

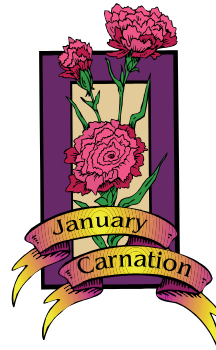
# Watt's News

January 2008  
Volume 21, No.1

Official Newsletter of Brainerd Public Utilities, PO Box 373, Brainerd, MN 56401

## What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is defined as any surface flow, runoff, and drainage consisting entirely of water from any form of precipitation such as rain or snow. Minnesota's lakes, rivers, forests and farms all depend on the replenishing waters of annual precipitation. However, when rain falls on land and impervious areas such as paved streets, parking lots and building rooftops it can wash away soil and sediment and pick up pollutants such as oil, chemicals and grease. This polluted runoff can severely reduce water quality. If left unmanaged, stormwater runoff can stress our streams, age our lakes, and degrade or eliminate our wetlands. The City of Brainerd is committed to improving water quality through education, public involvement and stormwater management. If you have any questions on this topic, please call the City Engineer's Office at 828-2309.



## Watt's Weather

### Total Precipitation

December 2007 13.64"

December 2006 6.42

### Average Temperatures

December 2007 Hi 20 Lo 1.5

December 2006 Hi 33 Lo 14

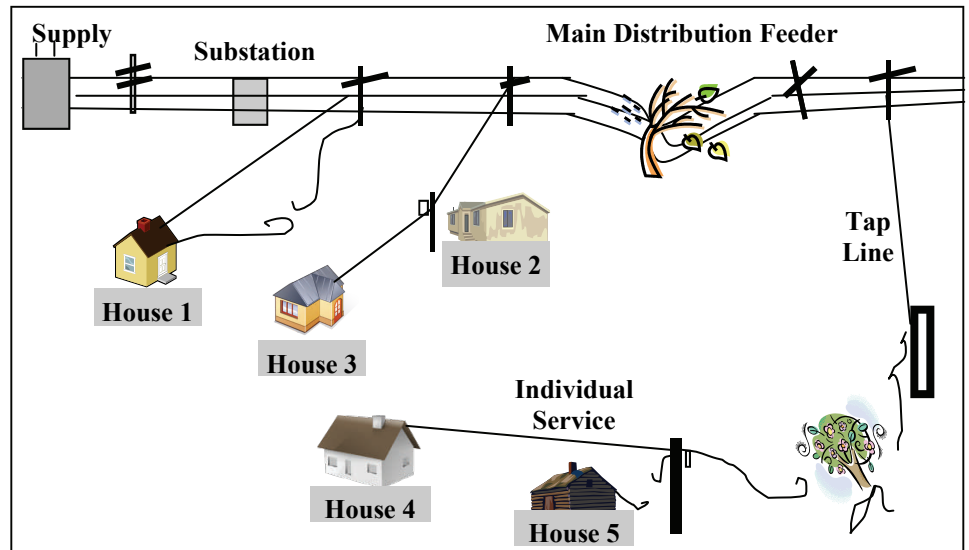
*An immense thank you to all who contributed to the HeatShare Program. Many people will benefit from your generosity.*

## Understanding BPU Power Restoration

Brainerd Public Utilities electric system is designed to withstand harsh weather, but damaging storms with ice conditions—or high winds anytime of the year—can cause outages. Our goal is to restore power to every customer in the fastest, safest manner possible. BPU's priority is public safety, so crews are first sent to remove power lines from roadways. Here's a diagram and explanation of other steps needed to restore electricity:

Individual repairs are most time consuming, as it often takes several hours to erect a new pole and repair damaged lines. BPU is responsible for getting electricity to customer meters. However, the mast on the house (a pipe containing wires that run from overhead lines to the meter) is the customer's responsibility. If your mast is damaged or torn loose from the house you must contact an electrician to repair it before BPU can restore power.

