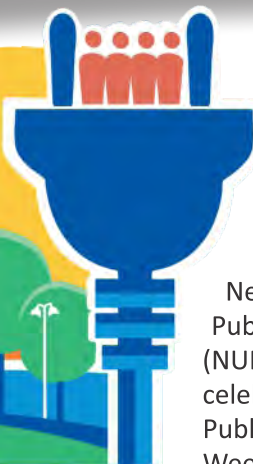




the municipal **Advantage**

PEOPLE...POWER.

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2020



Celebrate Public Power Week and Enter For a Chance to Win a Smart Thermostat-WiFi

New Ulm Public Utilities (NUPU) is celebrating Public Power Week Oct. 4-10, along with the American Public Power Association and

more than 2,000 other community-owned, not-for-profit electric utilities that collectively provide electricity to 49 million Americans.

With an increased amount of teleworking and time spent at home while social distancing, to mark this week, NUPU offers a few tips on how to save energy and money in your home, while caring for the environment and keeping everyone safe:

- **Plug energy leaks** with weather stripping and caulking, and be sure your house is properly insulated — you can save up to 20 percent on heating/cooling bills, and make your home more comfortable.

- **Clean or change filters regularly.** A dirty furnace or air conditioning filter will slow airflow and make the system work harder to keep you warm or cool.

- **Install a programmable thermostat** to save up to 10 percent on cooling and heating costs.

- **Wash clothes in cold water.** Heating the water in a washer uses 90 percent of the energy used to wash clothes. According to Energy Star, by switching to cold water, you can save \$30-\$40 every year.

- **To save energy at home, replace incandescent bulbs** with energy saving lights. LED lights use up to 90% less energy than incandescent bulbs while lasting up to 25 times longer.

- **Conserve energy by turning off and unplugging** all electrical devices that aren't in use. Better still, use a power strip and turn off devices and lights that are not in use to cut standby power, to save \$100 a year on your electricity bill. "We know that using energy wisely to lower monthly electric bills is important to New Ulm residents," said Derek Nelson, Energy Services Representative. "While we are sharing these tips during Public Power Week, we hope our community will keep an eye on energy efficiency all year 'round."

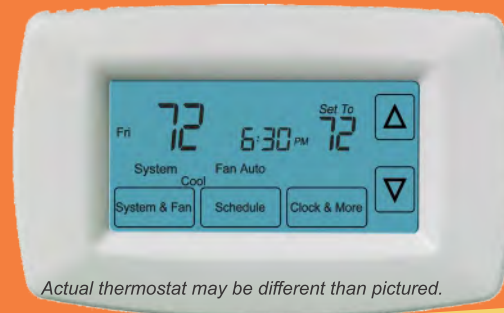
ANSWER THE FOLLOWING FOR A CHANCE TO WIN! What are the benefits for customers and community of having a publicly owned utility?

(OR SEE PAGE 7 AND COLOR THE JUST FOR FUN PICTURE)

Email to DerekN@newulmmn.gov, or mail or deliver **by October 9** to New Ulm Public Utilities, 310 1st N St, New Ulm, MN 56073.

Include your name, address and phone number with your entry.

You must be an NUPU customer to enter.



Actual thermostat may be different than pictured.



NEW ULM PUBLIC UTILITIES NEWSLETTER
newulmmn.gov • 507-233-2110



This season's forecast... LOWER BILLS, HIGHER EFFICIENCY AND REBATES!



● When you purchase a new energy efficient furnace you can expect to feel comfortably warm with a **100% chance of saving money on your utility bill and conserving energy.** Look to New Ulm Public Utilities for a furnace or boiler rebate on residential type furnaces or boilers.



● Furnaces can get into some hairy situations with dust, dirt and other issues that can keep it from running efficiently. **A properly cleaned and checked furnace runs better and saves on your heating bill!**



Remember, furnaces do not have nine lives. Make sure to get your furnace checked at least every two years.



NOTICE! CHANGES TO REBATES STARTING JANUARY 1, 2021

Many rebates and their applications will be changing, starting with the Furnace Check and Clean rebate. Currently, \$40 is taken directly off your check and clean bill from the vendor, and that vendor is then reimbursed by NUPU. Starting in 2021, this rebate will be \$25 and the application must be submitted by the customer.

Within the last year and a half, NUPU staff and an external source have been conducting internal and external audits on rebate programs. What was suspected and discovered was that while NUPU was doing an excellent job rebating back to customers, NUPU was not capturing the State-mandated savings from money rebated back to customers. Due to these findings, many rebates will be altered, and some new rebates may be added. When rebate applications are altered, notifications such as this will be posted within our newsletter.

