



**CITY OF RIVER FALLS WISCONSIN
UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA
CITY HALL – TRAINING ROOM
JANUARY 26, 2026**

The public may view/listen to the meeting by:

- Calling Toll Free: 1-844-992-4726, access code: 2867 543 2800 event password:456789
- Visiting the web link: <https://tinyurl.com/rfuab12626>
- Viewing the City's YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofriverfalls>

Call Meeting to Order: 6:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes: October 20, 2025

ACTION MAY BE TAKEN ON ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

PUBLIC COMMENT, PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Public Comment

NEW BUSINESS:

2. Resolution Approving River Falls Municipal Utilities Support of the 2026FY City of River Falls BUILD Grant Application
3. Resolution Recommending Approval Award for 2026-2028 Tree Service Contract

REPORTS:

4. Finance Report
5. Utility Dashboards
6. Monthly Utility Report
7. Utility Director's Report

ADJOURNMENT:

*Council members may be in attendance for informational purposes only.
No official Council action will be taken.*

NOTE: Any person who has a qualifying disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act that requires the meeting or materials to be in an accessible location or format, may contact City Clerk Amy White at (715) 426-3408 or in person at 222 Lewis Street, for accommodations. Requests for accommodations should be made at least three (3) business days in advance of the meeting. Every effort will be made to arrange accommodations.

Posted at City Hall: 01/15/2026; Published: The Pierce County Journal: 01/21/2026



**CITY OF RIVER FALLS
UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 20, 2025**

The meeting was called to order by Utility Advisory Board (UAB) Chair Chris Lick at 6:30 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance was said.

Utility Advisory Board Present: Josh Amundsen, Mike Gardner, Chris Lick, Scott Morrisette and Tim Thum

Utility Advisory Board Absent: Amber Bjork and Mark Klecker

Staff Present:

Utility Director Kevin Westhuis; Electric Operations Superintendent Wayne Siverling; Executive Assistant Lanae Nelson; WPPI Energy Services Manager Jenna Willi; WPPI Energy Chief Financial Officer Joe Daggett; and IT Technician Joe Reardon

Approval of Minutes:

Meeting Minutes: 09-15-2025

MSC Gardner/Thum approved minutes. Unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

William Hansen, N8723 1025 Street referenced October 10, 2025, *Science Advances* study of over 500 fish populations, noting that fishing has a greater impact than warming and recommended updating guidelines as a more effective and economical alternative to dam removal.

REPORTS:

WPPI Energy Business Update – The Power to Thrive Report

Westhuis introduced WPPI Energy Chief Financial Officer Joe Daggett and WPPI Energy Service Representative Jenna Willi. Daggett gave an overview of WPPI Energy's business operations, highlighting its 45-year history as a Joint Action Agency representing 51 member-governing bodies. He outlined the agency's mission, vision, financial status, and capital needs, and shared key initiatives for 2025, including electric generation resource planning, continued investments in transmission infrastructure, and ongoing support and advocacy for member communities.

Daggett also outlined the upcoming 2027-2031 business plan, to be finalized in 2026, with a focus on peak demand, cost stability, and a diversified power supply.

Finance Report

Westhuis shared the new year-to-date budget format. August financials were included in the packet.

Utility Dashboards

Westhuis reviewed the September 2025 dashboards, focusing on the Wastewater Treatment Plant Biosolids Dryer and Focus on Energy incentives.

Monthly Report

The utility reports for September 2025 were included in the NSP packet for review.

Utility Director's Report

Westhuis reviewed the utility billing disconnection process; the moratorium starts in November.

The Fall Cleanup (October 6-11) had 1,191 vehicles participating in the event.

At the WPPI Energy Annual Meeting in September, Council President/Aldersperson At Large Scott Morrisette received the Community Service Award, Electric Meter Technical Virgil Johnson earned the Shining Star Award and RFMU celebrated its 125th anniversary.

During Public Power Week (October 5-11) RFMU Electric Department hosted a live safety demonstration and provided free River Road Coffee beverages and Holy Donuts treats.

ADJOURNMENT:

MSC Amundsen/Morrisette to adjourn. Unanimous. UAB Chair Lick announced the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Executive Assistant Lanae Nelson



MEMORANDUM

TO: Utility Advisory Board

FROM: Kevin Westhouse, Utility Director
Todd Nickleski, City Engineer

DATE: January 26, 2026

TITLE: **RESOLUTION APPROVING RIVER FALLS MUNICIPAL UTILITIES SUPPORT OF THE 2026 FY CITY OF RIVER FALLS BUILD GRANT APPLICATION**

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve a resolution supporting the 2026 FY City of River Falls Build Grant Application for a future downtown reconstruction project.

BACKGROUND

In 2025 the City of River Falls Common Council reaffirmed its commitment to the City's four Strategic Priorities: Connected Community, Economic Vitality, Financial Sustainability, and Quality Municipal Services.

Strategic Initiatives are established and implemented to ensure City staff maintain a clear and formal workplan focused on the community's most important needs and opportunities, as identified by City Council. These initiatives guide organizational efforts, align resources, and support measurable progress toward Council's goals.

As part of this framework, the Downtown Project was identified as a key Strategic Initiative under the Economic Vitality priority. This initiative reflects Council's emphasis on strengthening the downtown area as a vibrant economic, cultural, and community hub.

The Downtown Project is tentatively planned to include reconstruction of Main Street from Division to Cascade Avenue, Second Street from Division to Spring Street, and the 100 block streets located between Main Street and Cascade Avenue. The project also includes electric utility improvements within the alley between Main Street and Second Street, as well as along the Riverwalk. The preliminary project limits are illustrated in the attached figure.

Within the project area, the scope of work is anticipated to include full roadway reconstruction, installation of new underground water and sanitary sewer utilities, and undergrounding of electric utilities. Each of these major components is described in greater detail in the sections that follow.

- Water Utilities: Water Utilities within the project limits consist primarily of 4 and 6-inch water mains that are over 100 years old, have outlived their useful design life, and the majority of water service valves have failed. This project will include complete replacement of all water mains and services within the project area. New water mains will be sized to provide improved fire flow and increased reliability within the project area.
- Sanitary Sewer: Sanitary sewer within the project area is constructed primarily of clay tile pipes greater than 80 years old. Sanitary sewer in this project area has outlived its useful design life and replacement is warranted. All sanitary sewer laterals will be replaced to eliminate shared services which are a concern to business owners and not a current acceptable construction practice.
- Electric Utilities: As projects occur and overhead electric cables age, the River Falls Electric Utility replaces overhead electric with underground electric cables when practical to improve system reliability and resiliency. This project offers an opportunity to replace overhead electric utilities on Division Street, the 100-Block Alley, Cedar Street, and the Riverwalk with underground utilities.
- Streets and Storm Sewer: All roadways in the project area are in poor condition and have not been updated in approximately 40 years. Pavement and base structure is severely degraded and traditional pavement maintenance techniques used elsewhere in the City will not be effective and would be expected to fail prematurely. The need to replace underground utilities offers the City a unique opportunity to reconstruct roadways and replace aging utilities as one comprehensive project. Future roadways will be wholistically designed to improve safety and functionality for all roadway users, but no preliminary planning is anticipated to occur until funding, discussed below, is secured.

DISCUSSION

This is a legacy project that will serve the City of River Falls for generations to come. As expected, this will be one of the most comprehensive, challenging, and expensive projects ever undertaken by the City of River Falls and the River Falls Municipal Utilities.

The United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program has been identified as a potential funding source for the Downtown Project. In alignment with the City's strategic initiatives, City staff are actively pursuing this funding opportunity.

BUILD grants are intended to support surface transportation improvements, including roadway and storm sewer infrastructure. The program allows for a maximum grant award of up to \$25 million. While a local funding match is not required, communities that commit local funds to BUILD-funded projects are viewed more favorably during the evaluation process and historically demonstrate a higher likelihood of receiving an award.

Our grant application strategy is to utilize the Electric, Water, and Wastewater utilities to fund their respective improvements as our local commitment if awarded a BUILD grant. Roadway and storm sewer improvements would be funded by the grant. Typical utility replacement projects require partial or complete roadway reconstruction above the utilities to be replaced. This strategy utilizes

grant funding to install an improved roadway over new underground utilities, reducing overall cost to the utilities for this comprehensive project.

To document the utilities commitment if successful and awarded a BUILD grant, it is desirable to request the Utility Advisory Board to document its support by providing a "Letter of Support" to be included in the US DOT grant application submittal, which is due February 20th.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no immediate financial obligations required to provide a letter of support to support the BUILD grant application. However, if successful, each utility will fund their infrastructure replacement costs, including planning and design. Preliminary opinions of probable costs with planning and design are shown below.

Work Division	Preliminary Opinion of Probable Cost (2025 Dollars)	Funding Source
Streets and Stormwater	\$21.9M	BUILD Grant
Electric	\$5M	Electric Funds
Water	\$3M	Water Utility Funds
Wastewater	\$1.9M	Wastewater Utility Funds

CONCLUSION

To support a competitive grant application, staff recommends the Utility Advisory Board support the City of River Falls FY 2026 BUILD grant application for Downtown Reconstruction by committing necessary funds to replace the aging water, sewer, and electric infrastructure and documenting support in a letter to the US DOT to be included with the grant application package.

Downtown Reconstruction Project



 Downtown Reconstruction Area

0 100 200 400
Feet





RESOLUTION NO. 2026-XX

**RESOLUTION APPROVING RIVER FALLS MUNICIPAL UTILITIES SUPPORT OF THE 2026
FY CITY OF RIVER FALLS BUILD GRANT APPLICATION**

WHEREAS, The City of River Falls Common Council identified a downtown reconstruction project as a key strategic initiative to promote economic vitality.

WHEREAS, the water and sewer utilities in the downtown area have aged beyond their useful design life and will require replacement, and

WHEREAS, overhead electric utilities in the downtown area should be replaced with underground utilities as part of a comprehensive reconstruction project to promote electric distribution system reliability and resiliency, and

WHEREAS, the City of River Falls is applying for a United States Department of Transportation “Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development” (BUILD) grant program to fund surface transportation improvements

WHEREAS, a complete downtown reconstruction project requires replacement of existing water, sewer, and electric utilities, and

WHEREAS, the Utility Advisory Board supporting infrastructure replacement as part of the downtown project will strengthen the BUILD grant application, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Utility Advisory Board hereby approves support of the City of River Falls 2026 FY BUILD grant application.

Dated this 26th day of January 2026.

Chris Lick, Board Chair

ATTEST:

Amy White, City Clerk



MEMORANDUM

TO: Utility Advisory Board

FROM: Wayne Siverling, Electric Operations Superintendent

DATE: January 26, 2026

TITLE: **RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL AWARD FOR 2026-2028 TREE SERVICE CONTRACT**

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Recommend a resolution advising City Council to authorize the City Administrator to enter a three-year contract with Zielies Tree Service, Inc. to provide electric line-clearance tree and brush trimming services in support of vegetation management for the City's Electric Utilities Department.

