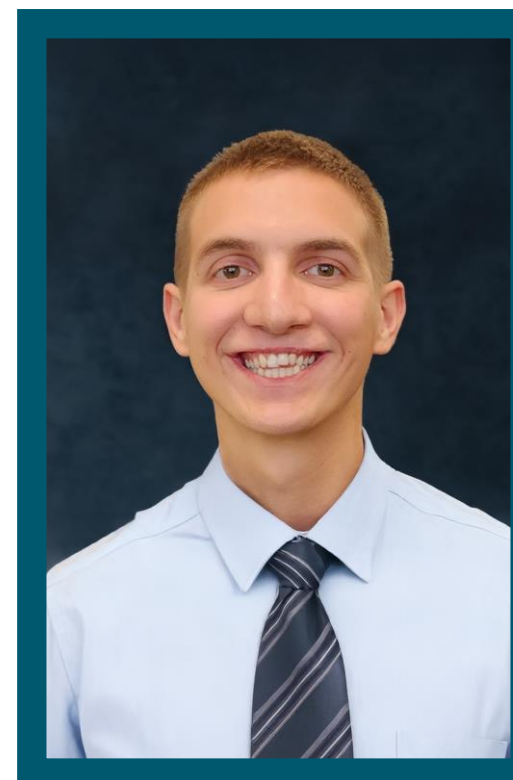
Jake Shones  
Residential Energy  
Advisor



Shae Hanson  
Commercial Marketing  
Assistant



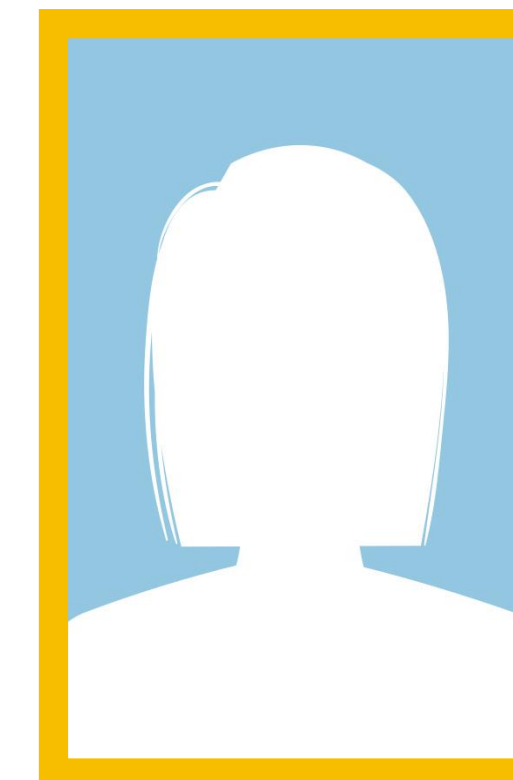
Matt Davidson  
Commercial Energy  
Advisor



Caleb Scheel  
Commercial Energy  
Advisor



Alex Pruett  
Commercial Energy  
Advisor



Open  
Marketing & Energy  
Services Support  
Specialist



Open  
Project Engineer –  
Energy Efficiency



# 2024 Electricity & Water Savings Results

Energy Conservation & Optimization Act –  
1.5% of annual kWh sales

## 2024 Electric Savings:

17,726,598 kWh (102% of goal)

2.8 MW

19th year of meeting goal

**1,600**  
Homes



**43,000**  
Homes



**Since 2002:**

412,183,677 kWh

94 MW

**X2**

Westside  
Energy

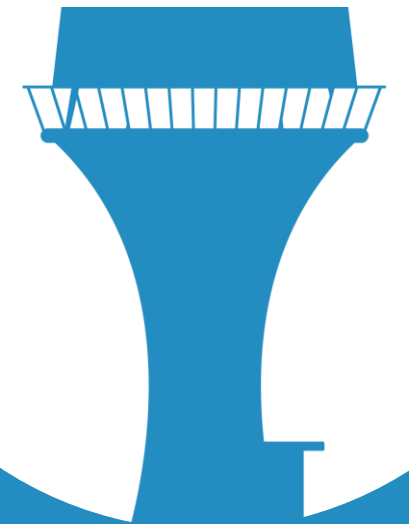
Internal Conservation Goal  
3.5 Million Gallons/Yr