Visit newulmmn.gov for the most recent rebate forms and information.

Light up your holidays!

Let the holiday season shine with strings of energy saving LED lights! AND get some extra jingle in your pocket with a rebate from New Ulm Public Utilities.

Receive \$5 in New Ulm Chamber Dollars per string, up to five strings, with a minimum of 25 lights purchased between October 1 and December 11.

Attach the portion of each package that shows the number of lights per string.

Call 233-2110 for more information or visit nupuc.com for forms.



\$493 raised for New Ulm Area Emergency Food Shelf from holiday lights recycling

From lights with hearts or ghosts, to traditional Christmas lights, New Ulm Public Utilities has collected old holiday lights from customers over the last few years. Once collected, holiday lights are stored at the utilities' Material Distribution Center (MDC). Over these last few years, the MDC has accumulated lights totaling 2,342 pounds.

With the help from NUPU customers, \$493 was raised by simply recycling holiday lights. The money generated from the holiday light recycling program was donated to the New Ulm Area Emergency Food Shelf on behalf of NUPU customers. NUPU would like to thank its customers, not only for keeping these lights out of the landfill, but for helping generate money for an important local nonprofit. NUPU would also like to thank New Ulm Steel and Recycling for taking these old lights and for matching NUPU's \$493 donation to the food shelf.



DEPARTMENT **highlights**

DEPARTMENT STAFF SHARE
IMPROVEMENTS, PLANS,
ACTIVITIES AND
ANNOUNCEMENTS

**LARRY
BOTTEN**
Electric
Distribution
Department
Supervisor

Benefits of Electric Line Burial

Burying your electrical lines from the utility poles to your house has many advantages. The first and foremost benefit to going underground is protection from high winds and ice. Also, under extreme weather conditions, falling trees and branches may pull down your overhead service.

Imagine no more tree trimming, which can be dangerous, around your overhead service. Another benefit is aesthetics. Your home and yard not only look better, but it's easier to do home maintenance such as siding, painting, gutter work, etc., when you no longer have to contend with utility lines.

If you are building a new home, underground service is automatically installed.

Another benefit is that Nuvera and Comcast can coordinate to install underground service at the same time. A great way to get all three lines, if needed, in the same trench.

To request underground service, stop by or call the New Ulm Public Utilities office and fill out a service application. Next, the Electric Department will meet you or your electrician to determine where the service will go.

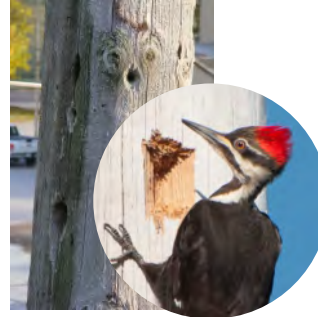
The cost for this service is \$600. If you choose to hire an electrician to move your meter outside, a rebate of \$425 is available.

Doughnut Hole Eating Contest Raises Dough



New Ulm Public Utilities (NUPU) participated in the first ever doughnut hole eating contest held by United Prairie Bank in July. The bank donated \$500 which was split between the top three contest winners. Representing NUPU was Electric Distribution Lineman Jim Henderson. The contest was held over three minutes and Jim came out victorious eating 30 doughnut holes. Jim, on-behalf of the NUPU customers, donated winnings totaling \$250 to the Disabled American Veterans (DAV).

Transmission Pole Replacement on Agenda Early Next Year



Woodpeckers have damaged transmission poles throughout the area prompting plans to replace them in 2021.

materials arrive, the expected construction time is eight weeks.

The current transmission poles (horizontal post construction) are across the Minnesota River and enter New Ulm at 19th North Street. The additional transmission poles (wishbone poles) that will be replaced continue a parallel path next to the bike trail heading to the south end of New Ulm.

A major reason these transmission poles will be replaced with steel poles is due to the discovery of extensive woodpecker damage on the horizontal post construction and rotting material with moss growth on both the poles and cross arms of the wishbone poles. Of the 33 poles being replaced, only a few dead-end poles will not be of steel construction. NUPU will follow up with this project in future newsletters.

Horizontal posts (left) and wishbone poles (right), will be replaced with steel poles.

Over the past several years, NUPUC has been discussing transmission pole replacement.

