

RPU Plugged In



PREPPING — for — SPRING!

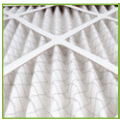
What you will want to do now to
be ready for spring

Photo by Josh Banks.

PREPPING FOR SPRING

Spring is upon us and being ready for it now will save you time and money as the weather gets warmer. Before we know it, we will again be watering our yards and running our air conditioning to keep our homes comfortable when the dreaded Minnesota humidity comes.

Now is the perfect time to address all of the necessary energy and water tasks to ensure that you will be ready for warmer weather. We've developed a checklist for you to make sure you don't miss a thing!



CHANGE THE AIR FILTER

Nothing will hinder the efficiency of your air conditioner more than letting dust and debris cake on your air filter. It is recommended that you change your air filter every month.



CLEAN AND SURVEY ALL OF YOUR LIGHT BULBS

Dust build-up can greatly reduce the light output from your light bulbs. Also, make sure all of your bulbs are working properly. If you need new bulbs, remember RPU's rebate for CFLs and LEDs. For details, visit RPU's website www.rpu.org.



CLEAN YOUR COILS

It is a good practice to pull your refrigerator out each year and vacuum the coils on the bottom of the unit. The dust

build-up provides more heat build-up and requires the unit to work harder, which uses more electricity. (Consult the owner's manual before beginning any work.)



TEST RUN YOUR AC

Springtime is a good time to test your air conditioning unit to ensure that it is working properly. Contact your local AC contractor for a spring AC tune-up if you have concerns. (See RPU website www.rpu.org for AC tune-up rebate details.) They should go over your unit thoroughly and provide you with measurements and areas of concern, if any. By calling now, the wait time for a service call should be shorter since the weather is cooler than it will be two months from now. If you need to purchase a new AC unit, refer to RPU's Conserve & Save® rebates on qualifying units.



BUY A POWER STRIP

When the weather is warmer the family will want to be outside. Don't pay for electricity you don't need by leaving something on when you are outside; ensure everything gets turned off by putting it all on a power strip. A perfect application for this is a TV and cable/satellite box or home theater system. With one flick of the switch, you will know nothing is drawing power while you are outside enjoying the outdoors.



INVEST IN A RAIN BARREL

Spring showers will be coming soon, so make sure you collect and use the rainwater when and where you want to. A rain barrel is an inexpensive way to collect rainwater from the roof of your house. Get a rebate of \$10 per rain barrel from RPU (see www.rpu.org for details)!



INSPECT YOUR GARDEN HOSES

Over the winter, hoses can become brittle and crack from the extreme changes in temperature. That's why it's important to inspect your garden hoses each spring to make sure that you aren't watering the driveway when you want that water for your new flower garden. Water lost down the driveway or sidewalk is literally money running down the drain.



SET IRRIGATION TIMER

Make sure you are getting the most out of your irrigation system by setting it to water at the most efficient time. We recommend setting your irrigation timer to water in the early morning hours when your yard will be able to soak up the most water without having it evaporate from the sun. A deep soak of 45 to 60 minutes, two to three times a week should be adequate, but that can be increased during hot and dry conditions. Also, inspect your sprinkler heads to ensure that the water is making it to your yard and not hardscape areas.

Landscaping around RPU Transformers

The spring season is a great time to plant new bushes and shrubs in your yard. However, did you know that there are issues and potential problems with planting them near and around transformers?

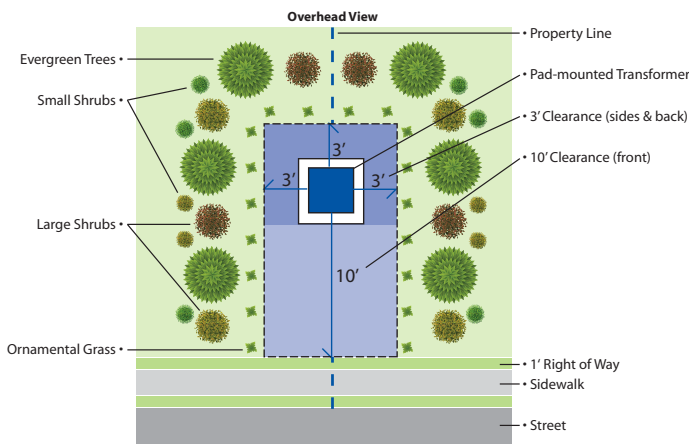
Improving the aesthetics of the community and neighborhoods is one of the reasons why RPU installs new electric service underground and is also the reason why some customers choose to

plant around the pad-mounted transformers. There are, however, guidelines and access requirements so RPU crews can safely work on the transformers.

