

Brainerd Public Utilities



Customer Handbook

The mission of Brainerd Public Utilities is to provide safe, reliable, environmentally friendly electric, water and sewer services to our customers at the lowest reasonable cost.

How To Contact Us

Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU) business hours are 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Our Business Service Center address is 8027 Highland Scenic Rd, Baxter MN 56425

BPU employees are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to respond to electric and water emergency needs. Please call 829-2193 if you are experiencing an emergency with your electric or water service.

BPU's customer service team is here to answer any questions you may have. Please call the following telephone numbers if you need help with any of our services.

Moving in or out of a rental, or selling/purchasing a home or business – 218-825-3200
Please notify BPU at least 24 hours or more in advance of any changes of address, ownership or tenancy.

Going away for the winter – please let us know – 218-825-3207

Make a payment on your account 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – 218-829-8726 (Option number 3) or go to www.bpu.org and make a payment online.

Questions about your automatic bank pay – 218-825-3201

Past due on your account and need to set up a payment arrangement – 218-825-3223

Have a question about your utility bill or deposit – 218-825-3207

Questions regarding stormwater or wastewater collection charges, please call the City Engineer's office – 218-828-2309

Sewer back up – please call the City Engineer's Office – 218-828-2309

Any questions regarding your electric or water meter – 218-829-2193

Following is the contact information for BPU's management team

Todd Wicklund, Public Utilities Director	twicklund@bpu.org	218-825-3220
Trent Hawkinson, Electric Operations Manager	thawkinson@bpu.org	218-825-3211
Charles Gammon, Wastewater Supervisor	cgammon@bpu.org	218-825-3237
Jana Pernula, Accounting Supervisor	jpernula@bpu.org	218-825-3203
Aaron Andersen, IT Supervisor	aandersen@bpu.org	218-825-3205

Please visit us at www.bpu.org for more information including our rates and policies



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About Brainerd Public Utilities

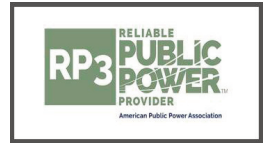
This customer handbook is designed to introduce you to Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU) and provide you with information regarding BPU's services. Please keep this handbook handy so that you may use it for future reference.

BPU is a municipally owned utility that has been providing electric, water, and wastewater services to the City of Brainerd, portions of the City of Baxter, and surrounding townships since 1892.

BPU is governed by a five member commission board. The members of the commission are appointed by the mayor and each term lasts five years. The board meets at 9:00 a.m., the last Tuesday of each month, at the BPU Service Center and the meetings are open to the public.

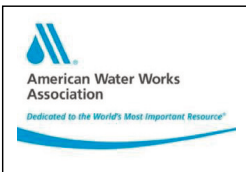
Electric Department – BPU takes public power seriously and strives to provide affordable electric rates to its customers. Our professional and dedicated field crews are on call 24/7, 365 days a year, to ensure your lights stay on. BPU will continue to make investments in the future to ensure safe and reliable electricity for all of its customers.

BPU is a designated gold level “reliable public power provider” by the American Public Power Association. The RP₃ designation certifies that BPU has demonstrated leading practices in reliability, safety, workforce development and system improvement.



Hydro Dam – The hydro dam provides a reliable renewable energy source from the Mississippi River, and is able to generate 3.2 megawatts of electrical power. Generation from the hydro dam represents approximately 10.5% of energy used by BPU customers.

Water Department – Brainerd's water filtration plant treats approximately 1.55 million gallons per day. The plant removes iron and manganese from the water, which is pumped out of six wells that were drilled near the facility. BPU is able to achieve 95% removal of those minerals which helps to improve the taste and appearance of the water. After filtration, the water is pumped to three water towers and the distribution system and ultimately to customers taps.



BPU is a member of the American Waters Works Association.

Wastewater Department – The BPU Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) is a Class A facility designed to treat an average wet weather flow of 6.0 MG and a CBOD5 influent concentration of 240 mg/L and a TSS concentration of 240 mg/L.

**For a complete list of BPU's electric, water, and wastewater rates, please go to
www.bpu.org**

Electric and Water Metering System

BPU uses AMI metering for both electric and water readings. The metering system provides a number of important functions that were not previously possible or had to be performed manually.

With AMI meters:

- BPU can receive readings in 15, 30, or 60 minute intervals.
- AMI meters allow better access and data to manage energy use by both BPU and the customer.
- AMI metering enhances BPU's outage management system by pinpointing the location of the outages quicker and enables BPU's electric field crews to get the power restored more efficiently.
- Water customers have the capability to detect a water leak much sooner, which will save money in excess water and wastewater billing charges and help prevent expensive cleanup costs.
- AMI meters allow BPU staff to manage their electric grid in several ways, including building a more reliable power distribution system, improve transformer load management, and providing data for improved efficiency, reliability of service, and improve line loss and line loading studies.



Electric Meter



Water Meter



Water Transmitter

MANAGE YOUR UTILITIES

SURPRISE BILLS? ELIMINATE THEM!

Monitor consumption, set usage thresholds, and access your account information 24/7/365.

- Specify billing and usage thresholds.
- View estimated bill amounts.
- Monitor consumption with easy-to-understand graphs.

No fee to sign up! Visit bpu.org to register.



Tyler Smart Meter Portal provides important electric and water usage information to allow customers to manage and reduce utility costs in their homes and businesses. Access smart meter data to view annual, monthly, daily, or hourly usage in easy-to-understand graphs.

What can I do with the usage information?

You can use the information to better understand how and when you use utilities.

Does the portal have other features in addition to showing my consumption/usage?

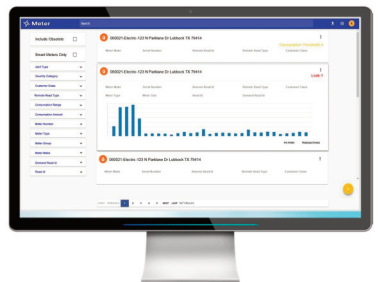
Yes! You can set up thresholds for both electric and water usage and be notified if you go over the set thresholds.

