Along the Lines

A Publication of Rolla Municipal Utilities

Missouri Lineworker Appreciation Day

The State of Missouri has designated April 13, 2026 Missouri Lineworker Appreciation Day, in honor of the critical work performed by electrical crews. Our lineworkers do a difficult, dangerous job that really matters. Their everyday work with electricity and power lines requires special training and skill. It's also a job they have to perform safely in all kinds of weather conditions, at any hour of the day or night. Rain or shine, our lineworkers show up whenever they are needed. These men and women work tirelessly to get emergency systems back in working order and urgently return service to damaged areas. We are thankful for their dedication to work in challenging conditions to help restore power safely and quickly.



Welcome

We would like to welcome Dylan Thompson to the RMU staff as a Laborer. Dylan grew up in the Salem area and is a 2021 graduate of Salem High School.



He is happy to have a shorter work commute and looks forward to the long-term opportunities at RMU.

Dylan has recently become engaged (Congrats to Brianna & Dylan!) and they have plans for a September wedding. They and their weiner dog, Mabel, hope to make a move to the Rolla community in the future. In his spare time, Dylan enjoys turkey & deer hunting. Welcome to RMU!



A Message from Rodney Bourne, P.E. RMU Retiring General Manager



After many years of service to the Rolla community, the time has come for me to step into retirement. As I reflect on my tenure as General Manager of Rolla Municipal Utilities (RMU), I am filled with gratitude, pride, and optimism for what lies ahead.

Serving this community over the last 27 years has been one of the greatest honors of my professional life. Together, we have made meaningful progress in strengthening the reliability and efficiency of our utility systems. Among our accomplishments, I'm especially proud of the infrastructure upgrades that have improved electric reliability, reduced outage times, and positioned RMU to meet growing demand. We have continued to modernize and upgrade key components of our water system, ensuring safe and dependable service for residents and businesses alike, along with increased fire flows. Additionally, our investments in technology and system monitoring have allowed us to operate more efficiently and respond more quickly to issues when they arise.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the dedication of RMU's employees. Their commitment to excellence, often under challenging conditions and at all hours, is what truly keeps this community running. It has been a privilege to work alongside such a skilled and hardworking team.

Of course, our journey has not been without challenges. Like utilities across the country, we have faced rising material and operational costs, evolving regulatory requirements, and the ongoing need to balance affordability with system improvements. Catastrophic equipment failures and severe weather events have also tested our resilience, reminding us of the importance of preparedness and continuous investment in infrastructure. Notably, the Ameren Substation Fire of 2003, the 2007 Ice Storm, and the 2025 Tornado stand out as particularly memorable events that tested—but did not break—the RMU team or the community we serve. Through it all, RMU has remained steadfast in its mission to serve our customers reliably and responsibly.

Looking to the future, there are important issues that will require continued focus and thoughtful leadership. Grid modernization, cybersecurity, and the integration of new energy technologies will shape how utilities operate in the years ahead. Managing growth while maintaining affordability will remain a delicate balance. Ensuring our water system meets ever-growing needs and continuing our long-standing commitment to water main replacement will also be critical priorities as our region evolves.

I am confident that RMU is well-positioned to meet these challenges. The foundation we have built, combined with the expertise of our staff and the support of the community, will ensure continued success.

As I step away, I want to thank the citizens of Rolla for their trust and support over the years. It has been deeply rewarding to serve a community that values reliability, integrity, and continued growth. While I may be retiring from my role, I will always take pride in having been part of RMU's story.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Sincerely,
Rodney P. Bourne, PE

— HAPPY —
Retirement