

## ***'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.

By replacing the five most-used bulbs in your home with energy-efficient CFLs, you can save about \$35 in energy costs a year. 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.)

## ***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.

# The Connector

Princeton Public Utilities

## ***Join us for Public Power Week***

We are once again celebrating Public Power Week, Oct. 4-10. Refreshments will be served all week, and door prizes will also be available!



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

Princeton Public Utilities is one of 125 municipally-owned electric utilities in Minnesota. We have provided high quality, competitively-priced 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 emergencies and as a hedge against high wholesale market prices.

## *Electrical improvements along 4th Avenue continue this fall*

This summer we completed burying the three-phase primary cable along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, from the Golf Course north to Steven's Restaurant and surrounding streets. If you live in or were driving in the area you probably saw our crew and equipment. We also had a contractor come in and assist. We will continue to work in the area this fall setting transformers and getting power switched from the overhead 4,160 volts to the 12,470 volt underground system. Burying the power line will help reduce outages and increasing voltage creates a more efficient system.



Switching power to the new system will require an outage for each building. We will contact each business prior to switching over and work with your schedule to try and keep the outage and inconvenience to a minimum. We will first work to get the commercial businesses switched over, then will convert the residential homes to the new system.

As the new underground system is energized, we will remove our power lines from the poles. We will not be able to remove the poles along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue as there are cable TV and telephone lines on the

poles, as well as customer-owned service lines. Some poles also have street lights on them. These poles and street lights will remain, but removing the overhead electric lines will result in a less cluttered look.

## *Watch for discolored water as we flush water mains this fall*

The Princeton Public Utilities Water Department will again be conducting the fall distribution system flushing, beginning the end of September.

This is routine maintenance and is normally done in the spring and fall. If you encounter discolored water during this period, you can run the cold unsoftened tap for a few minutes to clear it up. The discoloration is not harmful to humans or animals.

During normal consumption, water sits in the larger mains and the iron settles out. This settlement sits on the bottom of the main until the flow is increased by opening of a large water delivery system. Once this large flow is established it stirs up the sedimentation in the pipe and turns the water brown or black.



This process also cleans out the stagnated water in mains caused by deadend mains with little water usage. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call the Public Utilities Office at 763-389-2252.

## *Bill trouble? Don't wait! Call us*

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 **all** of 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 enters into a payment schedule and is reasonably current with payments under the schedule.

Local agencies may be able to provide payment assistance. Call 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.