How will I receive alerts?

You will receive your alerts by email or text message using the email address or cell phone number that you designate when creating your account. In addition, you can log into the portal to see alerts online.

Can the portal indicate if I am using electric or water excessively?

Yes! Conservation is the key to avoiding high bills and high consumption. This system will allow you to monitor your usage and be made aware quicker of any abnormalities and be able to control utility expenses based on your specific settings.



Brainerd Public Utilities • 8027 Highland Scenic Rd • Baxter MN • (218) 829-8726



Energy Saving Tips

There are things you can do to cut your energy use and help control your living costs by making your home more energy efficient.

1. **Adjust your day-to-day behaviors** – To reduce energy consumption in your home, you do not necessarily need to go out and purchase energy efficient products. Energy conservation can be as simple as turning off lights or appliances when you do not need them.
2. **Replace your light bulbs** – Traditional incandescent light bulbs consume an excessive amount of electricity and must be replaced more often than their energy efficient alternative. Halogen incandescent bulbs, CFL and LED light bulbs use anywhere from 25-80% less electricity and last three to 25 times longer than traditional bulbs.
3. **Use smart power strips** – “Phantom loads”, or the electricity used by electronics when they are turned off or in standby mode, are a major source of energy waste. Smart power strips eliminate the problem of phantom loads by shutting off the power to electronics when they are not in use.
4. **Install a programmable or smart thermostat** – A programmable or smart thermostat can be set to automatically turn off or reduce heating and cooling during the times when you are asleep or away from home. When you install a programmable thermostat you eliminate wasteful energy, without upgrading your HVAC system or sacrificing any comfort.
5. **Purchase energy efficient appliances** – When you purchase an appliance, you should look for appliances with the ENERGY STAR label, which is a federal guarantee that the appliance will consume less energy during use and when on standby. Brainerd Public Utilities also offers rebates for energy efficient appliances. Go to our website www.bpu.org/services/residentialrebates to find out more information.
6. **Reduce your water heating expenses** – Water heating is a major contributor to your total energy consumption. Reduce your water heating expense by using less hot water, turn down the thermostat on your water heater, or insulate your water heater and the first six feet of hot and cold water pipes.
7. **Maintaining your HVAC system** – Your heating and cooling system should be checked at least once a year before the beginning of each season. Filters should be replaced every month, unless you have the permanent type filters.
8. **Install energy efficient windows** – Windows are a significant source of energy waste, which can amount up to 30% of your total heating bill. To prevent heat loss through your windows, you can replace single-pane windows with double-pane windows.
9. **Weatherize your home** – Weatherizing or sealing air leaks around your home is a great way to reduce your heating and cooling costs. The most common sources of air leaks into your home are vents, windows, and doors. To prevent these leaks, you should ensure that there are no cracks or openings between the wall and vent, window, or doorframe. There are weather winterizing kits that you can purchase to help with this project.
10. **Insulate your home** – Insulation plays a key role in lowering your utility bills through retaining heat during the winter and keeping heat out of your home during the summer. The recommended level of heat resistance or “R-Value” for Minnesota is 49.

DIAGRAM OF AN OVERHEAD ELECTRIC SERVICE

The diagram below shows what Brainerd Public Utilities is responsible for and what the customer's responsibility is for an overhead electric service.



BRAINERD PUBLIC UTILITIES OVERHEAD ELECTRIC SERVICE DIAGRAM

* DRAWING NOT TO SCALE

- ① POLE AND OVERHEAD TRANSFORMER - BPU OWNED
- ② OVERHEAD SERVICE WIRE - BPU OWNED
- ③ SERVICE BRACKET - CUSTOMER OWNED
- ④ WEATHER HEAD AND DRIP LOOP - CUSTOMER OWNED
- ⑤ ENTRANCE CABLE - CUSTOMER OWNED
- ⑥ ELECTRIC METER - BPU OWNED
- ⑦ METER BASE - CUSTOMER OWNED

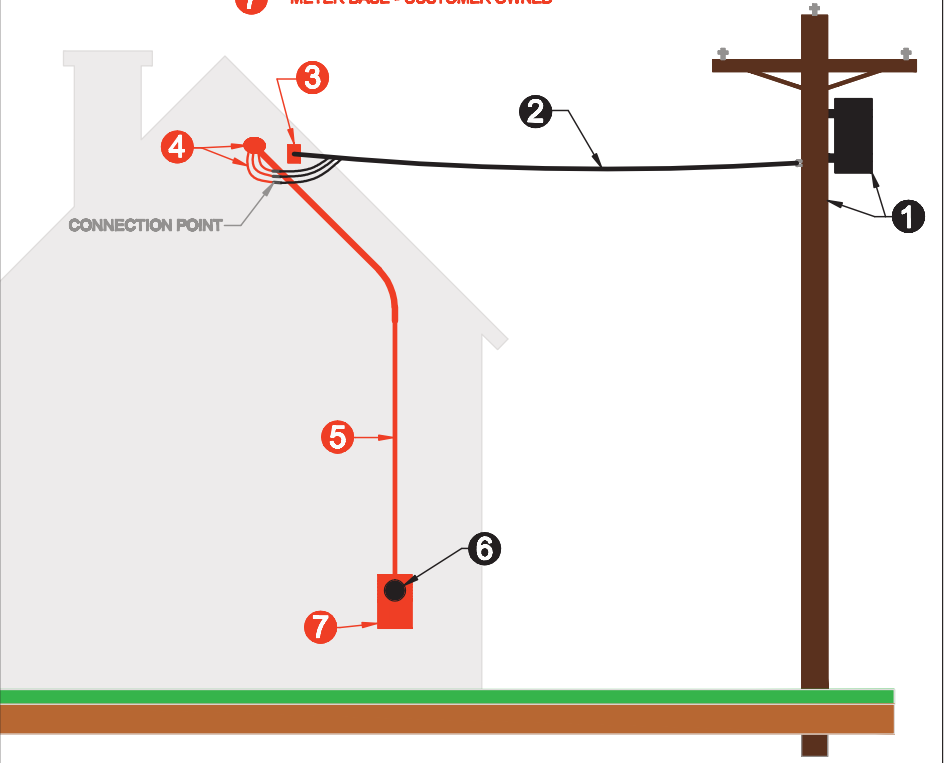
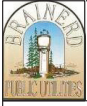


