



# the municipal Advantage

PEOPLE...POWER.

MAY-JUNE 2022

## New Ulm Public Utilities Recognized for Reliable Electric Service to the Community with APPA Certificate of Excellence in Reliability Award



Above left: Gary Beranek-Electric Substation/Maintenance Technician.  
Right: Jeff Folkens-Electric Distribution Department Assistant Supervisor

APPA's Reliability Team compares this data to national statistics tracked by the U.S. Energy Information Administration for all types of electric utilities.

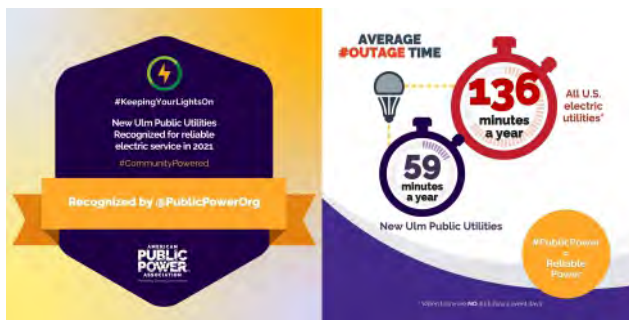
"Once again, public power utilities have demonstrated their commitment to providing highly reliable power to their customers," said Alex Hofmann, APPA's Vice President of Technical and Operations Services. "We commend these utilities for their hard work

**"We are proud to receive this recognition. It is a testament to the hard work of all our staff to ensure that we keep New Ulm powered."**

—Kris Manderfeld, New Ulm Public Utilities Director

New Ulm Public Utilities has received national recognition for achieving exceptional electric reliability in 2021. The recognition comes from the American Public Power Association (APPA), a trade group that represents more than 2,000 not-for-profit, community-owned electric utilities.

APPA helps electric utilities track power outage and restoration data through its subscription-based eReliability Tracker service. Once per year,



**"We commend these utilities for their hard work when it comes to keeping the lights on in their communities."**

—Alex Hofmann, APPA Vice President of Technical and Operations Services.

when it comes to keeping the lights on in their communities."

Nationwide, the average public power customer has their lights out for less than half the amount of time that customers of other types of utilities do.

"We are proud to receive this recognition. It is a testament to the hard work of all our staff to ensure that we keep New Ulm powered," said Kris Manderfeld, Utilities Director at New Ulm Public Utilities.

For more information on New Ulm Public Utilities and its commitment to reliability, visit [newulmmn.gov/547/Annual-Benchmark-Report--eReliability-Tr](http://newulmmn.gov/547/Annual-Benchmark-Report--eReliability-Tr).



**NEW ULM PUBLIC UTILITIES NEWSLETTER**  
[newulmmn.gov](http://newulmmn.gov) • 507-233-2110



**Water-Smart  
Landscapes**  
Start With WaterSense®

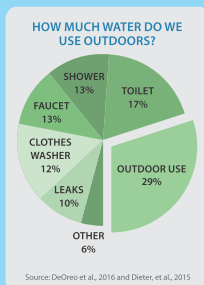
## Be Water Smart!

**A**re you interested in developing a water-smart landscape for your home or property? The WaterSense Water-Smart Landscapes guide can get you started.

Choosing the right plants, supporting soil health, and proper maintenance are all keys to water-smart landscapes. For more information visit [epa.gov/watersense/landscaping-tips](http://epa.gov/watersense/landscaping-tips).



This front yard incorporates a rain garden populated with plants native to Michigan, uses stormwater runoff to meet its water needs, and leaves turfgrass space for the kids to run and play. Using a conduit installed in the curb, stormwater is diverted from the street and into the rain garden.



# Energy Awareness Committee, New Ulm Public Utilities and City of New Ulm Busy with GreenSteps Cities Program



**G**reenSteps Cities is a five-step program for cities and tribal nations to work towards sustainability. There are 29 best practices, which each provide required and recommended actions. Recommended actions are placed into the following categories: buildings and lighting, land use, transportation, environmental management, and resilient economic and community development. Each action submitted by a city receives a ranking based on a three-star system.

Since joining GreenStep Cities in April of 2021, New Ulm Public Utilities and the City of New Ulm, with input and guidance from the Energy Awareness Commission, have been busy. After joining this voluntary program, the Energy Awareness Commission was first tasked with researching what actions the community has already accomplished within program guidelines and what actions should initially be implemented.