Beginning January 1, 2021, or shortly after dependent on material arrival, 33 electric poles will be replaced. The estimated project timeline is 21 weeks. Much of the project time consists of the manufacturing of materials such as the new steel poles that will be installed. After



MEETING NOTES

ENERGY AWARENESS

- Received and order filed the Minnesota Department of Commerce yearly state report.
- Approved changes to the Furnace Check and Clean Rebate Program.
- Approved the June/July statement of expenses.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION JULY

- Accepted the proposal from HDR Engineering Inc. to develop a study of the current market and provide a professional opinion for an energy and capacity market analysis.
- Accepted bid from Hooper Corporation for transmission pole replacement project.
- Accepted proposal from Power System Engineering Inc. to develop plans and specifications, and to acquire and oversee the replacement of the transformer and bus differential electromechanical relays in the South Side Substation.

JUNE

- Approved a Deferred Payment Plan for unpaid utility bills suspended for disconnection under the COVID-19 Peacetime Emergency.
- Received an Energy Efficiency Grant from Heartland Consumers Power District in the amount of \$5,000, awarded to Electric Production for the variable frequency drives on the #4 boiler controls upgrade.
- Accepted the proposal from Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH) for a Cost of Service and Rate Study, along with a Rehabilitation and Renewal Plan, for the Water and Wastewater utilities.
- Accept the quote from M.E. Simpson Co. to design and provide a unidirectional hydrant flushing program.
- Commended Joseph Dietz, Boiler Operator in the Electric Production Department, for nearly 20 years of service with the New Ulm Public Utilities Commission.

Outstanding in Their Field ★ Employees of the Month

Greg Kuehn started at the New Ulm Wastewater Treatment Plant as a helper in 1994. He was promoted to Class "D" wastewater operator in 1996, maintenance lead in 2003 and assistant supervisor in 2008.

GREG KUEHN
Operator B
Assistant
Wastewater
Supervisor



His outstanding ability and knowledge of the New Ulm Wastewater Plant has helped him gain the position he holds today.

Greg displays great leadership and shares his knowledge and past experiences with staff. He is a stickler for details and that is highlighted with his management and record keeping of our bio-solids program.



JIM HENDERSON
1st Class
Journeyman
Line Worker
Electric
Dept.



Jim Henderson has been employed with the Electric Distribution Department as an electric line worker since January 2006.

Jim has demonstrated to the department he is ready to take on a bigger role within the department.

Most recently, he has taken the initiative to learn the electric metering and does a great job locating electric utility infrastructure.

His attention to detail and dependability are skills that are very valuable in the documentation of meters and locating. Jim is a self-starter and is able to work efficiently with very little supervision. His mechanical ability is useful in the maintenance of utility equipment to make sure it is operational when needed.

Jim is a valuable asset to the utility, and we are lucky to have him as a utility employee.

Use Some Common Water Sense

The average household's leaks can account for nearly 10,000 gallons of water wasted every year, and 10 percent of homes have leaks that waste 90 gallons or more per day. Common types of leaks found in the home are worn toilet flappers, dripping faucets, and other leaking valves. These types of leaks are often easy to fix, requiring only a few tools and hardware that can pay for themselves in water savings. Fixing easily corrected household water leaks can save homeowners about 10 percent on their water bills.

TIP: Don't forget garden hoses! Check your garden hose for leaks at its connection to the spigot. If it leaks while you run your hose, replace the nylon or rubber hose washer and ensure a tight connection to the spigot using pipe tape and a wrench.



Here are some tips for finding leaks:

- Look at your water usage during a colder month, such as January or February. If a family of four exceeds 12,000 gallons per month, there could be serious leaks.
- Check your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter changes at all, you probably have a leak.
- Examine faucet gaskets and pipe fittings for any water on the outside of the pipe to check for surface leaks.
- WaterSense partners have guides and videos that you might find helpful in finding and fixing leaks. Visit epa.gov/watersense.

Toilet Leaks

Old or worn-out toilet flappers (e.g., valve seal) can cause leaks. Flappers are inexpensive rubber parts that can build up minerals or decay over time. Replacing them can be a quick and easy fix for your water woes. To fix this leak, consult your local hardware store, home improvement retailer, or licensed plumber.

- Identify toilet leaks by placing a drop of food coloring in the toilet tank. If any color shows up in the bowl after 10 minutes, you have a leak. (Be sure to flush immediately after the experiment to avoid staining the tank.)

TIP: Bring the old flapper to the hardware store for comparison to make sure you buy a new flapper that fits your toilet model. You can also check the owner's manual, if you have it, or the manufacturer's website for the appropriate replacement part number for the flapper

Test Your Water Sense!

Think you know everything there is to know about water? You can't be sure until you test your WaterSense.

Circle your answers below. Use the answer key at the end to see how many questions you answer correctly!

