

Watt's News

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



Checking for Water Leaks

Assuming there are no leaks in your house can cost you money!

Brainerd Public Utilities would like to offer the following tips and encourage all customers to monitor their homes for possible water leaks. Leaks not only waste water; they cost you money!

First Sign

One of the first indications of a water leak is an unexplained increase in the usage amount and dollar amount on your monthly utility bill. If there is an increase in usage that cannot be explained (extra people in the house, lawn watering, faucet left on, etc) there is a possibility that a toilet is leaking, a faucet is dripping, or there is a break in the water line between the meter and the house. Other sources of leaks can be the sprinkler system, the water softener, or the automatic fill on the swimming pool.

Monitor Your Meter

To identify leaks, we suggest that you monitor your meter. You will need to conduct the monitoring during a time period when you will not be using water. Monitoring while no one is home is ideal. First, turn off all water inside and outside the house. Write down the reading on the meter and the position of the sweep hand. Do not use any water for at least two hours. At the end of the monitoring period, read the meter a second time. If the second reading is different from the first, water flowed through the meter, indicating there may be a leak.

Check Toilets First

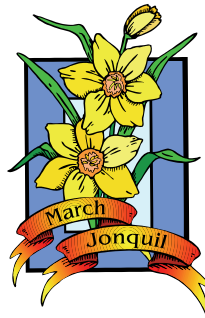


If a leak is detected, we recommend that you check your toilet(s) first. Our experience shows that most leaks occur in the toilet. A leaking toilet tank can waste up to 200 gallons of water per day and cost you 31 cents per day, \$ 9.30 per month!

A toilet flapper hung partially open can waste up to 7,200 gallons of water per day and cost you \$2.33 per day, \$69.90 per month!

To check for a leaking toilet you will need some food coloring (any color). Flush the toilet. Then put enough coloring in the tank to color the water. Do not flush the toilet for at least an hour. If the water in the bowl of the toilet becomes colored there is a leak that will need to be repaired.

If you do have a leak, there are a number of possible causes. If you remove the tank lid and can easily identify the cause, correct the problem and try your leak test again. Consider that "fixes" such as



Watt's Weather

Total Precipitation

February 2008 5.61"

February 2007 12.65"

Average Temperatures

February 2008 Hi 21 Lo -1.7

February 2007 Hi 8 Lo -5.0

NOTICE:

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.

BEFORE 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.

bending the float back to shape, or adjusting how the rubber flapper falls, often end up failing soon afterward. In most cases, you will simply want to replace the toilet flapper (the rubber thing at the bottom of the tank that keeps water in the tank) and/or filling mechanism. These are available at hardware stores and home centers for about \$9 each.

Water Faucets

Water faucets, inside and outside of the house, can also be leaking. 100 drips per minute can waste up to 33 gallons per day. That's 5 cents per day, \$1.50 per month, and \$18.00 per year! In most cases, a leaking faucet is caused by a worn washer or "O" ring.

If there is a leak in the water line there will be a spot in the yard that never dries up. This could indicate that the water line below needs to be replaced.

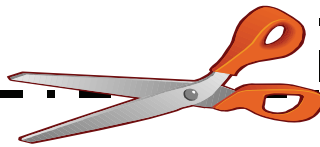
Remember, it is your responsibility to make sure all leaks are repaired in a timely manner. Brainerd Public Utilities is responsible for the main water line and the meter itself. Leaks on the BPU's line do not affect the charges on your water bill.

Brainerd Lakes Chamber Commerce and Industry Marketplace

Friday, March 28—10:00 a.m.—9:00 p.m.
Saturday, March 29—9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

**Come and see us at booth #44
for a free
energy efficient gadget!**

Please present coupon to receive this free offer



Business & Repair Office Hours

7:00 a.m.—3:30 p.m.
Business 218-829-8726
Repair 218-829-2193

Emergency 24 hour service 365 days a year
218-829-2193

WWW.BPU.ORG

Where Does Rainwater Go?

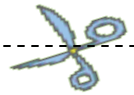
Storm drains are NOT connected to the sanitary sewer or wastewater treatment plant. The primary purpose of a storm drain is to carry rainwater away from developed areas to prevent flooding. As rainwater flows over the ground, it can pick up a variety of pollutants, such as dirt, debris, automotive fluids, pet waste, pesticides and other hazardous materials, which then flow to local stormwater ponds, ditches, and ultimately the Mississippi River. By preventing these items from being introduced to storm water we can help keep our lakes and rivers cleaner. The City of Brainerd is committed to improving water quality through education, public involvement, and stormwater management.

What Does My Stormwater Fee Pay For?

Every month, a stormwater charge appears on your Brainerd Public Utilities' bill. This charge is billed on behalf of the City of Brainerd. The revenue collected for this charge is to maintain and improve the existing stormwater drainage system for impervious surfaces (where stormwater cannot penetrate into the ground). Residential customers are charged a \$3.00 monthly fee and commercial/industrial customers are charged according to the amount of impervious surface their property has. If you have any questions about this charge, please call the City Engineer's Office at 828-2309.

Direct Payment Plan

An option for a different due date would be a Direct Payment Plan. You authorize regularly scheduled payments to be made from your checking or savings account. If the first two digits of your BPU account number are between 01-10, your automatic payment date will be the 25th of each month. If the first two digits are between 11-18, your automatic payment date will be the 10th of each month. You will still receive your monthly utility billing statement and proof of payment will appear on your monthly bank statement.



AUTHORIZATION FOR DIRECT PAYMENT

I authorize **Brainerd Public Utilities** & the financial institution named below to initiate entries to my checking/savings account once each month in the amount of my current billing beginning ____/____/20__. **This authority will remain in effect until I notify BPU in writing to cancel it in such time as to afford the financial institution a reasonable opportunity to act on it.**

(Name of Financial Institution) (Branch) (Address) (City) (State/Zip)

(Bank Account Number) Checking or Savings (circle one) (Name, as it appears at the Bank-Please Print)

(Service Address) (Signature)

(BPU Account No.) (Home Phone No.) / /20_____
Date

Please call our office at
825-3201 if you **change** any
information with your bank
account.

To take advantage of this service, complete this authorization form and return it to us with a voided check.