

RPU Plugged In

2016 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION RECAP

See page 2



Photos by Josh Banks.

Another Great ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION!

After watching the weather forecast all week, Friday, April 29 finally arrived with a cool, but dry day for the 14th Annual Arbor Day Celebration. Despite the cool weather, Arbor Day festivities kicked off at 11 a.m. sharp with many people even arriving early for the fun and celebration of trees!

Over 1,400 school-age students came out to Silver Lake Park to take part in the event, along with hundreds of teachers, chaperones, and community members. Just like every year, the free trees were the stars of the event, but there were many fun activities for everyone to enjoy. People lined up to see the balloonists, get a temporary tattoo, play the football toss, and, of course, see Smokey Bear.

At noon, the winners of the Rochester elementary school Arbor Day poster contest were recognized. This year's overall winner was Paige Patten, a fifth grader from Jefferson Elementary, who received a \$100 Barnes & Noble gift card and had a tree planted at Jefferson Elementary in her honor.

This year's celebration was chosen by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to be the official state of Minnesota Arbor Day event. This marks the second time that the RPU Arbor Day Celebration has received this distinguished recognition.



Thanks to the over 60 RPU employees who helped to make this year's Annual Arbor Day Celebration a success.



Thank You!



RPU, along with partners Maier Tree & Lawn and Rochester Parks & Recreation, would like to thank all of the co-sponsors, participants, and volunteers. Without their help, the Arbor Day Celebration would not be possible. Please thank them for their participation and support of this great event promoting the benefits and beauty of trees.

Co-sponsors of this year's event include: Hy-Vee, Minnesota Energy Resources, Sargent's Gardens, Seneca Foods, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Participants include: Boys & Girls Club of Rochester, Olmsted County Environmental Resources, Olmsted Soil & Water Conservation District, Rochester Public Library, Rochester Public Works, and Zumbro Valley Audubon.



2016 Poster Contest Winners

Look for
these posters
in our
2017 RPU
calendar!



Overall Winner

Paige Patten • Mr. Rietkerk •
Jefferson



First Grade

So-Yeon Smith • Mrs. Daniels •
Ben Franklin Montessori



Second Grade

Lexie Zielsdorf • Mrs. Jacobson •
Sunset Terrace



Third Grade

Leah Monosmith • Mrs. Neurer •
Washington



Fourth Grade

Claudia Meier • Mrs. Duff •
Bamber Valley



Fifth Grade

Isaiah Hanson • Mrs. Burdick •
Washington



Public Power Lineworkers Take Center Stage at National Rodeo

Twelve teams and 13 individuals won awards at the American Public Power Association's 16th annual Public Power Lineworkers Rodeo, held April 1-2 in Shakopee, Minnesota, and hosted by the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association and Shakopee Public Utilities.

Sixty-three teams and 130 apprentices from not-for-profit, community-owned electric utilities across the nation participated. The "rodeo" is a series of competitive events demonstrating lineworker skills and safe work practices.

"Lineworkers risk their lives on the job every day, as much as firefighters, construction workers, or security professionals," said Mike Hyland, senior vice president of engineering services at the American Public Power Association. "Public power utilities and national standard-setting entities are vested in protecting lineworkers' safety," he added.

The awards honor lineworkers' expertise, and the events are judged based upon safety, work practices, neatness, ability, equipment handling, and timely event completion. All safety rules established by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the APPA Safety Manual were observed during events.

There are two levels of competition within the rodeo – journeyman and apprentice. The journeyman teams consist of three members – two climbers and a ground person – and can include an optional alternate. A qualified journeyman has more than four years of experience within the electric utility trade. An apprentice lineworker has four or fewer years of experience.

Enjoy these photos from the recent APPA Lineworkers Rodeo!



(L. to R.) Matt Tupper, Brad Gunderson, and Todd Keach



Photos by Josh Banks.

Letter from the GM



Mark Kotschevar

It's always nice to be recognized. This spring RPU was the recipient of several national and state awards. It started in March with RPU being notified by the Arbor Day Foundation of earning recognition as a **Tree Line USA** utility for the seventh year in a row. Tree Line USA is a national program recognizing public and private utilities for practices that protect and enhance America's urban forests. In order to

achieve Tree Line USA status, RPU is required to meet five program standards. We must follow industry standards for quality tree care; provide annual worker training in best tree-care practices; sponsor a tree-planting and public education program; maintain a tree-based energy conservation program; and participate in an Arbor Day celebration. In addition to training and following industry standards on a daily basis, over 1,400 students in grades 3–5 attended this year's Arbor Day Celebration along with RPU donating and lineworkers helping to plant 50 new boulevard trees. While pruning trees is a necessary part of our maintenance program, it is nice to know we are doing so in a nationally recognized manner.

