



## City of River Falls News Release

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**For Immediate Release:**

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### **River Falls is #1 in Wisconsin and #5 in the nation for customer participation in renewable energy**

River Falls, WI -- River Falls Municipal Utilities (RFMU) and the River Falls community recently received national recognition for leading the nation in renewable energy participation. The Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) evaluated the green power programs of utilities across the nation and released lists of the top 10 utilities in four categories. RFMU ranked first in Wisconsin and fifth in the nation in the category of Green Power Participation Rate. It was also ranked eighth in the nation in the category of Green Power Sales Rate.

The Green Power Participation Rate is determined by the percentage of customers who participated in a utility's renewable or green energy programs. In 2015, 8.58% of RFMU customers participated in the green block program. The Green Power Sales Rate compares the ratio of a utility's renewable energy sales to total sales. In 2015, 3.76% of RFMU's sales were renewable energy sales.

"It's an honor to be recognized nationally for our renewable energy programs," said Kevin Westhuis, RFMU director. "And, we are grateful to River Falls' residents for recognizing the value of green energy through their participation and support."

RFMU offers several renewable energy programs. The Renewable Energy Block Program, for which NREL recognized the utility, provides customers with an affordable option to buy 300-kilowatt hour (kWh) blocks of energy generated from sustainable resources, such as wind, solar, and biogas. Customers can choose to purchase enough blocks to cover some or all of their energy usage each month, and know that by doing so they are reducing the amount of energy generated by coal, oil, and natural gas.

River Falls is also the first municipality in Wisconsin to pilot a community solar garden program. Local residents and businesses subscribe to shares of the solar garden and, in return, receive a credit on their energy bill for the amount of energy their share generates

over the next 20 years. Customers can also apply for the utility's Renewable Energy Finance Program, which assists with the purchase of shares in the community solar garden and energy efficiency improvements.

NREL is the U.S. Department of Energy's primary national laboratory for renewable energy and energy efficiency research and development. NREL is operated for the Energy Department by The Alliance for Sustainable Energy, LLC.

River Falls Municipal Utilities (RFMU) is a locally owned and operated, not-for-profit utility. RFMU provides electric, water/sewer, and wastewater services to approximately 5,800 customers. For more information, contact Mike Noreen, (715) 426-3467 or [mnoreen@rfcity.org](mailto:mnoreen@rfcity.org).

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