

## OUR MISSION

To provide our customers with safe, reliable, cost-effective, and quality long-term electric and water utility services. To communicate and educate our customers in the use of utility services, programs, policies, and future plans. These products and services will be provided in an environmentally and financially responsible manner.

## OUR VISION

Provide exceptional services and value to those we serve.

## OUR VALUES

-  **INTEGRITY**
-  **QUALITY**
-  **COMMUNICATION**
-  **SAFETY**
-  **COMPETITIVE**

## Exciting Transition to Start the New Year

After serving just over 18 years in various roles at Elk River Municipal Utilities, Theresa Slominski officially retired as General Manager on January 2, 2023. Mark Hanson has since assumed full duties as the new GM, bringing with him 25 years of experience as a public works professional.

Ms. Slominski worked her way through the ranks, starting as the Payroll & Accounts Payable Clerk. She then went on to Accounting & Office Manager, Administrations Director, and then General Manager for the last two years of her career.

During her tenure, Theresa saw ERMU grow from roughly 20 employees to 48, move from a three-person to a five-person Commission, transition to a new software system with NISC, convert to advanced meter reading systems, and construct a new field services building.

We would like to thank Ms. Slominski for her long-standing service to ERMU and we wish her well in her retirement.



*"I am so proud of all the employees at ERMU. They are good, hardworking people that care about our customers! I am humbled they trusted me with the role of GM and I am very excited for Mark Hanson to take the lead. I know he will do great things for this organization!" - Theresa Slominski*

## Rates and Operations Update

**\$7.47**  
**ELECTRIC**

**\$0.42**  
**WATER**

*Monthly price increase  
for an average  
RESIDENTIAL customer.*

As inflation and supply chain issues continue to impact our daily lives, it is important for our community to know that wholesale power costs are not immune to this economic reality. Customers may have noticed Power Cost Adjustments (PCA) on their bill in 2022, which are a direct pass through of price increases incurred from ERMU's power provider.

ERMU staff has worked diligently to keep operations costs down and we continue to educate our customers on how they can lower their bills through conservation and rebates. However, wholesale power costs make up around 70% of ERMU's budget and have increased by 27% over the last two years. This means that responsible budget setting requires an electric rate increase for 2023. Building these increases into our rates is in line with our mission statement to provide safe, reliable, and cost-effective services for customers.

Keeping true to our core value of timely and clear communication, we are reporting that the Commission has approved a 5% increase in electric rates and expected PCA charges throughout 2023.

The Commission also approved a 2% increase in water rates to address items such as a conservative estimate for usage and growth, system maintenance, and water quality.

ERMU remains committed to helping customers use their electricity and water efficiently. Looking to the future, we have begun the multi-year process of implementing Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). This service will provide precise, real-time data to help customers better understand their utility usage and identify specific, measurable actions to improve that usage. As always, please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.



### CONTROLLING YOUR COSTS

There is one thing every customer can do to help keep the utilities bill as low as possible: Use less. In addition to using electricity and water wisely, efficient appliances like those that are ENERGY STAR® and WaterSense-rated can cut down on usage for you.

ERMU also offers rebates for a wide variety of efficient appliances:

Visit [www.ermumn.com/programs-rebates](http://www.ermumn.com/programs-rebates) to learn more.



**recycle  
coach**

### DOWNLOAD RECYCLE COACH

Do you find yourself always wondering when your recycling gets collected or what items are recyclable? Get answers by downloading the Recycle Coach app today.

The Recycle Coach app is a handy suite of tools provided by the City of Elk River that will make you a pro-recycler!

## Field Services Project in the Home Stretch

In June of 2021, earthwork began at the site of the new field services building near the Lake Orono Dam. Fast forward to the fall of 2022: Crews began moving inventory into the new facility and landscapers have begun putting final touches on its exterior.

ERMU took advantage of what experts called a 50-year low in bonding interest rates to accommodate the much needed growth for our field operations center. The new facility will offer secure storage for ERMU vehicles and materials, improving their longevity and reducing replacement costs. Stay tuned for information to come about our Open House in 2023.

Please note that all customer service staff will continue to be available to assist you with account services and in-person payments at ERMU's City Hall office.



## Trimming the Trees This Season



ERMU field staff and contractors are working around the city to trim branches near power lines. Tree trimming benefits your electric service by minimizing instances of branches interfering with power lines. Falling limbs can also take down energized power lines, creating a dangerous situation. Work is done in the winter because it is easy to see the structure of the branches and make minimal cuts once their leaves have fallen. The cold temperatures also help prevent diseases and parasites from entering freshly cut limbs.

If you see a branch hanging near a line, do not take the risk of trimming it yourself. Contact ERMU to have a member of our expert staff review the situation.

## ERMU Scholarship Application Now Open

ERMU has opened its annual scholarship program, conducted in partnership with the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association (MMUA). The Tom Bovitz Memorial Scholarship Award is available to high school seniors who are customers or have a legal guardian who is a customer of ERMU.

Students are required to submit an entry form and an essay of 500 to 750 words, typed and double spaced, reflecting on one or more prompts from the Tom Bovitz Scholarship Guidelines. ERMU will award a \$500 scholarship to one local winner who will then go on to compete in MMUA's statewide scholarship program, where they will have a chance to win an additional \$500, \$1,000, \$1,500, or \$2,000. A previous ERMU scholarship recipient went on to place second in the overall competition, earning a total of \$2,000!

Judges are looking for originality and the relevance of the prompts to the writer and ERMU. For more information on the scholarship program, please visit our website. Submissions are due by March 31, 2023.

