



# Plugged In

**Tour a Water Tower  
and Wellhouse at  
RPU's Open House!**

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MAY / JUN  
**2025**





# Tour a Water Tower and Wellhouse at RPU's Open House!



Have you ever been curious about what's inside a wellhouse or how water travels from an aquifer to your home? In celebration of Drinking Water Week May 4-10, 2025, RPU invites customers to a special open house for a behind-the-scenes look at the city's water system.



Drinking Water Week highlights the importance of safe, reliable drinking water and recognizes the dedicated professionals who ensure it flows 24/7. RPU's open house is the perfect opportunity to learn more about this

essential resource and the people who help provide it.

Join RPU's water staff for a look inside the Apache Mall water tower and wellhouse on Friday, May 9 from 2-6pm. The Apache Mall water tower, a spheroid water storage facility, holds up to 500,000 gallons of water. In comparison, the St. Mary's Reservoir can store six times as much, around 3,300,000 gallons!

Come and discover the process that ensures more than 42,000 customers in Rochester receive clean, safe drinking water every day. Whether this is your first visit, or you attended last year, this event is a great way to see firsthand how Rochester's water system operates.

We look forward to seeing you at the open house!

## WHAT:

**Water Tower  
Open House**

## WHEN:

**2-6pm  
May 9th**

## WHERE:

**Apache Mall  
Water Tower**



RPU's Todd Osweiler talks to visitors at the 2024 Drinking Water Week Apache Water Tower and Wellhouse Open House



# Backflow Assembly Testing is Required Annually

Providing safe drinking water is a top priority for Rochester Public Utilities (RPU). To protect the public water supply from contamination, RPU follows strict standards set by the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act, Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Plumbing Code, and our own Water Service Rules & Regulations. One key safeguard is preventing backflow, which is the reverse flow of potentially contaminated water into the clean water system. This can happen when there is a sudden change in water pressure. Since we all share the same water supply, backflow prevention is a shared responsibility.



Minnesota Plumbing Code requires all backflow prevention assemblies, both at the water meter and throughout your property, to be tested annually by a certified tester. Types of backflow prevention assemblies include Reduced Pressure Zone (RP) assemblies, Double Check Valve (DC) assemblies,

Pressure Vacuum Breakers (PVB), and Spill Resistant Vacuum Breakers (SVB). It is the responsibility of the homeowner or business owner to schedule this test each year. Regular testing ensures these devices are working properly to keep our water safe. For more information, visit [rpu.org/education-environment/backflow-prevention-program.php](http://rpu.org/education-environment/backflow-prevention-program.php).



## RPU Expands Language Options on Self-Serve Kiosk

Rochester Public Utilities is proud to announce that Somali has been added as a language option on the self-serve kiosk. The kiosk also offers English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Arabic. This latest update reflects RPU's ongoing efforts to make services more accessible and inclusive for all customers. RPU remains committed to meeting the diverse needs of the community and enhancing the customer experience for everyone.



## 2024 Water Quality Report

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, 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, RPU is pleased to announce that water provided by RPU, again met all State and Federal drinking water standards. Review the complete version of the CCR at [rpu.org/environment/water-quality](http://rpu.org/environment/water-quality). Questions and requests for a hard copy version of the 2024 Water Quality Report can be directed to Todd Osweiler at **507-280-1589** or [tosweiler@rpu.com](mailto:tosweiler@rpu.com).





# Power Up Your Summer with Energy-Smart Choices

With longer days and better weather ahead, it's a great time to switch to electric-powered options for both transportation and yard care. Whether you're considering an electric vehicle (EV), an e-Bike, or battery-powered lawn equipment, RPU offers rebates to help you make the transition.

## **NEW! Battery-Powered Equipment Rebates**

Make the switch to battery-powered lawn equipment and receive rebates for eligible purchases. These quieter, cleaner alternatives to gas-powered equipment help reduce emissions and noise pollution.

### **Eligible equipment and rebate amounts:**

- \$100 per battery-powered riding lawn mower.
- \$50 per battery-powered push lawn mower.
- \$10 per battery-powered chainsaw, lawn trimmer, or leaf blower.

### **Eligibility:**

- All equipment must be new and battery-powered to qualify.
- Mowers must have a battery voltage of at least 36 volts to qualify.
- Corded equipment and robotic mowers do not qualify for a rebate.
- Rebates are limited to 50% of the equipment cost.
- Rebate quantities are limited to two riding mowers and five push lawn mowers, blowers, trimmers, and chainsaws annually.
- Purchase date on invoice/receipt must be between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025.

## **NEW! E-Bike Rebate**

RPU now offers a rebate for electric-assisted bicycles (e-Bikes), making it more affordable to choose a clean, energy-efficient mode of transportation.

### **Eligibility:**

- \$150 per e-Bike (not to exceed 50% of cost).
- Eligible e-Bikes must be new, include a battery, electric motor, seat, and functional pedals.
- Used, rebuilt, resold, or warranty/insurance claim e-Bikes do not qualify.
- Electric bicycle conversion kits are not eligible.
- Purchase must be made between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025.



## Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebates

RPU supports customers who choose electric vehicles with rebates based on enrollment in a Time-of-Use (TOU) Rate. TOU rates encourage EV charging during off-peak hours (10pm–8am) to help lower overall energy costs.

### TOU Rate Enrollment Incentives:

- Enrolling Now: EV owners who enroll in a TOU Rate now can receive a \$500 rebate for their first EV and a \$150 rebate for each additional qualifying EV.
- Currently Enrolled: EV owners already on a TOU Rate who purchase an additional qualifying EV can receive a \$150 rebate per EV.

### Eligible Vehicles:

- All-Electric EV – Powered solely by an electric battery.
- Plug-In Hybrid EV – Similar to a hybrid but with a larger battery and electric motor.
- **Not Eligible:** Hybrid EVs that cannot be plugged in are NOT eligible for this rebate.

EV owners must also acknowledge the TOU rate structure, understanding that shifting electricity use to off-peak hours can reduce costs, while excessive on-peak use may result in higher bills.



## NEW! EV Charger Rebate

For customers installing a new ENERGY STAR® qualified, AC-output Level 2 EV charger with connected capabilities, RPU offers a \$15 rebate per charger.

### To qualify:

- The charger must be fully installed and operational before applying.
- Must be purchased new between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025.
- EV manufacturer-provided chargers do not qualify.



## How to Apply

To take advantage of these rebates, complete an application and submit it along with the required documentation, including proof of purchase and product specifications. Applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis, and funds are limited.

To view all minimum efficiency requirements and complete terms and conditions, visit [rpu.org/rebates-programs/residential/conserv-save-rebates.php](https://rpu.org/rebates-programs/residential/conserv-save-rebates.php) to download rebate applications.

**ROCHESTER**  
**Is your home ready for an upgrade?**

Receive step-by-step guidance on weatherization and electrification for a more comfortable, healthier, and safer home.

**Join our FREE Workshop Series:**

- ✓ **Stay Cool, Stay Warm: Heat Pumps Demystified**  
Thursday, May 8, 6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.
- ✓ **Hot Stuff: Electrifying Water Heating, Cooking, and Clothes Drying**  
Thursday, June 12, 6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.

  

[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, and other foundation and local government partners.





# From the Desk of the General Manager: RPU Recognized with Two Safety Excellence Awards



**Tim McCollough**  
General Manager

At RPU, safety is not just a priority. It is a core value embedded in everything we do. I am incredibly proud to share that RPU has been recognized with two distinguished safety awards: the American Public Power Association's (APPA) Safety Award of Excellence and the Minnesota Governor's Workplace Safety Silver Achievement Award. These honors affirm our ongoing commitment to maintaining a safe work environment for our employees.



The APPA Safety Award of Excellence is a prestigious recognition in the public power industry, reflecting our unwavering focus on safety. This award evaluates utilities based on key factors including fostering a strong safety culture, the implementation of effective safety policies, and continuous efforts to reduce workplace incidents.

The Minnesota Governor's Workplace Safety Silver Achievement Award recognizes our team's commitment to injury prevention. Our safety record ranks above the 50th percentile among utility companies at both the state and national levels, demonstrating the effectiveness of our safety initiatives and the dedication of our employees.

These achievements are a direct result of the hard work and vigilance of every RPU employee. This past winter, our crews worked tirelessly through extreme conditions, responding to water main breaks and outages in -20°F weather. Their ability to perform in all weather conditions while adhering to strict safety protocols played a crucial role in earning

these awards. Whether repairing infrastructure in freezing temperatures, restoring power during storms, or ensuring the continued operation of essential services, our team demonstrates an unwavering commitment to safety in every task they undertake. Their dedication not only keeps our community safe but also reinforces RPU's reputation as a leader in workplace safety.

