



# the municipal Advantage

PEOPLE...POWER.

MARCH-APRIL 2024



## NUPU Participates in Home, Health, & Recreation Show

Thank you to all who stopped by the New Ulm Public Utilities booth at the Home, Health, & Recreation Show. We had many individuals interested in our information and display about Lead Service Lines (LSL). If you have yet to

submit information regarding your water service line, there is still time to do so. If you know your water service line is not lead, we still need information from you, regardless. Having an accurate database of information on all locations in New Ulm is crucial to meeting the criteria requested by the Minnesota Department of Health.

If you have questions or would like to schedule an appointment to verify your water service line, please contact the Water Department at 507-359-8279.

Thank you to all individuals who submitted information already and we hope to hear from others at your most earliest convenience.

See page 5 for more information and form.



Follow us on Facebook!

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

## Home Energy Audits



**N**ew Ulm Public Utilities along with the help of Center for Energy and Environment completed home energy audits at customers home for the late winter/spring season. Thank you to all who participated in receiving a home energy audit.

If you missed receiving a home energy audit, no worries! We will resume offering energy audits starting this fall and continuing into the winter, when audits are

best conducted. If you would like to schedule a home energy audit, contact Derek Nelson, Energy Services Representative with New Ulm Public Utilities at 507-233-2110 ext. 401, or DerekN@newulmmn.gov. If you prefer to discuss an energy audit in person stop by our office located at 310 1st N. St.

Home energy audits are paid for by the Utility through our CIP (Conservation Improvement Program). Below is a brief explanation of what happens during an energy audit.

During an energy audit, a trained energy expert collects and analyzes data on how your home uses energy. Auditors will commonly perform the following tasks:

- ★ **Inspect your home's interior and exterior.**
- ★ **Analyze insulation levels throughout the home.**
- ★ **Determine the age and efficiency of your heating and cooling equipment as well as your water heater.**
- ★ **Conduct combustion safety tests on your mechanical equipment.**
- ★ **Conduct a blower door test to see how much air your home loses through leaks.**
- ★ **Use an infrared camera to scan and document insulation levels (if possible).**
- ★ **Sometimes auditors can review utility bills to aid their analysis of your energy usage (you may be asked to supply them with utility bills prior to their visit).**

### *What is the outcome of the energy audit?*

Auditors will provide a summary report that explains what they found as well as prioritizing next steps. There will often be information about rebates in the document as well.

## ★ MEETING MINUTES

### NUPU Commission

#### February

- ✓ Approved 2023 Annual Distribution Energy Resources (DER) Report.
- ✓ Approved #7 gas turbine controls upgrade.
- ✓ Accepted proposal for a Water Treatment Plant filter assessment.

#### March

- ✓ Approved purchase and installation of steam and condensate line.
- ✓ Received and order filed the Wastewater Department Plant permit from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)
- ✓ Approve agreement with Abdo to perform audit services.

### Energy Awareness Commission

#### March

- ✓ Received and order filed discussion on City of New Ulm's Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Approved ESR monthly report.
- ✓ Received and order filed GreenStep Cities Best Practice 15.2 approval from program coordinator.
- ✓ Approved participation in 2024 Home, Health, and Recreation Show.

**Did You Know?**

**One drip per second of a leaky faucet wastes 1,661 gallons of water, and can cost you up to \$35 per year.**





# Minnesota GreenStep Cities **Update**

**N**ew Ulm received GreenStep Cities Step 2 recognition this past year (2023). In 2021, New Ulm decided to be a volunteer member of this program. Since joining, 9 Best Practices (BP) have been completed along with 24 BP Actions. Here are some highlights of Best Practices and their Best Practice Actions that have been completed and recognized by GreenStep Cities program.

★ **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.

★ **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).

★ **Tree inventory** of over 9,000 trees included public trees and voluntary tree self-inventory submittals with help from GreenCorps member mailings.

★ **WaterSense Partner** since 2019 and have promoted conservation and products through events, programs – resulting in over 350 sink aerators purchased and additional given away.

If you are interested in knowing more about GreenStep Cities program or would like to see how you can participate, please visit [greenstep.pca.state.mn.us](http://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us). This program is community based and many individuals and organizations can participate. If you or your organization have completed something within the program or are looking to complete a project that may fit into the GreenStep Cities program, feel free to contact an Energy Awareness Commission member or Derek Nelson with New Ulm Public Utilities.

## Call before you dig! Know what's below!

[www.gopherstateonecall.org](http://www.gopherstateonecall.org)

Call GSOC at 811 or 1-800-252-1166

**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.**

## KEEP YOUR COOL!

### ✓ CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONING CLEAN & CHECK

Must be performed at locations connected with electric service supplied by New Ulm Public Utilities and be performed by an HVAC professional.