BACKGROUND

River Falls Municipal Electrical Utilities (RFMU) is required to clear transmission and distribution service lines on a regularly scheduled basis. The Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC) and the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) require regular inspection and maintenance of electric systems. Proper vegetation management is necessary to ensure public safety and maintain system reliability.

The Electric Utilities Department and the City's Public Works Department evaluated the feasibility of combining the vegetation management contract with the City's tree trimming contract. After review, it was determined that electric line-clearance trimming requires specialized skills, certifications, and regulatory compliance that differ from general tree trimming services. As a result, combining the contracts is not feasible at this time.

DISCUSSION

RFMU recommends awarding a three-year contract (2026–2028) to Zielies Tree Service, Inc., of Bruce, Wisconsin, to provide electric line-clearance tree and brush trimming services for the City's distribution and transmission systems. Work will be performed on a rotating basis to address all service areas over the contract term.

The total estimated cost of the contract is \$360,000, with projected expenditures of \$100,000 in 2026 for distribution line trimming, \$160,000 in 2027 for distribution and transmission line trimming, and \$100,000 in 2028 for distribution line trimming.

Proposals were received from Zielies Tree Service, Inc. and New Age Tree Service. Makovsky Brush Service, SavATree – Tree Service & Lawn Care, and JCE Tree Service were also solicited but did not submit proposals. Zielies Tree Service, Inc. submitted the lowest responsive proposal. Proposal details for both respondents are summarized in the tables below.

Staff is confident in Zielies Tree Service, Inc.'s ability to perform the required work based on its satisfactory performance under the current contract. Funding for this project will be provided through the Electric Utility Fund. The 2026 budget includes \$100,000 for this service.

Zielies Tree Service, Inc.	2026 Rates	2027 Rates	2028 Rates
Stump Grinding	\$4.40/inch	\$4.84/inch	\$4.99/inch
Foreman	\$74.26/hr.	\$77.23/hr.	\$80.32/hr.
Trimmer 5/Journeyman	\$66.41/hr.	\$69.07/hr.	\$71.83/hr.
Trimmer 4	\$57.76/hr.	\$60.07/hr.	\$62.47/hr.
55'ft Backyard Track Machine	\$64.32/hr.	\$66.25/hr.	\$68.24/hr.
70'ft Bucket Truck and 15" Chipper	\$52.21/hr.	\$53.78/hr.	\$55.39/hr.
Mechanical All Terrain Tree Trimmer	\$79.36/hr.	\$81.74/hr.	\$84.19/hr.
Brush Mower	\$65.09/hr.	\$67.04/hr.	\$69.05/hr.
Stump Chipping with Chip Cleanup	\$96.42/hr.	\$99.31/hr.	\$102.29/hr.
Stump Chipping without Chip Cleanup	\$94.22/hr.	\$97.05/hr.	\$99.96/hr.
Equipment for Large Wood Removal	\$61.11/hr.	\$62.94/hr.	\$64.83/hr.
¾ ton Pick-Up	\$22.44/hr.	\$23.11/hr.	\$23.80/hr.
Chip Truck	\$23.20/hr.	\$23.90/hr.	\$24.62/hr.
Service Truck/Pulling Truck	\$23.64/hr.	\$24.34/hr.	\$25.07/hr.

New Age Tree Service	2026 Rates
Stump Grinding	\$8.00/inch
Foreman	\$78.00/hr.
Trimmer 5/Journeyman	\$75.00/hr.
Trimmer 4	\$72.00/hr.
55'ft Backyard Track Machine	\$75.00/hr.
70'ft Bucket Truck and 15" Chipper	\$68.00/hr.
Mechanical All Terrain Tree Trimmer	\$110.00/hr.
Brush Mower	\$155.00/hr.
Stump Chipping with Chip Cleanup	N/A
Stump Chipping without Chip Cleanup	N/A
Equipment for Large Wood Removal	\$125.00/hr.
¾ ton Pick-Up	\$22.00/hr.
Chip Truck	\$28.00/hr.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Funding the Tree Service project is included in the 2026 budget and reflected in the table below. The project is proposed to be budgeted at \$160,000 in 2027 for distribution and transmission line trimming and \$100,000 in 2028 for distribution line trimming.

Sources	Amount	Uses	Amount
Electric Utility Fund 610	\$360,000	Zielies Tree Service, Inc.	\$360,000
Total Sources	\$360,000	Total Uses	\$360,000

The 2026 budget includes \$100,000 for distribution line clearance only. As shown in the table below, the City’s distribution system is divided into three service areas, with trimming services rotated among these areas on a three-year cycle.

The City’s 11 miles of transmission right-of-way are cleared on a four-year cycle. These transmission assets are divided into two sections to support ongoing maintenance, with partial transmission line clearance performed every other year.

<u>Example</u> Vegetation Management Rotation / Tree and Brush Trimming Rotation			
Yr.	Calendar Yr.	Scope of Work	Amount
1	2026	Distribution Area 3	\$100,000
2	2027	Distribution Area 1	\$100,000
2	2027	Transmission Section 1	\$60,000
3	2028	Distribution Area 2	\$100,000

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends the River Falls Utility Advisory Board approve a three-year Tree Service contract resolution recommending that the River Falls Common Council authorize award of the contract to Zielies Tree Service, Inc. for the City’s electric line clearance and vegetation management and authorize the City Administrator to enter into an agreement.

Enc:
 2026-2028 Tree Service Contract
 Zielies Tree Service, Inc. Proposal



**CITY OF RIVER FALLS
RIVER FALLS MUNICIPAL UTILITIES
2026-2028 TREE SERVICE LINE CLEARANCE CONTRACTED SERVICES**

I. Scope of Work

This Line Clearance Service Agreement (“Contract”) by and between the City of River Falls and River Falls Municipal Utilities (“RFMU”) and “Contractor” is intended for RFMU to retain a contractor to competitively and efficiently prune all trees, including right-of-way line clearance, tree/brush cutting, and removal work near transmission, distribution and secondary voltage lines in their respective service areas.

Contractor shall furnish all supervision, labor, tools, transportation, licenses, permits and other equipment and materials necessary to perform the work required under this contract, consisting of tree trimming and/or removal, brush and/or woody vegetation cutting at ground line, and the disposal of the debris resulting from such work to an approved landfill or burning site at the Contractor’s expense (collectively, “Work”).

It is the responsibility of Contractor to supply labor, equipment, materials, and supervision to complete the Work in a manner acceptable to RFMU to guard against interfering with the normal operations of RFMU’s electrical circuits.

II. Safety to Contractor’s Employees and the Public

Contractor shall always conduct Work in a manner as to safe-guard the public from injury to persons or property.

Contractor recognizes that RFMU is engaged in the distribution of electrical energy. Contractor shall always be aware of the nature and characteristic of electric circuits before Work is commenced in the vicinity thereof. Contractor understands that the electric circuits shall remain energized at all times during the execution of Work. Contractor is required to utilize all necessary and proper protective procedures and mechanical devices for the protection of its employees and the public. Contractor shall not interfere with the normal operation of such electrical circuits. All Contractor-caused electric service interruptions shall be repaired at Contractor’s sole cost and expense.

Contractor shall be responsible for the erection and maintenance of all barricades, lights, signs and other traffic control necessary for public safety and convenience in accordance with local requirements. In general, all hazards within the limits of the work area or on detour around the work area must be marked with appropriate signs, flashers, barricades, reflectors, etc., to protect the public, persons, and property. These safeguards shall be moved, changed, increased or removed as required during the progress of the Work to meet changing conditions.

III. Communication

Communication is the responsibility of Contractor. Communication must be established between the Contractor, its crew, and property owners prior to commencement of Work. All trees on private property, including easements, and public right-of-ways adjacent to the private property owner’s property are considered private property. Prior to trimming and/or removal, the Contractor must make

a reasonable attempt to contact each property owner a minimum of twenty-four hours prior to commencement of Work, in accordance with Wis. Admin. Code PSC § 113.0510. Trees to be pruned on public right-of-way shall be cleared with the appropriate municipal agency.

IV. Personnel and Equipment

The parties intend to create, by this contract, an independent contractor relationship and not an employee/employer relationship. All Work performed by Contractor under this contract shall be as an independent contractor, with Contractor maintaining complete control over all its employees and equipment. Contractor shall be solely responsible for the payment of any and all taxes or fees relating to compensation received by Contractor under this Contract, including without limitation, all federal, state, and local income taxes, Social Security taxes, Unemployment Insurance taxes, and any other such taxes, whether foreign or domestic, and any business license or other fees arising from Contractor's activities pursuant to this Contract. Contractor personnel shall have required training and qualifications, certifications, knowledge and practical experience to perform the required services in accordance with Section V. Standards. Contractor's equipment shall be state-of-the-art and adequate to perform the work.

V. Standards

All Work performed shall be in accordance with the best recognized and approved forestry and/or tree arboricultural standards. In addition, all performed work and equipment used shall conform with the requirements, specifications, and standards of the Electrical Hazard Awareness Training (EHAP), the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC), the National Electrical Code (NEC), the Wisconsin State Electrical Code, Municipal Electric Utilities of Wisconsin Safety Manual, applicable practices and specifications of River Falls Municipal Utilities (RFMU), and the City of River Falls ordinances, and any amendments or revisions of said codes or practices. Furthermore, all performed work and equipment used shall comply with any applicable rules or orders issued by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW), the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), and any other governmental authorities having jurisdiction. This policy is to set forth the specifications and guidelines related to tree trimming, tree removal, and line clearance to provide for reasonable service continuity, safety to the public, and to guard against forest fire damage caused by supply conductors. All work shall be performed in a thorough and workmanlike manner and to the satisfaction of RFMU.

VI. Schedule

RFMU shall furnish Contractor with a map outlining location of work to be performed. The Contractor shall communicate and coordinate work to be performed by providing RFMU a preliminary time table consisting of utility location, preliminary dates, and costs with the proposal. Prior to performing Work, Contractor shall provide RFMU in writing an updated work schedule seven calendar days before the commencement of Work. Contractor work hours shall conform to RFMU's normal work hours. Arrangements for Work performed beyond or different from normal work hours shall be agreed to with RFMU. Contractor shall provide RFMU written weekly update outlining Work completed.

VII. Insurance

The Contractor shall indemnify and hold harmless, to the fullest extent allowed by law, the City of River Falls, Wisconsin, its agents, employees and representatives from all claims, demands, suits, actions, payments, liability, judgements and expenses (including court-ordered attorney's fees),

arising out of or resulting from the performance of the contract that results in bodily injury, sickness, disease, death, civil rights liability, or damage to or destruction of tangible property, including the loss of use resulting therefrom, that are caused in whole or in part by the Contractor, any subcontractor, or any agents or representatives, either directly or indirectly employed by them. Contractor's insurance coverage must include, and the insurance certificate must indicate, waivers of subrogation on all policies in favor of the City of River Falls and RFMU, and all policies (except for workers compensation insurance) must include the City of River Falls and RFMU as additional insureds.

