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PEOPLE...POWER.

JULY-AUGUST 2025

Utility Submits Wastewater Treatment Facilities Plan to the MPCA

Following a public hearing, the New Ulm Public Utilities Commission authorized submittal of the completed Facilities Plan to the MPCA. This is the first phase of the improvement plan for the Wastewater Treatment Plant which is 50 years old.

The plan prioritized a series of improvements with a targeted approach, seeking short-turn improvements. The primary goal was to address aging infrastructure, plant optimization and future limits and regulations. The report, compiled by Bolten and Menk, would also help target funding sources to pay for improvements.

The report address six areas of the wastewater treatment plant: the Courtland receiving station; 20th Street force main; flow and load equalization basin/ATAD expansion; blower improvements; control system; and a solar energy system.

The Courtland receiving station was built in 1995 and receives raw wastewater from Courtland. It takes out garbage, and filters items that cannot be treated. Swanson said raw wastewater is corrosive and the life expectancy of this equipment is 20 years, but the Courtland station is 30 years old.

WASTEWATER
continued to page 2...



Edited from
New Ulm Journal



Ship Shape
Canal Park in Duluth is our favorite MN destination.
-Mitch & Eileen Madsen

Enter Today to be Published! 2026 REBATE & CONSERVATION CALENDAR Minnesota Vacation Memories

New Ulm Public Utilities 2026 Conservation & Rebate Calendar will feature your Minnesota vacation adventures. Any year is accepted, from childhood memories to recent trips to anywhere within the state. All seasons highly encouraged.

Submit high resolution digital photos or prints. All entries must include your name, where the photo was taken in Minnesota, along with any other details you wish to share.



**DEADLINE:
SEPTEMBER 30
ALL NEW ULM
PUBLIC UTILITIES
CUSTOMERS ARE
MAY PARTICIPATE.**

- Email high resolution digital photos to:
DerekN@newulmmn.gov
- Mail or bring prints to NUPU office:
310 1st N. St., New Ulm, MN 56073



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NEW ULM PUBLIC UTILITIES NEWSLETTER
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★ MEETING MINUTES

NUPUC June

- ✓ Authorized the City Manager to accept the proposal from Power System Engineering, Inc. (PSE) to develop plans and specs, acquire and oversee the replacement of bus 1 main and feeder electromechanical relays.
- ✓ Received and order filed the Water Plant Condition Assessment report and presentation from Chris Larson of Short, Elliott and Hendrickson, Inc.(S.E.H.).
- ✓ Received and order filed the annual financial report for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2024 for the New Ulm Public Utilities Commission

NUPUC July

- ✓ Received and order filed the report on the New Ulm Public Utilities Water Leak Detection Survey as prepared by Westrum Leak Detection.
- ✓ Received and order filed the introduction and presentation from German Intern Lexane Fourre on her internship with the New Ulm Public Utilities.
- ✓ Approved the Resolution to request funding from the State of Minnesota Capital Investment Bonding Bill in the 2026 Legislative Session to complete the Gravity Sewer & Water Main Project on Front Street and demolition of the Center Street Lift Station.

★ UTILITY trivia

Outside of major adverse events (e.g., storms), customers of a public power utility are likely to be without power for less time - 62 minutes a year, compared to 150 minutes a year for customers of private utilities.

...WASTEWATER *continued from page 1*

If rehabilitated, and all existing equipment is replaced, the receiving station could have another 20 years of life expectancy. The improvement cost for the Courtland receiving station is estimated at between \$1.8 million and \$2.3 million.

The 20th Street force main takes all wastewater from New Ulm to the treatment plant. This main was installed in 1972 and is constantly used by the city. The longevity of the main is between 50 and 75 years. The first of multiple options is rehabilitation, which is expensive and challenging. Bolton and Menk recommends creating a second parallel force main to the plant. With a second line, the city could shut down and conduct maintenance to the old line. If the current force main is viable it can be used. The 20th Street force main improvement is estimated between \$3 million and \$3.5 million.

The plant's control system has exceeded useful life expectancy and NUPU is already looking to replace the equipment as part of regular budget items. The improvement cost is estimated at \$800,000.

Bolton & Menk is recommending placing the equalization basin/ATAD expansion was proposed to optimize biosolids production on hold due to currently changing regulations. This project is the most expensive of those proposed at between \$45 million and \$50 million.

