



the municipal **Advantage**

PEOPLE...POWER.

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2023

History of the Natural Gas Department

The Natural Gas Department of New Ulm Public Utilities (NUPU), like the Electric Production Department before them, did not start out as a publicly owned entity. In 1914, New Ulm citizens and businesses received gas from the privately owned New Ulm Gas Company. From 1914 until World War II, New Ulm Gas Company supplied their processed product, referred to as carburetted water gas, to residential and business locations natural gas for heating and cooking purposes.

NEW ULM PUBLIC UTILITIES



Over a decade later, New Ulm Gas Company was sold to an out-of-state business, Interstate Power Company (IPC) in 1925 and

assumed to have been headquartered out of Dubuque, Iowa. Many years later, IPC merged with Alliant Energy based in Madison, Wisconsin. At that time, IPC was one of the largest public service companies of the northwest. IPC served customers in multiple states including Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, and other communities in Minnesota. When obtained by IPC, 810 customers utilized gas in New Ulm.

Prior to the IPC purchase, New Ulm Gas Company built the original gas plant in 1914. Located across the street from the M. & St. L. Depot on the corner of Valley Street and First Street North. However, with the expanse of the much more efficient, cleaner, and higher BTU-rated natural gas fields bursting into existence across Texas, Kansas, and other southern states, the plant closed in 1939. Advancements in pipeline materials, transportation, and extraction of natural gas led Northern Natural Gas of Omaha, Nebraska to complete a natural gas pipeline from Mankato to New Ulm. Northern Natural Gas' pipeline led IPC to switch gears from a gas producer to a natural gas distributor and convert residential and commercial burners to natural gas.



The fine offices of the New Ulm Gas Co.

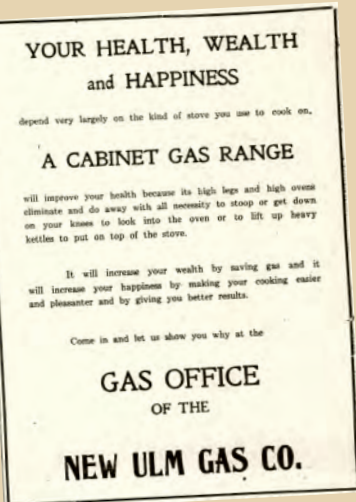
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NEW ULM PUBLIC UTILITIES NEWSLETTER
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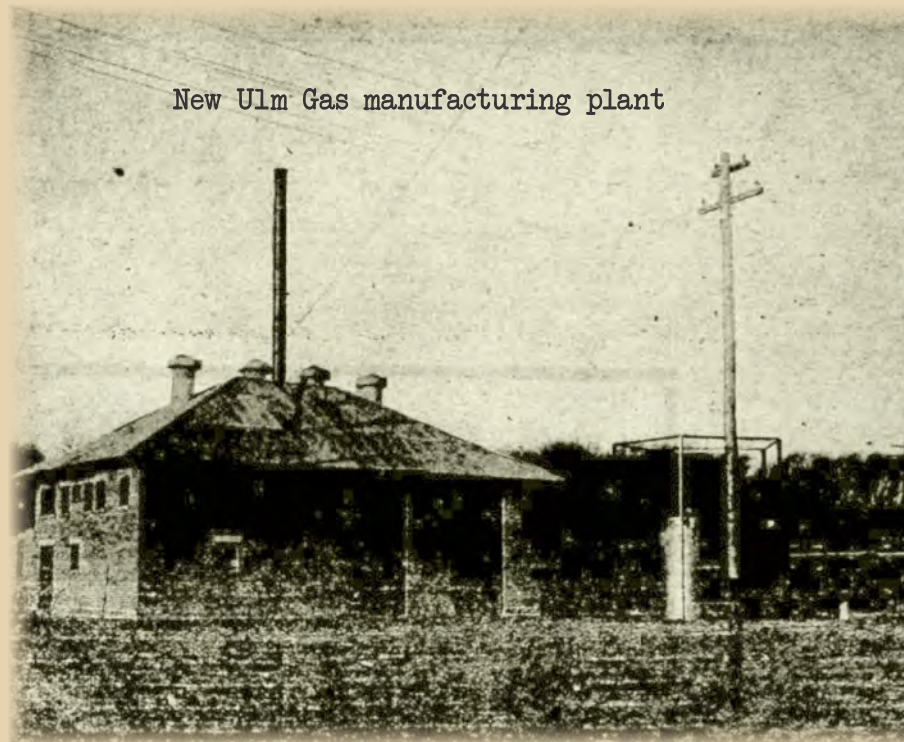


When the calendar turned to 1945, IPC and the newly formed New Ulm Public Utilities Commission (NUPUC-1940) began negotiations of the purchase of the natural gas distribution system within New Ulm. In late October of that year the purchase price of \$125,000 was agreed upon and by January 2, 1946, the natural gas distribution system was under control of the NUPUC.