Each pad-mounted transformer has a warning sticker affixed to it outlining the dangerous voltage inside, the dangers of digging and planting around it, and a diagram for safe planting distances. This information is for the safety of both the customer and RPU line workers.

The recommended clearance for all plantings near a transformer is to keep them 12 feet away from the front and three feet from both sides.

If you have questions regarding landscaping near a pad-mounted transformer, call RPU at **507.280.1500**.



In most cases, RPU has a utility easement of 10 feet from the front of the property line to work in. If there are plantings or landscaping within that 10 feet, RPU may need to remove or cut the landscaping near it to ensure a safe working environment.

Utility Easements

It is important to maintain an unobstructed easement for the construction and maintenance of all necessary underground or surface public utilities including rights to conduct drainage and trimming on said easement.

If you choose to plant landscaping closer than the space recommended by RPU, keep in mind that it may be removed, altered, or damaged by line crews needing safe access to the transformer and is done at the homeowner's own risk.

! WARNING



Hazardous Voltage Inside

Can shock, burn, or cause death

KEEP OUT

If open, damaged, or unlocked immediately call Rochester Public Utilities 507-280-9191

RPU002-W-A2-J44

! WARNING



Underground Hazardous Voltage Cables Buried in this Area



Call
GOPHER STATE
ONE-CALL
48 hours before
digging

1-800-252-1166.

NOTICE



We need room to work safely on this device. Please keep shrubs and structures 12 feet away from front side and 3 feet from other sides.

Obstructions will cause delays when restoring electrical service.

For planting instructions call: 507-280-9191

Electromark

This warning sticker is placed on every RPU transformer to remind people about the dangers of being near it.

Saturday, May 10

Celebrating Drinking Water Week

RPU will be hosting an open house at Cascade Meadow Wetlands and Environmental Science Center on **Saturday, May 10, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** The first 50 visitors will receive a FREE reusable RPU water bottle. RPU water experts will be available to answer any water questions you have. Make sure you tour the RPU water exhibits and qualify to win a FREE rain barrel!

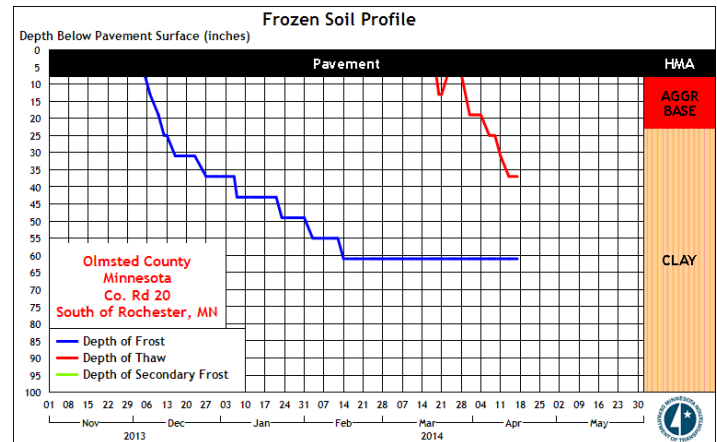
Location: 2900 19th St. NW, Rochester, MN 55901



Has the Frost Thawed Yet?

Continue to check the frost and thaw level by following the link on the RPU website at www.rpu.org. If you have been running your pencil-width stream of water, continue to do so until the thaw level is completely down to where the frost level is shown. This will ensure that it is safe to discontinue running your water and that the potential of your water service freezing is gone.

Thank you for your cooperation!



Central A/C Clean & Tune Rebate

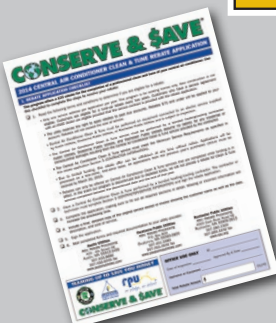
Thumbs Up for Energy Efficiency!

Regular preventative maintenance is the best way to ensure trouble-free, energy-efficient operation.

Complete a **Central Air Conditioner Clean & Tune** and apply for a

\$25 REBATE

Visit www.rpu.org to download a rebate application with complete terms and conditions; some exclusions apply.