Also in March, RPU was awarded the **Best Tasting Water in Southeastern Minnesota** title during the Southeast Minnesota Water School. It is a competition where several water utilities from southeast Minnesota bring a sample of their water to be judged by the 170-plus water professional attendees. This is the fourth year out of five that we have been awarded this distinction. To be judged best tasting water by our peers is a tribute to the RPU water staff in designing, operating, and maintaining a quality water system.

In April, the American Public Power Association, our national trade association, presented us with the **Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) Diamond Award**. The diamond award is the highest rating possible, with RPU scoring 100% in all four categories. The RP3 designation recognizes public power utilities that demonstrate proficiency in four key disciplines: reliability, safety, workforce development, and system improvement. Criteria within each category are based on sound business practices and represent a utility-wide commitment to safe and reliable delivery of electricity. Applications are judged by an 18-member panel of utility professionals. Only 62 of the more than 2,000 public power providers have achieved the diamond level. RP3 utilities stand out as industry leaders, who dedicate themselves to providing



Mark Kotschevar, General Manager, from RP3-designated Rochester Public Utilities, is pictured with Brent McKinney, Director of Electric Transmission & Distribution at City Utilities of Springfield (L) and Mike Hyland, APPA Senior Vice President of Engineering Services (R).

safe and reliable electricity to their customers, a commitment to constantly improving best practices, and raising the bar for other service providers. While the recognition from the award is much appreciated, the real value is in filling out the application and looking for opportunities to improve.

In May, the Minnesota Safety Council awarded RPU the **Governor's Meritorious Achievement Safety Award**. This award recognizes Minnesota employers for excellence in safety. In addition to providing injury data, we also completed a Safety Program Evaluation Scorecard. The scorecard was developed by a team of experienced safety professionals from organizations that are members of the Minnesota Safety Council. It measures progress in implementing a comprehensive safety program. There is nothing more important in what we do than making sure everyone goes home safely each night.

These awards are more than plaques on the wall. They are an affirmation of the hard work and dedication of all the employees here at RPU. We strive to provide you with the highest quality products and service, and I want to thank all the staff for their efforts in achieving these well-deserved recognitions.

HOW TO READ YOUR UTILITY BILL

Below is a detailed description of what's included in your utility bill. If you have any questions that are not fully answered here, please call one of our helpful Customer Service Representatives at 507.280.1500.

RPU CHARGES: RESIDENTIAL ELECTRIC

- 1 Energy Charge** is calculated according to the metered kilowatt-hours (kWh) consumed during the billing period. The per kWh rate is multiplied by the metered usage for the set billing period.

Note: Two energy charges may appear during the transition between summer (June-Sept) and non-summer rate schedules. This reflects a meter read during two rate schedules. In the example bill to the right, the customer's bill is for usage from May 9 to June 8; usage in May is charged at the non-summer rate and the usage in June is charged at the summer rate.

- 2 Energy Customer Charge** is a set charge for all residential customers regardless of energy usage. This charge covers the cost to maintain facilities and infrastructure to continue supplying customers with reliable electricity. This charge can include items such as meters, distribution poles, safety equipment, miscellaneous supplies, and account administration.

- 3 Clean Air Rider** covers the bond payments for the Emission Reduction Project (ERP). The amount that customers pay on the clean air rider is dependent on energy 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.

- 4 Power Supply Adjustment** is charged if the cost to supply customers with the electricity needed 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 usage.

RPU CHARGES: RESIDENTIAL WATER

- 5 Water Usage Charge** is calculated according to the metered water usage during the billing period. The usage is based on the number of units of water used. Each unit of water equals 100 cubic feet of water or 748 gallons. The rate is an increasing block rate to encourage water conservation

- 6 Water Customer Charge** is a set charge to cover the cost to maintain water facilities and infrastructure. This can include items such as meters, pipes, fittings, excavation tools and machinery, and account administration.

- 7 Fire Hydrant Charge** is for the installation, maintenance, and availability of water for the City and other emergency services, e.g. the 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.

- 8 State Mandated Water Charge** is required by the MN Department of Health and funds the required testing for drinking water.

- 9 Products and Services** area is where charges for additional offerings will appear. The additional offerings include SERVICE ASSURED® (RPU's Underground Utility Repair Coverage) and RPU's CARBON OFFSET PROGRAM, which offers renewable energy credits (REC) for purchase as units of renewable energy.



