



ROCHESTER
PUBLIC UTILITIES
WE PLEDGE, WE DELIVER™

Plugged In

Powering Pollinators
A Transmission Line Habitat for Nature and People

Welcome! This site beneath the power lines isn't just about delivering electricity – it's also BUZZING with life!

Thanks to a collaboration between Rochester Public Utilities and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, over the next several years this transmission corridor will be transformed into a pollinator-friendly habitat filled with native plants that support bees, butterflies, birds, and other essential species.

Why Pollinators Matter	What You'll Find Here	Nature & Power Working Together
Pollinators are responsible for 1 in every 3 bites of food we eat! But they're disappearing quickly due to habitat loss, pesticides, and climate change. Creating spaces like this helps them recover and thrive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Native Wildflowers • such as milkweed, goldenrod, and coneflower• Grasses and Shrubs • that provide shelter and nesting areas• Pollinators • including monarch butterflies, bumblebees, and hummingbirds	Utility corridors are ideal spaces for native habitats because they stay open and sunny, which pollinators love! Plus, low-growing native plants reduce the need for mowing and chemicals, helping us maintain safe, reliable power lines while protecting the planet.

ROCHESTER PUBLIC UTILITIES WE PLEDGE, WE DELIVER™

mn BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

You Asked, We
Answered: What
is RPU doing to be
environmentally
responsible?

Details on page 4-5

SEP / OCT
2025

From the Desk of the General Manager: Protecting Your Personal Data

Protecting your personal information is more than a legal requirement, it's a core value we adhere to every day. At RPU, trust extends beyond providing reliable utility services, it also means protecting the sensitive personal and financial information that you share with us.

Recently, we have taken important steps to strengthen that protection. Credit card payments are no longer accepted over the phone or by mail, since those methods pose a greater risk of exposing sensitive information. Instead, we are directing customers to our more secure options such as our automated phone system (IVR), the online customer portal, the mobile app, and our lobby kiosk. These tools help safeguard your information while giving you more convenient ways to manage your account.

That's why efforts like this matter. Taking proactive steps to protect your personal and financial information is part of our commitment to you. At RPU, we're committed not just to reliable service, but to protecting your data and maintaining your trust. We'll keep making improvements that reflect that responsibility.

Sincerely,



Tim McCollough
General Manager,
Rochester Public Utilities



NEW CUSTOMER PORTAL AND MOBILE APP LAUNCHING THIS FALL!



Payment Arrangements for Military Service Members

If someone in your household is ordered to active duty, deployment, or a change of duty station, you may qualify for protection from utility disconnection under Minnesota law.

To stay protected, customers must set up and stay current with a payment plan:

- If your income is below the state median or you receive energy assistance: Pay 10% of your gross monthly income toward your RPU bill.
- If your income is above the state median: Set up and follow a payment plan with RPU.

This protection is outlined in Minnesota Statute 325E.028, available at revisor.mn.gov/pubs.

To enroll in a payment plan or for questions, contact RPU Customer Care at 507-280-1500.

Have You Updated Your Contact Information?

Moved recently? Got a new phone number or email address? Make sure we can reach you when it matters most. Keeping your contact information up to date helps us provide timely updates, schedule appointments, and answer any questions about your account. If you have had any changes, give RPU Customer Care a call at **507-280-1500**. Thanks for helping us stay connected!





Understanding the Minnesota Cold Weather Rule & 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:

- 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;
- 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;

- 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. 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:

- A notice of proposed disconnection;
- A statement explaining the customer's rights and responsibilities;
- A list of local energy assistance providers;
- A form on which to declare inability to pay; and
- 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** 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 download the form at <https://www.rpu.org/my-account/billing-fees-deposits-and-payment-options.php> or contact RPU Customer Care at 507-280-1500.

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

Customers with past due balances who do not have an active payment arrangement and a Cold Weather Protection application on file are still at risk of service disconnection, even during the cold weather period from October 1 through April 30.