## 2024 Water Savings:

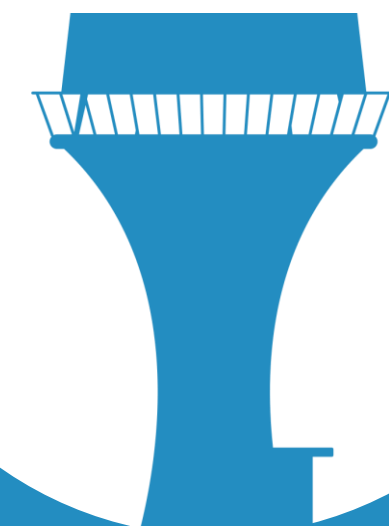
3.9 million gallons (114% of goal)

**2**

Water Towers



**50**  
Water Towers



**Since 2010:**

100 million gallons saved

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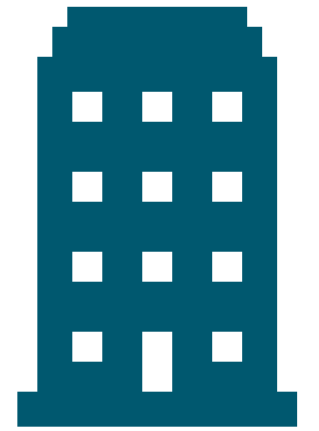
## Residential Rebate Programs



### 2024

- 15% of annual savings
- 2,676,166 kWh
- 11,852 rebates processed
- \$646,735 paid in rebates
  
- Programs primarily focused on appliances, HVAC, lighting, and electrification technologies

## Commercial Rebate Programs



### 2024

- 85% of annual savings
- Commercial: 15,049,432 kWh
- 307 rebates processed
- \$1,146,300 paid in rebates
  
- Top performing programs: lighting, HVAC, VFD's, motors, RCx, and Energy Design Assistance

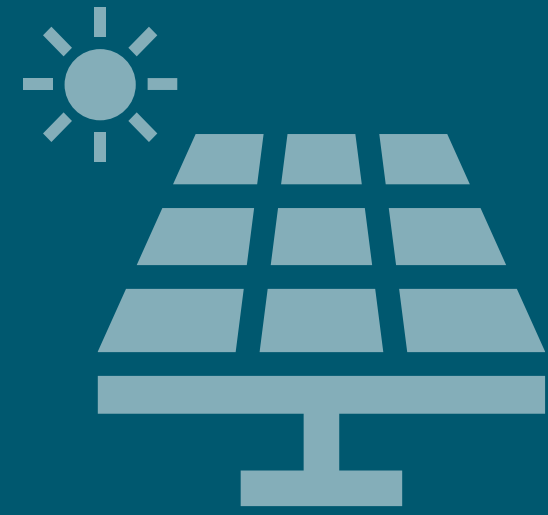


**OVER 45 DEFINED CONSERVATION PROGRAMS:  
"IF IT SAVES ENERGY, WE HAVE A PROGRAM".**

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# Renewable Energy



**2024:**

117 DER systems interconnected  
Hosted 2 Solar Classes: 26 attendees  
Total Customer Owned Systems: 659; 7.2 MW

# Demand Response

**2024:**

Smart Thermostat Program: 1,558 devices  
1.7 MW reduction  
Partners Load Management: 7,947 devices  
~0 MW reduction

# Electrification

## Electric Vehicles

EV Time-of-Use Enrollment Rebate (\$500)

**2024:**

94 Customers  
Total (since 2023): 122



**NEW 2025:**

- Level 2 EV Charger
- Battery Outdoor lawn equipment
- eBikes
- Transit (school bus, city bus)

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# Low Income



Our low-income spending requirement is equal to 0.2% of our annual residential gross operating revenue (GOR). In 2024, our requirement was \$117,148.

