



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

# Plugged In

**From the Desk  
of the General  
Manager:  
Preparing for  
Advanced Metering**

Details on page 4-5

JUL / AUG  
**2025**



# 2025 Arbor Day Celebration

Rainy skies couldn't dampen spirits at RPU's 2025 Arbor Day Celebration. More than 2,500 people made their way to the Rochester Community and Technical College Fieldhouse for the annual event, which was relocated indoors due to weather. Students and community members enjoyed a day of environmental education, interactive activities, and celebration of the vital role trees play in our lives.

The elementary school Arbor Day Poster Contest winners were recognized for their creativity around this year's theme,

"Trees Provide Food for Animals and People." Their artwork will be featured in the 2026 RPU calendar, available for free later this year.

Save the date for next year's Arbor Day Celebration: April 24, 2026



## 2025 POSTER CONTEST WINNERS



**OVERALL:**  
**Lauren**  
Mr. Lynch  
Gibbs  
Elementary



**FIRST GRADE:**  
**Rina**  
Mrs. Schad  
Jefferson  
Elementary



**SECOND GRADE:**  
**Doriah**  
Mrs. Peters  
Pinewood  
Elementary



**THIRD GRADE:**  
**Serena**  
Mrs. Cox  
Hoover  
Elementary



**FOURTH GRADE:**  
**Andie**  
Ms. Chhunn  
Elton Hills  
Elementary



**FIFTH GRADE:**  
**Shaarav**  
Mrs. Hill  
Washington  
Elementary





# Meet the New Faces of Marketing & Energy Services

RPU is excited to welcome two new members to the Marketing & Energy Services department who bring fresh perspectives and a shared commitment to serving our customers and community.

Laurie Cook joins RPU as a Project Engineer – Energy Efficiency. She brings over 30 years of experience designing lighting, power, and communication systems for a wide range of local customers. She also has extensive expertise in conducting energy audits and implementing demand management strategies for commercial and industrial clients. A

Southeast Minnesota resident for more than 25 years, Cook's knowledge and local insight are a welcome addition to the team.

Shae Hanson is RPU's new Marketing & Energy Services Support Specialist. With over two years of experience in the utility industry, she is passionate about promoting energy efficiency and enhancing the customer experience. A lifelong resident of the Rochester area, Hanson values strong community ties and brings that same dedication to her role. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her Llewellyn Setter and trying out new recipes in the kitchen.



Laurie Cook



Shae Hanson

## COMMERCIAL CORNER

### Christ Community Church Invests in Energy Efficiency

Christ Community Church recently completed a significant energy efficiency upgrade with support from RPU. The project included replacing three aging air handlers with high-efficiency units and upgrading many existing lights to LED fixtures. These improvements are expected to save the church more than 38,000 kilowatt-hours of energy each year.

To help offset project costs, Christ Community Church **received over \$27,000 in rebates through RPU's Conserve & Save™ program**. This investment reduces utility expenses and supports long-term sustainability, showing how local organizations are making smart energy choices that benefit both their bottom line and the community.

## CONSERVE & \$AVE™



To learn how your business can save money through energy efficiency upgrades and RPU rebates, visit [rpu.org](http://rpu.org) and explore the Conserve & Save™ program.



# From the Desk of the General Manager: Preparing for Advanced Metering

At RPU, we are committed to delivering safe, reliable service while continuously improving the way we operate. One of our most significant upgrades coming soon is the implementation of advanced metering, with installations beginning in early 2026.

Advanced metering is part of a secure system known as Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). Advanced metering uses upgraded meters, a communications network, and a data management platform to allow two-way communication between your electric and water meters and RPU. This will enable us to read meters remotely, respond to outages more efficiently, and give you access to more detailed usage data through our enhanced customer portal once available.

An electric meter installation typically takes less than 15 minutes and does not require you to be home. Water meter installations take 30–60 minutes and will require an appointment, as technicians will need to access the meter inside your home.

To help you prepare, we've created a dedicated webpage with more information: [rpu.org/advancedmetering](https://www.rpu.org/advancedmetering). There, you'll find two short videos showing you what to expect during the installation process—one for electric and one for water.

We're excited to bring the benefits of advanced metering to our customers and will continue to keep you informed as our project moves forward.

Sincerely,



**Tim McCollough**  
General Manager,  
Rochester Public Utilities

## Help Reduce Energy Demand During Peak Savings Events

**Participate in RPU's Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program.** During periods of high electricity demand, from May 1-September 30, you'll agree to allow RPU to make minor temperature adjustments (2-4 degrees) to your smart thermostat<sup>^</sup> during Peak Savings Events. *(Peak Savings Events will not occur on weekends or holidays.)*

When you join BYOD, you'll receive a one-time **\$50** enrollment incentive bill credit plus a **\$25** annual, year-end bill credit for participating.

Visit [www.rpu.org](https://www.rpu.org) to enroll today:



**PARTNERING IN SMART ENERGY SOLUTIONS**  
PROGRAMS BROUGHT TO YOU BY RPU

<sup>^</sup>RPU electric customers who have installed a qualifying connected smart thermostat controlling their central air conditioning or heat pump system are eligible. Read the BYOD FAQs and Terms and Conditions at [www.rpu.org](https://www.rpu.org).





# Advanced Metering Frequently Asked Questions

## What is advanced metering?

Advanced metering is a modern system that uses upgraded electric and water meters to securely communicate usage data between your home or business and RPU. This allows for faster outage detection and better service.

## What's the difference between electric and water meter installation?

Electric meter installations take less than 15 minutes. You do not need to be home. Water meter installations take 30–60 minutes and requires an appointment, since the technician must access your indoor water meter.