Contractor shall not commence Work until it has obtained all insurance required under this Section VIII and such insurance has been approved by the City of River Falls, nor shall the Contractor allow any subcontractor to commence work on its subcontract until all similar insurance required of the subcontractor has been so obtained and approved.

Minimum Requirements

- A. **Workers' Compensation Insurance and Employer's Liability Insurance:** The Contractor shall take out and maintain during the Term of this Contract the applicable statutory Worker's Compensation Insurance, and in the case of any work sublet, the Contractor shall require the subcontractor similarly to provide statutory Worker's Compensation Insurance for the latter's employees. Coverage shall be provided by an insurance company authorized to write such insurance in all states where the Contractor will have employees located in the performance of this contract, and the Contractor shall require each of his subcontractors similarly to maintain Employer's Liability Insurance similarly to the Contractor.

Workers' Compensation - Required limits:

Coverage A - Coverage will include Statutory requirements

Coverage B - Employers Liability

\$500,000 Each Person

\$500,000 Each Person by Disease

\$500,000 Policy Limit - Disease

- B. **General Liability Insurance**

1. The Contractor shall maintain during the term of this contract, Commercial General Liability Insurance, naming and protecting contractor and the City of River Falls against claims for damages resulting from (a) bodily injury, including wrongful death, and (b) property damage which may arise from operations under this Contract whether such operations be by contractor or by any subcontractor or anyone directly or indirectly employed by either of them. The insurance requirements are:

Commercial General Liability (form CG0001 or equivalent) with limits of:

\$2,000,000 Each Occurrence

\$2,000,000 Personal Injury

\$2,000,000 Products/Completed Operations

\$2,000,000 General Aggregate

2. Coverage shall include Contractual Liability coverage insuring the contractual exposure as addressed in this Contract.

3. There shall be no exclusion or limitation for the Explosion (X), Collapse (C) and Underground (U) hazards.
 4. Coverage shall also include Products/Completed Operations (CG2037 or equivalent)
 5. City of River Falls shall be named as Additional insured (CG2010 or equivalent).
 6. The Commercial General Liability coverage shall be endorsed with the Designated Construction Project(s) General Aggregate Limit endorsement (CG 2503 or equivalent).
- C. Automobile Liability Insurance: The Contractor shall take out and maintain during the Term of this Contract such Automobile Liability Insurance as shall protect Contractor against claims for damages resulting from (a) bodily injury, including wrongful death, and (b) property damage which may arise from the operations of any owned, hired, or now-owned automobiles used by or for Contractor in any capacity in connection with the carrying out of this Contract. The minimum acceptable limits of liability to be provided by such Automobile Liability Insurance shall be as follows:
- Bodily Injury and Property Damage \$1,000,000 Combined Single Limit
- D. Minimum Scope of Insurance: All Liability Insurance policies shall be written on an "Occurrence" basis only. All insurance coverage are to be placed with insurers authorized to do business in the State of Wisconsin and must be placed with an insurer that has A.M. Best's Rating of no less than A: VII unless specific approval has been granted by the City of River Falls.
 - E. Certificate of Insurance: All Certificates of Insurance shall be filed with the City of River Falls on the standard ACCORD CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE form showing the specific limits of insurance, coverage modifications and endorsements required by the preceding Sections A, B, C, D and showing the City of River Falls is an additional insured where required. Such certificate shall specifically state that insurance policies are to be endorsed to require the insurer to provide the City of River Falls thirty days, notice of cancellation non-renewal or any material reduction of insurance coverage.

VIII. Indemnification

The Contractor hereby indemnifies and holds harmless RFMU and the City of River Falls, its elected and appointed officials, officers, employees, or agents from and against any and all liabilities, damages, costs, expenses, causes of action, claims, suits, proceedings and judgments arising out of, or are attributable to, the Contractor's performance of the contract.

IX. Compensation Due to Contractor

RFMU shall pay the Contractor for all work based on hours worked in cutting, pruning and removing trees, brush and similar growth.

Contractor shall accept as full and complete compensation for the performance of all things required by the contract, such sums as shall be determined due to using the hourly rates for labor, and equipment set forth in the proposal, which is part of this contract.

Prior to compensation being paid, Contractor shall submit a written statement to RFMU showing the Work performed during the invoice period. The statement shall list the number and kind of hours worked, equipment used, and a map outlining the location of work performed. RFMU shall have the right to verify and otherwise investigate the contents of said statement before payment is due.

X. Emergency Service Restoration

It is the intent of the parties that insofar as possible, all work shall be done during the usual and ordinary working hours on regular workdays. It may, on rare occasions, be necessary for RFMU to require Contractor to work crews for any storm or emergency work and respond quickly for any “hot spot” trimming outside of normal business hours. At such times it may be necessary, because of safety and the urgency of service restoration, to deviate from the use of proper pruning techniques as defined. Contractor shall be compensated at regular rate as provided, unless an emergency service restoration rate has been established.

During a utility-declared emergency, utilities must restore service as quickly as possible. At such times it may be necessary, because of safety and the urgency of service restoration, to deviate from the use of proper pruning techniques. Following a utility-declared emergency, corrective pruning should be done by Contractor, as necessary.

XI. Assignability of Work by Contractor

The Contractor without the prior written consent of RFMU thereof shall make no assignment or transfer of this contract or any part. No work to be performed hereunder shall be subcontracted out by the Contractor without the prior written consent of RFMU.

XII. Scope of Contract

Both RFMU and Contractor agree that RFMU shall not be obligated to provide the Contractor with any specific amount of Work with respect to the care, trimming, cutting of trees, brush or similar growth during the Term of the Contract.

It is further agreed by both RFMU and Contractor that RFMU may, at its option, assign any or all of its tree or brush care, trimming, cutting and removal to its own personnel or in the event of default by the Contractor, to other parties engaged in this type of work.

XIII. Amount of Contract

The total amount of compensation under the Contract is subject to RFMU’s annual budgeted amount. This Contract shall be effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2028 (“Term”) as provided for below:

Stump grinding	\$ _____ per inch
Foreman	\$ _____ per hour
Trimmer 5/Journeyman	\$ _____ per hour
Trimmer 4	\$ _____ per hour
55’ft Backyard track machine	\$ _____ per hour
70’ft Bucket truck and 15” Chipper	\$ _____ per hour
Mechanical all terrain tree trimmer	\$ _____ per hour

Brush mower	\$ _____ per hour
Stump chipping with chip cleanup	\$ _____ per hour
Stump chipping without chip cleanup	\$ _____ per hour
Equipment for large wood removal	\$ _____ per hour
¾ ton Pick-Up	\$ _____ per hour
Chip truck	\$ _____ per hour

XIV. Contract Renewal

Within 90 days of expiry, this contract may be renewed upon mutual agreement of both RFMU and the contractor for an additional three-year term. Current rates will be reviewed at this time and adjusted as agreed upon by both parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the parties hereto has caused this Contract to be duly executed by their authorized representatives.

Contractor _____

City of River Falls
River Falls Municipal Utilities

Print Name/Title

Print Name/Title

Signature

Signature

For additional information, please contact Electric Operations Superintendent Wayne Siverling at 715-426-3480.



Zielies Tree Service, Inc.

PO Box 307
Bruce, WI 54819

ZIELIES

Phone 715/868-5644 Fax 715/868-2045

River Falls 2026/2028

Rates for this contract shall be effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2028 ("Term") as provided for below:

	2026 RATES	2027 RATES	2028 RATES
Stump Grinding	4.40	4.84	4.99
Foreman	74.26	77.23	80.32
Trimmer 5/Journeyman	66.41	69.07	71.83
Trimmer 4	57.76	60.07	62.47
55' Backyard Track Machine	64.32	66.25	68.24
70'ft Bucket truck and 15" Chipper	52.21	53.78	55.39
Mechanical all terrain tree trimmer	79.36	81.74	84.19
Brush Mower	65.09	67.04	69.05
Stump chipping with chip cleanup	96.42	99.31	102.29
Stump chipping without chip cleanup	94.22	97.05	99.96
Equipment for large wood removal	61.11	62.94	64.83
¾ ton Pick-Up	22.44	23.11	23.80
Chip truck	23.20	23.90	24.62
Service Truck/Pulling Truck	23.64	24.34	25.07



Electric

2026-2028 Tree Service Contract

Vegetation Management / Right of Way Clearing
Zielies Tree Service

Electric Operations Superintendent Wayne Siverling
City of River Falls, WI



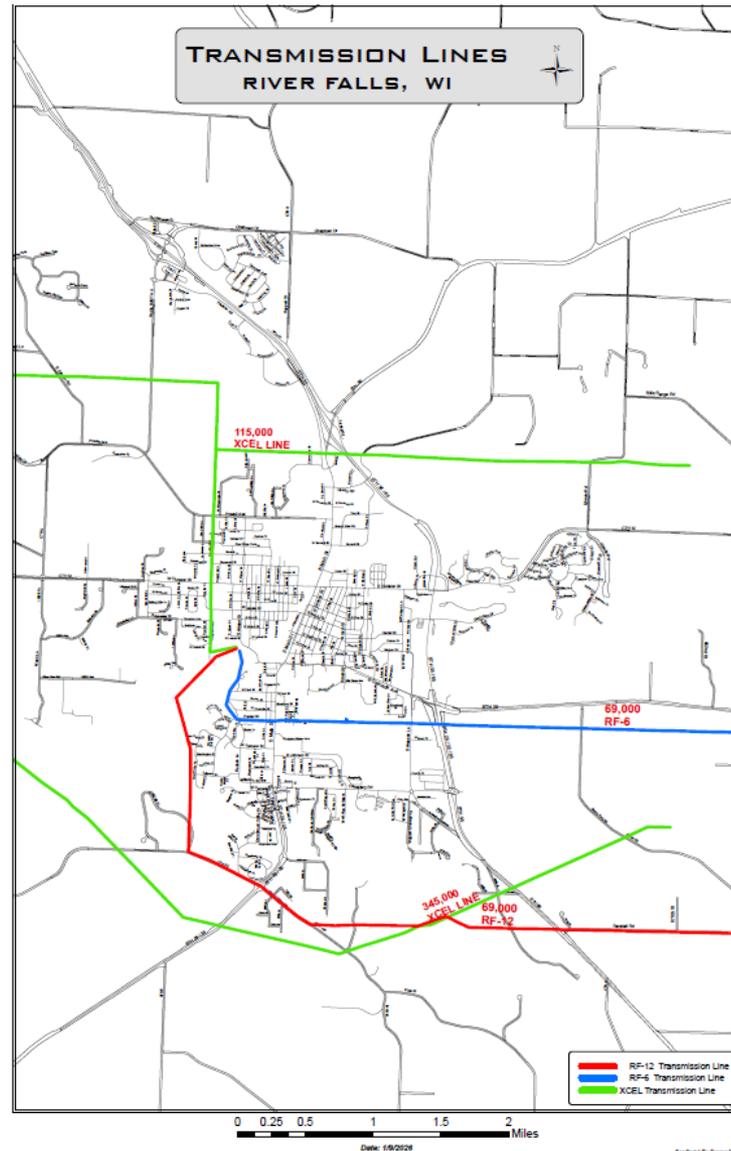
- I. Zielies Tree Service**
- II. Tree Trimming Transmission Map**
- III. Tree Trimming Distribution Map**
- II. Transmission and Distribution Trimming**
- III. Notification Process**