DIAGRAM OF AN UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC SERVICE

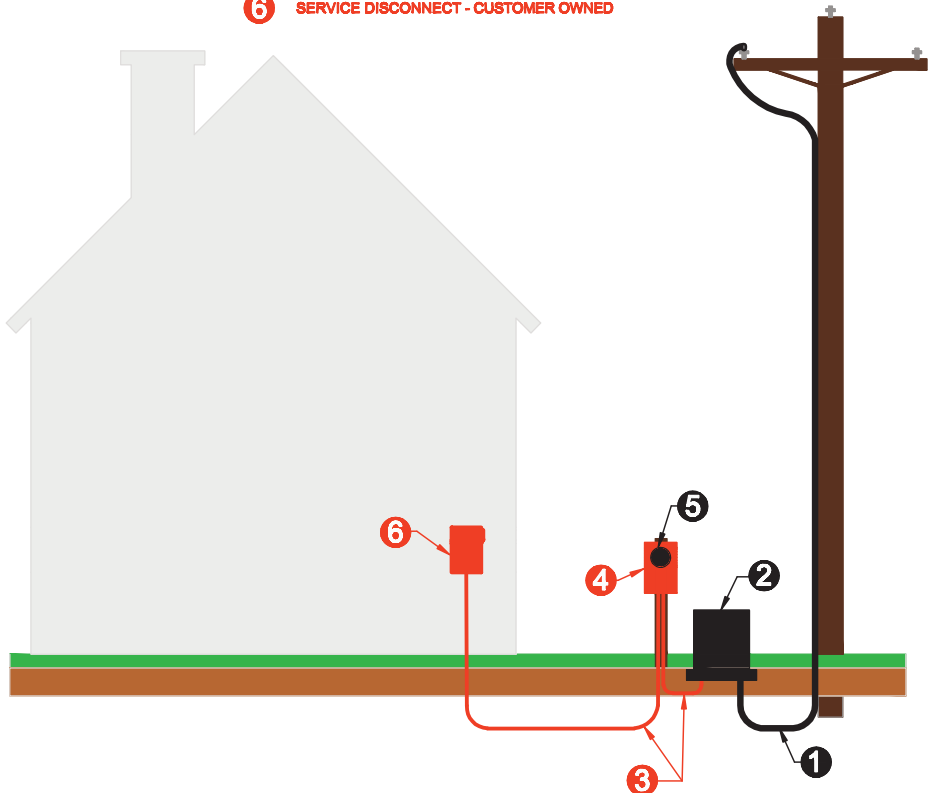
The diagram below shows what Brainerd Public Utilities is responsible for and what the customer's responsibility is for an underground electric service.



BRAINERD PUBLIC UTILITIES UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC SERVICE DIAGRAM

* DRAWING NOT TO SCALE

- 1** CONDUCTOR (PRIMARY CONDUCTOR TO TRANSFORMER OR SECONDARY CONDUCTOR TO SECONDARY PEDESTAL FOR POINT OF CONNECTION TYPICALLY AT PROPERTY CORNER) - BPU OWNED
- 2** TRANSFORMER OR SECONDARY PEDESTAL - BPU OWNED
- 3** UNDERGROUND SERVICE CONDUCTOR - CUSTOMER OWNED
- 4** METER BASE (TYPICALLY LOCATED ON HOUSE OR ON METER PEDESTAL NEAR PROPERTY LINE) - CUSTOMER OWNED
- 5** ELECTRIC METER - BPU OWNED
- 6** SERVICE DISCONNECT - CUSTOMER OWNED



TREE TRIMMING & PLANTING SHRUBS NEAR TRANSFORMERS

Through Pruning



Side Pruning



Under Pruning



Tree requests will be put on a list to be done during the winter months. Trees that interfere with Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU) power lines, with the exception of service wires to residences or buildings, will be trimmed or removed depending on the circumstances.

Trimming or removal of trees on private property is the property owner's responsibility. BPU will temporarily remove and replace the property owner's service wires to accommodate the tree trimming or removal during normal business hours.

BPU requires 24 hours notification to temporarily remove service wires.

If you would like to be put on the winter tree trimming list, please call the BPU repair office at 218-829-2193.



Maintain Clearance

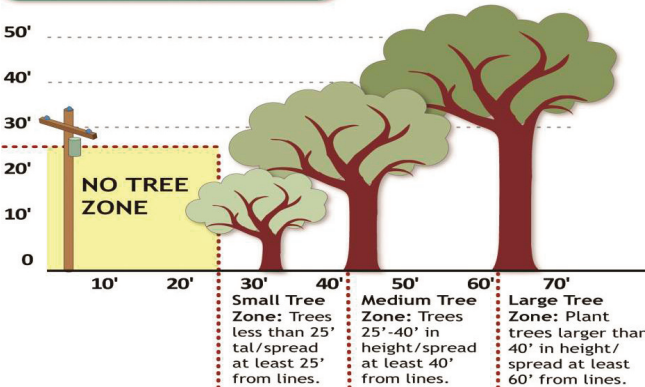
Energized electrical equipment.

PLANTING SHRUBS

Please keep shrubs and structures 12 feet from all sides of transformers, junction boxes, and/or any BPU utility box. We need room to work safely on these devices.

Obstructions may be damaged or removed during service restoration or maintenance and will not be replaced.

Tree Planting Guide



Call Before You Dig-- But Beware -- Not Every Utility Gets Marked!