1. Power is restored to customers on the "critical needs list". (Healthcare facilities, nursing homes, those on respirators, infant heart monitors or other life-support equipment. These customer have also filled out a "Medical Conditions Form.". If you need to fill out a form, please call 825-3200 to have one sent out to you and have your Dr. fax it back to us.)
2. Trees are removed from main distribution feeders, returning power to house 2 and 3.
3. Major distribution feeders and substations would be worked on next in a major storm.
4. After major feeders and substations are working, trees would be removed from the tap line and repairs made, restoring power to house 4.
5. Finally, individual service lines would be repaired, restoring power to house 1 and 5.





## IMPORTANT NOTICE For Military Personnel Effective August 1, 2007



Section 325E.028 of the Minnesota statutes pertaining to utility payment arrangements for military service personnel outlines their rights and responsibilities effective August 1, 2007. Minnesota's Municipal Electric Utilities must not disconnect the utility service of a residential customer if a member of the household has been issued orders into active duty, deployment, or change in duty station if a residential customer meets criteria set forth in this statute.

Application forms are available at Brainerd Public Utilities or on our Web site at [www.bpu.org](http://www.bpu.org). If you would like a copy of this statute or an application sent in the mail, please contact BPU at 218-825-3200. An application received with-out copies of income statements and proof of military orders overseas is considered incomplete resulting in the possibility of no shut-off protection.



### Carbon Monoxide

Approximately 250 people in the United States died last year from the "Silent Killer" -- carbon monoxide (CO). This deadly gas is hard to detect because it is odorless, colorless and tasteless. BPU recommends that consumers follow these steps to help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning:

- Have a qualified technician inspect fuel-burning appliances at least once each year. Fuel-burning appliances such as furnaces, hot water heaters and stoves require yearly maintenance. A qualified technician can identify and repair problems with your fuel-burning appliances.
- Be alert to the danger signs that signal a CO problem: streaks of carbon or soot around the service door of your fuel-burning appliances; the absence of a draft in your chimney; excessive rusting on flue pipes or appliance jackets; moisture collecting on the windows and walls of furnace rooms; fallen soot from the fireplace; small amounts of water leaking from the base of the chimney, vent or flue pipe; damaged or discolored bricks at the top of your chimney and rust on the portion of the vent pipe visible from outside your home.
- Be aware that CO poisoning may be the cause of flu-like symptoms such as headaches, tightness of chest, dizziness, fatigue, confusion and breathing difficulties. Because CO poisoning often causes a victim's blood pressure to rise, the victim's skin may take on a pink or red cast.
- Install a CO detector outside sleeping areas. A CO detector will sound an alarm before dangerous levels of CO accumulate. CO indicator cards and other devices are also intended to detect elevated levels of CO, but most are not equipped with an audible alarm, and cannot wake you at night, when most CO poisonings occur.
- Read the manufacturer's instructions carefully before installing a CO detector.
- Avoid placing your detector directly on top of or directly across from fuel-burning appliances. These appliances will emit some CO when initially turned-on. Don't leave vehicles running in an enclosed garage, even to "warm up" your car on a cold morning.

Know how to respond to a CO detector alarm. If your alarm sounds, immediately open windows and doors for ventilation. If anyone in the home is experiencing symptoms of CO poisoning -- headache, dizziness or other flu-like symptoms -- immediately evacuate the house and call the fire department. If no one is experiencing these symptoms, continue to ventilate, turn off fuel-burning appliances and call a qualified technician to inspect your heating system and appliances as soon as possible. Because you have provided ventilation, the CO buildup may have dissipated by the time help responds and your problem may appear to be temporarily solved. Do not operate any fuel-burning appliances until you have clearly identified the source of the problem. A CO detector alarm indicates elevated levels of CO in the home. Never ignore the alarm.



**N**OTICE: All electrical work performed in the City of Brainerd requires a "Request for Electrical Inspection" form to be completed, filed, and work inspected by our inspector. If you need the form or have any questions, please contact BPU at **825-3210** or **829-2193**.

**B**EFORE DIGGING: Call Gopher State One Call at **1-800-252-1166** for water and electric locations. All requests for locations must be made by calling the above toll free number at least **48 hours** before digging begins.