CONSERVE & \$AVE®



Why Public Power



Public Power systems, deeply rooted in the history of the United States, are an expression of the American ideal of neighbor helping neighbor – local people working together to meet their local needs. More than 2,000 cities and towns throughout the United States own and operate electric distribution systems and provide many benefits to the 47 million Americans they serve, including:

- **Local control/local decisions** – citizen-owners have direct say in how their utility is managed
- **Cost consciousness** – Public Power is not-for-profit, and spending decisions are made with the community in mind
- **Economic development** – because Public Power is reliable and low-cost, commercial and industrial companies like to locate and operate in these communities
- **Funding for community projects and services** – Public Power revenues stay in the community and provide additional funding for city initiatives and operations

2013 Water Quality Report

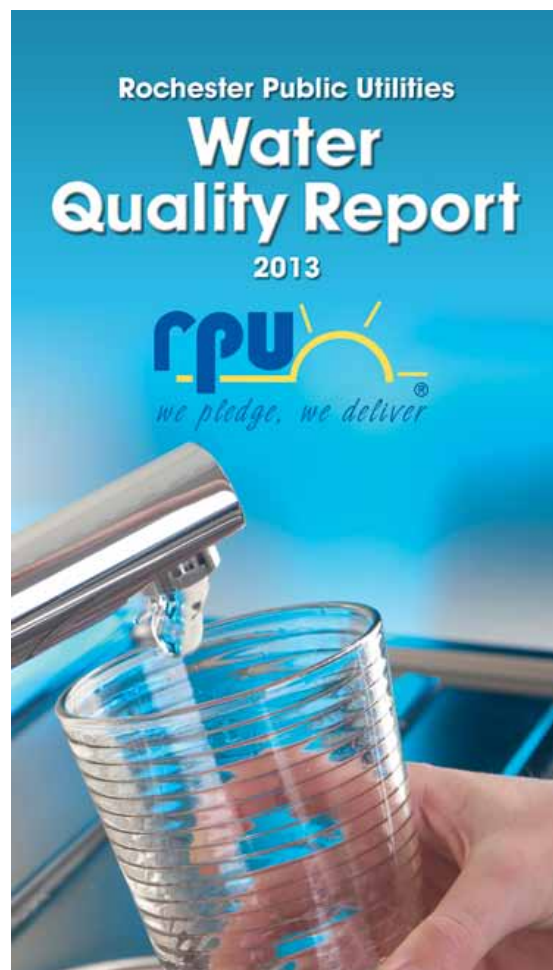
Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about RPU Drinking Water

Municipal water utilities, including RPU, are highly tested and scrutinized for safety and quality. In accordance with the Environmental Protection Agencies 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, we are pleased to announce that water provided by RPU again met all State and Federal drinking water standards.

Hard copy versions of the CCR will not be mailed out individually as in past years, but a complete version can be found on RPU's Web page located at: www.rpu.org/environment/water-quality/.

Questions and requests for a hard copy version of the 2013 water quality report can be directed to Todd Osweiler at **507.280.1589** or email tosweiler@rpu.org.



FREE ENERGY WORKSHOP

**LAST
CHANCE
UNTIL
FALL!**

MONDAY 05.12.2014
Lincoln K-8 Choice School • 6:30pm



**Attendees are eligible for a
\$50 home energy audit! (\$400 value)**
Learn more at www.rpu.org.



REGISTER WITH ASHLEY: 888.734.6365 • arobertson@mncee.org

Choose Your Way

TO PAY YOUR RPU BILL



Go Paperless

Receive an email that payment is due and your bill is available to view at www.rpu.org.

Budget Billing

Monthly payments stay the same based on the average of the previous 12 months of service.

Automatic Payments

- Automatic Checking or Savings Account Debit
- Automatic Credit/Debit Card Payment
- Can be combined with Budget Billing

How to Enroll

Enroll at www.rpu.org or fill out the form below and mail this page to: RPU Customer Service
4000 East River Road
Rochester, MN 55906-2813

Visit www.rpu.org to learn how to Pay Online, Pay By Phone, or use Pay Stations and Drop Boxes.

RPU BILL PAYMENT OPTIONS ENROLLMENT FORM *You may also enroll at: www.rpu.org*

Last Name: _____

(As It Appears On Your Account)

First Name: _____

(As It Appears On Your Account)

RPU Contract Acct Number: **300000** _____

Service Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Mailing Address: _____

(If Different Than the Service Address)

City/State/Zip: _____

Primary Phone: _____

Phone Type: ☐ Home ☐ Cell ☐ Other: _____

Email Address: _____

(Required to Go Paperless)

SIGNATURE:

By signing above, I hereby request RPU to enroll my account in the options I select to the right, and acknowledge that I have read and agree to the terms and conditions as outlined on www.rpu.org.

