

Along the Lines

A Publication of Rolla Municipal Utilities

Congratulations! ON YOUR RETIREMENT

Albert Crump Jr., Rolla Board of Public Works Vice President, announced his retirement from the Board effective August 31, 2023. General Manager Rodney Bourne had this to say, "Mr. Crump has provided a wealth of stability for the Utility over the years, and we want to sincerely thank him for his years of service to the Board, RMU and the Rolla Community." Mr. Crump can be proud of his tenure on the Board, which included the following:

- Completion of the Alfermann Substation and associated 138 KV transmission lines along with the more recent successful sale of a portion of those assets to Ameren Transmission company;
- RMU continues to grow under Mr. Crump's leadership, increasing service connections 9% and 13% respectively for RMU's electric and water systems;
- Despite this incredible growth, customer energy and water rates have stayed among the lowest in the area;
- Even with the approved October 1 rate increase, residential electric energy rates are still lower than when Mr. Crump joined the board in 2009. What a fantastic accomplishment during Mr. Crump's 14-year tenure.

On behalf of the Rolla Board of Public Works, RMU staff and management, we wish Mr. Crump all the best for his well-deserved retirement!

Pictured below: RBPW President (right), Nick Barrack, presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Albert Crump, Jr. (left) for his years of service on the board.



PUBLIC POWER CELEBRATION

Rolla Municipal Utilities is celebrating Public Power Week, October 1-7. To mark Public Power Week, RMU will hold a cookout celebration in the downtown parking lot on Wednesday, October 4th. The event is open to the public and we will have hotdogs, hamburgers, chips & soda. RMU door prizes will be handed out on a first come-first serve basis. Additionally, customers have the opportunity to win a credit on their utility bill. Just complete the form & word search and return it to RMU by noon on Wednesday, October 4th and you will be entered to win!

Public power utilities across the U.S. celebrate Public Power Week the first full week of October every year to help customers and stakeholders understand how they can better engage with their community-owned utility and benefit from all its offerings. This year, we are focusing on how RMU is building for the future to ensure reliable, affordable, sustainable, and customer-focused service to our community for many years to come. We're working hand-in-hand with customers and community leaders to make sure our utility reflects the long-term goals and needs of members of our community.

UPCOMING PROJECTS

RMU crews expect to be working in the following areas in the near future; however, crews could be working in other areas as situations dictate. Please help keep crews safe by giving them plenty of distance and obeying road signs.

ELECTRIC

- McCutchen Dr from Liberty Dr to Harvey Ln
- 9th Street from Main to State Streets
- Mercy Parkway

WATER

- Avon Court



WHAT'S GOING ON WITH RMU RATES

After much deliberation, the Rolla Board of Public Works has deemed it necessary to adjust RMU's electric rates to keep pace with rising cost of supplies as well as increasing energy cost. Beginning on October 1, 2023, RMU will increase our service availability fee from \$24 to \$26 and increase our residential energy rates from \$0.079 to \$0.082. An average household using 1,100 kWh of energy will see their monthly bill increase from \$110.90 to \$116.20. Over the last couple of years, we have had a multitude of factors that have worked against us. First, winter storm Uri increased our expenses \$3.6 million over 3 days. Those costs were absorbed by RMU in 2021 from our cash reserves with the intention of rebuilding our cash reserves over the next few years. Unfortunately, costs have continued to increase, and this was not possible. Fiscal year to date our electric department has seen losses of over \$1.1 million dollars.

On the water side, we are seeing similar issues. While our water department has seen modest operating gains this year, income has been buoyed by a stockpile of material that allowed us to avoid extensive new material purchases. Unfortunately, those stockpiles are running out. The cost of PVC pipe has tripled in the last two years. We will continue our water main and service line replacement projects which have been instrumental in reducing water leaks and increasing fire flow to our community. RMU's water storage tanks will need to be repainted, which is a costly endeavor. Because of these factors, we are increasing our service availability fees for 5/8" meters from \$9 to \$10 and increasing the cost per 1,000 gallons from \$3.75 to \$4.05. An average household, using 4,000 gallons of water a month would see their monthly bill increase from \$24.00 to \$26.20.

This was a tough decision to make, and we understand how it affects our customers. While the residential increases affect the vast majority of our customers, all rate adjustments can be found on our website at rmurolla.org. We thank you for your ongoing support and trust that these changes will help us to continue providing you and the Rolla community with affordable, safe, and reliable electric and water service.

Rodney P. Bourne, P.E.

RMU General Manager