1. When is the best time of day to water your lawn?

- A. Early morning or late evening
- B. In the afternoon
- C. All day long

2. Which of these ways to wash the car saves the most water?

- A. Wash it in the driveway with the garden hose
- B. Drive it into the lake
- C. Take it through a car wash that recycles water

3. How much water does a family of four (mom, dad, two kids) use everyday?

- A. 50 B. 100
- C. 250 D. 400

4. True or False: It isn't important to save water because there is so much of it on Earth.

- A. True B. False

5. True or False: Keeping the water running when you brush your teeth wastes a lot of water.

- A. True B. False

6. Which one uses less water?

- A. Taking a 5 minute shower
- B. Taking a bath

7. Which of these activities wastes the MOST water per day in the average home?

- A. Running the tap while washing dishes
- B. Using a garbage disposal
- C. A leaky toilet
- D. Long showers

8. True or False: It's okay to flush some trash down the toilet like cotton balls and tissue.

- A. True B. False

9. What should you do if you see or hear a leaky faucet in your house?

- A. Ignore it—drips are no big deal
- B. Do nothing—there is no way to fix a drippy faucet
- C. Tell your parents, or find where it's coming from and fix

Answer Key:

- 1. Answer: A** Your lawn should only be watered in the early morning or late evening when it's cooler. Watering the yard when it's really hot outside causes the water to evaporate before the plants have time to drink it.
- 2. Answer: C** Many car washes save more water than if you wash your car at home. They do this by recycling the water that they use instead of letting it run down the sewer drains.
- 3. Answer: D** The average person uses 100 gallons of water each

day—that's enough to fill 1,600 drinking glasses!

4. Answer: B Although there is a lot of water on earth (75 percent of the earth's surface!), most of it is salt water so you can't drink it. Less than 1 percent of the earth's water can be used by people!

5. Answer: A You can save up to 8 gallons of water by turning off the faucet when you brush your teeth in the morning and before bedtime. That adds up to more than 100 gallons of water each month!

6. Answer: A It takes 70 gallons of water to fill a tub but only 10 to 25 gallons for a 5 minute shower. If you do take a bath, put the stopper in the drain right away and change the temperature as you fill the tub.

7. Answer: C A leaky toilet can waste about 200 gallons of water every day! Test your toilets for leaks. Place a drop of food coloring in the tank and if the color shows in the bowl, you have a leak.

8. Answer: B Never flush anything except toilet paper. Cutting out 1 flush per day saves enough water to wash 32 loads of laundry each year.

9. Answer: C Leaky faucets are big water wasters. Those drips and drops can add up to 2,700 gallons of wasted water in 1 year!





EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITH NEW ULM PUBLIC UTILITIES

★ **Boiler Operator Trainee (2 positions)**

Electric Production

Full time, with minimum of a
special engineer's license.

Under the direct supervision of the
Power Plant Supervisory
personnel, assist in the operation
and maintenance of power plant
systems.

★ **Relief Boiler Operator Electric Production**

Under the direct supervision
of the Power Plant Operator,
to operate and maintain all
steam generating equipment.
This position will work shifts,
which does include working
weekends.

Visit newulmmn.gov for details and to apply. Select CITY
DEPARTMENTS and then HUMAN RESOURCES. To apply for an
opening, complete an online application by clicking "Apply" at
the top of the job announcement and then clicking "Create an
account." You may access a free public computer at the New
Ulm Public Library.

CUSTOMER tips & tricks!



**NUPU customers were asked
on social media:
WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES
OF HAVING A PUBLICLY-
OWNED UTILITY?**

★ **Amber:** Input from
customers! Your question in
a public forum is case in
point.

★ **Jason:** As an electrician, I
appreciate the quality and
overall reliability of our
infrastructure. I also
appreciate the fast response
time and the fact that I can
get in contact with someone
fast if I need power shut off.
Dealing with the big
investor- owned utilities is a
real headache.

★ **Ray:** One stop shopping.
In the 70s I lived in
Cleveland, Minnesota. We
had Minnegasco, Northern
States Power and the city for
water and sewer.

★ **James:** Reliable and
friendly service.

Gopher State One Call at 811.

Never guess where utilities are buried.
The call and service to mark your
underground lines and pipes is free and
it's the law! 1-800-252-1166 or 811.

811

DID YOU KNOW?

NOT EVERYTHING GETS MARKED WHEN YOU CALL



HOMEOWNERS: Tell your excavator
about any private underground
lines you know of.

Private underground facilities, such as private
utility lines and private distribution networks, do
not get marked by facility operators. When a
property owner or tenant has any type of private
underground facility, they are responsible to locate
those facilities or hire someone to locate them.