Imagine this: you have a project that requires you to make a hole in the ground with a shovel, a trencher, a skid-steer, or some other digging tool. You're aware that hitting an underground utility – a pipe, power line, fiber cable, etc. – can be expensive and dangerous. You want to do the right thing and adhere to the law, so you contact Gopher State One Call, generate an excavation ticket, and wait 48 hours for utility employees to mark the areas you must avoid. With the utilities marked, the ground surface becomes an explosion of colors, and you're clear to start your project. Right? Wrong!

The law does not require ALL underground utilities to be located; the ones falling in the category of "private facilities" may go unmarked, including some electric and natural-gas facilities. Your in-ground sprinkler system probably will not be marked, along with a substantial portion of the sewer line under your yard. If there are gas or electric facilities buried after the meter, ("downstream" from the meter in the directional flow) on your property, they may not be marked either. These are all examples of "private facilities" that are not owned by the utility, but by the property owner – and, therefore, not required to be marked by utility employees.

In light of this reality, what can you do to assure your personal safety and the integrity of your private facilities as you complete your project? These actions will help:

- If you are not the original property owner, it may be necessary to contact previous owners or longtime neighbors to determine whether private facilities were installed prior to your ownership.
- Be a detective. Look around the proposed excavation site for clues, including:
 - A gas meter with no yellow markings on the property
 - An electric meter with no red markings on the property
 - In-ground sprinkler heads
- If you have a city sewer system, the operator is required to mark it in the right-of-way and indicate the spot where it leaves the right-of-way and goes into your property. If it's not marked, call the city and find out where your service line comes off the main sewer pipe and goes into your yard. Use hand tools to dig carefully around the spot where it should be.
- If you have a septic system, locate it (or hire a private locator) and mark it yourself so you can avoid damaging it.
- Look for devices powered by gas or electricity; things like lights, grills, or heated swimming pools that do not have markings leading to the device.
- If evidence suggests that private facilities are present in the ground where you will be working, consider hiring a private locator. A private locator is someone who will come to the job site and attempt to locate private, underground facilities.

Anytime an excavation occurs, care must be taken. Knowing what steps to take on your own, even after Gopher State One Call has been contacted, will assure a safe and successful project.



Know the Color Code	
WHITE:	Proposed Excavation
PINK:	Temporary Survey Markings
RED:	Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit and Lighting Cables
YELLOW:	Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum or Gaseous Materials
ORANGE:	Communication, Alarm or Signal Lines, Cables or Conduit
BLUE:	Potable Water
PURPLE:	Reclaimed Water, Irrigation and Slurry Lines
GREEN:	Sewer and Drain Lines



WHAT TO DO DURING A POWER OUTAGE



Stay away from downed power lines and broken utility poles! Please note the location and call Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU) immediately. Even lines that look harmless can be dangerous.

If your power is out, check with your neighbor. If they still have electricity, check your fuses or circuit breakers.

If that does not solve the problem, go to BPU's website www.bpu.org and click on "OUTAGES" to report your outage or call 218-829-2193. **Once you have called us, there is no need to continue to call.** Your request will be handled as quickly as possible. The only reason you will need to call us again is if your neighbor's power has been restored and your power is still out.

As we restore power, overloaded lines can often cause additional outages. You can help prevent this by switching off your heating and cooling equipment and other appliances during the outage. Leave a light on so you will know when the service has been restored.

Do not keep checking the refrigerator and freezer. Food will keep much longer if the doors are left closed.

Prepare a "lights-out kit". Keep a flashlight, spare fuses, and a battery-powered radio handy. Know where the electric service panel for your home is located and how to reset circuit breakers or replace blown fuses. Make sure your family knows where the kit is located and what to do if you are not home.

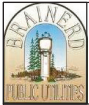
And remember.... BPU'S field crews are working as rapidly as they safely can to restore your power!!

PLANNED POWER OUTAGES

Occasionally BPU must perform maintenance work that requires a temporary interruption of your electric service. If we are aware that crews plan to have your service off for a long period of time, BPU crews will knock on your door or you will receive an automated telephone message of the day and time of the planned outage. **It is very important that you keep your telephone number updated with BPU at all times, so we can notify you of a planned outage. Please call 825-3200 if your telephone number has changed.**

DIAGRAM OF A RESIDENTIAL WATER SERVICE

The diagram below shows what Brainerd Public Utilities is responsible for and what the customer's responsibility is for a water service.