## 2024 Programs

- Energy Sustainability for our Elderly: 8 participants, 771 kWh saved
- 4U2: 15 participants, 20,722 kWh saved
- Multifamily Energy Savings Program: 387 units, 24,722 kWh saved
- Free energy audits for low-income customers through our Neighborhood Energy Challenge (NEC) program

# Community Education



- Neighborhood Energy Challenge
- Community Education Classes – Solar, EV
- **Annual Arbor Day Celebration ~2,500 kids**
- Safe City Nights – 6 events in 2024
- EarthFest Expo
- Rochester Area Builders Home Show
- **Rochester Electrified Event – Farmers Market**
- Chamber STEAM Summit
- **Downtown Dazzle – 2024 First Year. 1<sup>st</sup> Place Goal in 2025!**
- Trade Ally & Commercial Customer Annual meeting



**OVER 15,000 COMMUNITY TOUCH POINTS IN 2024**

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# Communications Essential Functions

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**External Communications:** Press releases, Plugged In newsletter, social media, and website.

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**Internal Communications:** Internal newsletters, intranet content, all staff emails.

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**Outage Communications:** Real-time service disruption alerts and restoration updates.

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**Media Relations:** Responding to inquiries, issuing statements, and coordinating interviews.

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**Crisis Communications:** Acting as Public Information Officer (PIO) during emergencies, managing media briefings, drafting crisis messaging, and ensuring timely, accurate public updates.

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**Community Engagement:** Public outreach, education initiatives, and stakeholder communications.

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**Brand Standards:** Ensure consistency in messaging, visual identity, and public image.

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# Communications Engagement

## *Plugged In* Newsletter

- Bi-monthly: six issues per year
- More than 321,000 mailings annually
- Digital Version: 1,019 QR code scans







# Communications Digital Engagement

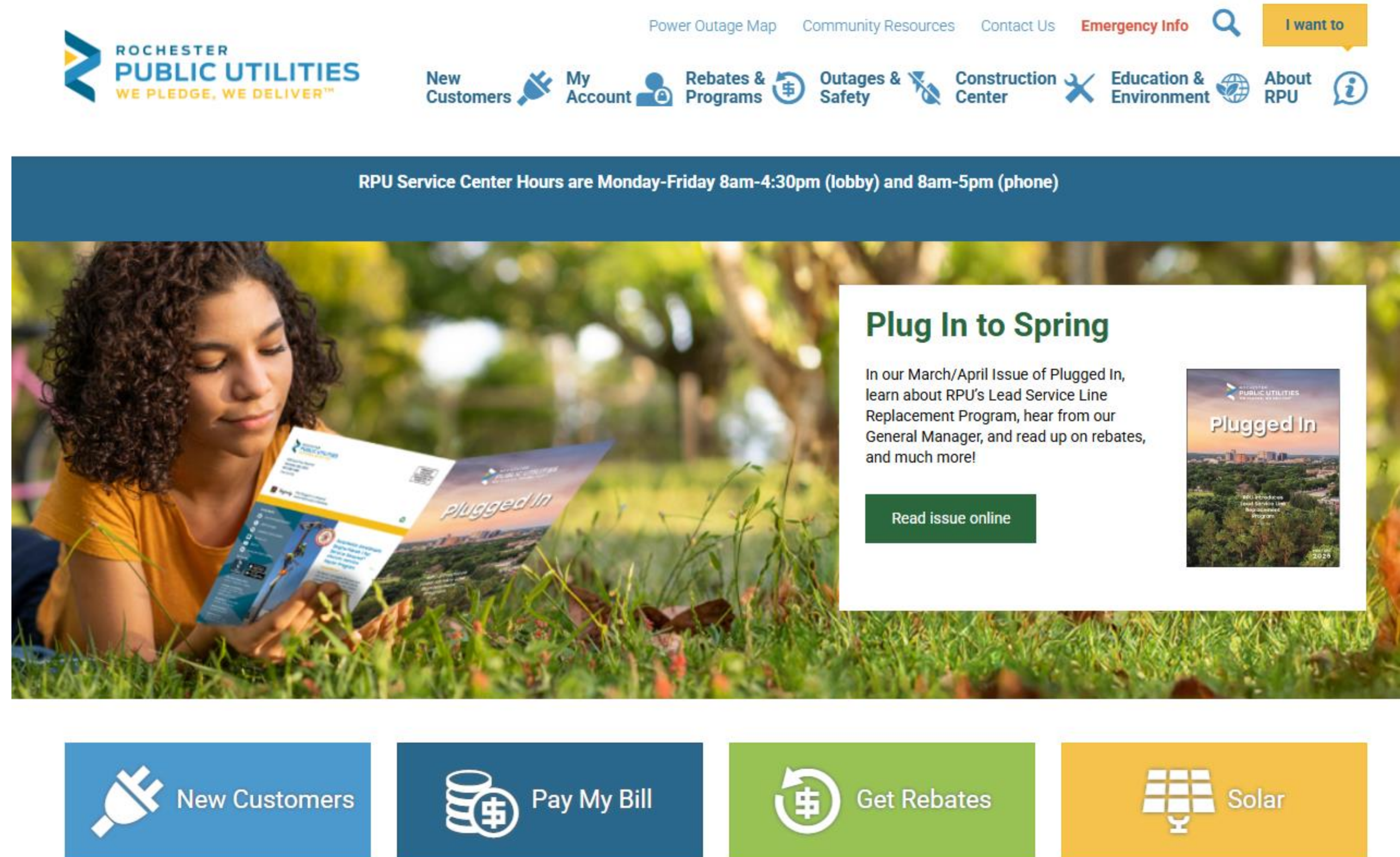
[WWW.RPU.ORG](http://WWW.RPU.ORG)