Zielies Tree Service

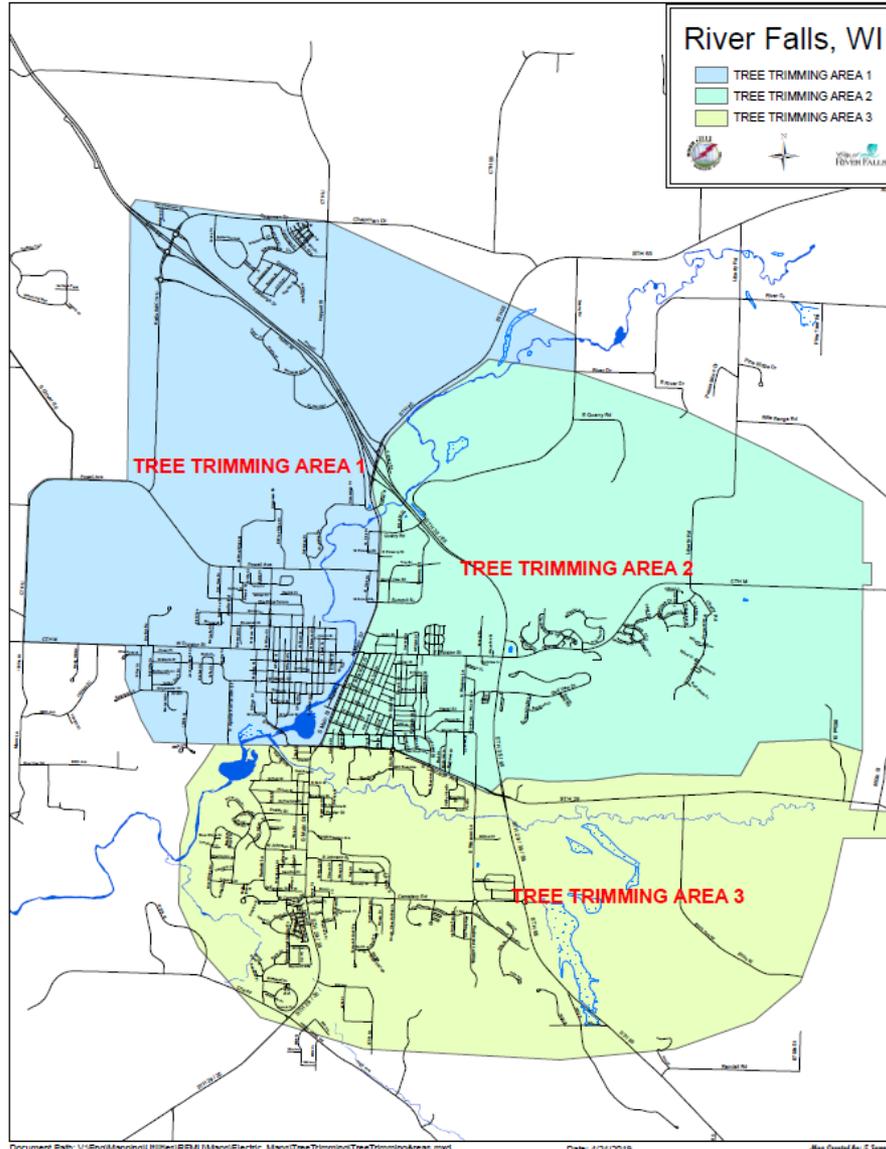


- **Company Established: 1987**
- **Located: Bruce, WI**
- **RFMU Electric Partnership: 2017**

Tree Trimming Transmission Map



Tree Trimming Distribution Map

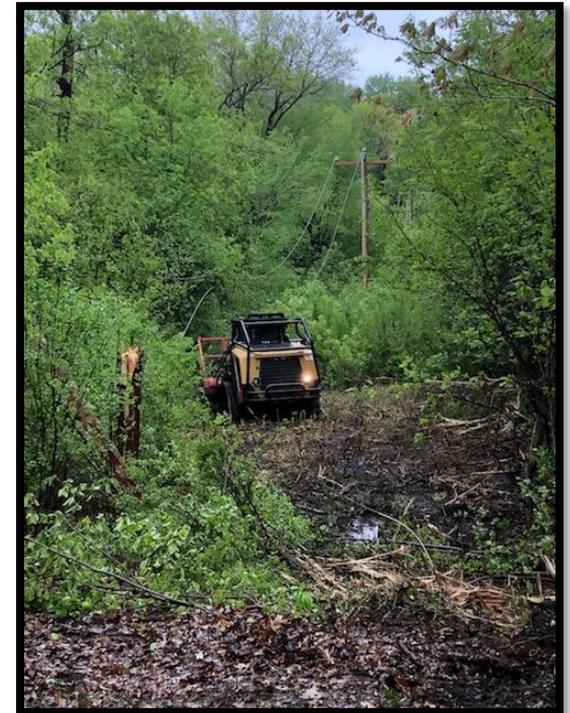


Document Path: V:\Eng\Mapping\Utilities\RFMU\Maps\Electric_Maps\Tree Trimming\Tree Trimming Areas.mxd

Date: 4/24/2019

Map Created By: J. Janssen

Tree Trimming



Tree Trimming



Trimming Frequency and Styles



Frequency

- **Distribution lines: Once every 3 years**
- **Transmission lines: Once every 4 years**

Styles

- **Hand Trimming**
- **Bucket Tree Trimming**
- **Backyard Bucket**
- **Track Brush Removal Equipment**

Trimming and Removal Operations Options



Contractor

- **Perform trimming and cleanup**
- **Remove all cut tree materials**
 - **Branches, limbs, brush, and remnants**
- **Transport removed materials to the City of River Falls Yard Waste Site**
- **Will not remove existing dead, diseased trees and their related debris**

Property Owner / Customer

- **If the property owner / customer emails the Electric Department requesting to keep the cut tree materials, the contractor will leave them on-site as directed**