Through 2021 New Ulm has completed 5 Best Practices (BPs) and 10 BP Actions. BPs and actions completed include:

- **Best Practice 1 Efficient Existing Public Buildings**

- Action 1)* Enter Building Data into MN B3 Benchmarking Database.
- Action 2)* Indoor lighting and operational changes in city-owned buildings.
- Action 4)* IT efforts to reduce plug loads, building energy use and workflow efficiency.

- **Best Practice 5 Building Redevelopment**

- Action 1)* Adopt an historic preservation ordinance/regulations and encourage adaptive reuse.

- **Best Practice 12 Mobility Options**

- Action 1)* Increase walking, biking, and transit by following recommendations on GreenStep website.

- **Best Practice 16 Community Forests and Soil**

- Action 1)* Certify as a Tree City USA
- Action 6)* Build community capacity to protect existing trees by on or more of:
  - a) Having trained tree specialists.
  - b) Supporting volunteer forestry efforts.
  - c) Adopting an EAB/forest management plan or climate adaptation plan for the urban forest.

**GreenSteps continued on page 3**





**GreenSteps from page 2**

- **Best Practice 17 Stormwater Management**

*Action 2)* Complete the GreenStep Municipal Stormwater Management Assessment.

- **Best Practice 18 Parks and Trails**

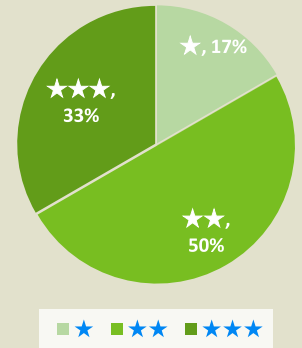
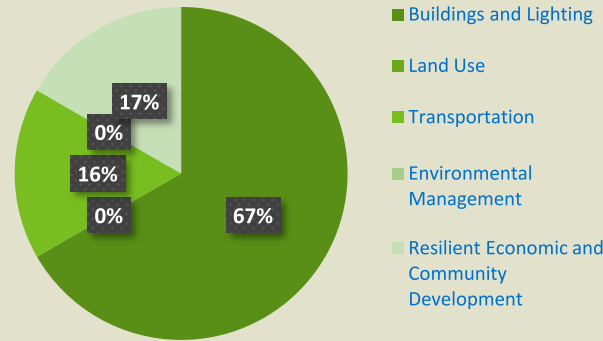
*Action 8)* Develop a program to involve community members in hands-on land restoration, invasive species management and stewardship projects.

- **Best Practice 27 Local Food**

*Action 3)* Create, assist with, and promote local food production/distribution within the city.

**Notable Actions:**

- ✓ Bronze Bike Friendly Community in 2017.
- ✓ 20 lighting upgrades 2018-21 resulted in first 5-yr savings of 49.1 kW, 152,819 kWh and \$18,211. Average payback is 3.4 years.
- ✓ Installed vending machine misers save estimated \$192.10 and 1,612 kWh per machine, annually. Six machines installed save an estimated \$1152 and 9672 kWh annually.
- ✓ Local public high school installed a greenhouse in 2016 which includes hydroponic and aquaponics systems with a 10kW solar system.

**Current distribution of BP Categories: Star Rating of Actions:**

✓ New Ulm Community Garden established in 2013 provides 70 plots on City owned property.

✓ Rec on the Go program travels to different locations to provide free activities for the community. In partnership with Community Ed.

✓ Pollinator Park Events bring awareness and help promote and maintain a healthy city environment for pollinators and citizens by exploring the pollinator park, located on unused city property and maintained by volunteers.

✓ Tree Advisory Commission reported 2020 funds of \$134,417 (\$10.07 per capita) for public education, training, park tree inventory, utility line clearance, tree removal, tree maintenance, and tree purchases.

✓ Tree rebates for energy conservation were offered to residents 1990-2019 by New Ulm Public Utilities; over 318 trees were rebated \$32,688 (data 2011-2019 only).

# LOVE THE GOOD OLD DAYS?



**Sure, we all remember our favorite era when life seemed simpler. But today's technology can streamline the rebate application process so you can get back to grooving to what you love.**

Over the course of the last year, New Ulm Public Utilities has been working on software allowing customers to submit rebate applications online at [newulmmn.gov](http://newulmmn.gov). Fillable forms currently available are Energy Star rebates (appliance, lighting, and ceiling fan), Commercial-Industrial Lighting. Furnace and AC Check and Cleans, Furnace/Boiler, AC Units and others.