## Website Performance

- Total Views: 510,000
- Active Users: 156,000








Top Viewed Pages	Number of Views
Home Page	226,000
Lake Zumbro Water Level	88,000
Report an Outage	36,000
Residential Rebate Programs	16,000
Contact Us	14,000

Website traffic remains strong, with high engagement on key resources like outage reporting and rebate programs. Digital newsletter sign-ups indicate growing interest in online access.



Power Outage Map Community Resources Contact Us **Emergency Info**  [I want to](#)

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

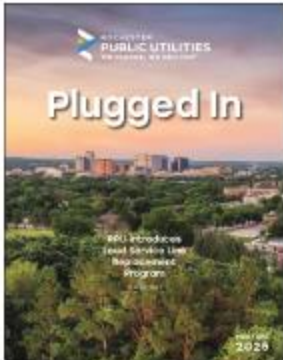
New Customers  My Account  Rebates & Programs  Outages & Safety  Construction Center  Education & Environment  About RPU 





RPU Service Center Hours are Monday-Friday 8am-4:30pm (lobby) and 8am-5pm (phone)

**Plug In to Spring**

In our March/April Issue of Plugged In, learn about RPU's Lead Service Line Replacement Program, hear from our General Manager, and read up on rebates, and much more!

[Read issue online](#)





# Communications Digital Engagement

## Social Media Performance

Reporting Period: December 2, 2024 – March 5, 2025

Since stepping into the Communications Coordinator role, our Facebook presence has experienced significant growth:

- **Total Views:** 67.2 K
- **Reach Increase:** +62%
- **Content Interaction Increase:** +47%
- **Link Click Increase:** +416%



These metrics highlight the effectiveness of our content strategy in expanding audience and driving traffic to key resources. The significant rise in clicks reflects a focused effort on using social media to direct users to our website, enhancing visibility and access to important information.