You Asked, We Answered: What is RPU doing to be environmentally responsible?

Each quarter, we hear directly from you through our customer survey. This new section highlights some of the most common questions and comments we receive and gives you answers, updates, and insights straight from the RPU team. It's our way of keeping the conversation going and making sure you're plugged in to what matters most.

Environmental responsibility is built into our everyday work at RPU. When asked about our environmental efforts, we were glad to highlight the steps we are taking to reduce our impact and support a cleaner, more efficient future.

Power Supply Resource Plan

RPU is planning for a more sustainable future through our Power Supply Resource Plan. We're developing new energy projects like wind, solar, energy storage, and reliable on-demand generation to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reach our goal of being 100% net renewable by 2030.

Powering Pollinators

Beneath our transmission lines, something incredible is happening. In partnership with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BSWR), we are transforming two of RPU's transmission corridors into pollinator-friendly habitats. These areas are planted with native species that support bees, butterflies, birds, and other vital pollinators. Once fully grown and established, the habitat will help reduce the need for mowing and herbicides, all while supporting biodiversity and improving ecosystem health.



Environmental Efforts: Frequently Asked Questions



Habitat-Friendly Solar Site

Our Valleyhigh Solar Site is recognized by BWSR as a Minnesota Habitat Friendly Solar Project. The 71-acre, 10-megawatt installation meets and exceeds the state's standards for benefiting local wildlife and native vegetation. As part of our commitment to ongoing stewardship, vegetation is monitored and maintained to ensure long-term ecological health alongside renewable energy production.



Arbor Day Celebration

Each spring, we host an Arbor Day event focused on education and awareness about the importance of trees in our community. The event brings together students, families, and local partners to celebrate environmental conservation and the role trees play in creating healthier communities.



RPU's Beekeepers

Environmental responsibility goes beyond the workplace. Six RPU employees are beekeepers, actively supporting pollinator populations in their own backyards. Their passion for sustainability reflects the values we bring to our work every day.

A Litter Bit Better

Every year, RPU employees take part in Rochester's "A Litter Bit Better" citywide clean-up initiative. It's one more way we give back to the community and help keep our city clean and welcoming.



RPU is committed to building a more sustainable future for Rochester. Whether it's through habitat restoration, clean energy, or community involvement, we're proud to take action that protects our environment for generations to come.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

Have more questions? Watch for the next edition of "You Asked, We Answered" in the November/December issue of Plugged In.

Understanding PFAS: Protecting Our Water and Community

Your local public utilities are committed to protecting the health of our community and the environment through proactive monitoring and education. In partnership with the City of Rochester and Olmsted County, RPU is working to increase public awareness about per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)—a group of widely used, long-lasting chemicals. By sharing information and resources, we aim to help you better understand PFAS and what you can do to reduce exposure in your home and community.

Here are a few examples of actions being taken to address PFAS:

Rochester Public Utilities continues to conduct water testing at municipal water supply wells to ensure regulated PFAS concentrations remain compliant with federal water quality standards, while also investigating potential ways to treat drinking water for PFAS if needed in the future.

