

Simplify your life! Sign up now for automatic bill payment

How would you like to receive your utility bills stamped 'paid?' You can by signing-up for our automatic bill payment plan.



It works like this: We notify your bank of what you owe us monthly. The bank will withdraw that amount out of your account automatically on the 15th of the month. (Bills are due on the 15th.) 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. You also receive your regular record of account transactions from the bank. This service is especially handy for people who go out of town for extended periods of time, aren't able to run errands easily, or are just looking to simplify bill-paying.

It also promises to save 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 651.674.7100 for more information.

Clearing trees keeps lights on

A common cause of power outages is tree branches contacting power lines. To maintain reliable service, North Branch Municipal



Water & Light trims trees and brush under our power lines within the right-of-way.

Utility crews will also cut dangerous or leaning trees along the side of the right-of-way that could cause power outages in the future.

Water & Light does not cut trees hanging over buildings or not endangering power lines. However, power lines will be dropped during normal working hours so you or your contractor can cut the tree(s). Questions? Call us at 651.674.7100

Remember to 'move over,' or stop

'Move Over' traffic laws were created in honor of first responders who have been struck and killed in the line of duty. Minnesota has also seen workers in construction sites killed by passing traffic. If you see flashing lights or orange cones, slow and move over. If traffic is too congested to move over safely, slow down below the posted speed limit and be prepared to stop.



The Connector

North Branch Municipal Water & Light

Excellent local service is the foundation of our business

Being a locally-owned and operated organization, North Branch Municipal Water & Light policymakers and staff not only have a career interest in our community's success, they have a personal stake in the city in which they have chosen to raise their families and build life-long relationships.

Because of this, the utility's interest in the well-being of our community and devotion toward maintaining a high quality of life is more than corporate slogan—it's the foundation of our business philosophy.

Municipal electric services in North Branch date to the 1941, when citizens, fed up with poor service, voted to build the local power plant. Our dedicated employees work to continue a tradition of reliability and excellent customer service.

The utility is governed by a three-person utilities commission, whose members are appointed by the mayor and city council.

North Branch and SMMPA — Partners in Power

North Branch Municipal Water & Light is a member of the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (SMMPA).

SMMPA partnered with NSP and owns a 41 percent share of the Sherco III power plant in Becker, the newest, most efficient coal-fired generating facility in the Midwest. SMMPA generates and sells reliable wholesale electricity to its 18 non-profit, municipally-owned member utilities, and develops innovative products and services to help us deliver value to our customers.



SMMPA's energy resource mix includes renewable energy and an array of standby generating units at member utilities.

SMMPA members serve over 96,000 residential customers and over 12,300 commercial and industrial customers.

Wholesale electric rate increases

The wholesale power supplier to North Branch Municipal Water & Light—the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (SMMPA)—in October announced its first wholesale rate increase in six years.

The rate your utility pays for power will increase 6 percent. Our wholesale power bill is our biggest expense, so this will affect our rates.



The main reasons for the increase are changing wholesale market conditions, a diversification of SMMPA's generating mix (including wind and natural gas-fueled electric generators), increased debt service, and other escalating business costs.

Increased investment in transmission facilities to ensure reliability and move wind energy is also a contributing factor. SMMPA has also invested in transmission projects that will provide a future economic return. That will help offset some of the upward pressure on transmission costs.

Electric and water rate increases necessary for 2016

The North Branch Municipal Water & Light Commission announced with last month's bills that 2016 electric and water rates are increasing.

The electric increase is in response to a 6 percent increase in the wholesale electric costs announced by Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency. The North Branch Municipal Water & Light Commission approved changes in electric and water rates.

The net effect to the average electric customer amounts to a \$4.80 increase per month.

We also need to properly maintain our water infrastructure, to ensure a reliable supply of clean water. As is normally done to finance costly utility improvements, your utility borrowed money to upgrade our infrastructure in recent years. These improvements were necessary to meet regulatory requirements and serve growth. We are responsible to raise and maintain necessary funds to repay the revenue bonds. The net effect to the average water customer will be a \$4.92 increase per month.

North Branch now has the necessary infrastructure to properly serve you, our customers, and to serve a growing city for the foreseeable future.

Check our energy-saving ideas!

North Branch Municipal Water & Light prides itself on providing a steady supply of competitively-priced electricity, but we also want to help our customers use energy wisely!

We offer a full range of energy efficiency programs for residential and commercial customers. Go to www.smmpa/members/north-branch for more information!