With the addition of a natural gas distribution system, New Ulm Public Utilities offered potable water, wastewater treatment, electricity, and district energy (steam) to customers and citizens of New Ulm. Since that day in 1946, NUPU still operates these same utilities to customers in New Ulm.

Currently, the Natural Gas Department works

with Kinect Energy to purchase natural gas from many different gas companies. By working with Kinect Energy, NUPU is able to utilize their knowledge to pinpoint opportunities for efficiencies that reduce risks and provide a hedging strategy that meets NUPU goals. All purchased gas is transported and delivered to New Ulm via pipeline from the Northern Border Pipeline to Trimont, Minnesota, where it is then transferred to the Hutchinson pipeline for delivery to New Ulm. The gas is then distributed to customers at various pressures. Thirteen regulating stations are used to provide gas to 6,000 residential and business customers. Along with maintaining 6,449 meters throughout New Ulm, the department maintains 103 miles of pipeline distributed at 80 pounds per square inch gauge (psig) and 5 psig.



New Ulm Gas manufacturing plant

New Ulm Public Utilities:

- ★ Brings electricity and other utilities to homes and businesses
- ★ Generates and buys power
- ★ Is a not-for-profit entity
- ★ Is owned by the community
- ★ Involves citizens in decision-making



Building for the Future



#CommunityPowered
#PublicPower





CELEBRATING 120 YEARS!

**Our 120th Celebration will be held on
Wednesday, October 4
at the Electric Distribution Department building
located behind German Park.**

**JOIN US
WEDNESDAY,
OCTOBER 4
4-7 p.m.!**



**Enjoy hot dogs, popcorn,
beverages, and chips
supplied by NUPU from
4 to 7 p.m.**



**Many different vehicles and other equipment used by
utility departments will be on display for customers
to look at and become more familiar with as a
community-owned utility.**

QUESTIONS:

- 1) How many miles
of pipeline are
maintained by NUPU?**
- 2) What year was
the natural gas
distribution system
under NUPU control?**

SEPT-OCT TRIVIA DRAWING

ENTER TO WIN!

Name: _____
Address: _____
Email : _____ Phone: _____
Answers: 1) _____ 2) _____

ENTER TO WIN!

Email to: DerekN@newulmmn.gov and include the information above.

Please note September-October Trivia in the subject line.

Or mail/deliver to:

New Ulm Public Utilities

310 1st N St, New Ulm, MN 56073

Enter by October 15 - Must be a NUPU customer to enter.



July-August Newsletter Article Q & A Winners

Winners of NUPU Water Department article for our 120th Anniversary can pick up their prizes are the New Ulm Public Utilities office at 310 1st North Street.

Of the 55 entries the randomly drawn winners were:

• Connie Kalk • Tom Esser • Carolyn Kramer • Sharon Pizel • Cindy Bode





The green box on the right is an electrical pedestal where electrical underground lines meet. From this location homes, businesses, and other buildings needing electricity get their power. (The green cylinder in the picture is communication wire from a telecom company and is not NUPU property.)

Electrical Distribution System Updates

The Electric Distribution Department conducts many projects within summer months each year. One constant project that has occurred over the past 20-plus years is the placement of overhead distribution powerlines to underground.

While moving overhead powerlines underground provides a more aesthetic look to a location, it is not the driving force of the project. In Minnesota, where we all experience snow, ice, high winds, heavy downpours of rain, and at times, all the above, moving power lines underground is a commonsense decision. By

conducting this work yearly, NUPU has helped establish a very reliable electric system throughout New Ulm. The Electric Distribution Department has been busy doing overhead-to-underground work this past August on South Front Street. The driving force behind these projects each year is updating the electrical distribution system. When overhead powerlines are placed underground, it allows the distribution system to install new electrical cables and additionally eliminates the need for electrical poles.

Are underground power lines better than overhead power lines? There is most definitely an advantage to underground power lines. With a focus on “keeping the lights on,” burying power lines plays a major factor in the number of power outages due to snow, ice, and high winds, potentially causing falling trees on power lines.