Customer-owned lines usually include any that
serve outbuildings, hot tubs, security lighting,
pools, and natural gas grills.

The free locating service available through
Gopher State One Call (GSOC) applies **ONLY** to
public facility operators. The diagram below
shows a variety of utilities, some owned by the
utility and some by the homeowner.

**THOSE UTILITIES MARKED BY DOTTED LINES ARE
TYPICALLY OWNED BY THE PROPERTY OWNER.**
Private locating services will mark these for
a fee. Those lines will **NOT** be marked by
contacting GSOC.

DON'T FORGET!

After calling GSOC, wait 48
hours (excluding weekends
and holidays) before you
begin your excavation!
Remember to check for
facility operator responses.

- ELECTRIC
- GAS, OIL, AND
PROPANE
- PHONE AND CABLE
- WATER
- SEWER

If private facilities are
suspected, the excavator should:

- Physically inspect the jobsite.
- Ask the property owner.
- See what equipment or power may serve
out buildings.
- Contact the original installer of the
facilities for any maps of the lines.
- Excavate with caution and be aware
of any warning signs of underground
facilities.
- Visit www.gopherstateonecall.org/contract-locators-directory
for information on private locating
companies.

If you are
installing private facilities
consider doing the following:

- Prepare maps of any new underground
facilities.
- Bury tracer wire with the new facilities.
- Use above ground markers or signs to indicate
the buried facilities.
- Visit www.gopherstateonecall.org/how-gsoc-works/private-facility-intro for more
information about protecting private facilities.

The contact information for a
number of locating companies
who will locate privately owned
underground facilities on your
property can be found in the industry
directory at www.gopherstateonecall.org/private-facility-locators.

RESPECT THE MARKS!

Once the utilities have been located, you'll
see a variety of paint markings or flags on
the ground. Respect the marks! Never use
mechanized digging tools when you are digging
within 24 inches of the markings. Only use
hand tools.

WHITE	Area of Proposed Excavation
PINK	Temporary Survey Markings
RED	Electric
YELLOW	Gas, Oil, Steam, Propane
ORANGE	Communication, CATV, Fiber
BLUE	Water
PURPLE	Reclaimed Water, Irrigation
GREEN	Sewer

TOLERANCE ZONE



**Just
for FUN!**

New Ulm Public Utilities encourages kids of all ages to learn about safety, saving energy, saving money, and environmental awareness.

#COMMUNITYpowered



COLOR THE DRAWING ABOVE AND BE ENTERED TO WIN A SMART THERMOSTAT-WIFI!

Must be a customer on New Ulm Public Utilities. Winners will be selected from a random drawing. Include your name, address and phone number with your entry. E-mail to DerekN@newulmmn.gov or mail or drop off by **Oct. 9** to **New Ulm Public Utilities, 310 1st N St. New Ulm, MN 56073**



**CALL FOR
PHOTOS!**
New Ulm's
Best Kept
Secrets
2021
Calendar



What is Uniquely New Ulm?

Take photos of what YOU see that maybe others don't. What is hiding in your backyard, scenes at your favorite grocery store, your kid's dance recital, cats and dogs, picnics in the park, family celebrations, secret alleyways or a night out in downtown hot spots.

Feel free to submit older photos that you or your family may have taken over the years that are uniquely New Ulm!

Take photos of whatever you see that others may not, then submit them to New Ulm Public Utilities for the opportunity to be published in NUPU's 2021 Rebate & Conservation Calendar.

Photos can be from any year.

Submit high resolution digital photos, or prints, with month and year taken, location, event, activity or scene information along with your name and contact information to **DerekN@newulmmn.gov,**

drop off or mail:

**New Ulm Public Utilities,
310 1st N. St. to the
attention of Derek Nelson.**

**Call 233-2110 for more
information.**



New Ulm Public Utilities
310 1st North Street
New Ulm, Minnesota 56073

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
MANKATO, MN
PERMIT 609



the municipal
Advantage

NEW ULM PUBLIC UTILITIES
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

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NEW ULM PUBLIC UTILITIES
310 1st North Street

MAIN NUMBER	233-2110
Billings & Connections	359-8259
Administration	359-8264
Electric Distribution Dept	359-8295
Gas Dept	359-8289
Material Distribution Center	233-2134
Power Plant Chief Engineer	233-2128
Power Plant Operator	233-2129
Utilities Director	359-8264
Wastewater Treatment Plant	359-8360
Water/Steam Dept	359-8279
AFTER HOURS ALL CALLS	359-8204