

RPU Plugged In



Rochester is #COMMUNITYpowered

Find Out What #CommunityPowered
Means to Rochester!

Read more on page 2

Rochester is #COMMUNITYpowered

1 in 7 Americans — or 49 million — are #CommunityPowered.

Find Out What #CommunityPowered Means to Rochester

When you ask someone around town, what powers Rochester, you may end up with many different answers. We hope that one of the answers that comes up would be RPU. Even going a step further, its RPU employees, customers, and community members that power Rochester. That's because RPU is a public power provider, simply meaning that RPU is a community-owned utility.

Decisions about how RPU is run are made by people who live and work in the community, not corporations. The RPU Utility Board has four Mayor-appointed seats and one City Council Liaison seat. All members of the RPU Utility Board are volunteers. They are not paid for their service. The RPU Utility Board meetings are open to the public and allow for open comment, if customers or community members choose to speak to the Utility Board. Check out the RPU website (www.rpu.org) for a full schedule of meeting dates.

Public power utilities also support local jobs and the economy. RPU employs over 190 local employees who are rooted in and committed to the Rochester community. Many employees volunteer their time and help support many organizations across the Rochester area, helping to make Rochester a great place to call home.

Lastly, did you know that RPU is a not-for-profit organization? The revenue that RPU generates goes back into the utility services and infrastructure, which stays in Rochester. Revenue never goes into the pockets of corporate executives or shareholders. Annual in-lieu of tax payments of nearly \$9 million to the city of Rochester helps to provide the city with additional resources for city services, public safety, and necessary programs.

See other ways in how we're proud to be #CommunityPowered!

What is POWERful about being #CommunityPowered?

You Save Money AND Energy!



Public power customers pay **an average of \$160 less per year** than corporate utility customers.*

Public power utilities aren't motivated by profits to sell more power — they can help **reduce energy use.**

Your Community Benefits!



Communities receive **more than \$2 billion annually** because of investments from public power.

Public power customers get electricity back after an outage **74 minutes sooner**** than non-public-power users.

+ 93,000 people have hometown jobs thanks to public power.†

Your Voice Matters!



Community members — like you! — **help make decisions.**

Your voice helps the utility reflect your community's **values and priorities.**

Share what being #CommunityPowered means to you!

* Based on 2016 average home electricity use of 10,766 kWh per year, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Retrieved from <https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=97&t=3>.
** Excluding major events, and compared to the national average for all utilities. Source: EIA.
† Retrieved from: <https://www.publicpower.org/public-power>



Join Us at the Rochester Area Builder's Home Show!

We're excited to meet with our customers again at the Rochester Area Builder's (RAB) Home Show on February 8-10, 2019, at the Mayo Civic Center.

This year, RPU employees will be talking about the importance of electrical safety in and around the home. Did you know that RPU partners with the Minnesota Children's Museum Rochester to provide educational opportunities for children to learn about RPU services and electrical safety? Visit us at the RAB Home Show to learn more about our partnership with the Minnesota Children's Museum Rochester, electrical safety, or to receive a discounted coupon for admission to the museum.

We're looking forward to seeing you at the RAB Home Show! For show times, visit the Rochester Area Builder's website at www.rochesterareabuilders.com.



Santa Brede Stops by RPU

In his last year serving as Mayor of Rochester, Mayor Ardell Brede stopped by RPU to show his appreciation for the staff before the holidays. RPU staff actually had their own show of appreciation for Mayor Brede.

RPU staff presented Mayor Brede with a plaque showing appreciation for his support for public power during his years as Mayor. The plaque will be placed at the Westside Energy Station, and a tree will be planted on the property in his honor.

RPU Commercial Customer Corner: Commercial Rebate Program Changes for 2019

Thank you for helping Rochester conserve energy in 2018. With RPU's Conserve & Save® program, you not only helped your bottom line, but helped us reach our kilowatt-hour savings goal.

If you forgot to send in that rebate for 2018, don't fret. We can accept rebate applications until March 31, 2019 for projects completed in 2018.

With a new year, come new energy efficiency opportunities for energy cost savings. Let RPU's 2019 Conserve & Save® rebate program help cover some of the costs for your upcoming projects.

We have added a new rebate category, **Compressed Air Equipment** that includes:

- VFD Air Compressors (< 50hp)
- No Loss Air Drain (compressed air)
- High Efficiency Air Filters (compressed air)
- Refrigerated Air Dryers (compressed air)
- Mist Eliminators (compressed air)
- Engineered Nozzles (compressed air)

The following rebates have been revised:

- The maximum rebates have been reduced on LED linear and screw in lamps up to 20 watts. This is due to the falling prices of LEDs.
- Based on the new savings recorded in the 2019 Minnesota Technical Reference Manual, the rebate savings and minimum efficiencies have been adjusted for cooling equipment, air-source heat pumps, and packaged terminal heat pumps.
- Savings for the water-source heat pumps, (for use with cooling towers), have been adjusted to match ASHRAE 90.1-2010 minimum efficiency and maximum capacity.
- The ECM Refrigeration Condenser Fan Motors rebate program had two major changes:
 - The rebate for a ½ HP motor size has been eliminated.
 - The program now includes a ECM compressor motor rebate.
- Variable speed drives will be capped at 50% of the equipment cost up to a maximum rebate amount.