The blowers that provide oxygen for organism-eating waste products are also at the end of useful life. The existing blowers are from 1972. In the last 15 years some additional high efficiency blowers were installed but are becoming rapidly obsolete with fewer staff servicing these devices. Bolton and Menk is recommending providing multiple types of blowers for redundancy at the plant. The blower improvements are estimated at between \$6.5 million and \$7.5 million.

A solar energy system at the plant was considered as a potential funding opportunity, but was determined to not be practical at the wastewater treatment plant due to space limitations, length of pay back time vs solar panel life expectancy.

Based on this report, Bolton & Menk recommended the public utilities prioritize the Courtland receiving station and blower improvements.

The two projects would cost between \$8 million and \$10 million and could receive funding from Minnesota Pollution Control (MPC) and Public Facilities Authority. One of the goals is to submit the projects for federal considerations. The ultimate result is healthier lakes and rivers by cleaning up waste water.

Commissioner Kim Williams made the motion to accept the plan and submit it to MPCA. It was unanimously approved by the commission.

Leave Worries Behind While on Vacation

Wherever you go on vacation, it's nice to leave worries behind. To help accomplish this, we offer these tips to lower your electricity use, and help keep your home safe while you are away.



Whether you're planning a weekend trip or you'll be away for an extended period, take time to prepare your home to run safely and efficiently. It not only helps you save energy and money, but it also helps keep your home safe.

● **Energy vampires are a source of energy drain in unoccupied homes.** Unplug appliances and electronics. You will not use your computer or television while you are away, but they will continue to use energy and waste money if you do not unplug them. It also reduces the chances of a power surge and associated fire hazards.

● **Change thermostat settings before you leave.** When temperatures are warm outside, it is unnecessary to keep your home as cool as you normally would since you will not be in it. You will save money on your electrical costs when the indoor temperature is as close to the outdoor temperature as possible. Turn the thermostat up to a warmer temperature or turn it off entirely. The Department of Energy warns that you should not set your thermostat higher than 90 degrees. At this level of heat, appliances such as your refrigerator can sustain damage.

● **Secure all window covers** before you leave town, such as lowering blinds and closing curtains, to slow the temperature climb in the home.

● **If you have a programmable thermostat**, adjust it to cool down the house just in time for your return home.

● **Adjust the water heater.** Water heaters continue to use energy to keep the stored water warm. Since you are not using this water while on vacation, either adjust the water heater temperature to the lowest setting or turn it off if you are gone for more than three days. Once you return home, be sure that you run the tap before turning the water heater on once again. This will avoid potential damage to the water tank.

● **Put the lights on a timer if you plan to leave lights on to deter burglars.** You can save money by not having lights on constantly and making it appear that people are home by varying the times the lights are on.

Don't Become Electricity's **PATH TO GROUND**



When electric utility equipment becomes damaged, the ground and objects can become energized.

If you are in a situation where there could be downed power lines or a damaged pole, guy wire or padmount transformer (green box), know what to do to save your life and the lives of others:

CAR ACCIDENT



Stay inside your vehicle or cab since the ground or objects could be energized.

Call 9-1-1 and report that there are downed or damaged power lines or a dislodged green box.

Wait for the utility crew to arrive to deenergize the power.

Do not exit until someone from the utility says it is safe to do so.

ONLY EXIT IF THE VEHICLE IS ON FIRE

Cross your arms over your chest and make a clean jump out.

Do not touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.

Make solid hops with your feet together as far away as you can.

Do not return to the vehicle.



IF YOU ARE A BYSTANDER

Do not approach the scene to try and help.

Stay at least 50 feet away and do not lean on or touch anything, including fences or guardrails.



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



Dehumidifier Facts & Stats



★ A dehumidifier that has earned the ENERGY STAR label removes the same amount of moisture as a conventional unit, but uses almost 15% less energy.

★ A standard dehumidifier uses about the same amount of energy as a refrigerator and clothes washer combined, so it pays to find an ENERGY STAR certified option.

★ Reducing sources of moisture can reduce your need for a dehumidifier, or allow you to use it less often. Here's how:

- Improve the drainage around the foundation of your home by extending downspouts from your gutters and keep gutters and downspouts clear from debris.
- Ensure that clothes dryers are properly vented outside.
- Use vent fans in bathroom and kitchens to remove humidity at the source.

Get more great tips at energystar.gov.