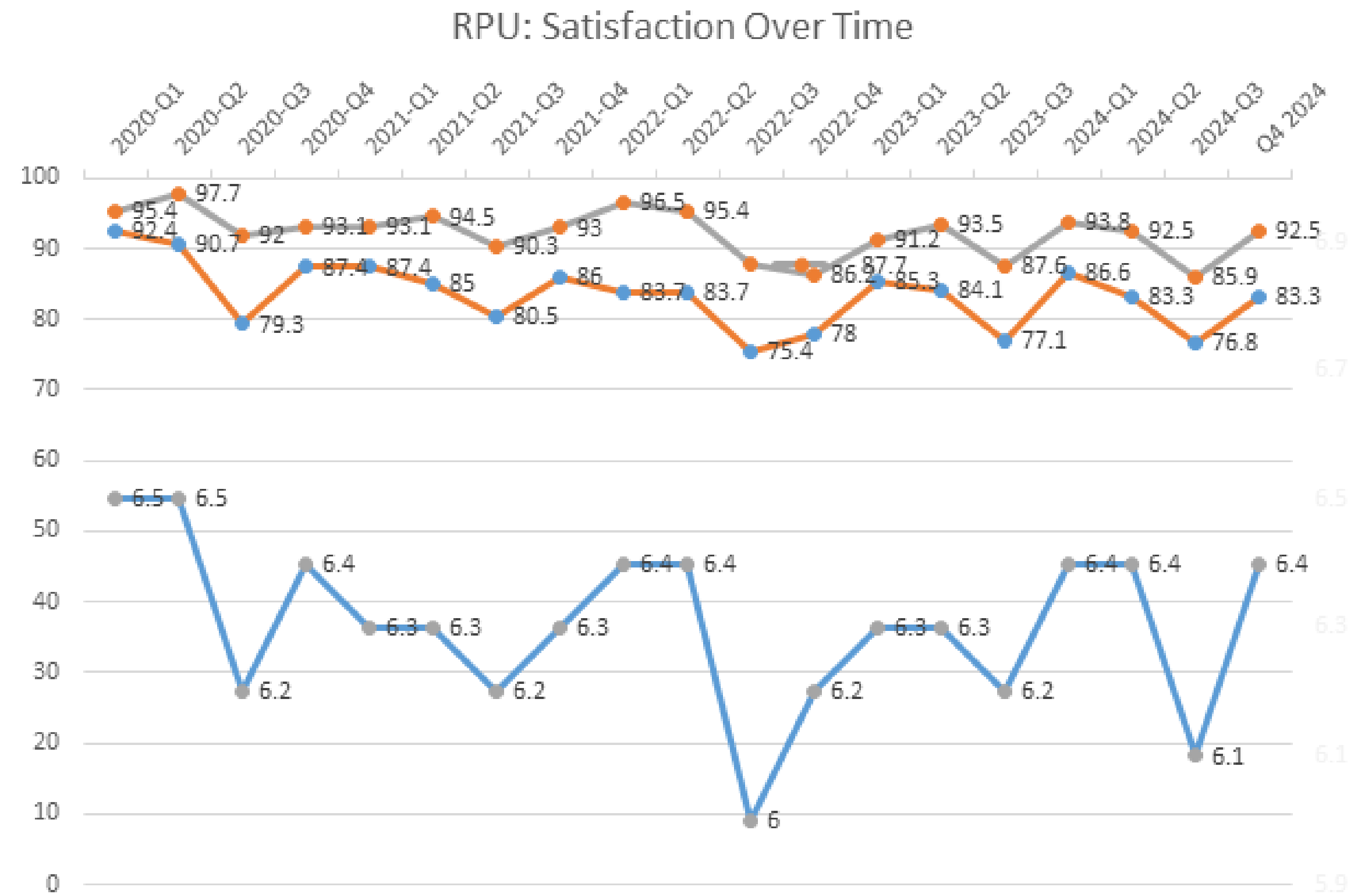
# RPU Customer Satisfaction Survey – Q4 2024

## Survey Goal:

Gather residential customer feedback on satisfaction with RPU services, communication, and community engagement.

## Key Takeaways:

- Overall Utility Provider: High at 6.4 out of 7.
- Overall Satisfaction: 92%
- Net Satisfaction Score: 83.3%



GREY = SATISFACTION (PERCENT)

BLUE = OVERALL SATISFACTION (NUMBER 0-7)

ORANGE = NET SATISFACTION SCORE (PERCENT)