Notification Process



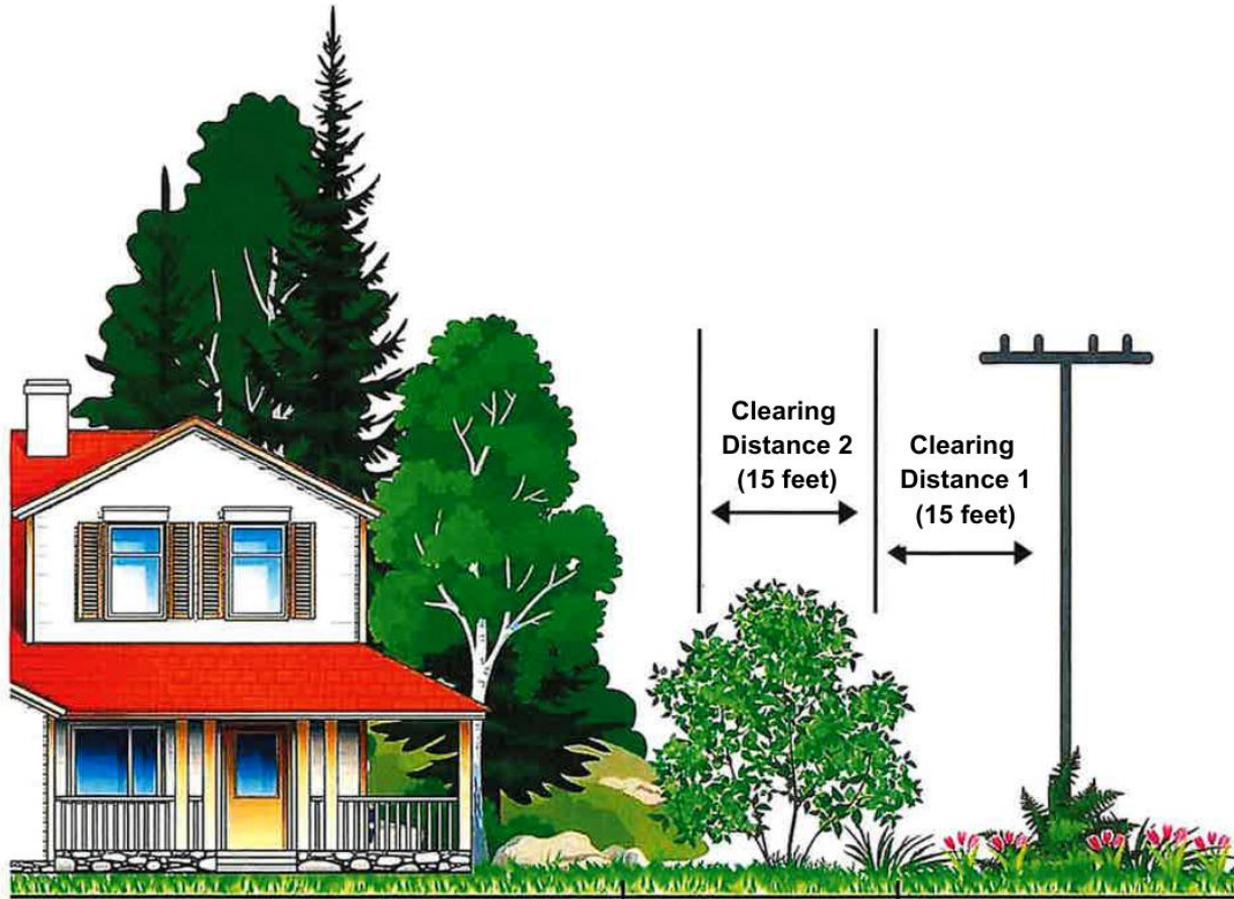
Forms of Communication to Customers

- Letters
- Postcards
- Doorhanger Tags
- Website
- Social Media

Trimming/Maintaining Areas



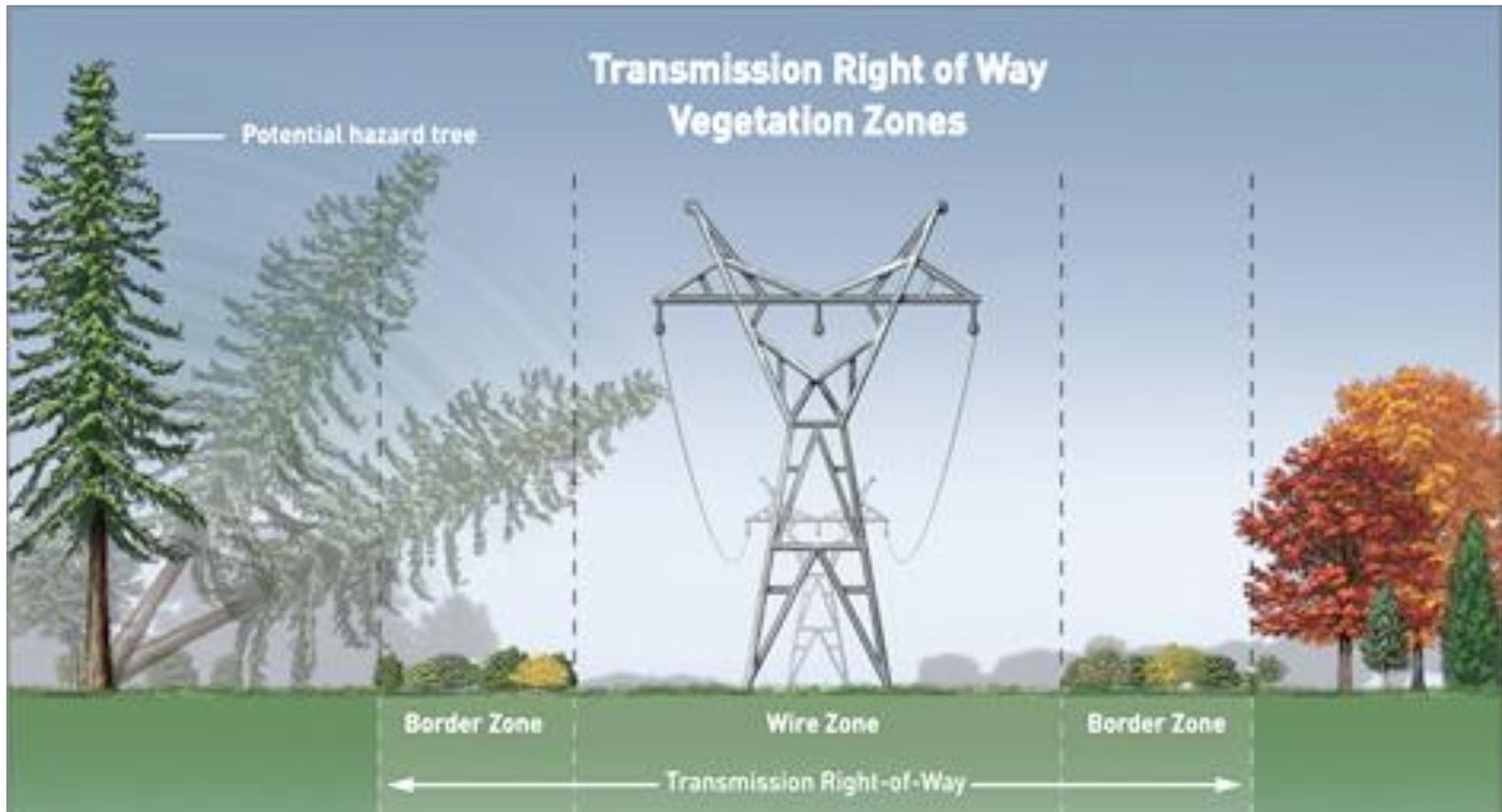
Distribution lines: Once every 3 years



Trimming/Maintaining Areas



Transmission lines: Once every 4 years





THANK YOU!

**Electric Operations Superintendent Wayne
Siverling**

wsiverling@rfcity.org

715.426.3480



RESOLUTION NO. 2026-XX

**RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL AWARD FOR 2026-2028
TREE SERVICE CONTRACT**

WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin Public Service Commission (WPSC) and the North American Electric Reliability Commission (NERC) requires electric line clearance, tree trimming, and vegetation management; and

WHEREAS, tree trimming and vegetation management increase electric reliability for customers and reduce maintenance for our crews; and

WHEREAS, vegetation management will begin soon after approval of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, the City of River Falls Electric Utility's current line clearance contract has expired; and

WHEREAS, Zielies Tree Service, Inc. has submitted the lowest responsible proposal for a new three-year contract; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Utility Advisory Board hereby advises the River Falls Common Council to authorize the City Administrator to approve the proposal with Zielies Tree Service, Inc. for the City's electric line clearance and vegetation management for electrical line clearance of tree and brush trimming.

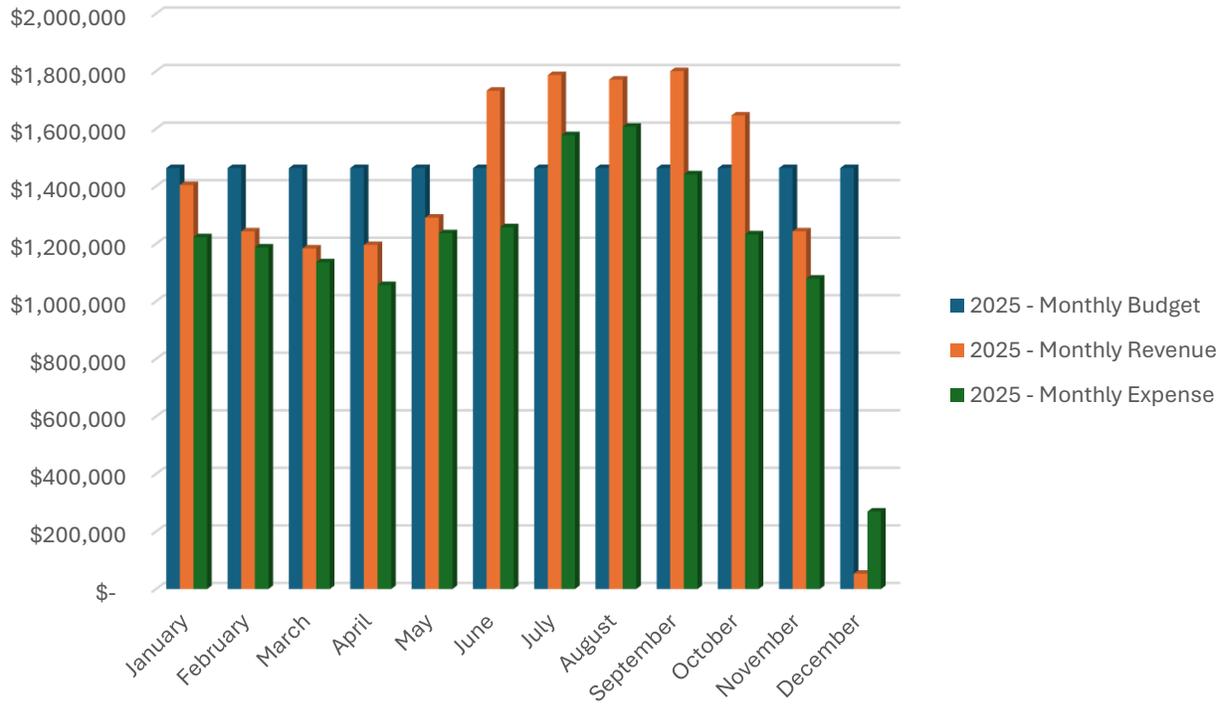
Dated this 26th day of January 2026.

Chris Lick, Board Chair

ATTEST:

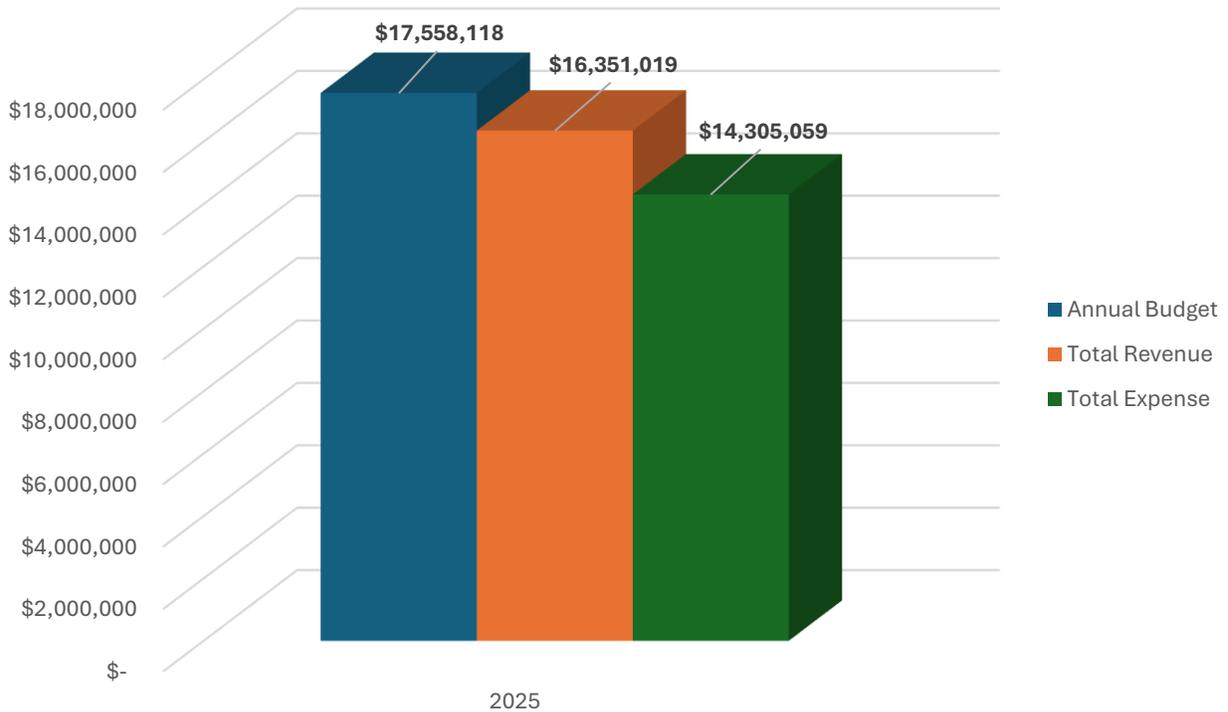
Amy White, City Clerk

Electric Fund 610 - 2025 Monthly Budget vs Actual



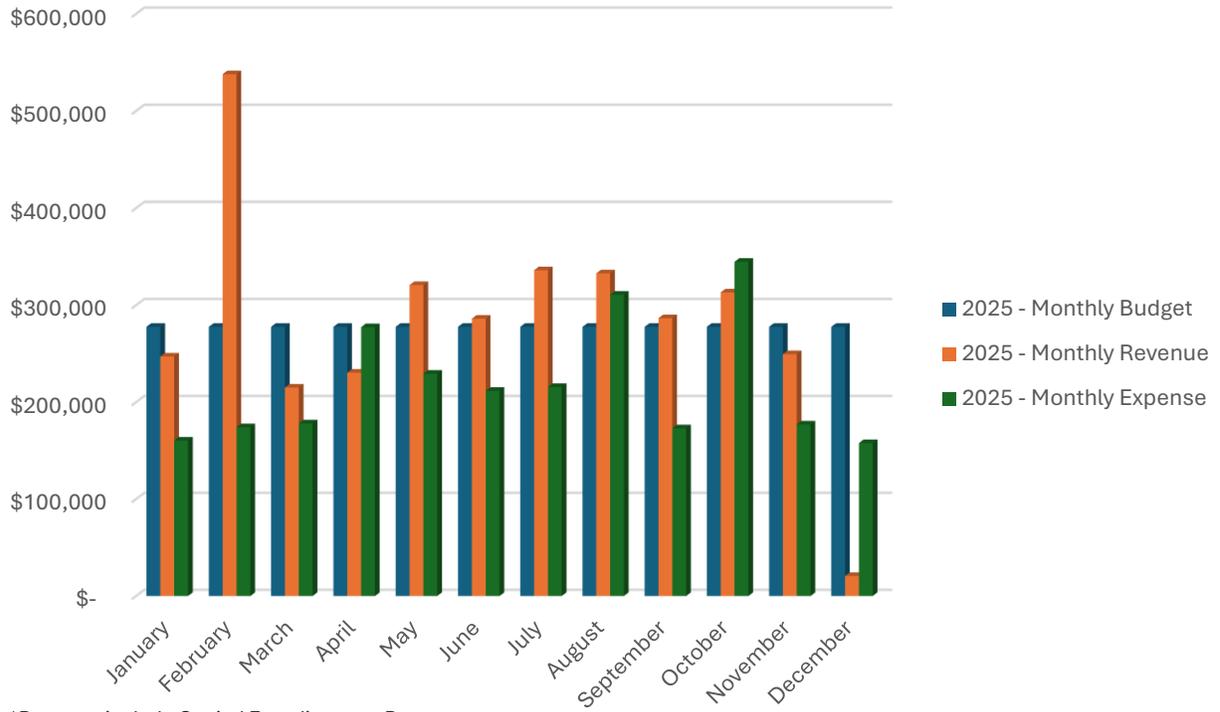
*Does not include Capital Expenditures or Revenues

Electric Fund 610 - 2025 Budget vs Actual

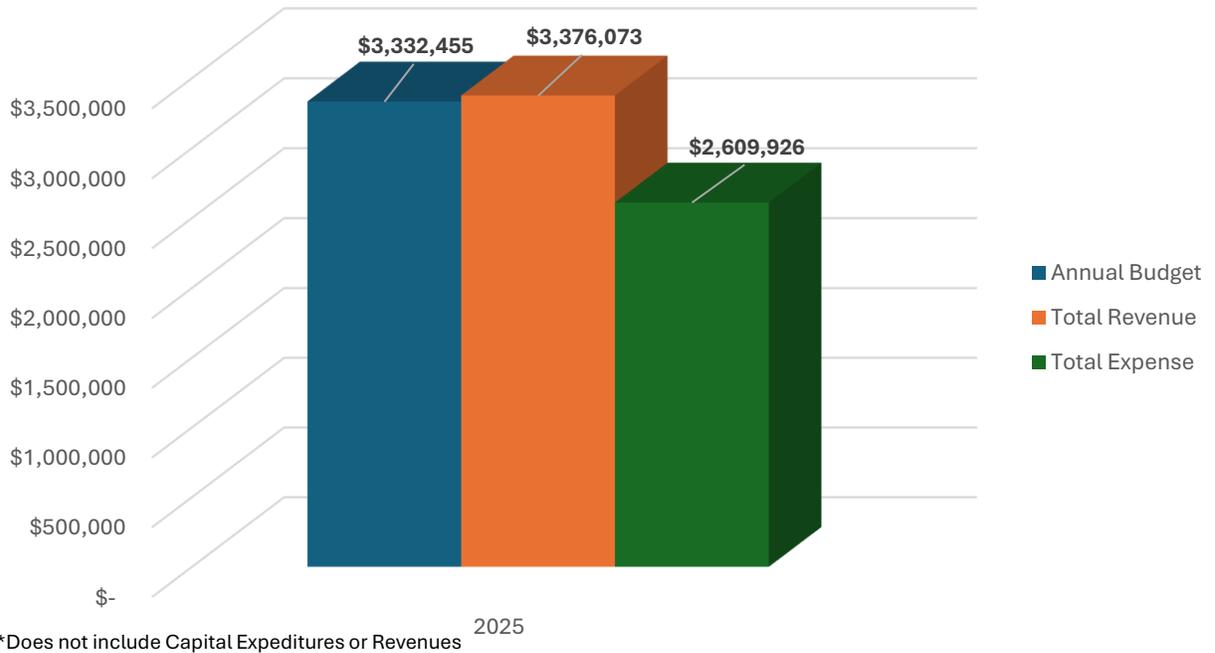


*Does not include Capital Expenditures or Revenues

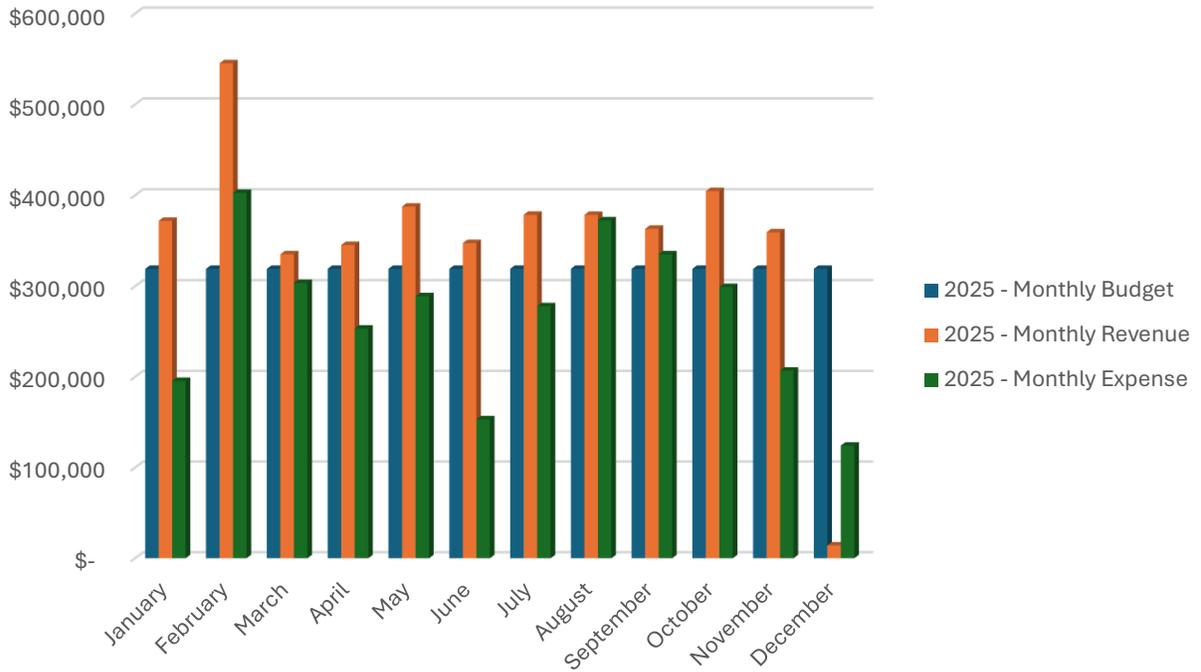
Water Fund 620 - 2025 Monthly Budget vs Actual



Water Fund 620 - 2025 Budget vs Actual

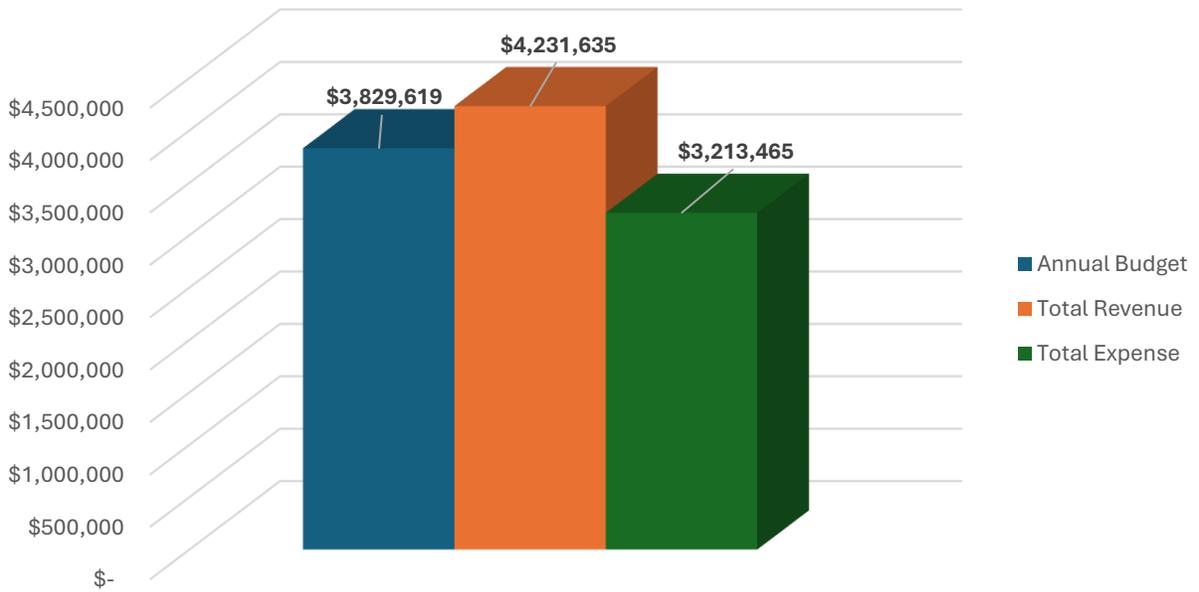


Waste Water Fund 630 - 2025 Monthly Budget vs Actual



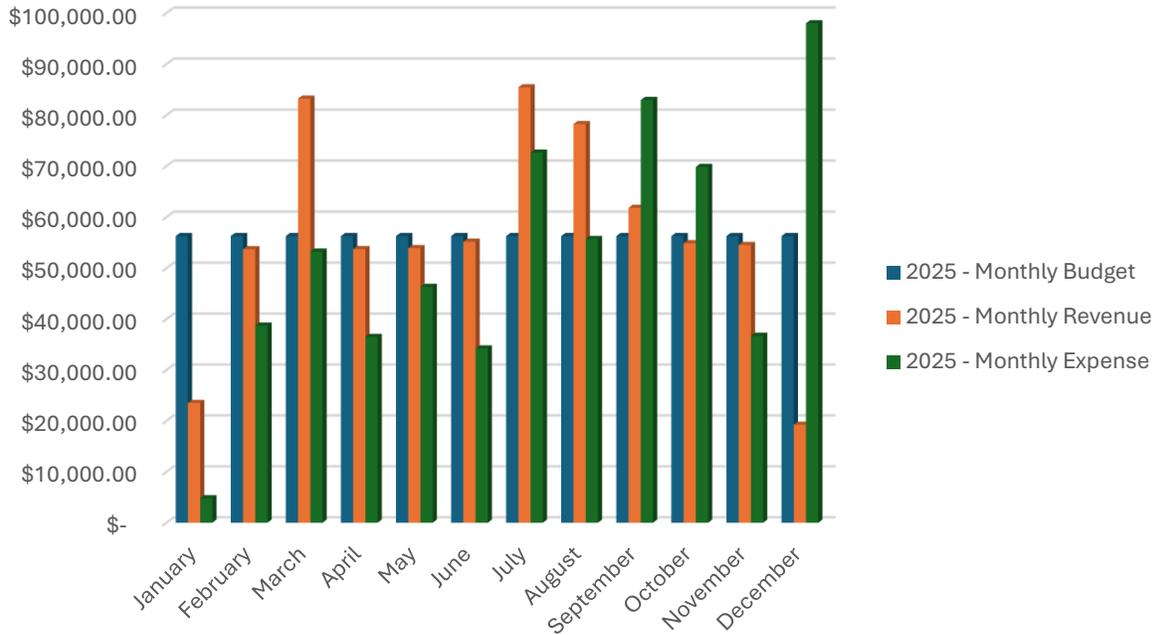
*Does not include Capital Expenditures or Revenues