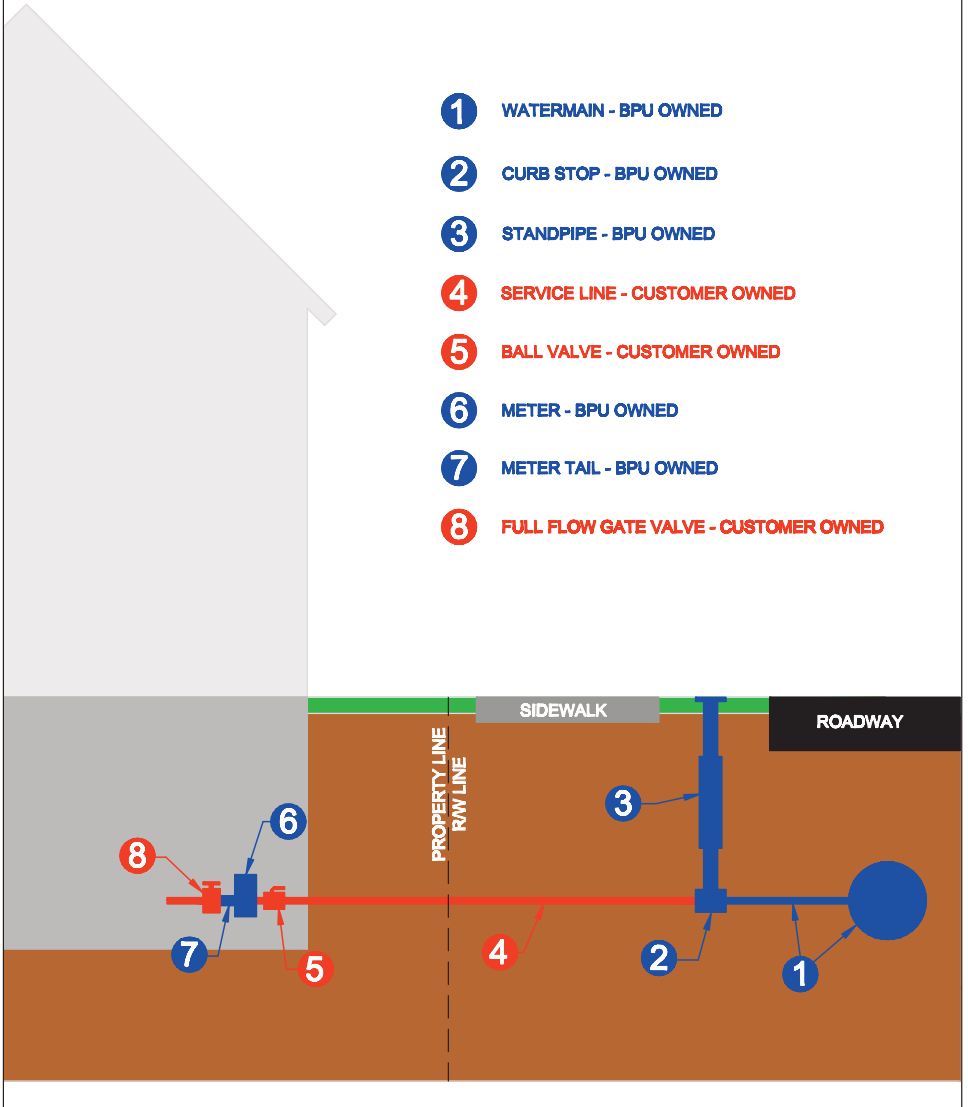


BRAINERD PUBLIC UTILITIES

RESIDENTIAL WATER SERVICE 3/4" OR 1" DIAGRAM

* DRAWING NOT TO SCALE

- 1** WATERMAIN - BPU OWNED
- 2** CURB STOP - BPU OWNED
- 3** STANDPIPE - BPU OWNED
- 4** SERVICE LINE - CUSTOMER OWNED
- 5** BALL VALVE - CUSTOMER OWNED
- 6** METER - BPU OWNED
- 7** METER TAIL - BPU OWNED
- 8** FULL FLOW GATE VALVE - CUSTOMER OWNED





Water Leaks Can Be Expensive

Having an undetected water leak in your home can cost you a much higher water and wastewater bill and can also cause damage to your home. Below are some ideas where to look for a leak in your home.

Leaking Toilets – Toilet leaks can waste hundreds of gallons of water and often times are silent. Even a small leak can add up to a lot of wasted water and money over time. Fortunately most toilet leaks are easy and inexpensive to repair.

To help determine if you have a leaking toilet, simply remove the tank lid and place a few drops of food coloring in back of the toilet tank. (Brainerd Public Utilities can also provide you with dye tabs to use). Wait about 30 minutes, without flushing, and then look in the toilet bowl to see if any of the color has come through. If the water is clear, there is no water leak. If you see colored water in the bowl, you have a water leak.

Flapper Valve Leaks - In most cases, you will simply just need to replace the toilet flapper and/or filling mechanism. The flapper is the rubber valve in the bottom of the tank that lifts when the toilet is flushed. These are available at hardware or home center stores and are inexpensive to purchase.

Flush Handle Problems – If the handle needs to be jiggled to keep the toilet from running, the flush level bar and chain, or the handle itself, may be sticking. Adjust the nut that secures it in the toilet tank. If that does not work, the handle may have to be replaced.

Overflow Tube Leaks – Ideally the water level should be set so that it is even with the fill line on the back of the toilet tank (approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ " below the overflow tube). If the water level is too high, and spilling into the overflow tube, the water level can be adjusted by turning the adjustment screw or gently bend the float arm so the water shuts off below overflow tube.

Leaking Faucets – Leaking faucets are generally a result of a worn rubber washer. The washer on a faucet is usually located under the handle. These are relatively easy to replace, if you have the right tools.

Other Water Leaks

- If you have a water softener, and the regeneration process does not shut off and softener continues to cycle.
- Pipes can break or get holes on an outside irrigation system. You should also notice water pooling in the yard.
- Outside faucets that are cracked or are left on without you realizing it.

UNREPAIRED WATER LEAKS CAN BE EXPENSIVE

A continuous leak from a hole this size would, over a three month period, waste water in the amount shown below.

Streams Diameter at 50 psi		Gallons	Daily Average
Inches	MM		
1/4"	6.5	1,181,000	13,122
3/16"	4.8	652,000	7,244
1/8"	3.2	296,000	3,288
1/16"	1.6	74,000	822

My Water Tastes Funny And Is Discolored



There are different ways that can make your water have an unusual taste or color including a deteriorating interior plumbing system, not running enough water through your water pipes on a daily basis, and the flushing of Brainerd Public Utilities hydrants.

Rinsing your interior plumbing system is a good habit for customers to practice to help keep their water fresh. Also, make sure that water softeners are in proper working order.

How to Rinse a Cold Water Plumbing System

- Open the cold water tap closest to the water meter. Let the water run for 15 minutes, then turn off the tap.
- Flush each toilet in the house twice. Start with the toilet closest to the water meter. Flushing the toilets after clearing the pipe closest to the water meter will rinse out the water sitting in the pipes and fill them with fresh water through most of the house.
- Starting from the tap closest to the water meter and working your way to the tap furthest from the meter, open all the other cold taps through the house. If a bathtub has a bath tap and shower head, open the bath tap only and let the water run from there. Let the water run for at least 5 minutes. Remove and clean all aerators and screens where possible.
- Run all outdoor spigots for at least 5 minutes.
- If the house has a point-of-entry filter or softening unit, detach the unit from the water system before beginning the rinsing.