## When will I be able to see my usage data?

Once fully implemented, customers will be able to view updated electric and water usage information through the RPU Connect customer portal.



## Why is RPU replacing my meters?

Advanced meters are the new utility standard. Upgrading to this technology allows RPU to improve efficiency, reduce operating costs, and provide customers with access to more detailed usage information.



## How will I know when my meter is being replaced?

Customers will receive advance notification. If you're not home during an electric meter exchange, the installer will leave a door hanger with follow-up information. Water meter appointments will be scheduled in advance.

## Will I lose service during the installations?

There may be a brief outage during the meter change to safely complete the work.

## Can I opt out?

No. Advanced meters are part of RPU's system-wide upgrade and are required for system compatibility and efficiency.

## When will installations happen?

Meter installations will begin in early 2026 and continue over the next three years. Electric and water meters will be upgraded for both residential and commercial customers.

## Who is doing the installations?

Installations will be performed by RPU and our trusted partner, WESCO. All installers will carry proper identification and wear uniforms or badges.

## Is my data secure?

Yes. At RPU, protecting your personal data is more than a legal requirement. It's a responsibility we take seriously. We are committed to safeguarding your information as part of our ongoing duty to you as a customer. That means going above and beyond when needed to ensure your data stays secure. Data is encrypted and transmitted securely, and no personal or account information is sent over the radio system. We also comply with Minnesota statute 13.685, which protects customer information.



## Where can I learn more?

Visit [rpu.org/advancedmetering](https://rpu.org/advancedmetering) to watch installation videos and explore more details about the project.



# 2025 Drinking Water Week Open House

RPU welcomed the community to the Apache Mall Water Tower and Wellhouse in May for the 2025 Drinking Water Week Open House. The event gave attendees a behind-the-scenes look at how RPU delivers clean, reliable drinking water to homes and businesses across Rochester.

Visitors had the opportunity to go inside both the water tower and wellhouse,

see a live fire hydrant demonstration, and learn how Rochester's water system works from the experts who keep it running. The open house offered a unique, hands-on way to explore the infrastructure and innovation behind the city's water supply.

**Thank you to everyone who attended the open house!**





# Pay Your Way: Convenient Payment Choices for Every Customer

RPU is committed to making bill payment as simple and convenient as possible. Whether you prefer digital tools or in-person service, RPU offers a variety of payment methods to fit your needs.

## USE THE RPU BILL PAY KIOSK

For 24/7 self-service, visit the RPU Service Center's indoor kiosk. Scan the QR code on your RPU bill or enter your account number manually. The kiosk accepts cash, checks, or credit cards. Please note that change is not provided for cash payments.



## PAY ONLINE WITH PAYPAL

RPU now accepts payments through PayPal. Simply search for Rochester Public Utilities within your PayPal account and pay directly—no setup or additional fees required.



## PAY AT WALMART WITH WALMART PAY

You can now pay your RPU bill at participating Walmart locations using Walmart Pay. Bring your RPU account number and a government-issued ID. Payments can be processed immediately or next day for a small fee charged by Walmart.

## OTHER PAYMENT OPTIONS

You can also pay your bill:

- Online at [rpu.org](https://www.rpu.org)
- Through the RPU Connect mobile app. Learn how to get the app at [rpu.org/my-account/rpu-connect-faqs.php](https://www.rpu.org/my-account/rpu-connect-faqs.php)
- Over the phone at **1-855-631-3643**
- By setting up AutoPay for automatic withdrawals

Have questions? Call RPU Customer Care at **507-280-1500**.



ROCHESTER

## Planning to upgrade an old appliance?

Receive **FREE** electrification support today!

The City of Rochester offers **FREE** guidance on upgrading gas appliances to efficient electric options. Plan ahead and get help navigating rebates, finding qualified contractors, and choosing the best equipment for your home, health, and comfort.

Visit [electrifyeverythingmn.org/contact-us](https://www.electrifyeverythingmn.org/contact-us) to get in touch with the Electrify Everything Help Desk.

Phone: 612-244-2486  
Email: [info@electrifyeverythingmn.org](mailto:info@electrifyeverythingmn.org)



[www.electrifyeverythingmn.org](https://www.electrifyeverythingmn.org)

Electrify Everything MN is managed by Center for Energy and Environment and supported by the City of Rochester, Destination Medical Center, Rochester Public Utilities, and other foundation and local government partners.

## Stay Cool & Save Big This Summer!



### Upgrade your home's comfort with energy-efficient cooling and get cash back!

- Room Air Conditioners
- Central Air Conditioners
- Air Source Heat Pumps

**Cool home. Cooler savings.** Scan the QR code to learn more and download rebate applications with complete terms and conditions.



## CONSERVE & \$AVE™



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STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
ROCHESTER, MN  
PERMIT NO. 4

4000 East River Road NE  
Rochester, MN 55906  
**507-280-1500**  
[www.rpu.org](http://www.rpu.org)



*Neighborly*

RPU Plugged In is designed  
and printed locally in Rochester.



RPU will be closed on Friday, July 4th in observance of Independence Day

#### Social Media:



@rochesterpublicutilities



@RPUOutages



Rochester Public Utilities



[blog.rpu.org](http://blog.rpu.org)



RPU TV



Rochester Public Utilities

#### Mobile App:



#### RPU Service Center Hours:

Monday - Friday (8am - 4:30pm)

#### Customer Care By Phone:

Monday - Friday (8am - 5pm)

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)

# SIGN UP FOR OUTAGE ALERTS!



**Log in to >> RPU Connect\***

**Go to >> My Account**

**Go to >> Notification Preferences**



\*Scan the QR code to log in to RPU Connect  
via "My Account" on [www.rpu.org](http://www.rpu.org) or  
download our mobile app:

