



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

# Plugged In

**Changes Coming  
to the LED Lighting  
Rebates in 2024**

Details on page 3

SEP / OCT  
**2023**

# Understanding Minnesota Cold Weather Law & 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 1 and April 30, 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.

If these conditions are not met, RPU can disconnect utility service(s) for non-payment during the cold weather period.

To be protected from service disconnection during the cold weather period, customers are required to complete a Cold Weather Application, available from RPU Customer Care or on [rpu.org](http://rpu.org). Before disconnecting service to a residential customer during the period between October 1 and April 30, 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 inability to pay; and
5. A statement explaining available time payment plans and other opportunities to secure continued utility service.

RPU is required to give notice of proposed disconnections to the local energy assistance provider and the Department of Commerce.

**Local Energy Assistance Provider:** Contact Three Rivers Community Action at 800-277-8418 or [threeriverscap.org](http://threeriverscap.org) to learn about options to assist with energy bills.

**Third Party Notification:** If you are elderly, ill, going south for the winter, or do not speak English, you may want to designate a third party (friend, relative, church group, or community agency) to be notified in the event that a disconnection notice is issued to you.

**Applications and Forms:** For a Cold Weather Application and/or Third Party Notification Request Form, please contact RPU Customer Care at 507-280-1500 or download at [rpu.org/my-account/billing-fees-deposits-and-payment-options](http://rpu.org/my-account/billing-fees-deposits-and-payment-options).

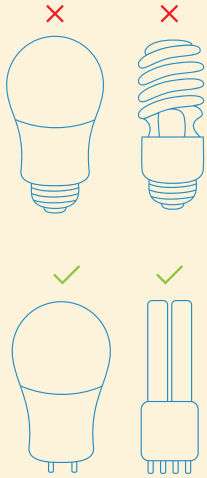




# Changes Coming to the LED Lighting Rebates in 2024

RPU's Conserve & Save™ LED lighting rebate will no longer include screw-in base bulbs starting in 2024.

Federal Lighting Standards that took full effect in 2023 have eliminated almost all older lighting technologies such as incandescent, CFL, and halogen Edison screw-base bulbs. With this change, LED lighting has essentially become the only lighting that can be sold with an Edison screw-base. This has eliminated RPU's ability to offer rebates on any screw-in base, including LED.



RPU will continue to have an LED rebate for Pin-style LED bulbs as well as Energy Star® and DLC-rated LED fixtures. Commercial lighting and linear LEDs replacing fluorescent lighting will continue to be available for the LED lighting rebate. Commercial customers are encouraged to reach out to their RPU Environmental and Energy Advisor for specific questions on commercial rebates available.

Qualifying LED holiday lighting will still be available for an RPU rebate in 2024. Visit [rpu.org](https://www.rpu.org) and click on Conserve & Save™ Rebates for full details.



## Utility Pole Inspections

In order for RPU to continue providing our customers with safe, reliable electric service, routine maintenance and inspections are needed of our utility poles.

RPU has contracted Osmose Utilities Services Inc. to perform utility pole inspections and an attachment survey throughout Rochester this summer through November. Osmose crews will be working in some locations to evaluate the condition of wood poles, as well as perform necessary maintenance, including digging around the base of the wood pole.

Different Osmose teams will be conducting a field survey to audit attachments and take photos of poles. We ask that you allow Osmose personnel access to all RPU poles on or adjacent to your property.





## Military Payment Arrangements 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 here.

- 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 [revisor.mn.gov/pubs/](https://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 Care at 507-280-1500.

### Would you like to round up your utility bill to help people in need?

RPU's **Neighbors Chipping In** program collects donations to help people in our community pay their utility bill. It's easy to give with a recurring monthly donation.\* You can round up or add a specific amount. Call RPU Customer Care at 507-280-1500 to enroll or learn more at [www.rpu.org](http://www.rpu.org).

D ♥ N A T E



\*Donations can be cancelled at any time.

## Does Your Bill Have You 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. This means 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 two separate energy charges appearing on your bill. On your billing statement, please note that the energy customer charge is a flat fee that stays the same regardless of energy use or rate.

**As of October 1st, the rate will return to the non-summer rate.**

Use this helpful tear-out guide to reference when reviewing your RPU billing statement. →

If you have questions about summer and non-summer rates, contact RPU Customer Care at 507-280-1500.





# HOW TO READ YOUR UTILITY BILL

If you have questions that are not fully answered here, please contact RPU Customer Care at [customercare@rpu.org](mailto:customercare@rpu.org) or 507-280-1500.



## SUMMARY OF CHARGES

- Account Number** is your unique RPU number. Please reference this number when calling us with account or customer service related questions.
- Amount Due** is the amount to be paid. This total will reflect your previous balance, recent payments, adjustments or credits (if applicable), and current charges.
- Account Information** includes your account name and service address.  
*NOTE: Accounts with multiple service addresses will not have an address listed here. Please see the back of your bill for specific address details.*
- Billing Period** is the period of time when charges are accrued and billed to your account.
- Total Current Charges** is the total of each service (i.e. Electricity, Water, etc.) and any applicable taxes summarized for the current billing period.  
*NOTE: See the back of the bill for meter readings and usage.*
- Total Amount Due** is your amount to be paid. This total will include any activity since your last bill, showing your previous balance, recent payments, adjustments or credits (if applicable), and current charges.
- Message Center** is the area where important messages from RPU are communicated – general and/or account specific.
- Payment Stub (front)** is the bottom portion of your statement that should be returned when mailing in your payments. This will include the amount due and the due date. *If you are on autopay, this portion will indicate the date and the amount to be deducted.*
- Payment Kiosk QR Code** can be scanned at our payment kiosk (located in our vestibule at our Service Center), available 24/7, to quickly access and pay your bill.
- Payment Stub (back)** includes information regarding payment options, as well as compliance information, electronic check conversion, and late penalty terms.
- A Late Fee** of sixty-five hundredths percent (.65%) or five dollars (\$5.00), whichever is greater, may be charged on balances not paid by the due date. Accounts that become past due because of a returned check or declined electronic payment may be charged a late fee and a returned/declined payment fee.

## BUDGET BILLING SUMMARY (if applicable)

- Budget Billing (BB) Plan** is your monthly Budget Billing (BB) amount.
- Actual Charges Billed this Period** is the total of your actual charges during the current billing period.
- Difference of BB Plan and Actual Charges** is the difference between your monthly Budget Billing (BB) amount and your actual charges during the current billing period.
- Previous Carry Over Balance** is the balance from your previous billing period.
- New Carry Over Balance** is the cumulative account balance at the end of each billing period. This balance takes into account your actual charges, your monthly Budget Billing (BB) Plan, your previous carry over balance, and assumes the recent Budget Billing (BB) amount billed is paid in full by the due date.  
*NOTE: This balance could be a debit or credit. 'CR' indicates a credit.*

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rpu.org/MyAccount  
507-280-1500 or 800-778-3421  
4000 East River Road NE  
Rochester, MN 55906-2813

**1 Account # 21XXXXX**  
**2 Amount Due \$221.48**

**3 JANE DOE**  
For service address 12345 UTILITY AVE NE ROCHESTER, MN 55902

**4 Billing Period 5/7/23 - 6/10/23**

Electricity	\$137.90	Previous Balance	\$516.32
Water	\$17.03	Payments	\$516.32CR
Products & Services	\$3.00	Balance Forward	\$0.00
Rochester Public Works		Current Charges	\$221.48
Wastewater	\$41.80	Current Bill	\$221.48
Stormwater	\$10.30	<b>Total Amount Due</b>	<b>\$221.48</b>
Taxes	\$11.45		

**6 MESSAGE BOARD**  
If you are having difficulty paying your utility bill, please call RPU to set up a flexible payment plan.

**5 TOTAL CURRENT CHARGES \$221.48**

Detach and return portion below with your payment.

4000 East River Road NE, Rochester, MN 55906-2813

**8**  
JANE DOE  
12345 UTILITY AVE NE  
ROCHESTER, MN 55902

**9**  
Payment Kiosk  
21XXXXX - 12345 UTILITY AVE NE  
Current Bill \$221.48  
Total Amount Due \$221.48 Due 04/19/23  
Amount Enclosed \$

**10 PAYMENT OPTIONS**  
**Pay Online @ [www.rpu.org](http://www.rpu.org)**  
One-time payment or enroll in automatic payments through your checking, savings, Visa, MasterCard, or Discover.  
**Pay By Phone:**  
1-855-631-3643 • no fee, available 24/7  
**In Person:**  
RPU Service Center • 4000 E River Rd NE  
**Drop Boxes:**  
RPU Service Center • 4000 E River Rd NE  
RPU Silver Lake Plant • 425 W Silver Lake Dr NE

**11**  
**Customer Charge:** Covers the cost of operation to supply and maintain each separate service. It includes items such as meters, equipment, and account information.  
**Notice About Electronic Check Conversion:** When you provide a check as payment, you authorize us either to use information from your check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction. When we use information from your check to make an electronic fund transfer, funds may be withdrawn from your account as soon as the same day we receive your payment, and you will not receive your check back from your financial institution. You may choose not to have your payment collected electronically by sending your payment and payment coupon in your own envelope, NOT the enclosed return envelope. Address your payment envelope to RPU, ARC Opt Out, 4000 East River Road NE, Rochester MN 55906-2813.  
**Failures not paid by the due date may be charged a late fee of sixty-five hundredths percent (0.65%) or five dollars (\$5.00), whichever is greater. Accounts that become past due because of a returned check or declined electronic payment may be charged a late fee and a returned/declined payment fee.**  
**FAILURE TO RECEIVE BILL DOES NOT WAIVE LATE FEE.**  
**Bills In Dispute:** Mail payments to RPU, 4000 East River Road NE, Rochester MN 55906-2813  
**City of Rochester Notice:** Taxable purchases made outside City limits may be subject to local use tax. Visit [www.revenue.state.mn.us](http://www.revenue.state.mn.us) or call 800-657-3777 for more information.

*NOTE: You will find the Budget Billing Summary (if applicable) on page 2 of your bill.*

Budget Billing Summary:	
Budget Billing (BB) Plan	\$190.00
Actual Charges Billed this Period	\$378.22
Difference of BB Plan and Actual Charges	\$188.22
Previous Carry Over Balance	\$300.59
<b>New Carry Over Balance</b>	<b>\$488.81</b>

\*This summary is comparing the amount billed to your monthly BB Plan

## RPU CHARGES: ELECTRICITY

- 17 Electric Usage Charge** is the total metered kilowatt-hours (kWh) used. The rate per kWh is then multiplied by the kWh used for the current billing period.

NOTE: Two energy charges may appear during the transition between summer (Jun–Sep) and non-summer (Oct–May) rates or when any changes to our rates occur (Dec–Jan).

- 18 Electric Customer Charge** is a fixed charge for all residential customers regardless of electric usage. This charge covers the cost to maintain electric facilities and infrastructure. It also includes costs for meters, distribution poles, safety equipment, miscellaneous supplies, and account administration.

- 19 Clean Air Rider** covers the bond payments for the Emission Reduction Project (ERP). All residential, commercial, and industrial electric customers are impacted by the charge. The amount you pay on the Clean Air Rider is dependent on your electric usage. The rate of the Clean Air Rider will change each year depending on the debt service payment schedule. The payments are scheduled to be complete by 2030.

- 20 Power Cost Adjustment** is charged if the cost to supply the electricity needed for our customers exceeds projections. This adjustment is made in cases such as high fuel costs, higher market pricing for electricity, or the load is higher than projected. This adjustment is based on your electric usage and varies each billing period. *In rare cases, this could result in a credit.*

## RPU CHARGES: WATER

- 21 Water Usage Charge** is the total metered water (Units) used during the current billing period. Each Unit of water equals 100 cubic feet or 748 gallons (1 Unit = 748 gallons). The rate structure is tiered to encourage water conservation. *The Water Usage Charge for commercial customers is the total metered water (Units) used during the current billing period but is not tiered.*

- 22 Water Customer Charge** is a fixed charge for all residential customers regardless of water usage. This charge covers the cost to maintain water facilities and infrastructure. It also includes costs for meters, pipes, fittings, excavation tools and machinery, and account administration.

- 23 Fire Hydrant Facilities Charge** is for the installation, maintenance, and availability of water for the City and other emergency services (e.g., fire department). All residential, commercial, and industrial water customers are impacted by the charge. It is based on the rate class, not the meter size. This charge is not taxed.

- 24 State Mandated Water Fee** is required by the MN Department of Health and funds the required testing for drinking water. This fee is not taxed.

## RPU CHARGES: PRODUCTS & SERVICES (if applicable)

- 25 Products & Services** is the area where charges for additional offerings will appear such as our Service Assured® Underground Utility Repair Coverage Program and our Carbon Offset Program.

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Billing Period	May 7 - June 10 (35 days)	Account # 21XXXXX
<b>Electricity</b>		
Residential Electric		
Meter # 10XXXX		
Jun 10 32889 Estimate Reading		
May 6 31935 = 954 kWh		
Non Summer Energy/kWh		
681.43 kWh @ \$0.11203/kWh	\$76.34	
Summer Energy/kWh		
272.57 kWh @ \$0.13382/kWh	\$36.48	
Electric Customer Charge	\$20.50	
Clean Air Rider @ \$0.00180/kWh	\$1.72	
Power Cost Adjustment	\$2.86	
Subtotal - Metered Charges	\$137.90	
<b>Total - Electricity</b>		
<b>Water</b> (1 Unit = 748 Gallons)		
Residential Water		
Meter # 30XXXXXX		
Jun 10 1374.12 Estimate Reading		
May 6 1367.78 = 6.34 Unit(s)		
Residential Water Consumption		
6.34 Unit(s) @ \$0.946	\$6.00	
Water Customer Charge	\$9.22	
Fire Hydrant Facilities Charge	\$1.00	
State Mandated Water Fee	\$0.81	
Subtotal - Metered Charges	\$17.03	
<b>Total - Water</b>		
<b>Products &amp; Services</b>		
Service Assured Electric	\$1.50	
Service Assured Water	\$1.50	
<b>Total - Products &amp; Services</b>	\$3.00	
<b>Rochester Public Works</b>		
The following services are operated and maintained by Rochester Public Works. These charges are billed on their behalf.		
<b>Wastewater</b>		
5.38 Unit(s)	\$22.70	
Wastewater Customer Charge	\$19.10	
<b>Total - Wastewater</b>	\$41.80	
<b>Stormwater</b>		
PIN # 70XXXX		
Stormwater Utility Fee	\$5.30	
Stormwater Customer Charge	\$5.00	
<b>Total - Stormwater</b>	\$10.30	
<b>Taxes</b>		
City Tax 0.75%	\$1.06	
County Tax 0.50%	\$0.71	
State Tax 6.875%	\$9.68	
<b>Total - Taxes</b>	\$11.45	
<b>Total Current Charges</b>		<b>\$221.48</b>

## ROCHESTER PUBLIC WORKS CHARGES: WASTEWATER

- 26 Wastewater Usage Charge** is how your wastewater charge is determined. For residential customers, the base rate for April–December is determined by your average water usage (Units) during the months of January, February, and March. If your actual water usage in any month of April–December is less than your base rate, you will be charged your actual usage. If you use more than your base rate, you will not be charged more than your base rate. *The Wastewater Usage Charge for commercial customers is based on actual water usage (Units).*

- 27 Wastewater Customer Charge** is a fixed monthly charge per sanitary connection that covers the cost to maintain sewer facilities and infrastructure.

## ROCHESTER PUBLIC WORKS CHARGES: STORMWATER

- 28 Stormwater Utility Fee** collects funds from every developed residential and commercial property in the City of Rochester to support the Public Works Stormwater Management program. Each parcel of land is assigned a parcel identification number (PIN#). The fee is based on the parcel size, land use, and the amount of impervious (hard surface) area.