We understand not everyone can submit rebate applications online. If you're one of them, simply contact New Ulm Public Utilities. We can provide paper forms and we will be happy to assist you with your rebate application.





**NEW  
EMPLOYEE  
SPOTLIGHT**

**SUSAN BRANDES**

## Brandes Takes on Role with New Ulm Public Utilities

Susan Brandes is New Ulm Public Utilities' new administration clerical assistant.

Starting her position last August, Brandes previously worked for the City of New Ulm Police Department.

Brandes' responsibilities include processing payments, payroll, monthly meeting agendas, mail, rebate processing, scanning prep, online storage filing, answering phones, helping people who visit the Public Utilities office, ordering supplies and other duties pertinent to the administration's needs.

"I don't have typical day," said Brandes. "Every day is busy and different. I enjoy working with my co-workers and coordinating the many deadlines and moving factors of the Administration Department."

Brandes is married, with three children. She enjoys running and spending time with family and friends.



## PUC MEETING HIGHLIGHTS April 26

- Received report regarding New Ulm's Electric System Reliability Standards and Performance for 2021
- Approved the revised NUPU Cogeneration and Small Power Production Rate Schedule to be effective with the June 1, 2022 billing.
- Approved the appointment of Glen Hillesheim to the position of Chief Engineer.
- Authorized the City Manager to accept the proposal for the exterior cleaning of the Airport Water Tower.

### May is...

- National Electrical Safety Month
- National Drinking Water Week
- National Bike Month
- Clean Air Month



### June is...

- National Safety Month
- National Great Outdoors Month
- National Pollinators Month



## Celebrate Safe Drinking Water

Water is key to healthy people and healthy communities.

Water is also vital to our economy. We need water for manufacturing, agriculture, energy production, and more.

One-fifth of the U.S. economy would come to a stop without a reliable and clean source of water. The state of Minnesota and local water systems work to protect drinking water sources. We treat water to remove harmful contaminants.

And we do extensive testing to ensure the safety of drinking water. If we detect a problem, we take corrective action and notify the public. Water from a public water system like yours is tested more thoroughly and regulated more closely than water from any other source, including bottled water. Watch for the 2021 Drinking Water Report in mailboxes early summer.

## NUPU Reminder Regarding Building Construction Over Gas Lines

The Federal code that regulates the operation of a natural gas pipeline (192) does not allow any permanent structure to be built over a natural gas service unless the gas line is encased in a gas tight conduit. If an existing gas service or main is found under a structure, it is the customer's responsibility to pay for the re-location of the service. If you are planning to build an enclosed structure on your property, it is your responsibility as the homeowner to contact the Public Utilities to have your service location checked. It may be necessary to relocate your service, or a new service may need to be installed. If utility work needs to be done, you will need to stop at the New Ulm Public Utilities office located at 310 1st North Street to fill out a service application.





## ★ **AT YOUR SERVICE** Employees of the Month Honored

**L**arry Pelzel has a reputation for his excellent customer service. Administrative assistant, Lisa Grathwohl received a compliment directly from a customer regarding Larry. The customer indicated that Larry was very helpful to her when she had just purchased a house and had run into some unexpected problems. She said that he explained everything in a very helpful and understanding way which she appreciated very much and spoke very highly of his interaction with her. This is not the only compliment that Larry has received regarding his interaction with customers. The Utility is thankful to have an employee take the time to help our customers, especially during a time that can be stressful for them.

**LARRY PELZEL**  
Assistant  
Supervisor  
Water/District  
Energy



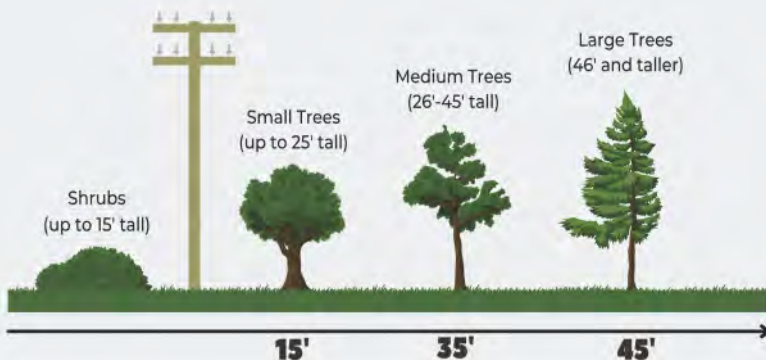
**I**n the last several months that Garret Loudermilk has been employed with the Utilities he has proven to be a great asset. Garret has learned the operations of the Electric Production Department very quickly. When the department needs to switch boilers he is effective in accomplishing this task. His abilities are highly valued for having been here such a short time. Garret also understands the boilers and their controls very well. In a recent boiler outage he responded quickly and calmly without any problems, and had the boiler back online in a very timely manner. Everyone enjoys working with Garret and he has been a great addition to New Ulm Public Utilities.

