

## *We offer rebates for several efficient central air conditioners*

Purchasing a new air conditioning system is a big investment. Even though high-efficiency cooling equipment can be more expensive to buy, the cost difference will be paid back over time through lower energy bills. If your central air conditioning unit is more than 12 years old, replacing it with a qualifying energy-efficient system could cut your cooling costs by 30 percent. Plus, qualifying systems are eligible for a rebate from us—making it even easier for you to save money on your electricity costs.



North Branch Municipal Water & Light provides rebates for qualifying central air conditioners, air-source heat pumps, and ground-source heat pumps.

### *Central air conditioners*

Most homes use a central air conditioner system for cooling. A properly-sized central air conditioner will cool and dehumidify a home to provide a comfortable environment.

### *Ground source heat pumps*

Ground source heat pumps are one of the most efficient ways to cool and heat a home. Also known as geothermal heat pumps or GeoExchange systems, they use a liquid circulated through a looped pipe buried in the ground to transfer heat to the home in the winter and from the home in the summer.

## *We help to save the monarch*

North Branch Municipal Water & Light, and other members of the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (SMMPA), are making an effort to create habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators. This is being done by preparing a site and then planting milkweed plants and a variety of flowering nectar plants. We will then maintain the sites. Our site is in the utilities right of way.



SMMPA partnered with Sand County Foundation in developing the program. Sand County Foundation has made addressing the loss of the monarch population a priority issue. In cooperation with Sand County Foundation, Syngenta, a leading agriculture company, is helping fund the SMMPA effort.

SMMPA will acquire necessary seeds and plants from Prairie Restorations, of rural Princeton. The Prairie Restorations “Sowing it Back Together” program uses native Minnesota plant species to help create habitat for pollinators like the monarch.

Pollinators, like bees and butterflies, are a critical component of 30-40 percent of the food supply. Loss of habitat is the major factor in the decline of pollinator populations.

Being part of the solution makes sense environmentally and economically.

# The Connector

North Branch Municipal Water & Light

## *North Branch shares honor as ENERGY STAR Partner of Year*

North Branch Municipal Water & Light is part of one of the nation’s leading energy efficiency organizations—the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (SMMPA).

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recognized SMMPA as a 2016 ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year, for its energy efficiency program delivery efforts. The award is for outstanding efforts to increase the adoption of energy-efficient products.

The ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year Award is given to states, utilities and other organizations for sponsoring energy efficiency programs to improve the efficiency of products, homes and buildings within their community. Award winners are selected from more than 16,000 organizations that participate in the ENERGY STAR program.

North Branch is one of 18 SMMPA members.

***We now offer online payment—  
It's fast, easy and secure***

At North Branch Municipal Water & Light, we are excited to announce that our customers can now view their bills online as well as make payments!



It's EASY and SECURE!

You start by going to <http://www.nbpuc.com> and then click on: Sign Up Now – Create an Account.

You will be prompted to enter your information as it appears on your utility bill and then enter a password. Once you have done this you can log onto your information anytime from home or your mobile device and:

- View your current bill
- View your previous bills
- Make a payment or schedule payments
- Sign up for paperless billing and receive your bill by email

***Energy saving tools***

Once you set up an account, you can access a variety of energy savings tools. We are

excited about our new online tools, that help our customers use energy more efficiently. Through our website, you can now:

- View your household usage this year vs. previous year
- View your household usage in comparison to other utility customers
- Click on Home Energy Analysis: Check the energy usage in your home and see how much you are spending and how you can save
- Click on Appliance Calculator and see how much that appliance is costing you.

***Receive Energy Saving Tips***

Most everyone wants to save money by improving the energy use of their homes, but many don't know where to start or what improvements will have the most impact. This information is to help you better understand how you are using energy and give you the tools to use energy more wisely.

***We also offer mobile app***

Our free mobile app is the best way to conserve energy on the go. With our new app, you won't need to be at your computer or look at your bill to see your energy usage and savings.



See our website for more information. The app is also available on android and the App Store.

***We offer our customers a  
variety of payment options!***

North Branch Municipal Water & Light has long offered our customers a variety of payment options. Please check out our new online payment option, highlighted elsewhere in this newsletter.

One of the most efficient payment options is automatic withdrawal. It works like this: We notify the bank of what you owe us monthly. The bank will withdraw that amount out of your account automatically as bills come due. The money is then automatically deposited into our account.



You receive your regular bill stamped 'paid,' so you have a payment and usage record. You also receive your regular record of bank transactions. This service is especially handy for people who go out of town for extended periods of time, or are just looking to simplify bill-paying.

It saves a lot of manual effort at the utility office, which helps save us all money.

We already have many people participating in this program. Please call us at 651.674.7100 for more information.