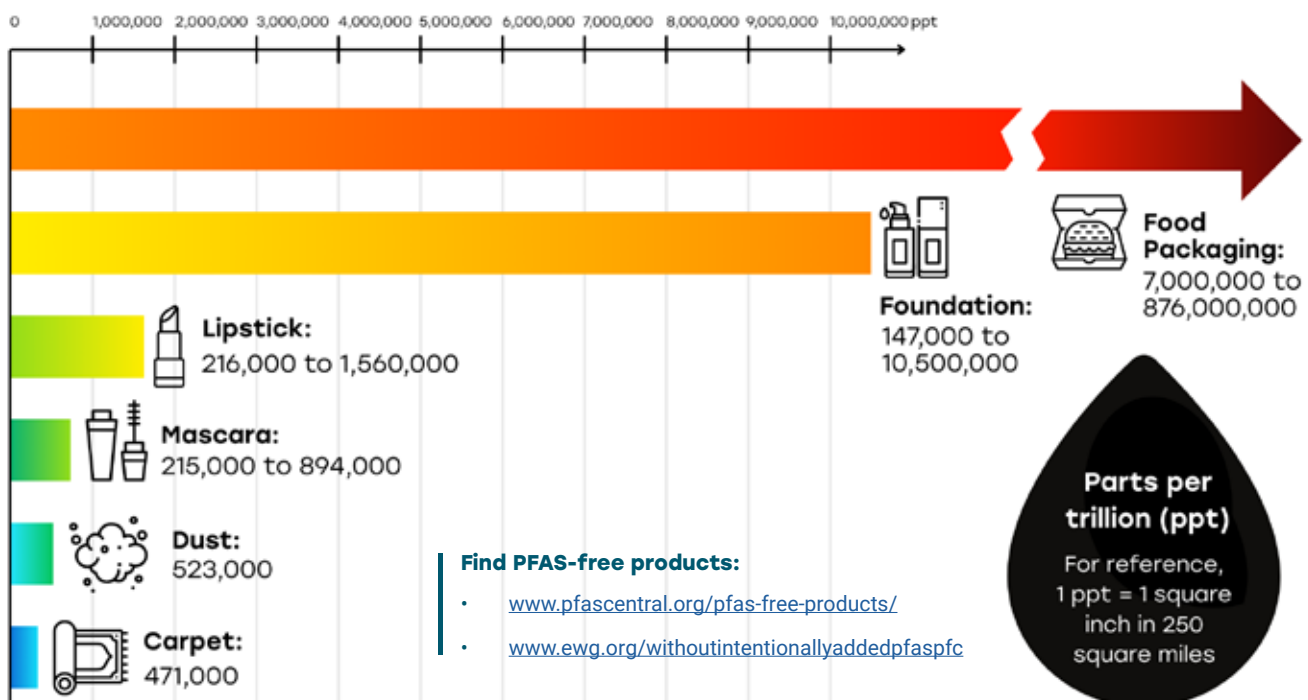
The City of Rochester is sampling wastewater discharge at the Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) and throughout the sewer collection system at strategic locations to identify the amount of PFAS coming from homes, businesses, and industries to prioritize efforts so we can address the largest sources first. Firefighting foam that contains these chemicals is also being phased out by the Rochester Fire Department and Rochester International Airport operations.

Olmsted County is participating in voluntary and state-mandated PFAS environmental monitoring at the Kalmar Landfill and Olmsted Waste-to-Energy Facility (OWEF). The county is also researching landfill leachate treatment opportunities to minimize delivery of PFAS to the Rochester Water Reclamation Plant.

WHAT ARE PFAS

- Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are widely used, man-made chemicals in products like food packaging, textiles, cleaners and cosmetics.
- PFAS are highly persistent chemicals that don't break down easily, leading to long-term exposure and accumulation in the body and environment.
- Exposure can occur directly through manmade products or indirectly as these products move by the ecosystem via solids, liquids and air.
- Research links certain PFAS to adverse health effects, leading to efforts to limit their use and presence in consumer goods.
- Wastewater treatment plants, landfills, incinerators and drinking water utilities don't make or use PFAS, so they aren't sources themselves. However, these systems were not designed to remove PFAS and thus some PFAS will migrate from these treatment systems to the soil, groundwater or air.
- The best way to stop PFAS is to avoid using products that contain PFAS.