**GARRET LOUDERMILK**  
Boiler  
Operator  
Electric  
Production  
Dept.



## Plant the **RIGHT TREE** in the **RIGHT PLACE**

The larger the tree, the farther it should be from a power line. Avoid planting beneath power lines, near poles or close to electrical equipment.



Remember, know what's below by calling 8-1-1 before you dig.

Learn more at: **Safe Electricity.org®**



## WHAT DO **YOU** WANT TO KNOW?

A public utility means **YOU** are an owner, and as such, we want to know what is important to you.

Email subjects you'd like to see in upcoming newsletters!

Email: [comments@newulmmn.gov](mailto:comments@newulmmn.gov)  
with the subject line: Utility Newsletter



**NEW ULM PUBLIC UTILITIES NEWSLETTER**  
[newulmmn.gov](http://newulmmn.gov)



## What Do the Flags in My Yard Mean?

**T**he Gopher State One Call (GSOC) is Minnesota's one call notification center for the excavating community. The GSOC center answers phone calls and online requests from homeowners and contractors who would like to excavate. The information is then processed and all underground utilities in the proposed excavation site are notified and are required to mark that area if they have utilities present. Gopher State One Call will process these tickets free of charge.

White flags and paint are used to mark the proposed excavation site. This makes it easier for the locators to find the exact location to be marked. This work area could extend for many blocks or just a few square feet. Usually you would be notified by the excavator that they will be digging near you. However, the locate ticket could say to mark so many feet on either side of the white flags. This could put flags in an area outside of the work area in some directions. Or the flags could be marking a proposed route so the excavator can map other utilities in a future project. If you see flags on your property and you did not request a locate, it is possible that your neighbor or a local utility is having some excavation work done. Do not remove the flags, they will be removed by the party that called in the locate request.

The flags locators leave behind are all marked with the name of the utility and a phone number that you can call.

More information can be found at [www.gopherstateonecall.org](http://www.gopherstateonecall.org).

**Always call before you dig!**  
**Call GSOC at 811 or 1-800-252-1166**  
**New Ulm Public Utilities Gas Department**

The color code for underground utilities is as follows:

**PINK FLAGS: TEMPORARY SURVEY MARKS.**

**RED FLAGS: ELECTRIC LINES.**

**YELLOW FLAGS: NATURAL GAS, OIL, STEAM, OR PROPANE.**

**ORANGE FLAGS: COMMUNICATION CABLES.**

**BLUE FLAGS: WATER.**

**PURPLE FLAGS: RECLAIMED WATER, IRRIGATION.**

**GREEN FLAGS: SEWER.**

**WHITE FLAGS: PROPOSED EXCAVATION.**

**CLEAR FLAGS: NO CONFLICT.**

## Call for Pet Photos for 2023 New Ulm Public Utilities Rebate & Conservation Calendar



"Yes, I want a cracker...  
 but just once I'd like it with fine  
 cheese, and a nice dry chardonnay."  
**—POLLY & PETE**

New Ulm Public Utilities 2023 Conservation & Rebate Calendar will feature those pets, past and present, who share, or have shared, our lives, our beds, our homes and our hearts. Be it cats, dogs, hamsters, horses, parrots or ferrets, send us your favorite photos of your furry, scaly, or feathered friends. Pets shown in a variety of seasons would be appreciated. Please identify the pet(s) names as well as your name(s) on back or with photos submitted. Feel free to submit your own captions or one will be provided.