- 29 Stormwater Customer Charge** is a monthly charge used exclusively to support the Public Works Stormwater Management program.

## TAXES

- 30 City Tax** is the sales and use tax that the City of Rochester imposes on all taxable items or services in the city, including utility services. The current city sales tax rate is 0.75%.

- 31 County Tax** is the sales and use tax that Olmsted County imposes on all taxable items or services in the county, including utility services. The City of Rochester falls within Olmsted County; therefore, this tax is required. This tax is used to fund maintenance on roads and bridges, construct public infrastructure, and for other transit and transportation projects within the county. The current county transit tax rate is 0.50%.

- 32 State Sales Tax** is the sales tax charged by the State of Minnesota on retail sales of taxable products and services, including utility services. The current state sales tax rate is 6.875%.

NOTE: Utility services are generally taxable; however, some exemptions may apply. Information can be found on the Minnesota Department of Revenue website to further explain possible sales tax exemptions. Customers who qualify for a sales tax exemption must provide RPU with a valid Certificate of Exemption (ST3 form).





# CALLING FOR NOMINATIONS!

2022-23

**Nominate someone you know for outstanding environmental achievement in Olmsted County.**

Climate Change • Conservation • Education • Energy • Renewables • Sustainable Food Production • Water • Other

**FORMS: [www.rpu.org](http://www.rpu.org) • DUE: Oct 6, 2023**

photo of Chester Woods Park by Nick Ryan



## Celebrate Public Power Week with Free Giveaways


We're excited to celebrate National Public Power Week (October 1-7, 2023) by highlighting the benefits of having a public power provider in Rochester by giving away FREE stuff the entire month of October!

Starting on October 2, stop by the RPU Service Center (4000 East River Road NE) for a FREE LED bulb (one per customer account). RPU will also be handing out Halloween bags full of goodies, candy, and an electric safety workbook to kids visiting the RPU Service Center during the month of October (available while supplies last).




Stay tuned to RPU on Facebook and Twitter for other fun giveaways and events happening during Public Power Week.

# FREE ENERGY EDUCATION



**Solar Energy for Your Home or Business**

Saturday, October 7  
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.




**Neighborhood Energy Challenge Workshop**

Thursday, September 14  
6:30-7:30 p.m.  
- OR -  
Saturday, November 18  
10:00-11:00 a.m.

**Also check out the many classes that Rochester Community Education has to offer on electric vehicles, heat pumps, and more!**

Go to:  
[rochester.ce.eleyo.com](http://rochester.ce.eleyo.com)  
and search "energy"



**All classes are held at the Northrop Community Education Center. Learn how to register at [www.rpu.org](http://www.rpu.org).**



PRESORTED  
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 now designed  
and printed locally in Rochester.



RPU is closed Monday, September 4 for Labor Day.

#### Social Media:



@rochesterpublicutilities



@rpuoutages / @rpualerts



Rochester Public Utilities



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



@rpualerts



Rochester Public Utilities

#### Mobile App:



**RPU Service Center:** Hours  
(8am - 5pm) Monday - Friday  
**Customer Care:** 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)

## Leaving for the Winter?

**Make sure your contact information is up-to-date in case of an issue with your water or electric service.**

If you are a customer that leaves Rochester for an extended amount of time over the winter, there are a few things you can do to help ensure that your electric and water services are safe and working properly while you are away.

- **Call RPU before you leave to make sure your contact information is up-to-date.** If there is a question regarding your bill or usage changes, RPU may need to contact you.
- **Tell RPU how long you will be away.** When you contact RPU, our Customer Care team will note your account with the period of time that you will be away.
- **Add a backup contact on your account.** Adding a backup contact of someone in the Rochester area can help you in the case of a utility emergency. Their name and phone number must be on your account, and they must be noted as an authorized person on your account.
- **Ensure your RPU bill is forwarded to your winter location.** Having your bill forwarded to your winter location is as easy as calling RPU Customer Care to provide them with your winter address. We can ensure any correspondence will reach you while you are away. If you would prefer to receive your bill via email, simply create a user account on your RPU Connect app or online portal.

