

# The Connector

Princeton Public Utilities

## *A different measure of success*

Princeton Public Utilities is a public service institution which answers to its customers rather than to shareholders. Success is measured by how much money stays within the community through competitive rates, energy conservation



programs, and services contributed to the city rather than by how much money goes out as profit to stockholders across the country and around the world.

Here are a few of the benefits that municipal ownership and control provide:

Here are a few of the benefits that municipal ownership and control provide:

- Responsiveness to customer concerns
- Emphasis on long-term community goals
- Quick response from crews located in the community
- Not-for-profit status—competitive costs and no split allegiance between customers and stockholders
- Greater portion of revenues stay in community
- Utility purchases from local establishments, including use of local

financial institutions

- Local Employment
- Efficiency through integrated utility operations (electric, water, etc.)
- Local management and operations bring added community leadership for innovation and development
- Local control that allows matching local resources to local needs
- Primary mission of providing affordable, reliable service over maximizing profit.

## *Use space heaters wisely*

Heating a home with electricity is generally more expensive than using natural gas. However, using a UL Certified space heater in occupied rooms can increase your comfort on a cold winter day and may help hold down overall heating costs.



Do not use space heaters in unoccupied rooms.

And if a room is rarely used (and has no water supply), you may want to close the heat register and the door, thereby lowering overall energy costs.

## *We offer payment options*

How would you like to receive your utility bills stamped ‘paid?’ Well, the Princeton Public Utilities Commission will take care of it for you. All we need is for you to sign-up for our automatic bill payment plan.

It works like this: We notify your bank of what you owe us monthly. The bank withdraws that amount out of your account automatically on the 10th of the month. (Bills are due on the 10th.) The money is then automatically deposited into our account.

You receive your regular bill stamped ‘paid,’ so you have a record of your usage and payment.

This service is especially handy for many people. It also saves a lot of time and manual effort at the utility office. Making our operation as efficient as possible will help save us all money.

We already have many people participating in this program. Please call us at 389-2252 for more information.

## ***Princeton Public Utilities: Local service for over a century***

Princeton Public Utilities has provided electric and water services to the citizens of Princeton since 1911.

The utility constructs, maintains and improves the electrical distribution system.

The local power plant contains five engines with a generating capacity of over 12 megawatts. The plant is available for use at times of peak demand and in emergencies.



The Princeton Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is an independent board, appointed for three-year staggered terms by the City Council. The PUC is responsible for utility operations. The PUC offices are located at 907 1st Street in Princeton. Our phone number is 389-2252.

The utility was created by the citizens through their votes in a referendum. Because of this, and the fact that the utility is subject to the state's open meeting laws, it is known as a 'public power' utility.

### ***Partners in power***

While we maintain the local power plant, most of our power is purchased from the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (SMMPA), which generates electricity

and sells it at wholesale to its 18 non-profit, municipally owned member utilities. Our main source of electricity is the 900-megawatt Sherco 3 (short for Sherburne County) generating unit located near Becker—the largest electric power generator in the state. SMMPA owns 41 percent of the plant, which is operated by Xcel Energy.

The Agency's energy resource mix also includes renewable energy sources and generating units owned by member utilities.

We also provide a wide variety of energy efficiency programs. For more on these programs, call us or go to our website at [princetonutilities.com](http://princetonutilities.com)

## ***Scholarship program offered***

Princeton Public Utilities is again offering a scholarship opportunity for high school seniors. This opportunity is provided through the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association's Tom Bovitz Memorial Scholarship Award program.

The statewide scholarship fund totals \$5,000. It will be split four ways, and awarded to \$2,000 first, \$1,500 second, \$1,000 third and \$500 fourth place essay contest winners who plan to attend a post-secondary educational institution. High school seniors are eligible to enter the essay contest.

Contact your high school guidance counselor or us at 389-2252 for more information.

## ***Check for unclaimed funds***

Businesses are regularly required to release unclaimed funds (in the utility's case, normally checks) to the state of Minnesota.

Unclaimed property is any financial asset for which an owner has not generated activity for an extended period of time. This may include savings, checking, certificate of deposit accounts; payroll (wages, bonuses, commissions); stocks and bonds (un-cashed dividends, interest checks, underlying shares principle); insurance proceeds; credit balances; customer deposits; travelers checks; money orders and other intangible interests or benefits.

Once we send funds to the state of Minnesota customers may still be able to receive them, but will have to do so by contacting the state. Below is the Minnesota Department of Commerce website that includes a 'Missing Money' locator.

<http://mn.gov/commerce/topics/Unclaimed-Property/find-unclaimed-property.jsp>

## ***Are hydrants, meters accessible?***

If you have a fire hydrant on your property and are physically able, please clear snow from around the hydrant so it can be quickly accessed in case of emergency. While you are at it, make sure your gas meter is clear of snow and all utility meters can be easily accessed. Thank you!