Overall New Ulm Public Utilities has 180 miles of powerlines throughout the community. Currently, NUPU has a network of six miles of 69 kV (kilovolt) overhead transmission lines, 37 miles of overhead distribution lines and 74 miles of distribution lines already placed underground.



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

LIKE & FOLLOW NUPU ON FACEBOOK!



New Ulm Public Utilities employees held a “Supplies for Success” school supply drive to help area students have a bright start to the new academic year. Supplies were donated to the United Way for their Back Pack project.



★ The NUPU gives 5% of revenue from each year to the City in lieu of taxes. This amounts to over \$2 million annually.

CEILING FAN REBATES AVAILABLE!

MUST BE LED ENERGY STAR CERTIFIED
UP TO \$15 PER FIXTURE
REBATE FORMS AVAILABLE AT
newulmmn.gov/206/Energy-Rebates.

CONSERVE
\$SAVE today... tomorrow!

Which Direction?

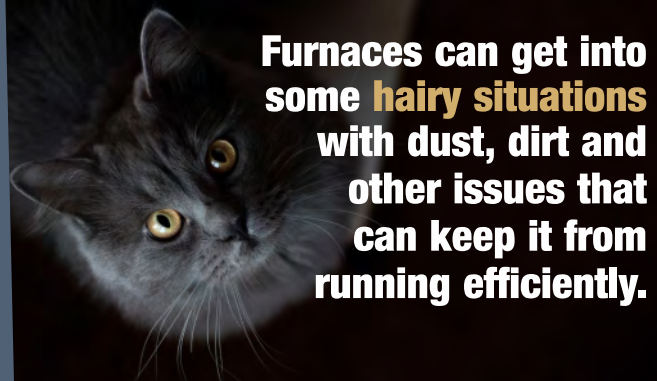
To force warm
air down from your
ceiling fan make
sure it's
rotating in a
CLOCKWISE
direction.

To see if the blades are moving
correctly, lie on the floor or stand
and look straight up to watch the
blades rotate.

Reverse this in summer months.



Running a ceiling fan correctly
helps conserve natural gas and
saves money off your next heating bill!



Furnaces can get into
some **hairy situations**
with dust, dirt and
other issues that
can keep it from
running efficiently.

Remember, furnaces do not have nine lives.
Have a professional HVAC technician
perform a **CHECK & CLEAN** to make
sure your heating unit is in top shape.

A heating system that runs efficiently will save
energy resources and energy costs, as well as
extend the life of your furnace or boiler.

Take advantage of our \$25 rebate. Visit
newulmmn.gov/206/Energy-Rebates for more
information and forms. Easy online fillable
form available!

Building for the Future



#CommunityPowered
#PublicPower



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 16.

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

Call 233-2110 for more information or
visit newulmmn.gov for forms.

*Limited Chambers Dollars available on a first come first
served basis. Chamber Dollars will not be given out after
funds are depleted.*



★ **AT YOUR SERVICE**

Employees of the Month Honored

Maria Beranek's continued effort to make the gas department more efficient in its operation makes her a valued team member. Maria looks for ways to get things done in a timely manner. Her past work experience has given her the insight needed to keep the Gas Department running smoothly through our meter database and work order system upgrades. Maria is always up for a challenge and more than willing to help wherever needed. She does a great job of supporting her co-workers and is always looking for ways to make improvements.

MARIA BERANEK
Clerical
Assistant
ADMIN/
GAS DEPT.



JoAnn has been with the Utility since September of 2022. During the time she has been part of our team, she has consistently demonstrated dedication, efficiency and a positive attitude that contributes to the success of our department. JoAnn is typically the first point of contact for customers coming into the Utility office. There has been a lot to learn since she started and she has been organized and efficient in taking on new tasks. Her friendly and approachable demeanor creates a positive interaction with customers and vendors. She has demonstrated qualities that make her a valuable asset to the Utility.

JOANN SPRENGER
Clerical
Assistant
ADMINISTRATION
DEPT.



★ **MEETING MINUTES**

July 25

- ✓ Received report on GreenStep Cities Step 2 achievement from Energy Services Representative.
- ✓ Approved Power Plant project to replace heat exchanger on the stand-by boiler.

August 22

- ✓ Approved the 2024 Energy Assistance Program Agreement with Minnesota Valley Action Council.
- ✓ Received the water leak detection survey report from utility engineer.
- ✓ Authorized the Cottonwood Area Water Service Analysis.