I want to extend my gratitude to our team for making safety a daily commitment. Our goal is to ensure that every employee goes home safely at the end of each day, and these awards serve as a reminder that our efforts are making a real impact. As we continue providing reliable public power to the Rochester community, we remain committed to upholding the highest safety standards.

## Make a **SPLASH** with savings! Get your water rebates now!

Look for the WaterSense®, Energy Star®, and Energy Star® Most Efficient labels. These products are certified to use at least 20% less water which saves you money! **Scan the QR code to download an application with complete terms and conditions from [www.rpu.org](http://www.rpu.org).**



**Most Efficient  
2025**  
[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)



Clothes  
Washers and  
Washer/Dryer  
Combinations  
**\$25**

(electric rebates  
also available)



High Efficiency  
Toilets  
**\$25**



Rain  
Barrels  
**\$10**



Weather-Based  
Irrigation  
Controllers  
**up to \$75**

**CONSERVE & \$AVE™**



## COMMERCIAL CORNER

# RCLS Invests in Energy Efficiency with Smart HVAC Upgrade

In 2024, Rochester Central Lutheran School (RCLS) made a strategic upgrade by replacing its aging 80-ton air handling unit with a high-efficiency 75-ton system. This new unit not only reduces energy consumption, but also integrates seamlessly with the building's existing controls— optimizing heating, cooling, and scheduling to cut down on energy waste.

Thanks to the collaboration between RCLS and RPU, along with the facility manager's attention to detail, the system is now fully optimized, resulting in lower electric bills, long-term savings, and an RPU rebate. By making this energy-smart choice, RCLS is freeing up valuable resources to reinvest in education, ensuring students continue to learn and thrive in a comfortable environment.

## CONSERVE & \$AVE™



**Pictured:** RPU Commercial Energy Advisor Alex Pruett, RCLS Office Manager Nichole Catevenis, RCLS Interim Principal Dan Kuball, RCLS Board of Trustees Member Laura Rhee, and RCLS Facilities Manager Mike Schmitt

## 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](http://www.rpu.org) to enroll today:



<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](http://www.rpu.org).



## NEW Large Commercial Benchmarking Law

In 2023, the Minnesota Legislature passed Minnesota Statute 216C.331, the Energy Benchmarking law, which requires commercial customers within RPU's service territory who meet the square footage requirements to electronically upload their energy usage into the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Energy Star Portfolio Manager (ESPM). Buildings over 100,000 square feet must submit their energy usage data by June 1, 2025. Starting next year, this program will also apply to buildings 50,000 square feet and larger.

For more information on how RPU commercial customers can comply with the Energy Benchmarking law, visit [rpu.org/rebates-programs/commercial/energy-star-benchmarking.php](http://rpu.org/rebates-programs/commercial/energy-star-benchmarking.php).



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

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*Neighborly*

RPU Plugged In is designed  
and printed locally in Rochester.



RPU will be closed for Memorial Day on Monday, May 26.

#### 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)

Partners in Planting  
**\$20**  
**NURSERY COUPON**  
\$20 OFF ANY SHADE TREE \$200 OR MORE  
Submit to Jim Whiting Nursery & Garden Center or Sargent's Gardens

**JimWhiting**  
Nursery & Garden Center  
[www.jimwhitingnursery.com](http://www.jimwhitingnursery.com)  
3430 19th St NW • 507-289-3741

**SARGENT'S**  
[www.sargentsgardens.com](http://www.sargentsgardens.com)  
7955 18th Ave NW 1811 2nd St SW  
507-289-0022 507-289-6068

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 \$200 or more. Regularly priced trees only. Not good with other discounts or promotions. Must be presented at time of sale. Expires 12/31/2025.



Partners in Planting  
**\$20**  
**ARBORIST COUPON**  
\$20 OFF ANY TREE CARE SERVICE \$200 OR MORE  
Submit to Davey Tree or Sargent's Gardens

**DAVEY**  
[www.forestandtree.com](http://www.forestandtree.com)  
3930 Hwy 14 E, Rochester, MN 55904  
507-286-8733

**SARGENT'S**  
[www.sargentsgardens.com](http://www.sargentsgardens.com)  
7955 18th Ave NW 1811 2nd St SW  
507-289-0022 507-289-6068

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 \$200 or more. Not good with other discounts or promotions. Must be presented at time of sale. Refunds not available. Expires 12/31/2025.



One of our **CONSERVE & \$AVE™** programs.  
Learn more about Partners in Planting at [www.rpu.org](http://www.rpu.org).