REMEMBER! NUPU offers rebates on ENERGY STAR certified dehumidifiers. Find more details and apply for rebates at newulmmn.gov.

Are you struggling to keep the second story of your home cool on these sizzling summer days? As heat and hot air rises, so does the temperature within your homes upper level. Keeping it cool can be a challenge, even if you have an air conditioner. The key is to limit heat gain and to keep the air circulating.

These steps can help cool down your upper floor, as well as keep your entire home cool through the end of the season. No sweat!

★ **Keep blinds and drapes closed.**

Close blinds or curtains when the sun is shining to reduce solar heat. Remember that light colored window coverings are most effective at blocking heat energy from the sun. Consider investing in thermal blocking drapes or insulated shades to keep your rooms cool and reduce demand on the air conditioning (AC) system.

★ **Limit heat being created upstairs.**

Devices such as computers and hair dryers emit hot air. Use them downstairs to help reduce heat upstairs.

★ **Use ceiling fans.** Ceiling fans make you feel cool by circulating air and providing a cooling sensation on your skin. Be sure to set ceiling fans to rotate counterclockwise in the summer to push cool air downwards and turn them off when you leave to conserve energy.

★ **Adjust the dampers.** Control airflow by adjusting dampers up and down to restrict or increase airflow. If the second floor is warmer in the summer months, keep dampers on second-floor vents fully open, and only partially open the vents on the first floor to force cooler air to the second floor.

★ **Check for air leaks.** EnergyStar.gov estimates that between 25% and 40%

Keep Your Cool on Your Home's Second Floor



of the money spent on cooling and heating homes is lost due to air leakage problems. Identify air leaks in your home and use caulking, weatherstripping and insulation to seal the gaps.

★ **Turn the fan from auto to on.** Use "on" instead of "auto" to keep your thermostat fan on and maintain air circulation throughout the home. This allows the entire house to stay cool, whether the air conditioner is running.

★ **Evaluate ductwork.** Check your ductwork for leaks or improper sizing to ensure even air distribution in every part of your home. If you don't feel cold air coming from second floor vents, or you see old and cracked seals in your ductwork, it could be time for maintenance.

★ **Check your air filters.** Regularly change your air filters to optimize airflow — dirty filters decrease air movement.

★ **Add portable air conditioners.** Use portable AC units in specific rooms that need extra cooling. They are relatively easy to install, effectively remove heat and provide a cool environment for sleeping.

★ **Adjust HVAC systems.** Consider a zoned HVAC system, with thermostats on each floor, to control the temperature on each floor separately.

★ **Keep heat-generating appliances off during the hottest hours.** Your dryer, oven and television produce heat, causing your air conditioner to work harder. Limit use of these appliances to early morning or evening when possible and consider grilling outdoors if you plan to cook.

★ **Don't forget the attic:** If your roof and attic area are not properly insulated, heat will seep in through the roof and heat the second floor. You can also have an attic fan or vents installed to help remove hot air from the attic.



Did You Know?

Take Advantage of Federal Tax Credits and Rebates!

Electric Vehicles

Tax credits up to \$7,500 are available for eligible new electric vehicles and up to \$4,000 for eligible used electric vehicles. You can work with your dealership to process the vehicle tax credit. Tax credits are available for home chargers and associated energy storage, each up to \$1,000.

Find requirements at www.energy.gov/save.

Home Upgrades

From solar panels to stove tops, you can get money back whether you're replacing an old appliance or installing new technology. The money is returned to you in two ways – a tax credit or a rebate.

Examples of eligible appliances and home upgrades include: Air Conditioners (non-heat pump), Electric Stoves or Ovens, Heat Pump for Heating and Cooling, Induction Cooktop, Heat Pump Water Heater, Wood & Pellet Stove, Boiler, Electric Panel or Circuit Upgrade, Exterior Doors, Skylights, Wind Turbines, Ventilation Systems, Solar Panels, Windows, Electrical Wiring and more.

Find details at www.energy.gov/save/home-upgrades



WAIT!

DON'T PLUG THAT IN



DON'T PLUG THESE 15 THINGS INTO A POWER STRIP

It is fine to plug in some things into a power strip, such as computers, lamps, phones and other light-load electronics.