How to Help Prevent Frozen Water Pipes and Water Meters

When below freezing temperatures are sustained over a few days, water pipes and meters that are close to cold air may freeze. Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU) urges customers to take the necessary steps to prevent water pipes and meter from freezing. Property owners are responsible for protecting both water pipes and the water meter from damage. Frozen water meters and water pipes can burst and/or stop water service and may be expensive to repair or replace. Preventing pipes and the meter from freezing is easier than trying to thaw them.

Make frequent use of your water supply:

- When outside temperatures remain below freezing, it's less expensive to run your faucet regularly than for you to repair a frozen or burst pipe.
- Running your water at a pencil-sized stream (1/4 gallon/minute) will help keep pipes from freezing; even running water for extended times periodically will help, for example, flushing toilets more often or washing a load of clothes every day.
- No adjustment will be given to the customer on their utility bill to run water, unless BPU has specifically told the customer to do so.

Eliminate cold drafts near water pipes:

- Tightly close doors and windows to the outside.
- Install storm windows on basement windows.
- Eliminate drafts from crawl spaces.
- Fill cracks in walls and around windows.
- Turn off all outside water connections.

Provide warmth to the water pipes:

- Open the door to the room where the pipes are located to allow warmth to circulate.
- Place a lighted bulb near water pipes. **Never use open flames.**
- Wrap pipes in insulation or heat tape.
- If kitchen or bathroom sink is located against an outside wall, insulate the wall. Open cabinet door below the sink to allow warm air to reach pipe.
- If you are going to be away from your home for an extended period of time, shut off the water supply to your home.

How to prevent a frozen water meter:

- It is colder near the floor and along the block wall of a basement than at the ceiling, so make sure warm air is allowed to circulate around your meter.
- If meter is in a separate room, leave the door open to this room to allow warmth to circulate.
- If meter is in a cabinet, open the cabinet door.
- Follow the above instructions for preventing frozen water pipes.

How to thaw frozen water pipes:

- The pipes are frozen if no water comes from your faucets when you turn them on. Most likely the pipes nearest a wall, door, window, or along the floor are frozen.
- Start by opening a faucet near the frozen pipe to release any vapor from the melting ice and so that you will know when the water starts flowing again.
- Begin warming the pipes nearest the faucet and work toward the frozen section.
- Blow warm air on the pipe using a hair dryer. **Do not leave the dryer unattended or allow it to overheat.**
- **Do not use a blowtorch or open flame to warm pipes. This is a fire hazard and could cause an explosion.**
- Once water has begun to flow again, let a pencil-sized stream of water flow through the faucet until normal heating is restored to the area.
- Eliminate cold drafts and allow warm air to circulate around the pipes to prevent freezing again.

UNFLUORIDATED WATER TAP



Brainerd Public Utilities has an unfluoridated water tap located at our **Central Station, 1520 Emma St.** available 24 hrs a day for our customers to fill their containers.

Directions to **1520 Emma St** are as follows:

- Turn south by Kiwanis Park, 1101 E River Rd, which turns into Jenny St (unmarked).
- Turn at water tank, follow around to building.
- The faucet is on the river side of the building. (West side of building).
- There is an "Unfluoridated Tap" sign on building.

HELP KEEP BRAINERD'S FIRE HYDRANTS CLEAR DURING THE WINTER

Clearing Snow From Fire Hydrants

When winter is at its coldest, you may want to spend most of your time inside. However, it's important to keep an eye on what's happening outdoors, too. Wintry weather can create fire safety hazards, such as ice or heavy snowfall that can obstruct fire hydrants.

You, as a Brainerd Public Utilities customer, can help reduce the risk by keeping fire hydrants accessible and clear of ice and snow.



Why It Matters

In an emergency, every second counts. Fire hydrants that are blocked, concealed, or difficult to access due to snow or ice will impede emergency fire response.

Fire trucks carry a limited amount of water, so one of the first tasks upon arriving at a fire is to locate a water supply from the nearest hydrant. Hydrants covered in snow can be difficult to locate, and uncovering them can waste valuable time needed during a fire fight. Keeping them clear can mean easier access to water and more time doing what really matters – fighting the fire.

How To Keep Fire Hydrants Clear

In addition to removing snow and debris covering the hydrant itself, Brainerd Fire Department recommends clearing a 3 foot area around the hydrant for easier access.

MAKING SAFE DRINKING WATER

Your drinking water comes from a groundwater source: six wells ranging from 123 to 187 feet deep that draw water from the Quaternary Water Table aquifer.

Brainerd Public Utilities works hard to provide you with safe and reliable drinking water that meets federal and state water quality requirements. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets safe drinking water standards. These standards limit the amounts of specific contaminants allowed in drinking water. This ensures that tap water is safe to drink for most people. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulate the amount of certain contaminants in bottled water. Bottled water must provide the same public health protection as public tap water.

To review BPU's annual Drinking Water Report, please go to www.bpu.org/services/water.

HELP PROTECT OUR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE – WATER!

Brainerd Public Utilities Office Hours - 7:00 AM - 3:30 PM Monday through Friday. We are closed Saturdays, Sundays & holidays.

Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) – In 2014 the City of Brainerd extended the existing LOST (implemented in 2007) to spend up to \$37.03 million in bonds for upgrading water and wastewater facilities and trail development. More information about the tax can be found on the MN Department of Revenue’s website at www.taxes.state.mn.us. Specific questions regarding the LOST should be directed to the MN Department of Revenue. The State is administering and collecting the LOST on behalf of the City.

Due and Payable - If your payment is not received at the Brainerd Public Utilities Business Office (8027 Highland Scenic Rd) by 2:30 p.m. on or before the due date, the bill is then delinquent and will be assessed a 10% penalty.