### REBATE AMOUNT:

**\$40** credit to your utility account.



# CLEAR ENERGY SOLUTIONS BUSINESS AND RESIDENTIAL REC PROGRAMS

Are you looking to add renewable energy to your business or residence?

Don't want to purchase solar panels and worry about the costs associated with solar and maintenance or it's simply not an option at your location?

Do you rent your location but want to support renewable energy efforts?

Supporting renewable energy with relatively little out of pocket cost is easy with NUPU's Clear Energy Solutions Business and Residential REC Programs!

We all want to help protect the environment. The good news is that **25% of the electricity you purchased from NUPU is from clean energy resources** (mostly from wind) that do not produce greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, or other pollutants. Would you like to do even more to help the environment? The Clear Energy Solutions REC Program allows NUPU to purchase Renewable Energy Certificates, or RECs, on behalf of our participating customers. RECs are proof that electricity was generated by qualifying clean, renewable facilities — such as wind and solar farms — and fed into the electric grid. When you enroll, REC purchases will offset the portion of your energy that comes from fossil fuels, making your electric usage, in effect, **100% clean and carbon-free!**



## RESIDENTIAL REC PROGRAM

### Opt-in with Clear Energy Solutions:

Fill out and return the Clear Energy Solutions-Residential REC Program opt-in portion below. The amount chosen is a surcharge on your electric bill in monthly increments.



Replace 25% of your electric consumption with renewable energy!

**\$1**

**Sign me up for 50%**



Replace 50% of your electric consumption with renewable energy!

**\$2**

**Sign me up for 75%**



Replace 100% of your electric consumption with renewable energy!

**\$3**

**Sign me up for 100%**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ ACCT # \_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## BUSINESS REC PROGRAM

### How much does it cost?

Electric energy usage is billed per kilowatt-hour (kWh). A Clear Energy Solutions premium will be applied to the percentage of the actual monthly purchase that comes from fossil fuels. It will be shown as a separate line item on your bill. The Clear Energy Solutions premium is \$0.001, or one-tenth of one cent, per kWh.

### How do I participate?

Contact NUPU if you are interested. We will email you the Clear Energy Solutions form to help you estimate the amount of RECs your business will need to purchase, along with the cost. If you choose to participate, just return the signed and dated Clear Energy Solutions form to us at the address below.

### What else do I need to know?

You may join Clear Energy Solutions program during the registration period only. Your participation will renew annually on Jan 1 of each year unless you notify us. We will inform program participants of any changes to the Clear Energy Solutions premium by Dec 1 of each year. NUPU will track and retire RECs annually.

Prices for RECs can vary each year. This program is automatically renewed (Jan 1st) on a yearly basis and prices may be adjusted to reflect the cost of a REC.

**Registration is May 1 - June 1 for both 2024 programs which end December 31.** Participation will automatically renew on January 1 each year, but can be canceled at any time by contacting NUPU or by completing a form available at [www.newulmmn.gov](http://www.newulmmn.gov). Prices may vary each year to reflect the cost of the REC.

**Return form to:**  
**New Ulm Public Utilities 310 1st North St., New Ulm, MN 56073**  
**Questions contact:**  
**Derek Nelson, Energy Services Representative, 507-233-2110 Ext. 401**



# LET'S GET THE LEAD OUT!

**REMINDER:**  
We need your help  
collecting this data!  
**THANKS** to all who have  
completed this form.

## GET THE LEAD OUT INITIATIVE.

New Ulm Public Utilities is following the guidelines set by the Minnesota Department of Health and the United States Environmental Protection Agency in the Lead & Copper Rule to collect an inventory of pipe materials used in water service lines and mains.

We need the help of all homeowners in this process!

We ask that you assess the water service line coming into your home and send us that information on a form available on our website. See the QR code and website information below. If you'd prefer to have a representative of the Water Department assess your service line, you can call to make an appointment.

Scan the QR code to direct you to the form.



Or visit our website

<https://forms.ci.new-ulm.mn.us/forms/LeadAndCopperSurvey>

## Have questions?

We're here to help with your questions or concerns and are available to set up an appointment to have one of our team members do your assessment if preferred.

**NUPU Water Department**

(507) 359-8279

**NUPU Administration**

(507) 233-2110

## No computer access?

Complete the form below and mail to or drop it off at:  
New Ulm Public Utilities; 310 1st North, New Ulm, MN 56073  
or City Hall; 100 North Broadway, New Ulm, MN 56073

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I am the home, business or property owner \_\_\_\_\_

I am a renter \_\_\_\_\_

Service Pipe Material

Copper \_\_\_\_\_

Plastic \_\_\_\_\_

Galvanized Steel \_\_\_\_\_

Lead \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Please include a picture of the service line.**

I prefer to schedule an evaluation. Please contact me. \_\_\_\_\_

To identify the material of your service line pipe, find the service line coming into your home - generally in the basement. Lead is a dull grey color and very soft. If scraped with a key, it will turn a bright silver color. Try sticking a magnet to the pipe - even a strong magnet will not stick to lead.