BILL PAYMENT OPTIONS:

☐ **GO PAPERLESS** *(Provide an email address at the lower left.)*

☐ **BUDGET BILLING**

☐ **AUTOMATIC PAYMENT OPTIONS:**

PLEASE DEDUCT MY PAYMENT: *(Check one.)*

☐ When Bill Is Invoiced ☐ When Payment Is Due

☐ **Checking Account Debit** *(Attach a VOIDED check.*)*

Bank Name: _____

☐ **Savings Account Debit** *(Attach a VOIDED deposit slip.*)*

Bank Name: _____

☒ **Credit / Debit Card**

☐ DISCOVER 

☐ MasterCard 

☐ VISA 

Card Number:*

_____ - _____ - _____ - _____

Exp Date: ____ / ____

**To protect your privacy, RPU will destroy the credit card information on this form, as well as any voided checks and deposit slips.*



4000 East River Road NE
Rochester, MN 55906
507.280.1500
www.rpu.org

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
BlueSpire



RPU Service Center Holiday Hours

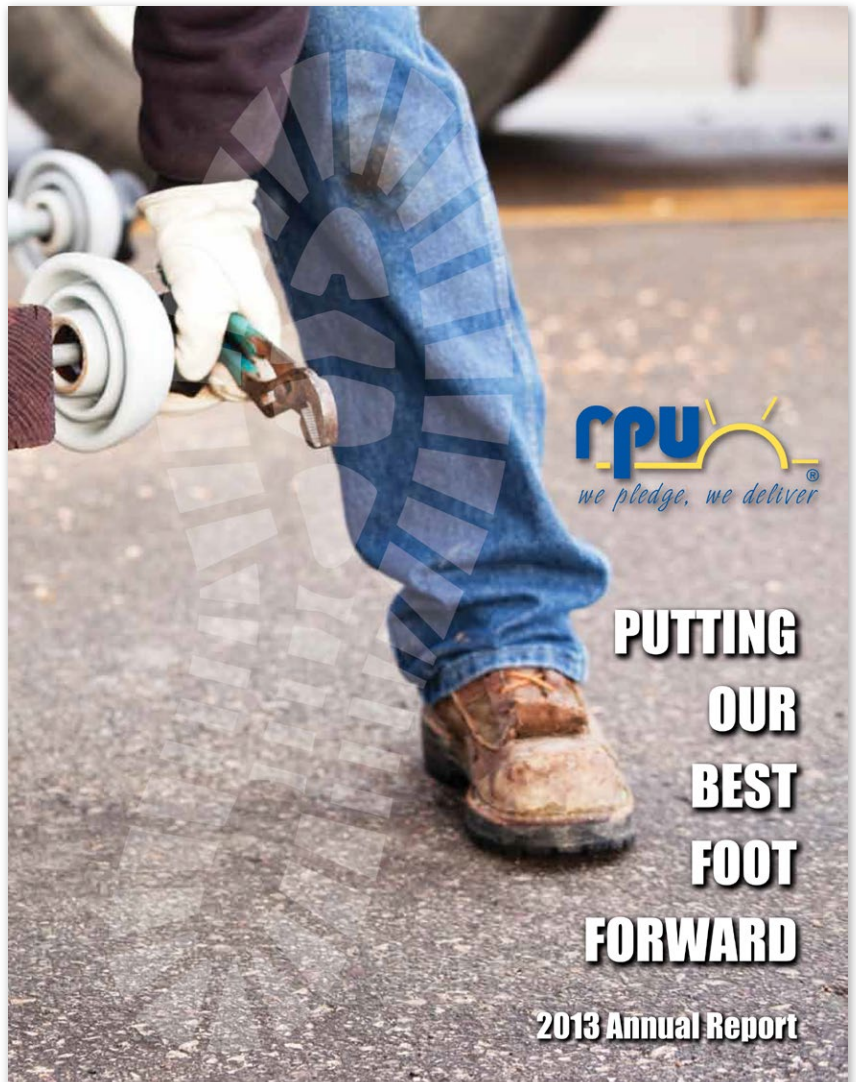
The RPU Service Center will be
closed on:

**Monday, May 26, in observance
of Memorial Day**

Now Available!

2013 RPU Annual Report

Look for the 2013 RPU Annual Report online at www.rpu.org or you can
stop by the RPU service center to pick one up (while supplies last).



**PUTTING
OUR
BEST
FOOT
FORWARD**

2013 Annual Report