Autumn Colors of RPU

See what RPU has going on this fall, including our Halloween treats!
Starting on October 15 and running through Halloween, RPU will be handing out Halloween bags to kids who visit the RPU service center with their parents during normal business hours. Inside each bag will be candy, stickers, and an Energy Star® activity book featuring the Lorax! In addition to the bags, children will be able to take a small pumpkin with them, while supplies last.

RPU HALLOWEEN!

Have a safe and fun Halloween!

Starting in November...

PICK UP YOUR RPU 2013 CALENDAR!

FEATURING:

• Arbor Day Posters Drawn By Rochester Area Elementary School Children
• Information on RPU's CONSERVE & SAVE® Rebate and Educational Programs
• Monthly Conservation Tips and Partners in Planting Tree Facts

Have a safe and fun Halloween!
Every year when the weather starts getting cooler and the leaves start turning, third-party utility mailers seem to find their way into Rochester mailboxes. With all of the offers promising to save you energy, money, time, peace of mind, water, or whatever it might be, we recommend consulting with an RPU customer service representative before signing up for any offer.

For every single offer you receive in your mailbox this fall, chances are the local RPU representative you talk with will have heard of it and three other similar ones. Often times, third-party offers promise coverage or a product from a company that is not local or known in the Rochester area. In times of needing support or help, who will be the one to help you? Chances are it won’t be a local individual, but a contracted company from out of state.

RPU stands behind all of the services and rebates it offers because they are valuable and beneficial to customers.

With regard to rebate offerings, the state of Minnesota verifies and stands behind the savings.

One of the more prominent offers seen recently has been for water service coverage. The coverage is being offered for nearly $60 per month and is not a local company. RPU has a water service protection program, called Service Assured® and it is $1.99 per month. If you have an underground service pipe issue, and you have RPU Service Assured® we will likely have you covered, protecting you from the high costs of having a contractor fix the service. In addition, the person who comes to fix your broken service will be an RPU employee or a qualified local contractor that meets RPU’s service standards. You can also cover both your water and electric service for $2.99 per month. Call RPU today to sign up for Service Assured®! Don’t leave your underground utility protection in the hands of an out-of-town company you’ve never heard of before.
2012 ‘Be Bright’ ENERGY STAR® CFL Rebate Campaign

Be Bright this fall! Starting October 8 and going through December 31, 2012 (or 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 these participating Rochester retailers to offer CFLs for as little as 99 cents each!

- Arrow Ace Hardware
- Home Depot
- Hy-Vee
- Lowe’s
- Menards
- Mills Fleet Farm
- Walmart

ENERGY STAR-rated CFLs use 75% 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% less heat than incandescent – improving 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.

New Neighborhood Energy Challenge Date Just Announced!

When: Tuesday, November 13, 6:30 p.m.
Where: Bishop Elementary School
406 36th Ave. NW

Contact Ashley Robertson at 888.734.6365 or email at arobertson@mncee.org.

A Learning Opportunity

RPU is co-sponsoring and hosting the next Building Operator Certification (BOC) Level I course starting November 1, 2012. BOC is a nationally recognized, competency-based training and certification program that offers facilities personnel the improved job skills and knowledge to transform workplaces to be more comfortable, energy-efficient, and environmentally friendly.

The Level I course series offers eight one-day classes. The course series consists of classroom training, project assignments to be completed at the participant’s facility, and in-class exams administered at the end of each day of training. You can earn the full cost of tuition through our BOC Awards program:

- Completion Award – $300 award to each participant who completes the training and earns certification.
- Analysis Award – $300 award to participants for submitting a project analysis for a potential BOC AWARDS project.
- Project Award – $600 award to participants when the project they have previously submitted is completed by their employer.

For dates, times, price, and to sign up, please visit www.boccentral.org/training-minnesota.
2012 Community Education Classes

Residential Geothermal Heating and Cooling

Whether you are building a new home or considering a new heating and cooling system for your present one, consider the economic and environmental advantages of geothermal technology. It is the world’s most advanced, most cost-effective heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system for new or existing homes. This class will provide you with geothermal basics: what it does and how it works. Learn how it uses the ground as a heating and cooling source. Geothermal heating and cooling systems can provide greater comfort and energy savings. Find out information on federal tax credits and Rochester Public Utilities’ installation incentives.

Instructor: Arnie Lorimor
Date: Tuesday, October 30, 2012
Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Session(s): One
Location: Cascade Meadow Wetlands & Environmental Science Center

Solar Energy for Your Home or Business

An overview of solar electric and solar heating systems will be presented. There will be many photos of solar installations so that you can get a good idea of what they look like and how they are installed. Many basic questions will be addressed such as: How well does solar energy work in Minnesota? How much energy do the systems produce? What are the costs involved and overall economics? What incentives are available? Is there any maintenance? There will be plenty of time for questions and discussion.

The instructor is the owner of Solar Connection, (www.solarconnectioninc.com) a solar energy design and installation company located in Rochester. Find out information on federal tax credits and Rochester Public Utilities’ installation incentives.

Instructor: Curt Shellum. Curt is a licensed general contractor and a NABCEP Certified PV Installer™. NABCEP is the National Board of Certified Energy Practitioners.
Date: Saturday, November 3, 2012
Time: 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
Session(s): One
Location: Cascade Meadow Wetlands & Environmental Science Center

Registration for a Community Education class can be made by calling 507.328.4000 or online through the Rochester Community Education website (www.rochesterce.org).
Learn how to hunt for **Vampire Power!**

**V**ampire load is the power that is sucked by a piece of electronic equipment when it is turned off but still in standby mode, or not in use. A growing number of household electrical devices are designed to draw power 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Even when they are turned off, these devices continue to use electricity to operate features such as clocks, timers, and touch pads.