Delinquency - A customer’s account shall be delinquent if not paid by the due date and is subject to disconnection. It is always the customer’s responsibility to pay their bills in a timely manner, and in full, unless otherwise agreed.

Returned Checks - A service fee of \$30 will be charged for all returned checks. Repayment of returned checks must be made by cash, money order, or credit card. Payment with a bad check constitutes non-payment; therefore accounts will be subject to immediate shut-off.

Disputed Bills - Should you question this bill, please call for an explanation/investigation by Brainerd Public Utilities personnel. All inquiries must be made within 10 days of receiving the disputed bill or payment must be made in full by the due date.

Deposits - A deposit may be required for a new customer of Brainerd Public Utilities. The deposit is refundable. It will be credited to the customer’s account with interest once their account has been paid in full and on time for 12 consecutive months. When a customer moves out of their residence and a final billing is done, the deposit will be applied to the final bill. If the final bill is less than the deposit, the remaining balance, if over \$5, will be mailed to the customer.

Moving? - Please notify us at least one business day or more in advance of any changes of address, ownership, or tenancy.

Past Due Finals - Any final billing that is not paid by the due date on the final bill will be turned over to a collection agency for collection.

EXPLANATION OF OTHER CHARGES ON YOUR BILL

Service Charges – The service charge consists of expenses related to providing a minimum amount of electricity or water to the customer and expenses related to servicing a meter at the customer's location.

Power Cost Adjustment – The power cost adjustment recovers the cost of fuel used in American Electric Power's (BPU's power provider) generating units and the cost of additional purchased energy required to serve your electric needs. This charge is based on your total kWh.

CIP – A State mandated 1.5% charge on all electric charges billed to you. The purpose of the Conservation Incentive Program (CIP) is to assist utility customers in becoming more energy efficient and to promote energy conservation.

Stormwater – This charge is billed on behalf of the City of Brainerd. The revenue collected for this charge is used to maintain and improve the existing stormwater drainage system for impervious surfaces (where stormwater cannot penetrate into the ground). Residential customers are charged a monthly fee and commercial 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 (218) 828-2309.

Wastewater Treatment – This charge is based on water consumption. It covers the cost of processing the wastewater. There is a monthly service charge even if there is no consumption.

Wastewater Collection – This charge also has been added to the bill on behalf of the City of Brainerd to cover the cost of maintaining the City's wastewater collection system. If you have any questions about this charge, please call the City Engineer's Office at 828-2309.

Wastewater Debt Service – This charge is determined by the size of your water meter. The revenue is used to pay for the expansion and upgrade of the Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Demand Meter – Commercial customers that have a kW of 15 or higher each month are billed for both kWh and kW (demand). The demand charge is determined during the highest 15 minute period of electric usage during the month. Electrical load scheduling is the key to reducing your peak demand. If you have electric motors, air conditioners or other electrical equipment which are used simultaneously, try to schedule their use at different times of the day or night to minimize peak loads.

Sprinkling Credit – All residential customers qualify for a sprinkling credit that is applied to their sewer charges for the billing months of June, July, August and September. This rate goes into effect after the water meter is read in May. The credit is based on the water usage for December, January and February.

NOTE: All fees and charges noted on this bill are subject to change in accordance with actions of the Brainerd Public Utilities Commission.

BILLING INFORMATION

Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU) observes the following holidays

New Year's Day (January)

Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January)

President's Day (February)

Memorial Day (May)

Independence Day (July)

Labor Day (September)

Veteran's Day (November)

Thanksgiving Day (Thursday & Friday in November)

Christmas Day (December)

EMERGENCY SERVICE IS AVAILABLE 24 HRS. A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK

Utility Bill Due Dates

Monthly bills are issued for the following utility services; electric, water, and wastewater. All utility charges for the services BPU provides are calculated in accordance with the rate schedule approved by the BPU Commission. BPU has 18 billing cycles and does zone billing, four times a month. Your utility bill is due the same date each month. The due date is determined by the first two numbers of your account number. Please refer to the chart below:

Billing Cycle	Due Date
01-02-03-04-05	3rd of every month
06-07-08-09-10	10th of every month
11-12-13-14-15	17th of every month
16-17-18	24th of every month
20	10th of every month

If you have any questions about when your bill will be due, please feel free to call our business office at **218-825-3207**.

Budget Billing

Budget billing allows customers to pay the same amount each month, based on the average annual usage of your service address.

Each monthly bill will show your budget billing amount due, plus your actual energy usage. All budget billing accounts are re-evaluated every six months. Enrollment period is March and September each year. In order to sign up for budget billing, you have to have 12 months of billing history, a good payment history (no more than one penalty in a 12 month period) and remain in the program for 12 months. You will be automatically removed from budget billing if your account is in disconnect status. To make sure your bill is always paid on time, you may combine an automatic payment with the budget billing option.

Access to Meters

BPU has the right to access the customer's premises at reasonable times for the purpose of installing, reading, inspecting, repairing, or removing any meter device and other equipment used in connection with furnishing electric and/or water. Refusal to allow BPU access to equipment can result in disconnection of services.

Late Payment Fees

Bills not paid by the due date are subject to a late payment fee equal to 10% of the current month's charges.

Delinquent Accounts and Disconnection of Service

Unpaid accounts shall be considered past due if not paid by the due date. BPU will follow their Disconnection of Service Policy to collect the past due accounts. If the delinquent bill has not been paid or acceptable arrangements made, utility services will be disconnected. If a customer is disconnected, the entire bill, plus a reconnect fee of \$50 will have to be paid for each service turned off. BPU does not do after hour reconnections. To read the entire Disconnection Policy, go to BPU's website www.bpu.org/rates/policies.

Medical Conditions

BPU will not discontinue service if such action will worsen an existing serious illness of any person who is a permanent resident of the premises, if BPU has on file a completed Physician's Certification of Illness form. The form must be filled out completely, and if requested by BPU, must be updated every 30 days by physician.

The customer cannot use their illness as a way not to pay their utility bill. The customer will be required to make a payment arrangement to pay their past due bill.