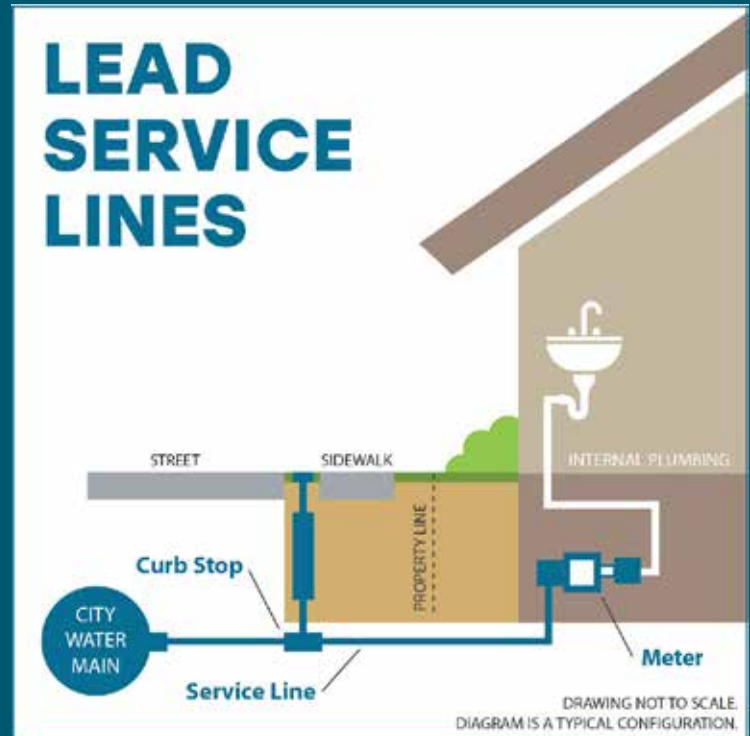
Infographic illustrates the amount of parts per trillion PFAS covers.



Lead Service Line Replacement Program

About 1,300 Rochester properties have lead or galvanized water service lines, and RPU wants to help replace them for free through a voluntary program funded by state and federal partners. If your home qualifies, RPU and our consultant SEH will handle the inspection, coordination, and replacement.

Learn more, see if your property is included, and watch our new video showing what the inspection process is like at <https://www.rpu.org/rebates-programs/residential/lead-service-line-replacement-program.php> or scan the QR code.



Receive guidance on weatherization and electrification for a comfortable, healthy, and safe home.

Join our **FREE** Workshop Series:

- ✓ **Get Amped: The Basics of Electrifying Your Home**
Thursday, September 25, 6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.
- ✓ **Stay Cool, Stay Warm: Heat Pumps Demystified**
Thursday, October 23, 6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.
- ✓ **Hot Stuff: Electrifying Water Heating, Cooking, and Clothes Drying**
Thursday, November 20, 6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.

Development Services & Infrastructure Center
4001 West River Parkway NW, Rochester, MN 55901



www.electrifyeverythingmn.org
Call (612) 389-9892 or scan to register

Rochester Public Utilities (RPU) proudly partners with the City of Rochester's Sustainability Department and Center for Energy and Environment to bring Electrify Everything MN 2025 to our community.



FREE ENERGY EDUCATION



Neighborhood Energy Challenge Workshop

Thur, Sep 18 • 6-7 p.m. –OR– Sat, Nov 15 • 10-11 a.m.
Call to register: 888-734-6365



Solar Energy for Your Home or Business

Saturday, Oct 11 • 10 a.m.–12 p.m.
Call to register: 507-328-4000



Rochester Electrify Everything 2025

3 Different Topics:
Sep 25 • Oct 23 • Nov 20
6-7:30 p.m.
Call to register: 612-389-9892



Scan to learn more and how to register for Neighborhood Energy Challenge and Solar Energy.



Scan to learn more and reserve your spot for Electrify Everything.



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Neighborly

RPU Plugged In is designed
and printed locally in Rochester.



RPU will be closed on September 1 for Labor Day.

Social Media:



@rochesterpublicutilities



@RPUOutages



Rochester Public Utilities



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)



Advanced Metering Starting in 2026

Beginning in 2026, RPU will begin upgrading electric and water meters as part of our advanced metering project. These new meters will help us detect outages faster, identify issues early, and give customers access to more detailed usage data through a new customer portal. Installations will be performed by RPU and our trusted partner, WESCO.

Learn more about the benefits, installation process, and what to expect at rpu.org/advancedmetering.