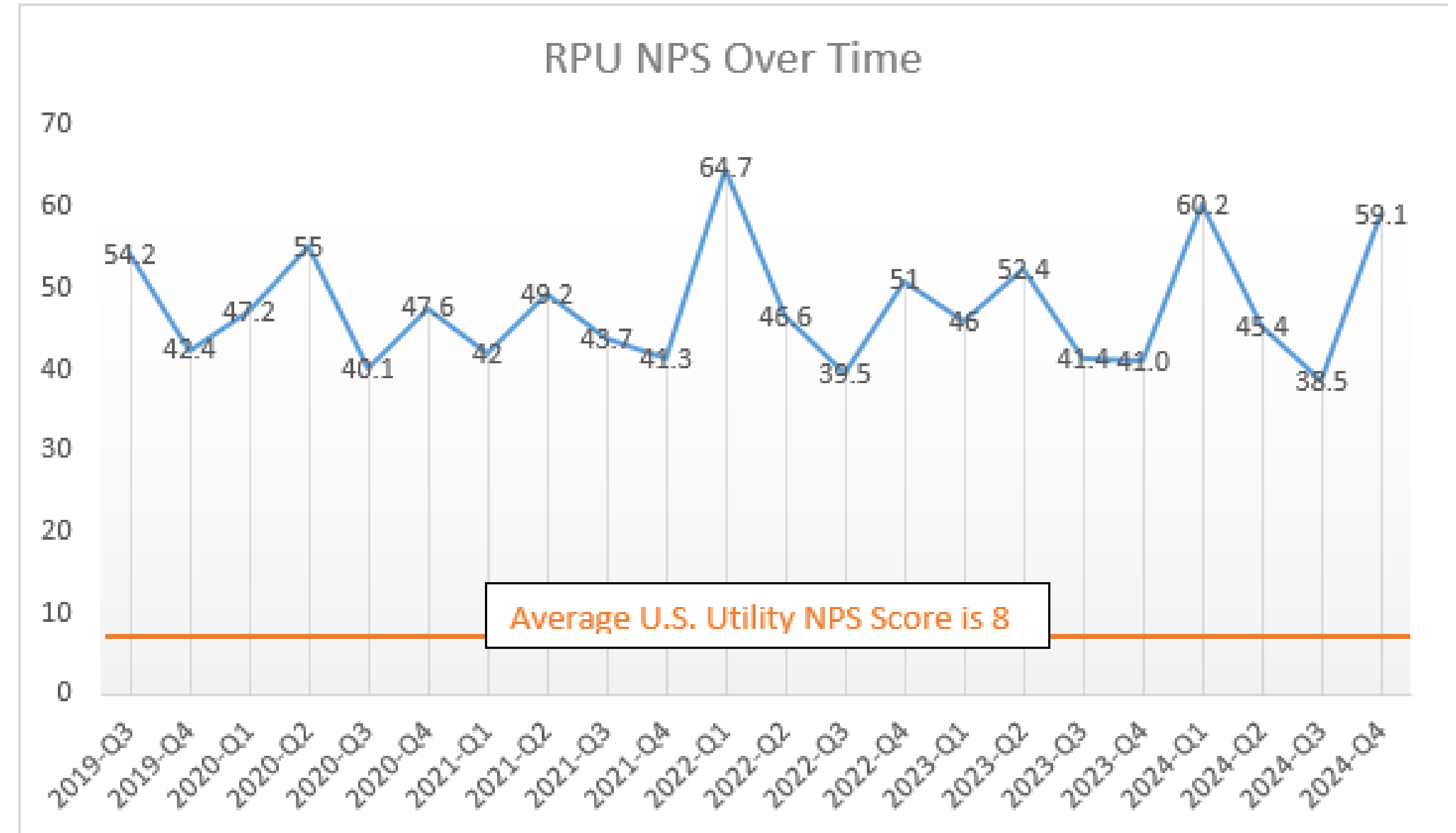
# RPU Customer Satisfaction Survey – Q4 2024

## Net Promoter Score

- Market research metric
- Used as an indicator of customer loyalty

## Net Promoter Score (NPS): 59.1

- Consider in the “Excellent” range (above 50)
- Average U.S. Utility NPS Score is 8