Waste Water Fund 630 - 2025 Budget vs Actual

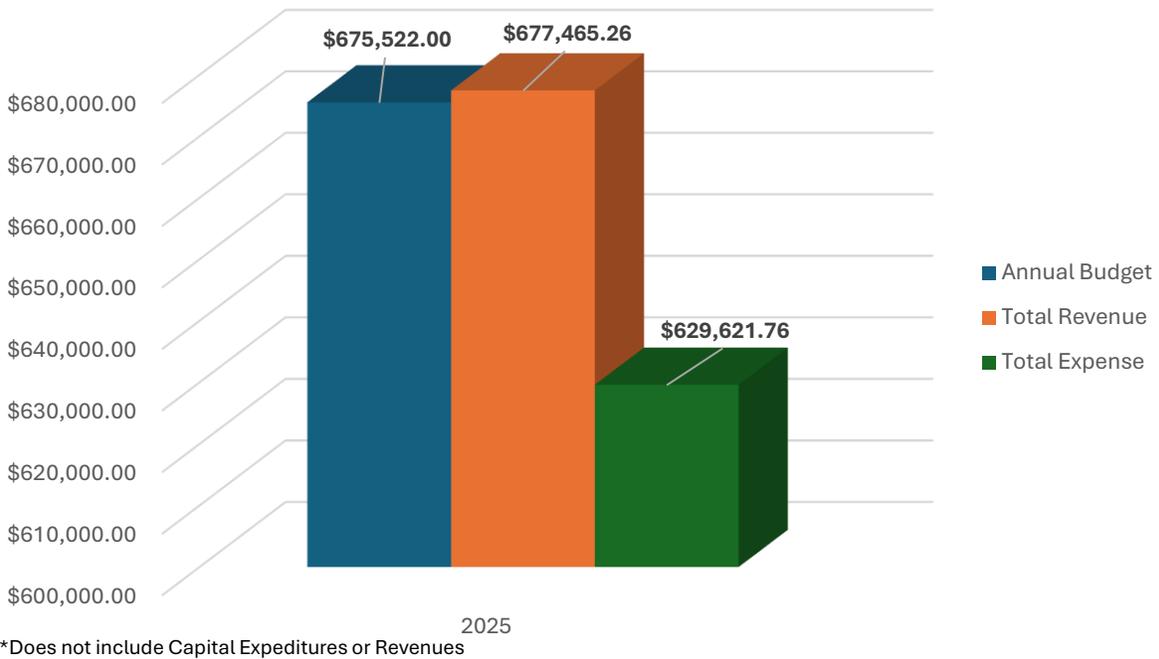


*Does not include Capital Expenditures or Revenues

Storm Water Fund 640 - 2025 Monthly Budget vs Actual



Storm Water Fund 640 - 2025 Budget vs Actual



FOCUS ON ENERGY PROGRAM DASHBOARD

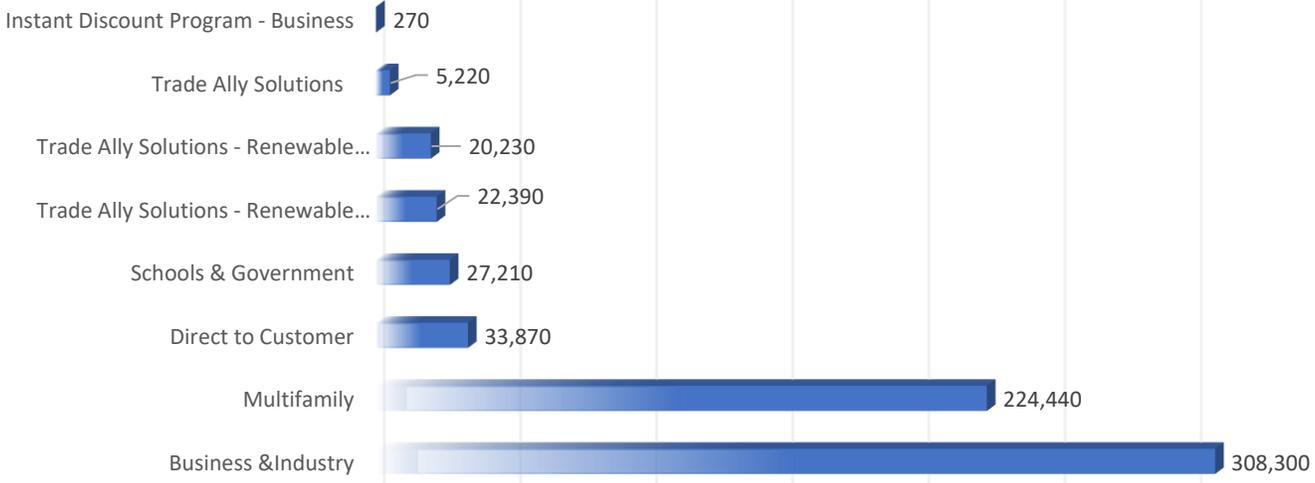
INCENTIVES PAID – THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2025

\$158,751

INCENTIVES BY PROGRAM



ANNUAL KWH BY PROGRAM*



*HOMES and HEAR program assessments and incentives are reflect no kWh savings (due to assessment only or electrification)

Key Statistics

447 Customers Participating
113 kW Reduced
641,924 kWh Savings (First Year)

RFMU EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS UPDATE

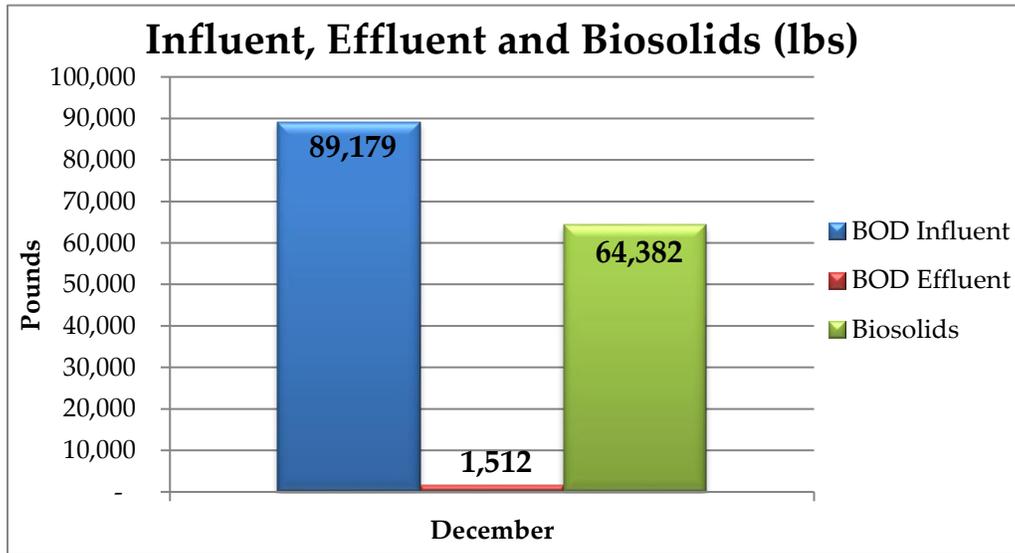
UTILITY PROGRAM PARTICIPATION 2025 REPORT

TOTAL INCENTIVES GIVEN IN 2025

Program	# of Customers Participating	Total Incentives
Business Programs (Focus on Energy Match)	4	\$18,594
Residential Efficiency Program (Focus on Energy Match)	2	\$1,650
Electrification of Landscape Equipment	13	\$842
Home Energy Assessments/Improvements	14	\$13,432
Solar Program	3	\$2,847
Electric Vehicle Charging Program	5	\$2,379
Smart Thermostat/Central Air Tune Up	15	\$797
Tree Power	4	\$350
TOTAL:	60	\$40,846

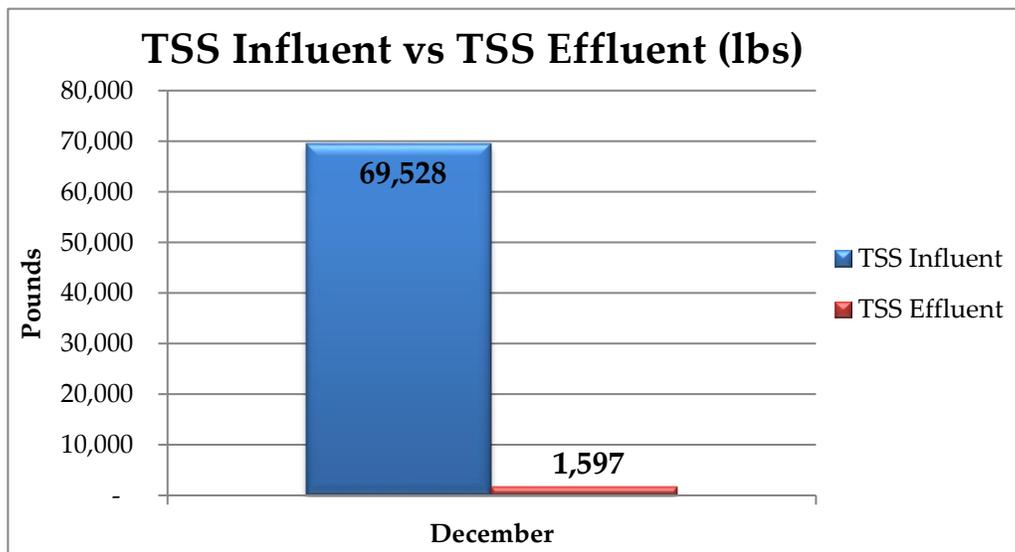
River Falls Municipal Utilities Wastewater Treatment Plant

December 2025



Influent, Effluent and Biosolids (lbs.)