**DEADLINE: October 3, 2022.**

*Original photos will be returned*

"There's  
 always  
 something  
 to see  
 along the  
 river!"  
**—MAMBO**



● **Submit printed photos to:**  
**New Ulm Public Utilities**  
**Attn: 2023 Calendar**  
**310 1st North St.**  
**New Ulm, MN 56073**

● **OR email high resolution digital photos to: [DerekN@newulmmn.gov](mailto:DerekN@newulmmn.gov)**



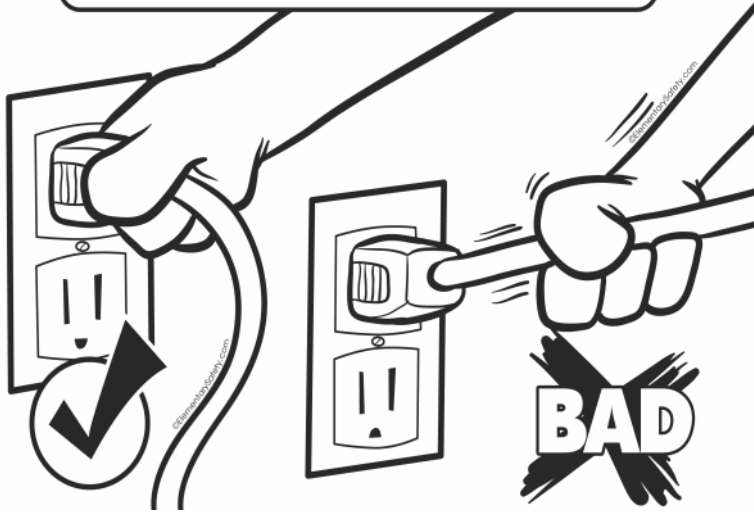


# Time for coloring FUN!

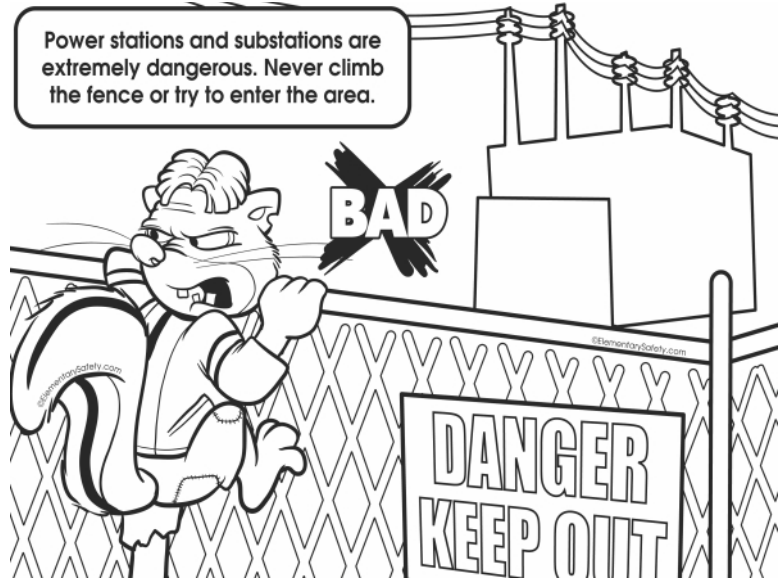
## May is Electric Safety Month

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

Always unplug an appliance before fixing it or filling it.  
Unplug things by pulling on the plug, NOT the cord.



Power stations and substations are extremely dangerous. Never climb the fence or try to enter the area.



If you are caught in an electrical storm while travelling, stay in your car with the windows rolled up.



Stay away from fallen electrical lines and report them immediately!



### Visit [newulmmn.gov](http://newulmmn.gov)

Find the latest news and announcements,  
department information, rebate information and forms,  
along with employment opportunities and more!



Follow  
us on  
**Facebook!**



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  
MAY-JUNE 2022 NEWSLETTER

## INSIDE

|                                            |   |
|--------------------------------------------|---|
| NUPU Receives Excellence Award.....        | 1 |
| Be Water Smart!.....                       | 2 |
| GreenStep Cities Program.....              | 2 |
| Online Fillable Forms Available.....       | 3 |
| Brandes Takes on NUPU Role.....            | 4 |
| Celebrate Safe Drinking Water.....         | 4 |
| Meeting Notes.....                         | 4 |
| Special Days & Months.....                 | 4 |
| Construction Over Gas Lines Reminder.....  | 4 |
| At Your Service Employee Spotlight.....    | 5 |
| Right Tree, Right Place.....               | 5 |
| What Do YOU Want to Know?.....             | 5 |
| What Do the Flags Mean?.....               | 6 |
| Call for Pet Photos for 2023 Calendar..... | 6 |
| Just for Fun Page.....                     | 7 |



**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 |