**The Hunt**
The first challenge is to identify products that draw vampire power. Examples include:
- A remote control or battery charger
- An external power supply
- A digital display, LED status light or digital clock
- A soft-touch keypad

**5 Tips to Strip the Fangs Out of Vampire Power**

1) **Get unplugged.** All of your chargers (cellphone, MP3, and laptop) continue to draw electricity when the device is not charging. Only 5 percent of the power drawn by a cellphone charger is used to charge the phone. The other 95 percent is wasted when it is plugged into the wall.

2) **Use a power strip.** Choose a power strip with a switch to control clusters of products. When you’re not using them, turn the power strip off.

3) **Use a Kill A Watt™ Meter.** RPU has Kill A Watt meters that you can use in your home for free! This device will tell you how much electricity products are using, whether turned on or off.

4) **Turn your computer off.** Computers in sleep mode can cost an additional $70 per year. If you can, turn your computer off, or at least set it to sleep mode.

5) **Look for the STAR.** Products that have earned the ENERGY STAR® label use less energy while providing the same performance and features as conventional models. They can be 10 percent to 50 percent more efficient and save you money.

You’ll also get great rebates on your purchase of ENERGY STAR products through RPU’s rebate program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VAMPIRE POWER CHART</th>
<th>Watts in Standby Energy (Vampire Load)</th>
<th>Estimated Hours Off per Month (Vampire Energy)*</th>
<th>Avg kWh/Used per Month</th>
<th>Estimated Monthly Cost (10¢ per kWh)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cell Phone Charger (not charging, but plugged in)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>$0.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coffee Pot</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desktop PC (computer and LCD Monitor)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>$0.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Speakers</td>
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<td>600</td>
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<td>Computer Printer</td>
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<td>21.00</td>
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<td>Dishwasher</td>
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<td>Energy Star DVD</td>
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<td>Standard TV</td>
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<td>Energy Star VCR</td>
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<td>Video Game Console</td>
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**CALLING FOR NOMINATIONS!**

Environmental Achievement Awards are given annually for outstanding environmental achievement in Olmsted County.

**Nominations are sought for individuals, families, youth, organizations, or businesses in any or all categories:**
- Climate Change
- Conservation
- Education
- Energy
- Renewables
- Water
- Sustainable Food Production
- Other
- Other

**APPLICATIONS:** www.rpu.org • **DEADLINE:** October 19
2nd Rain Barrel Winner from Water Celebration at Cascade Meadow

This sure beats rounding up buckets to water thirsty plants!

Brianna Varseo, 11, was the second winner of a full-sized rain barrel during RPU’s Water Celebration at Cascade Meadow Wetlands & Environmental Science Center in August.

Brianna, her brother Trevor, and mother Sharon had been lining up pails and buckets to catch rain for the collection of potted plants on the walk-out deck at their Rochester home. In the future, they’ll merely open the spigot on the large rain barrel and fill a sprinkling can with rainwater that has flowed off the roof. For them, it’s an easier way to CONSERVE & SAVE.

The family grows flowers, herbs, and shrubs at home. Water from the rain barrel will be able to run down a slight slope to help water some plantings along a drainage way. (This year, they also grew pumpkins in a garden patch farther back in their yard.)

Brianna told her classmates in 6th grade at Byron Middle School about winning the August 31 drawing for the rain barrel. “They were really surprised,” Brianna says.

RPU gave away the barrels to help celebrate the arrival of two new exhibits. Drop in at Cascade Meadow and discover how water-rich aquifers deep underground provide the water we use every day in Rochester.

RPU is a major partner at Cascade Meadow. The science center and 90 acres of wetlands and prairie under restoration are located at 2900 19th Street Northwest, just west of Valleyhigh Drive Northwest in Rochester.

RPU Supports the United Way

This time each year, RPU employees start to gather up ideas and activities to raise awareness and money for the annual campaign for the United Way of Olmsted County. RPU has long been a leader in supporting the United Way.

This year RPU employees have a goal to raise $28,000. Employees have a number of ways to donate to the United Way, including payroll deduction, lump cash contribution, or through support of the numerous employee’s activities set up each year.

A majority of the money raised by RPU employees is through the payroll deduction option, but one of the favorite ways for employees to contribute is through purchasing “casual day” pins. For a minimum donation, employees are able to wear jeans to work through the months of October and November. If you visit the RPU service center and notice the “casual day” pin on an employee, know that they are supporting programs and efforts of the United Way of Olmsted County.
ALERT!
Program Ends October 31*

Call 1.877.341.2259 today to schedule your FREE pickup!

Right now, you can receive $35 to recycle your old, spare, working refrigerator or freezer. Plus, we’ll even pick it up, free of charge, and properly recycle it.

RPU makes it easy for you to save your wallet and the environment. While that spare appliance in the basement or garage may provide additional storage, it’s not worth the additional $100 a year on your electric bill. And by properly recycling your spare refrigerator or freezer, you’ll be saving the environment, too!

Visit www.rpu.org for full details, then call 1.877.341.2259 to schedule your pickup.

*while funds last