Deceased Customer

When BPU discovers that a customer is deceased, the executor of the estate has 30 days to change the name on the account. If the utility service is not transferred, BPU reserves the right to disconnect the electric service for the address of the deceased customer.

Cold Weather Rule

From October 1 through April 30, a BPU residential customer, whose heat is affected by their electric, is protected by the Cold Weather Rule, for more information see page 24.

Tampering With Meters

Stealing electricity is dangerous and against the law. Tampering with any electric facility, including the meter box and its seal is dangerous. Anyone who breaks the seal and tampers with the meter exposes him/herself to the risk of electrocution. It is also illegal for any unauthorized person to alter, tamper with, relocate, willfully damage or bypass a water meter.

BPU will administer a zero tolerance program for unauthorized use of utility meters.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU) offers several ways to pay your utility bill each month.

Pay in Person

You can pay your bill in person Monday through Friday from 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM at the BPU Business Office located at 8027 Highland Scenic Rd.

Pay by Phone

You can make a payment 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, through our automated payment system. Please call 218-829-8726 – Option 3.

YOU WILL NEED TO KNOW YOUR BPU ACCOUNT NUMBER

Pay On-Line

Go to BPU's website www.bpu.org and click on pay my bill. If you are a first time user, you will need to know your BPU account number and the amount of your last payment.

Pay by Mail

You can mail your payment stub, along with a check or money order (please do not send cash), each month in the enclosed return envelope that you receive with your bill to: BPU, PO Box 373, Brainerd MN 56401.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS - IF YOU ARE MAKING A PAYMENT ON YOUR WATER AND SEWER CHARGES, YOU HAVE TO CALL AND SPEAK TO A BPU REPRESENTATIVE.

Automatic Payments (ACH)

Want one less check to write and ensure that your bill is paid on time? Download the bank pay form by going to BPU's website www.bpu.org fill it out and return to the BPU Business Office at 8027 Highland Scenic Rd, or call 825-3201 and BPU will e-mail you the form. You can have the payment automatically deducted from your checking or savings account; A voided check will be needed. The payment will automatically be withheld on the due date of your bill each month. A 30 day written notice is needed to cancel your automatic payment.

Drop Boxes

Please place your payment stub, check, or money order (please do not use cash), in the billing return envelope and put your payment in one of the four drop boxes that BPU provides. BPU picks up the payments Monday through Friday at 7:00 AM.

Drop boxes are located at:

- East Brainerd Mall by The Dollar Store
- The Senior Citizens Center's south entrance at 803 Kingwood St
- The southwest corner of South 7th Street and Laurel Street
- 8027 Highland Scenic Rd (BPU Business Office)



Having trouble paying your utility bill?

Seek help before you get disconnected

If you can't pay your utility bill and are in disconnect status, there are several agencies that can help pay your electric bill. **There are very few agencies that will pay water and sewer charges. If you are behind on those charges, you will have to make an arrangement by calling 825-3223, to ensure that your water is not shut off.**

Following is a list of local agencies that can help pay the electric portion of your utility bill:

- Lutheran Social Services – 716 E St NE – 829-5000
- Crow Wing County Social Services – 202 Laurel St – 824-1250
- Salvation Army – 424 Front St – 829-1120
- Bridges of Hope – 2011 6th St S – 825-7682
- St Vincent De Paul - 218-656-0074 (requires a home visit)

Minnesota Cold Weather Rule

The MN Cold Weather Rule does not forbid all winter disconnections. If you receive a Notice of Proposed Disconnection this winter, you must act immediately. If your heat is not affected by having your electric shut off, you are not protected by the MN Cold Weather Rule.

The MN Cold Weather Rule was established to protect residential customers from electrical service disconnection between October 1 and April 30. Cold Weather Rule protection is available if all of the following conditions exist:

- The disconnection would affect your main heating source.
- Your household meets Cold Weather Rule payment plan guidelines.
- You and Brainerd Public Utilities agree to a payment plan.

If you receive any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, between October 1 and April 30, you are eligible for Cold Weather Rule protection.



OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES

Natural Gas Companies – Determined by Boundaries

Center Point Energy	800-245-2377	www.centerpointenergy.com
Xcel Energy	800-895-4999	www.xcelenergy.com

Garbage Removal

Nisswa Sanitation	218-963-4758	www.nisswasanitation.com
Waste Management	218-829-4915	www.wm.com
Waste Partners	218-824-8727	www.wastepartnersinc.com

Cable Service

Spectrum (Charter Communications)	833-267-6094	www.spectrum.com
CTC (Consolidated Telecommunications)	218-454-1234	www.goctc.com

Department of Motor Vehicles

Brainerd License Office	218-855-5169	www.license.mn.com
Driver's License Exam Office	218-828-2489	www.dmv.org/mn

Brainerd Daily Dispatch

City Information and all legal notices are placed in the Dispatch.	218-829-4705	www.brainerddispatch.com
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Brainerd Post Office

	218-829-3101	www.usps.com
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AW Research (Water Testing)

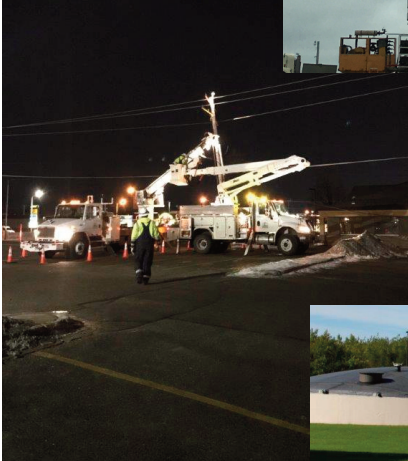
	218-829-7974	www.awlab.com
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City of Brainerd

	218-828-2307	www.ci.brainerd.mn.us
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City of Baxter

	218-454-5100	www.baxtermn.gov
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BRainerd PUBLIC
UTILITIES

8027 HIGHLAND SCENIC ROAD