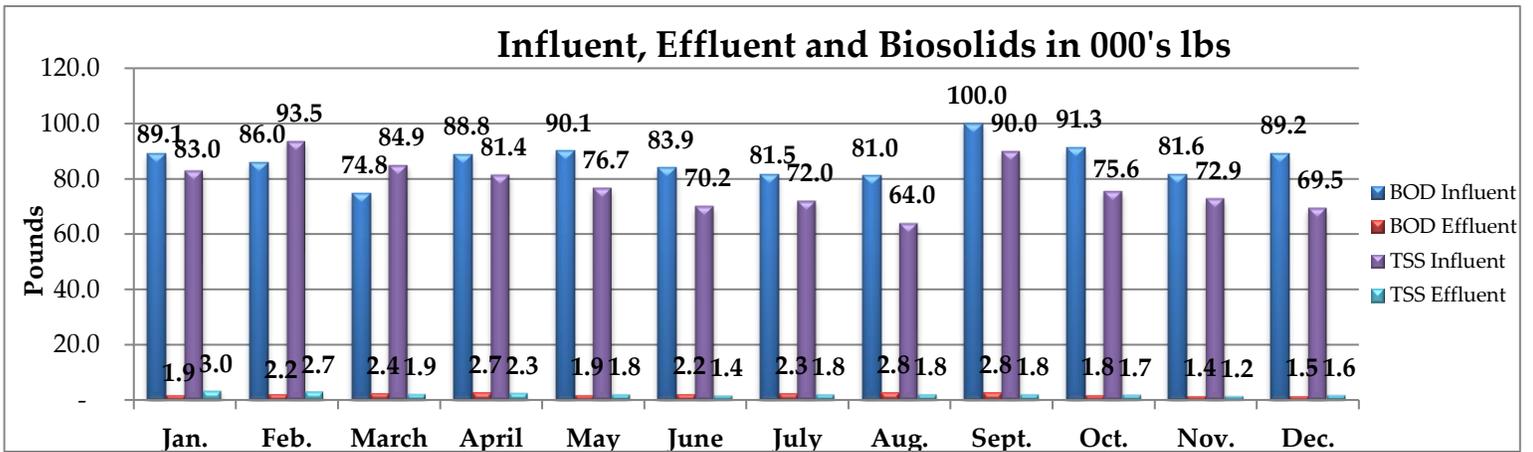
The Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) Influent and BOD Effluent pounds represent pounds of oxygen needed for treatment.



TSS Influent vs TSS Effluent (lbs.)

The TSS Influent and TSS Effluent represent the pounds of Total Suspended Solids entering the Wastewater Treatment Plant versus going out into the Kinnickinnic River.

River Falls Municipal Utilities Wastewater Treatment Plant



Yearly BOD and TSS Influent and Effluent in 000's lbs.

This graph represents the average monthly pounds of both BOD and TSS coming into the plant and being discharged at the plant's outfall into the Kinnickinnic River for the year 2025.

Wastewater Definitions

BOD: Biochemical Oxygen Demand represents pounds of oxygen needed for treatment.

EFFLUENT: Water and waste flowing out of the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

INFILTRATION: to pass into or through (a substance) by filtering or permeating. Infiltration numbers are self-induced and not leak related.

INFLUENT: Water and waste flowing into the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

TSS: Total Suspended Solids are solid materials, including organic and inorganic, that are suspended in the water and have to be removed.

Did You Know....

Excess bacteria removed from the Treatment Plant is called **Bio-Solids** which can be land spread or treated more to become a fertilizer or soil conditioner.



For more information please contact:

Wastewater Operator Bill Swenson
(715) 426-3531 wswenson@rfcity.org

RFMU Monthly Report



Electric Department



Wayne Siverling,
Electric Operations
Superintendent



Dan Treichel,
Lead Journeyman
Lineworker



Tim Wiste,
Lead Journeyman
Lineworker



Jeremy Holschuh,
Journeyman Lineworker



Cody Kruger,
Journeyman Lineworker



Pat Oja,
Journeyman Lineworker



Jeff Ploeger,
Journeyman Lineworker



Logan Snyder,
Journeyman Lineworker



Zachary Kuechenmeister,
Journeyman Lineworker Apprentice



Virgil Johnson,
Electric Meter Technician

Projects

- Performed maintenance repairs through required system inspections
- Completed monthly substation inspections
- Junction Falls checked on a daily basis
 - Had it off-line this month performing maintenance on it
- Continued weekly and monthly underground services
 - Installed 11 new customers
- Worked on monthly meter readings
- Worked on miscellaneous service orders of tree trimming around service wires and streetlight repairs
- There were 4 outages this month affecting 14 customers
- Powell Avenue/Radio Road project
 - Team has completed the installation of setting primary pedestals and primary switches
- Continued Underground and Overhead inspections
 - This work includes going to each location and inspecting the equipment for conditions that might need any repair or replacing
 - Overhead inspections have been completed
 - Continued to work on the underground inspections
- Brookgreen Primary Extension
 - Buildings 1-6 have services installed and have been energized
 - This project will be paused until Spring 2026
- Oak Hill Development project completed the extending primary and secondary infrastructure
- Sycamore II project
 - Overhead poles have been removed on this project and just some street lighting remains at this point
 - Temporary service is being worked on
- Zielies Tree Services completed tree trimming on RF 6 transmission line

Electric Department



Wayne Siverling,
Electric Operations
Superintendent



Dan Treichel,
Lead Journeyman
Lineworker



Tim Wiste,
Lead Journeyman
Lineworker



Jeremy Holschuh,
Journeyman Lineworker



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Journeyman Lineworker



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Journeyman Lineworker



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Journeyman Lineworker



Logan Snyder,
Journeyman Lineworker



Zachary Kuechenmeister,
Journeyman Lineworker Apprentice



Virgil Johnson,
Electric Meter Technician

MEUW Electric Operations Conference & Expo Apprentice Graduation Banquet

On Thursday, Jan. 15th at the Municipal Electric Utilities of Wisconsin (MEUW) Electric Operations Conference & Expo Apprentice Graduation banquet in the Wisconsin Dells, Journeyman Lineworker Cody Kruger graduated from his Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) apprenticeship program, completing a demanding four-year journey of training and hard work.

The CVTC apprenticeship combines thousands of hours of on-the-job experience with structured classroom instruction, preparing apprentices for real-world conditions and long-term careers in the skilled trades. It's a program built on discipline, accountability, and doing the job the right way.

The graduation ceremony was a proud moment, shared with fellow apprentices, instructors, and family — recognizing the commitment it takes to see a program like this through. Walking across the stage marked Cody's transition from apprentice to journeyman, and the start of the next chapter.



Water / Wastewater Department



Todd Nickleski,
Interim Water / Wastewater
Superintendent



Tim Rixmann,
Lead Water / Wastewater
Operator



Joe Curran,
Water / Wastewater
Operator



Todd Decker,
Water / Wastewater
Operator



David Paynotta,
Water / Wastewater
Operator



Josh Penovich,
Water / Wastewater
Operator



Thomas Polkoski,
Water / Wastewater
Operator



Dean Seemuth,
Water / Wastewater
Operator



Brent Wiersma,
Water / Wastewater
Operator



Bill Swenson,
Wastewater
Operator

Projects:

- Finished testing all meters for the year
- Water main dig on St. Croix Street n between Christmas and New Year's Eve
- Started year end meter inventory
- Continued water meter changeouts
- Televised some mains for the upcoming spring lining project
- Started cleaning/reorganizing the shop
- Cleared snow from water hydrants

Customer Service Department



Amy White,
City Clerk



Cindy Campbell,
Customer Service Lead



Wendy Tokheim,
Customer Service / Billing Clerk



Theresa Folak,
Customer Service
Representative



Brenda Rundle,
Customer Service
Representative



Jackie Sahnou,
Customer Service
Representative

Projects

- **Disconnections**
 - **Residential Customers**
 - Due to the winter utility moratorium, residential customer cannot be disconnected during moratorium which began November 1 and goes until April 15
 - The moratorium prohibits disconnection of heat-related services for nonpayment, but customers still need to make payment arrangements, especially after April 15
 - **Commercial Customers**
 - Business disconnection letters were sent out on December 9 to 13 businesses with past due amounts reflecting the threshold of \$250.00 or more.
 - Outbound calls were made on December 16 to nine business customers on the disconnection list informing them of the disconnection date and phone numbers for payment as well as payment arrangement options.
 - There were four payment arrangements established on or before the disconnection day of December 22.
 - No businesses were disconnected in the month of December.
- **Water Service Orders**
 - Customer service scheduled 34 water service requests in the month of December of which 28 were to exchange older water meters for updated AMI water meters.
- **New Team Member**
 - Customer Service welcomed Customer Service Representative Theresa Folak to the team on December 2. She will be assisting the court department as well.



**Tamarra Jaworski,
Engineering Technician
& GIS Mapper**

Projects

- **Mapped 15 AMI meters changes**
- **1 Training Session**
 - **CPR & 1st Aid**
- **Attached more sanitary videos and reports to the mapping system from field crew**
- **Sent data to surveyor for future projects**
- **Emphasized on electric mapping of closed work orders from electric line crew**

RFMU & WPPI Energy Programs



Jenna Willi,
WPPI Energy
Service Manager

Projects

- **Incentive Programs and Green Blocks**
 - Total RFMU Program participation (as of December 31st, 2025)
 - 60 customers received \$40,846 in incentives
 - Total River Falls Focus on Energy Participation (as of December 31st - final numbers given in February)
 - 447 customers given \$161,257 in incentives
 - Green Blocks Update - (as of November 1st)
 - 38,691 blocks sold through November 1st - final numbers given in February. 2024 participation was 18.30%, and we are on track to be near that number in 2025. See table to the right for historical participation numbers.
- **Total RFMU Customer Energy Efficiency Incentives in 2025**
 - Total Participating Customers: 507
 - An increase from 436 customers in 2024
 - Total Incentives (Focus on Energy and RFMU combined): \$202,103
 - An increase from \$99,863 combined in 2024
- **Upcoming Events of Interest**
 - January 11-13 - APPA Joint Action Conference
 - January 13-16 - MEUW Annual Conference
 - January 22 - WPPI Executive Committee Meeting
 - February 23-25 - APPA Legislative Rally

River Falls Green Blocks Program - Historical Participation	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Participation Rate</u>
2015	8.58%
2016	9.60%
2017	10.00%
2018	11.67%
2019	13.22%
2020	11.93%
2021	14.58%
2022	14.80%
2023	16.00%
2024	18.30%
2025	NA



Utility Director's Report

WWTP Biosolids Dryer Project Update

Utility Director Kevin Westhuis
City of River Falls, WI

WWTP Biosolids Dryer Project Update



WWTP Biosolids Dryer Project Update



WWTP Biosolids Dryer Project Update



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WWTP Biosolids Dryer Project Update





THANK YOU!

Utility Director Kevin Westhuis

kwesthuis@rfcity.org

715.426.3442