

The Connector



Fall 2011

Holiday Trash

Trash services are delayed by one day when your pickup day falls on a holiday. This holiday season, trash will only be delayed one day Thanksgiving week for those who have trash pickup on Thursday, November 24. Your pickup will be Friday, November 25.

ERMU Donates

Did you know that every time you flip on a light switch you lower your property taxes? Along with offering competitive rates, ERMU donates money and electricity to the City of Elk River helping keep their taxes down.

In 2010, a little over \$1,000,000 was donated. That donation was made up of three percent of ERMU's revenue and donated power and labor to various buildings and lights. We also donate millions of gallons of water annually to the fire department from our hydrants.



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What Happens During An Outage?

Have you ever wondered what happens during an outage? The Elk River area had an abundance of thunderstorms this summer resulting in a few outages. We thought we would explain a few outage scenarios so our customers can get a feel of what happens to get your utilities back up and running.

who is contacted to start working on the problem.



Tree fell on power lines near the Elk River Landfill in August, 2011. Picture courtesy of Star News.

If a customer is calling during business hours, our electric superintendent is the first one notified of the outage and determines which lineworkers go where. If the outage is outside of business hours, there is a lineman "on-call"

There are several scenarios that could have caused the outage: a tree fell on power lines, a pole fell down, a transformer failed, and etc. The severity of the problem determines how long the power will be out.

The largest outage that Elk River Municipal Utilities (ERMU) had this summer was by the Elk River Landfill off of Highway 169. Our lineworkers worked to restore power for 12 hours during that outage; however the average outage only takes 1-3 hours to fix.

ERMU has one of the best reliability ratings in the state. We have a 99.985% availability of electricity rate and we strive to maintain service for all of our customers.

If you have an outage during business hours call 763-441-2020. If the outage is after-hours, please call 1-888-606-4660.

New Kid On The Block

Elk River Municipal Utilities has a new-comer in the office. ERMU has added a Conservation and Key Accounts Manager position that has been filled by Tom Sagstetter. He will be

working closely with our Conservation Coordinator, Vance Zehringer.

Tom has previously been employed by Great River Energy (GRE) and was their Conservation Coordi-

nator. We look forward to Tom bringing his talents and prior experiences to ERMU and helping keep Elk River an energy conscious city.

Energy Assistance

There are several organizations that can support you if you need energy assistance this winter season. Please call to see if you qualify for financial or conservation and weatherization assistance.

Tri-Cap.....888-765-5597
Sherburne Co..763-765-4000
Wright Co....320-963-6500
Henn Co.....952-933-9639
SA.....320-252-4552
Caer.....763-441-1020

Keep Your Home Safe

Did you know Elk River Municipal Utilities offers free home security consultations? We will send a technician to your home to analyze what the best system would be for your lifestyle.

Not only will we put in a new system for you, but we monitor existing systems as well. Whether you live in the Elk River area or not, we will monitor your system for the same low rate of \$18.75 per month.

We invite you to let us bring greater peace of mind to your family. Call us today at 763-441-2020 to schedule your evaluation.

Help Keep Your Neighbors Warm

Did you know you can give the gift of heat to your neighbors this winter season? With Minnesota's bitterly cold winters, HeatShare is a last resort for hundreds of residents.

This program consists of voluntary donations to help provide funds for heating bills and heating-related repairs. HeatShare is administered by The Salvation Army and any donations made to this program stay within the community. Residents can make contributions of any

amount and each donation is tax-deductible.

HeatShare benefits people in all different situations.



Some of them include: senior citizens with low, fixed incomes, those who are disabled physically or mentally, people who have

had unexpected emergencies in the last twelve months, and those who meet income guidelines and have received or applied for all other possible public funds.

To make a donation, please visit our website at www.elkriverutilities.com and click on our HeatShare link or send in a donation with your utility payment. If we work together, we can keep everyone in our community warm this winter. Please make a donation today.

Cold Weather Rule

The winter season is here and the Cold Weather Rule has taken effect. The rule is effective from October 15 to April 15 and can protect you from utility shut-off as long as you meet the requirements of the Rule.

We encourage customers to visit our website at

www.elkriverutilities.com to download and fill out an "Inability to Pay" form to be protected from utility shutoff. You will also find more information on the Cold Weather Rule and energy assistance options.

Most importantly, **it is the responsibility of**

the customer to make payment arrangements that will cover your existing arrears plus the estimated usage during the payment schedule period. If you anticipate having trouble paying utility bills, contact us at 763-441-2020 to arrange a payment schedule. We'll try to help.

Keep Your Meters Clear

With heavy snowfalls in Minnesota, it is likely that your outside electric or natural gas meters could become blocked. Please be sure when you shovel or snowplow that you are aware of your meter location and keep it clear. Heavy snow on a meter could affect the operation



and make meter reading difficult and dangerous.

Please be aware of your natural gas meter as well. If the exhaust is blocked, the furnace or hot water could malfunction, with serious consequences, or the appliance could stop working. If you are able, please shovel a path to allow the meter reader to access your meters.