However, appliances that require a lot of power should not be plugged into a power strip. Do not use a power strip with the following appliances:

IN THE KITCHEN

- ✗ Refrigerators
- ✗ Microwave ovens
- ✗ Toasters
- ✗ Coffee makers
- ✗ Blenders
- ✗ Slow cookers
- ✗ Rice cookers

IN THE BATHROOM

- ✗ Hair dryers
- ✗ Curling irons
- ✗ Other hairstyling tools

IN THE LAUNDRY ROOM

- ✗ Washing machines
- ✗ Dryers

ANYWHERE

- ✗ Sump pumps
- ✗ Space heaters
- ✗ Portable air conditioners



Do not overload power strips by plugging in appliances that consume more watts than the cord can handle. This can cause the power strip to overheat or start a fire.

Safe
Electricity.org[®]

Learn more at:



★ AT YOUR SERVICE

Employees of the Month Honored

Mike Hoffmann has been employed at the New Ulm Public Utilities Wastewater Treatment Plant since 2000. Mike started his career in a Maintenance Helper position. He now has a Class B Wastewater license and a Type IV Land Application license. He is a reliable employee and gets along well with his cohorts. Mike likes to keep busy, and his mechanical aptitude is beneficial to the Wastewater Plant and all of its mechanical components.

**MIKE
HOFFMANN**
Wastewater
Operator
Wastewater
Treatment
Plant



Process Begins on Center Street Substation Transformer Replacement

The nearly 60-year-old substation located on Center Street is slated to have its transformer replaced within the next two years. Built in 1968, it's the oldest in the New Ulm system. It has been modified with oil coolers and fans since its initial installation. The transformer is currently working without issues, but due to its age, staff decided to replace it before there is a problem.

The transformer is not currently used every day, but it is tied directly to New Ulm's Midcontinent Independent System Operation (MISO) generation.

MISO provides transmission and monitoring of the high-voltage transmission system in the Midwest United States, Manitoba, Canada, and the southern United States. New Ulm's power plant is connected to the MISO market and is capable of supplying MISO with additional power if needed.

MISO calls on New Ulm to supply additional energy several times a year, so this transformer needs to be in working order. The transformer allows New Ulm's power plant to be in the MISO Market.

The estimate for the full replacement of the transformer is \$2.5 million.



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Former AC Install Rebate is Now Central AC and Mini-Split AC (Cooling Only) Rebate

As mentioned in our last newsletter, to keep up with Minnesota State Statutes, utility conservation improvement programs (CIP) need to be altered every year, or every few years. As central air conditioners (AC) and mini splits become more efficient, and minimum SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio) requirements increase, so do minimum requirements for issuing rebates.



The newly named Central AC and Mini Split Rebate (Cooling Only) not only has changed by name, the minimum requirement for both a Central AC and Mini Split has changed. **The new minimum requirement is 16 SEER2. Additionally, the EER2 (Energy Efficiency Ratio) will also need to be entered into the rebate form.**

All requirements to submit a rebate, whether electric or natural gas, are needed to either issue funds for an eligible rebate, and to calculate kWh, kW, or Dth savings.

If you are a customer who purchased an ASHP (air-source heat pump) which functions as both cooling and heating. A PDF rebate form is available at newulmmn.gov.



FREE AND EASY WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY

Here are 10 easy, no-cost ways to save energy this summer:



1.
Close or lower window coverings during the heat of the day



2.
Set your thermostat a few degrees higher



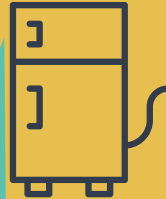
3.
Take cooler showers (this feels better in the summer, anyway)



4.
Use countertop appliances or a microwave instead of your oven



5.
Better yet, grill or smoke food outdoors



6.
Unplug that extra fridge, especially older, inefficient models (they have to work even harder in a hot garage)



7.
Optimize your programmable thermostat's features (around 40% of homeowners never program them)



8.
Check the airflow around windows and doors (add weather stripping if needed)



9.
Unplug all chargers and electronics before leaving the house



10.
SHUT THE FRONT DOOR (don't air condition the outdoors)

 Learn more at:
Electricity.org®



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310 1st North Street
New Ulm, Minnesota 56073

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NEW ULM PUBLIC UTILITIES
JULY-AUGUST 2025 NEWSLETTER



**“Rebate!
Rebate!”**

NUPU has on-going rebates year 'round!
See inside, visit newulmmn.gov, call 507-233-2110
EASY ONLINE APPLICATION!

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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