

'Be Bright' this fall with reduced pricing on energy efficient bulbs

Be Bright this fall! Through December 31, while supplies last, our residential electric customers are eligible for reduced pricing on ENERGY STAR® qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). We've partnered with participating retailers, including our local Ace Hardware and Marv's True Value, to offer CFLs for as little as 99 cents each!

ENERGY STAR-rated CFLs use 75 percent less energy and last up to 10 times longer than incandescent light bulbs, but less watts doesn't mean less light! Today's CFLs produce bright light at less cost to consumers and businesses because they use less electricity and last longer than incandescent bulbs—saving time and money on replacements.



By replacing the five most-used bulbs in your home with energy-efficient CFLs, you can save about \$35 in energy costs during the first year alone. CFLs also produce about 75 percent less heat than incandescent bulbs. This improves safety.

With the wide range of CFL shapes, sizes and styles now on the market, consumers

can find an energy-efficient bulb for every situation and enjoy reduced energy costs all year long.

While these financial savings are a big draw for consumers, CFLs also offer environmental benefits to help make our community a little greener.

Remember, supplies are limited so get your discounted CFLs before they sell out! (Discounted CFLs purchased during this promotion *are not* eligible for our CFL rebate program.)

Take a good look at your house, neighborhood as days shorten

Take a good look around as the days shorten and the leaves begin to turn.

If you notice a street light that is burnt out or flickering, please call the utility so that we may get it fixed and keep our streets bright! Be prepared to give us a specific location, so we can go directly to the light.

Also, please make sure your house numbers are visible at night. Clearly visible house numbers will not only make it easier for a pizza delivery, but it could be a matter of life and death if there is an emergency and public safety personnel are searching for your home.



The Connector

Princeton Public Utilities

Join us for Public Power Week

We are once again celebrating Public Power Week, Oct. 5-11. Refreshments will be served all week and **on Wednesday, Oct. 8 we will be serving hot dogs and brats for lunch on the front lawn.**

Princeton Public Utilities is one of more than 2,000 municipal electric utilities across America. We exist to serve our fellow citizens by saving them time and money, and by protecting their homes and environment so all community members can enjoy life with family and friends.

Princeton Public Utilities is one of 125 municipally-owned utilities in Minnesota. Rochester is the largest and Whalan the smallest. We have provided electric and water service since 1911.

We purchase power at wholesale from the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency, of which we are a member, and distribute it locally. Our local power plant is used in times of emergency and as a hedge against high wholesale market prices.



Severely past due accounts to be certified to county auditor

The City of Princeton and its Public Utilities Commission provide sewer, water and electric service to the city. Unfortunately, some customers do not pay for these services in a timely manner. Failure to collect these fees results in higher rates for other customers.

Because of that, and under state law, the City of Princeton has adopted an ordinance that allows it, in cooperation with the Princeton Public Utilities Commission, to certify severely past due sewer, water, and electric bills to the county auditor for collection. This collection is made with the subsequent year's property taxes due against the property for which past due billing is owed.

The PUC will prepare the list of severely past due sewer, water, and electrical customers who failed to make their final payment after Sept. 1 of each year.

A letter is sent to the property owner (not the renter) advising of the delinquency and if the balance is not paid in full the amount due on that date will be certified to the county auditor for collection with the following year's taxes. The certified amount includes an amount equal to one year's interest and penalty.

Trouble paying your bills? Call us sooner rather than later

Bills can pile up just like snow. But the **Minnesota Cold Weather Rule** is designed to protect people who may have trouble paying their utility bills in winter. The Cold Weather Rule applies from October 15 to April 15. Under the rule, your utility cannot disconnect your residential electric service during the winter if the customer meets the following requirements:

- utility disconnection would affect the customer's primary heat source;
- the customer has declared inability to pay on forms provided by the utility or is receiving any form of public assistance;
- the household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median income level, as documented; and
- the customer's account is current for the billing period immediately prior to October 15 or the customer has entered into a payment schedule and is reasonably current with payments under the schedule.

Local agencies may be able to provide payment assistance. Call the county in which you live or Lakes and Pines at 1-800-832-6082.

If you are going to have trouble paying utility bills, contact us at 389-2252 to arrange a payment schedule. We'll try to help.



Municipal utility brings benefits

Princeton Public Utilities is a municipal utility. You, as citizens, are its owners. This creates several benefits, including:

- **Local Control** – Because you are the owners, you have local control. PPU reflects the values of the community. Decisions are made locally with customer interests in mind.
- **Non-Profit Operation** – Rates are set to cover the cost to serve, not to generate profits for shareholders. This removes the conflict of serving both the shareholder and the customer.
- **Low-Cost Structure** – The public ownership model has the advantage of tax-exempt financing, solid credit ratings, and lower operating costs. All of these things help keep rates as low as possible. PPU contributes an 'in lieu of tax' payment back to the city's general fund that reflects a return on your investment in the system. Those payments help to offset your property taxes.
- **Primary Focus on Customers** – Our business model is built around serving our owners – you, the customer. We are focused on providing exceptional customer service and our employees are very proud of their commitment to serving this community to the best of their ability.