**Lead:** A dull, silver-gray color that is easily scratched with a coin. Use a magnet - strong magnets will not cling to lead pipes.



**Copper:** The color of a copper penny



**Galvanized:** A dull, silver-gray color. Use a magnet - strong magnets will typically cling to galvanized pipes.



**Plastic:** Smooth, colored, semi-rigid pipe that is joined to the water supply with a clamp.

**There is no charge for a representative from the Water Department to assess your line. There is also no obligation to remove or upgrade lines!**



## ★ AT YOUR SERVICE Employees of the Month Honored

Nick works in some difficult and unpleasant situations in the Steam and Water Department.

Recently Nick had to weld pipe in a district energy manhole with limited room. There was a steam leak in the manhole, and it was excessively hot. Once we were able to get the manhole to an acceptable level of heat, Nick proceeded to get the repairs done in a timely manner so the system could be brought back online. The customers had been notified of a steam outage, but it resulted in a limited disruption of service with this repair. Nick's welding abilities are instrumental in the success of the steam system.

**NICK PRICE**  
Water/Steam  
Operator  
DISTRICT  
ENERGY DEPT.



Mark has been employed by the New Ulm Wastewater Department since 1997. He holds a Class "A" Wastewater license and Type IV Biosolids license. He is the lead operator for our industrial program and operates our infrastructure camera truck. Mark's duties include visiting industrial sites daily, reading and calibrating flow meters, and collecting samples. With these daily data collections, he is responsible for compiling this data for monthly billing. His role as the camera truck operator has had him work with City Engineering, GIS, IT and the Street Departments to coordinate maintenance and repair work to New Ulm's 90 miles of sanitary sewers. Mark's professionalism and continuous communications with New Ulm's industries and other PUC/City departments, are an asset to New Ulm Public Utilities.

**MARK STUEBER**  
Wastewater  
Operator  
WASTEWATER  
DEPT.



## 2025 REBATE & CONSERVATION CALENDER THEME

# New Ulm COOKS!



**New Ulm Public Utilities 2025 Rebate & Conservation Calendar will feature customers' family meal memories, cooking tips, short recipes, and photos of food creations, families and friends gathered for picnics, holidays and meals, etc.**

Only high resolution digital photos will be accepted. If you have prints only, feel free to take cell phone photos of them. Please provide a caption with photos describing food, event, or activity. You may choose to identify the people in the photo at your discretion. Photos from past or present events accepted.

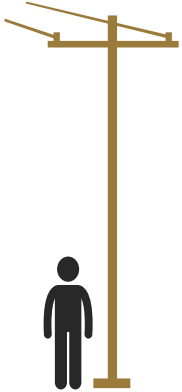
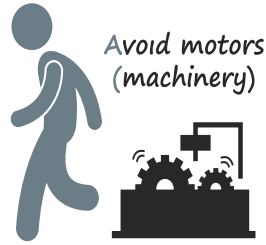
All entries must include your name. Food tips, memories and recipes must be short. Photos do not necessarily need to accompany tips, memories, recipes.

We reserved the right to edit or reject as space allows.

● Email tips, short recipes, memories, and high resolution digital photos to:  
[DerekN@newulmmn.gov](mailto:DerekN@newulmmn.gov)



# LIGHTNING SAFETY TIPS OUTDOORS



## ENTER TO WIN \$\$ FOR TREE PURCHASE!

### NATIONAL ARBOR DAY

Trees are an important part of our environment for so many reasons - from providing oxygen & cleaning the air, to providing shade & benefiting wildlife.

Trees properly placed around buildings can reduce energy usage for cooling and heating. See "Landscaping for Shade" on the Department of Energy website for more great information.

[www.energy.gov/energysaver/landscaping-shade](http://www.energy.gov/energysaver/landscaping-shade)



NEW ULM  
PUBLIC UTILITIES

To celebrate Arbor Day NUPU will give-away funds to one of our customers, for the purchase of a tree. To enter the drawing please fill out and submit this contest entry coupon and mail, drop off, or email by May 17 to:

New Ulm Public Utilities

310 1st North Street New Ulm [DerekN@newulmmn.gov](mailto:DerekN@newulmmn.gov)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_



### 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  
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NEW ULM PUBLIC UTILITIES  
MARCH-APRIL 2024 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 |