Jan Blevins
Commercial Account
Representative
jblevins@rpu.org
507.280.1578



Dru Larson
Energy and
Environmental Advisor
dlarson@rpu.org
507.280.1607



Josh Mason
Energy and
Environmental Advisor
jmason@rpu.org
507.280.1588



Anna Basimamovic
Energy and
Environmental Advisor
abasimamovic@rpu.org
507.280.1565

CONSERVE & \$SAVE®

The full list of available rebates can be obtained from your account representative or RPU's website (www.rpu.org). Always keep in mind that some rebates follow very specific efficiency guidelines, which must be met in order to qualify for the rebate. If you are unsure, please contact your RPU representative.



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**.

WHERE IS YOUR HOUSE ON THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY SCALE?



BEST ENERGY PERFORMANCE

POOR ENERGY PERFORMANCE

ATTEND OUR FREE ENERGY WORKSHOP TO FIND OUT!

Saturday, March 9, 2019 • 10-11am

Northrop Community Education Center • 201 8th St NW (Room 308)

Attendees qualify for a \$50 home energy audit where you will receive FREE "first step" water and energy saving products! You'll also get expert help with "next step" efficiency improvements.



MINNESOTA
ENERGY
RESOURCES

rpu
we pledge, we deliver
CONSERVE & \$AVE

TO REGISTER

Call: 888.734.6365

Email: sbootscamp@mncee.org

Learn more at www.rpu.org



DO NOT FALL VICTIM TO A UTILITY SCAM CALL

Please be vigilant and mindful of utility scams. Scams come in many forms, but the one that we are made aware of the most is the phone scam. **Never offer financial or bank information over the phone, unless you prompted the call to RPU at 507.280.1500.**

Imposters are calling RPU customers stating that their utilities will be shut off unless immediate payment is not made over the phone by credit card or pre-paid debit cards. These calls

can happen at any time of the day or night. Beware: with today's phone technology, scammers can even make the caller ID show RPU's customer service line (**507.280.1500**). **This is not how RPU operates, and remember that RPU would never call with this threat.**

RPU will never request bank or secure information from you over the phone unless you ask to discuss your account. The RPU representative will then ask for information to identify who you are and that you are authorized to speak on behalf of the account.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU RECEIVE A SCAM CALL

- If someone calls threatening to cut off your power if you don't pay, hang up!
- Call RPU at **507.280.1500** to report the scam.
- Never give personal or financial information to an unknown caller.
- Remember that RPU will never use threatening language or make forceful demands for payment.

This type of scam is not just seen in Rochester. Utilities throughout the nation deal with scam calls, as well. Please share this information with friends and family to help ensure that they don't fall victim to a phone scam.

Learn About Solar Energy For Your Home or Business

- QUESTIONS ADDRESSED:**
- How well does solar energy work in Minnesota?
 - How much energy do systems produce?
 - What are the costs involved and economics?
 - Is there maintenance?
 - What incentives are available?

There will be plenty of time for questions and discussion. Installation photos will show you how they look and how they are installed.

- CLASS:** Solar Energy for Your Home or Business
DATE: Saturday, February 23, 2019
TIME: 10 am – 12 pm
COST: FREE!
LOCATION: Northrop Community Education Center, Room 308
 201 8th St NW
REGISTER: Rochester Community Education
<https://rochester.ce.eleyo.com> or 507.328.4000



Pictured are homes with solar systems in Rochester, MN.

Now Accepting Entries for the MMUA 'Tom Bovitz Memorial Scholarship Award' Essay Contest

The deadline for essays for the MMUA "Tom Bovitz Memorial Scholarship Award" is March 29, 2019. All essays must be submitted to RPU by that date.

There are four scholarship awards given out statewide ranging from \$2,500 to \$500.

The essay topic is "Municipal Utilities: Good for All of Us" and should cover specific details of how RPU meets that goal with our services of electricity and water.

One local winner is selected from each municipal utility across Minnesota and then each is judged by a committee to decide on the scholarship awards. Last year, the first place award went to a Rochester student.

For full details on the scholarship contest, visit the RPU website at www.rpu.org or contact Tony Benson at tbenson@rpu.org or **507.280.1534**.



The 2018 MMUA Scholarship Award winner was Eric Chestolowski from Rochester.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Monthly Tip for Plugging into Savings!



Switch to Energy Star® LED bulbs! They use at least 75% less energy, and last 25 times longer, than incandescent lighting. Plus, you can apply for a rebate on your purchase from RPU!

For more conservation tips, and to download an LED lighting rebate application, visit www.rpu.org.

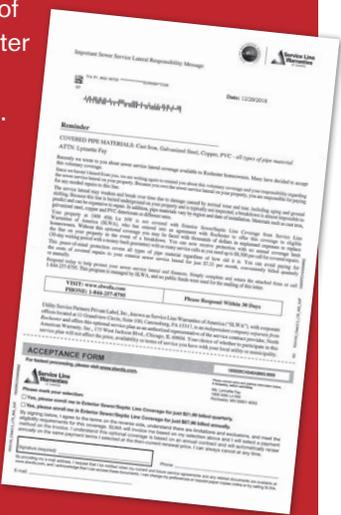





Sewer Letters Are NOT from RPU

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e have received a number of calls regarding a recent letter sent out to Rochester residents offering a sewer coverage service. The sewer coverage is not a service offered by or backed by RPU. RPU's only underground repair coverage is Service Assured® and protects your underground electric and/or water utilities for as low as \$1.99 per month. Call RPU if you are interested in signing up or if you have questions regarding the importance of protecting your underground utilities.



RPU website: www.rpu.org
RPU phone number: **507.280.1500**



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

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US POSTAGE
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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:

Monday, February 18
Presidents' Day

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Freezing Temps Can Cause Broken Pipes...

and 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.