# Our Commitment to Community Impact = over 1,052,796 Touch Points

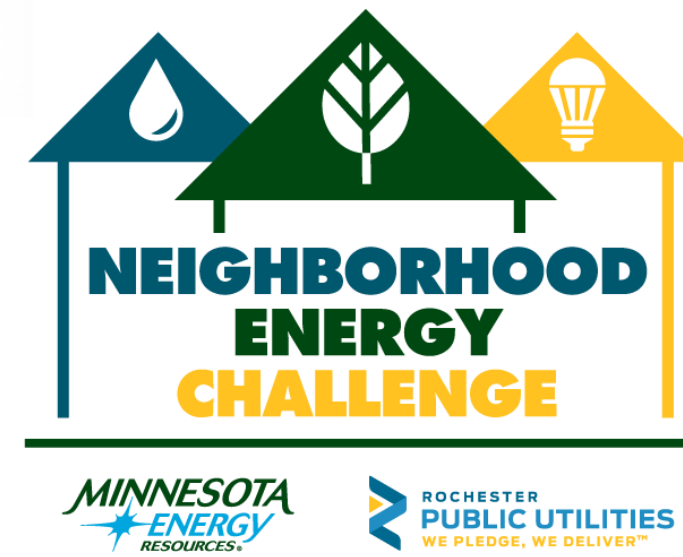
Partners  
*in Planting*



**4U2 PROGRAM**



**PARTNERING**  
In Energy Solutions



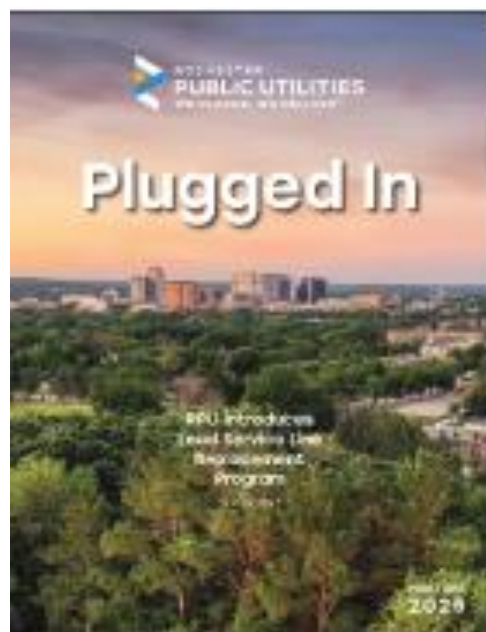
**SMART ENERGY PROVIDER**

American Public Power Association

**CONSERVE & \$SAVE™**



**Energy Sustainability FOR OUR ELDERLY**



**How Are We Doing?**

All Rochester Public Utilities (RPU) customer satisfaction is a top priority. You have been randomly selected to give feedback. Your response is important and helps us do our best to constantly improve.

Please return this survey in the postage-free envelope by **Monday, Nov. 14, 2023**

1. First, please rate your level of satisfaction with RPU in the following areas:

	Customer Service	Service Reliability	Service Quality	Service Value	Service Safety	Service Sustainability	Service Transparency
The ease of doing business with RPU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The reliability of the power, water, and other services you receive from RPU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RPU's quality of service to customers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The value for the money with RPU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RPU's efforts to be environmentally friendly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RPU as a utility provider overall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. So that RPU can improve its products and services, please tell us about any areas in which you are less than "Completely Satisfied" in question 1. Above or provide any other suggestions or feedback you have for RPU.

3. Have you communicated with RPU in the past 12 months?  
 Yes  No

4. If yes, how satisfied were you with the interaction?  
Please check a number (1=highly dissatisfied, 2=3=4=5=6=7=highly satisfied).

5. How often do you use RPU's services?  
Please check a number (1=never, 2=1-2 times, 3=3-4 times, 4=5-6 times, 5=7-8 times, 6=9-10 times, 7=more than 10 times).

6. How often do you use RPU's services?  
Please check a number (1=never, 2=1-2 times, 3=3-4 times, 4=5-6 times, 5=7-8 times, 6=9-10 times, 7=more than 10 times).

7. Please rate RPU's community outreach efforts (circle one number):  
Low 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 High

8. Are you aware of the many RPU payment options?  
 Yes  No

9. Which RPU payment method do you use? (check one)  
 Mail  Online  Direct Deposit  Phone  Pay stations or drop boxes  Person

10. Please tell us a little about yourself:  
Age:  18-24  25-40  41-54  55+  
Gender:  Female  Male Zip Code:

11. Would you like RPU to contact you regarding your comments on this survey?  
 Yes  No

If Yes, please provide your name, email and phone number:  
First Name:  Last Name:   
Email Address:  Phone Number: --

Please see other side!

**EVCHOICE**  
CHARGING FORWARD WITH LOCAL ENERGY



# 2025 Customer Relations Initiatives

**Customer Portal**

**Pollinator Project**

**Benchmarking**

**Commercial Survey**

**Plugged In Redesign**

**Employee Newsletter**

**Crisis Communications Plan**



**Questions?**

**THANK YOU**