★ Outside of major adverse events (e.g., storms), customers of a public power utility are likely to be without power for less time – 76 minutes a year compared to 138 minutes a year for customers of private utilities.



★ 10% of electricity generated in the U.S. is from public power facilities.

★ As a whole, public power utilities have lower rates than other types of electric utilities.

NEW ULM'S GOT TALENT! 2024 CALENDAR



New Ulm Public Utilities 2024 Conservation & Rebate Calendar will feature talented customers who paint, draw, sculpt, crochet, quilt, refurbish, restore, build, or otherwise create visual works of art. From dabblers, to amateurs, to professionals may submit photos of their creations.

Only high resolution digital photos will be accepted. If you have prints only of a former project, feel free to take cell phone photos of them.

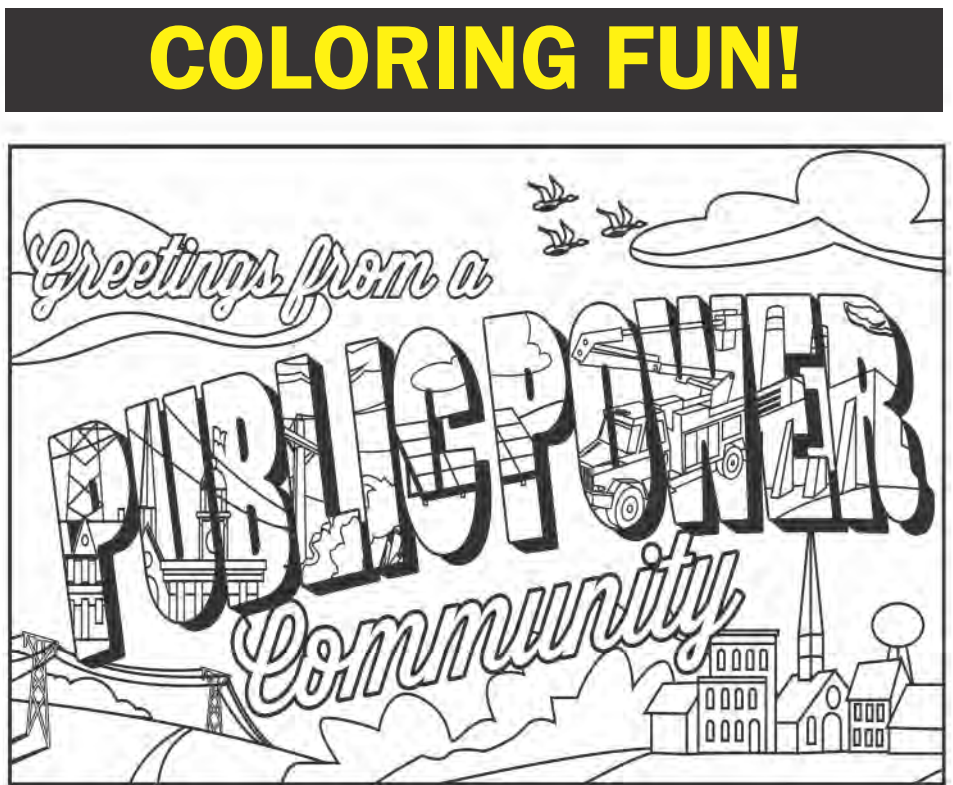
All entries must include your name and brief description of the work (example: Watercolor portrait of Aunt Mary; Restored 1965 Thunderbird), along with any other details you wish to share.



● Email high resolution digital photos to:
DerekN@newulmmn.gov

DEADLINE: OCTOBER 13, 2023 • ANY NUPU CUSTOMER CAN ENTER INCLUDING CITY AND NUPU STAFF!





October 1-7 is Public Power Week... and we have reason to celebrate!

Like more than 2,000 utilities across the country, we are powered by a community-owned, not-for-profit public power utility. During Public Power Week, we celebrate the benefits of living in a public power community including:

- Low rates
- High reliability
- Dedicated, local service
- Community focus
- Economic development
- Local decision-making



New Ulm Public Utilities Commission Members:

• Kim Williams • Sean Fingland • Shannon Hillesheim • Mary Ellen Schanus • Seth Visser



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

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MANKATO, MN
PERMIT 609



the municipal
Advantage

NEW ULM PUBLIC UTILITIES
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2023 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