Business Partner Name:		Bill Date:		Account Balance:	
Business Partner Number:					
Contract Account Number:					

ROCHESTER PUBLIC UTILITIES BILLING DETAILS

ACCOUNT ACTIVITY

Balance Forward	\$108.67
05/28/2015 iPay	\$108.67CR
Previous Balance	\$0.00

ROCHESTER PUBLIC UTILITIES CHARGES

RPU CUSTOMER SERVICE
507.280.1500 or 800.778.3421

PAYMENT OPTIONS
PAY BY PHONE: 855.210.2285

PAPERLESS BILLING & PAY ONLINE

ELECTRONIC PAYMENT
For electronic, automatic, or credit card payment options visit www.rpu.org

PAY IN PERSON
- RPU's Service Center
4000 East River Rd NE

CONSERVE & SAVE
For rebates and program information visit www.rpu.org

RESIDENTIAL ELECTRIC

Meter #93489 Readings
JUN 08 45004 Actual reading
MAY 09 44632 Actual reading = 372 KWH

1 Energy Charge	\$11.18
2 Energy Customer Charge	\$26.88
3 Clean Air Rider	\$16.40
4 Power Cost Adjustment	\$0.83
	\$0.09CR
	\$55.23

RESIDENTIAL ELECTRIC

RESIDENTIAL WATER (1 Unit = 748 Gallons)

Meter #22001728 Readings
JUN 08 617.70 Actual reading
MAY 09 610.67 Actual reading = 7.03 Unit(s)

5 Water Usage Charge - 7.00 Unit(s) @ \$0.727	\$5.09
- 0.03 Unit(s) @ \$0.799	\$0.02
6 Water Customer Charge	\$5.53
7 Fire Hydrant Facilities Charge	\$1.22
8 State Mandated Water Charge	\$0.53
	\$12.39

RESIDENTIAL WATER

9 PRODUCTS AND SERVICES	\$2.99
Service Assured Electric & Water for July	
	\$2.99

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

CITY OF ROCHESTER CHARGES



ROCHESTER PUBLIC WORKS
201 4th St SE Rm 108
Mon-Fri 8:00am-5:00pm

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
For more information visit:
www.rochesterstormwater.com

RESIDENTIAL WASTE WATER

10 4.73 Unit(s)	\$14.67
11 Waste Water Customer Charge	\$13.37
	\$28.04

RESIDENTIAL WASTE WATER

RESIDENTIAL STORM WATER

12 Storm Water Utility Fee	\$3.18
13 Storm Water Customer Charge	\$3.00
	\$6.18

RESIDENTIAL STORM WATER

TAXES

City Sales Tax 0.50% and County Transit Tax 0.25%	\$0.43
State Sales Tax 6.875%	\$4.00
	\$4.43

TAXES

Total charges billed 06/08/2015

\$109.26

Account balance

Please Pay \$109.26

CITY OF ROCHESTER CHARGES: RESIDENTIAL WASTE WATER

- 10 Unit Charge** is per 100 cubic feet (CCF) or one unit (one unit is equal to 748 gallons of water). For the first three months of the year, your waste water charge is determined by the actual units of water used. Your base charge for April-December is determined by your average water usage during the months of January, February, and March. You will be charged this same "base" rate throughout the remainder of the year.

- 11 Waste Water Customer Charge** is a fixed charge per sanitary connection made per month to cover the cost to maintain sewer facilities and infrastructure.

CITY OF ROCHESTER CHARGES: RESIDENTIAL STORM WATER

- 12 Storm Water Utility Fee** is proportional to a property's contribution to storm water runoff and impact on water quality. Every developed residential and non-residential property parcel is charged a fee based on its size, land use and the amount of impervious (or hard surface) area.

- 13 Storm Water Customer Charge** is a monthly charge used exclusively to support the Public Works Storm Water Management program.

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.

1. If your household income is below the state median household income, pay 10 percent of your household's gross monthly income toward your RPU bill.
2. If your household income is above the state median household income, make and keep a payment plan.
3. If you receive energy assistance, pay 10 percent 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 Service at 507.280.1500.



2015 RPU ANNUAL REPORT

The 2015 RPU annual report is now available on the RPU website to view and download. If you have questions regarding the annual report, contact RPU at **507.280.1500**.



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RPU Employees Pitch In for Litter Bit Better

Over one ton of recyclables were collected, and more than six tons of trash were collected by A Litter Bit Better! volunteers during this year's event. RPU employees picked up over 42 pounds of garbage around the RPU Service Center and Foster Arends Park.



RPU Service Center Holiday Hours

The RPU Service Center will be closed on:

Monday, July 4, in observance of Independence Day

