

You may have noticed several projects this construction season

At the Water & Light Department there seems to be two seasons, winter and construction. The following is an overview of construction activities the department has going on this summer.

- Water Main Replacement—we are replacing water mains in the Mero Court and River Drive areas on the south end of town.
- Electric Construction Project—we are installing new underground primary and secondary cables and removing overhead wires in a few north end areas.
- Lime Pond Relocation—the water treatment plant lime ponds are being relocated to higher ground.
- South Water Tower—the 500,000 gallon water tower on the south end of town is being cleaned, repaired and painted.

Help us control expensive peaks

What is an electrical peak? And why should you care?

An electrical peak is a time of highest use on a utility system. Most utilities in Minnesota peak during hot summer days, but our peaks occur during the coldest days of winter. That

may not insulate us from higher prices at peak times, however. Because of the way the wholesale electric market works, high demand in the southern part of the state equals higher electric prices for everybody.

Meeting the demand for electricity on peak days is expensive, as rarely-used, more expensive generating resources are called into service.

Our wholesale power bill is based, in part, on peak use. You can help us reduce our peak and control costs by doing a number of simple things, like using washers, dryers and dishwashers earlier in the morning or later at night, such as after 8 p.m. This applies to both very hot or very cold days.

Thanks in advance for helping us control our electric use and costs.

Over a century of local service

East Grand Forks Water & Light was established by a vote of city residents in 1909. We currently serve approximately 4,200 electric customers. We also provide water service. Our business office is at city hall (600 Demers Ave.). The utility employs professional management and staff and is governed by a four-person commission, whose members are appointed by the mayor and city council.

East Grand Forks Water & Light

YOUR HOMETOWN UTILITY SINCE 1909

The Connector

East Grand Forks Water & Light

Local ownership means we take local interests to heart

The trend in the electric utility industry these days is consolidation. Utility mergers are widespread. As these companies get bigger, they tend to get farther and farther away from their customers.

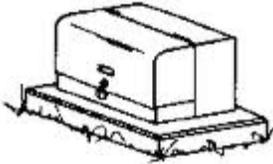
Being a locally-owned and operated organization, our commission and staff not only have a career interest in the success of East Grand Forks, they have a personal stake in the community in which they have chosen to raise their families and build life-long relationships.



Because of this, our interest in the well-being of this city and devotion toward maintaining a high quality of life in this area is more than corporate slogan—it's the foundation of our business philosophy.

What's in the green box?

“Why does that ugly box have to be in the yard?” Technically, it is a pad-mounted transformer, but many people call them an “electrical box.” Often homeowners try to hide them with bushes, fences or flower beds, but beware: even small additions around pad-mounted transformers create hazards.



The Water & Light Dept. realizes landscaping represents an investment of time and money and respects the care customers take in making their properties attractive. However, landscaping around electrical equipment interferes with Water & Light's ability to deliver reliable power. Water & Light recommends leaving at least 10 feet of clear space in front of pad mounted transformer and 3-4 feet of space on the sides and behind the transformer.

Customers sometimes leave plenty of space in front of the transformer, but grow vegetation on the other three sides. Plant roots can grow into a transformer and interfere with its operation. Choked from fresh air, pad mounted transformers surrounded by vegetation or a structure—like a cover or fence, can overheat and cause an outage.

Customers should also be aware that any planting or fencing in easements (strips of land owned by a customer on which the utility company places wires and other equipment like pad-mounted transformers) could be damaged if work needs to be done on the utility lines in those areas.

The “ugly green box” is very important to providing our customers with reliable electric service, so please try to follow the recommendations mentioned. In the event of an outage or maintenance on your transformer, our crews will be able to work faster, safer and more efficiently.

Zap those power surges

Has lightning or other power surges ever zapped your electronic gadgets? Computers, modems, fax machines and other electronic equipment should be protected by a surge suppressor. Electrical surges can be caused from nearby lightning or from sudden changes in power needs. An electrical surge from lightning is able to travel through phone, electrical and cable lines up to half a mile and still cause harm. Surge-related damage can also be caused by everything from changes in seasonal energy demands to the use of large appliances like refrigerators, electric dryers and air conditioners.



A good way to protect your electronics is to get a surge protector to fit your needs,

whether it is to protect the whole house or a few appliances. A surge protector allows the electricity to flow through it to the appliance. Once a higher voltage is detected, the surge protectors are able to divert the voltage quicker, within a nanosecond. Ordinary power strips don't provide adequate protection.

You need a true surge suppressor, which looks like a power strip, but which provides much greater protection.

Whole-home surge protectors are also available. The system should be hard-wired into your electric system by a licensed electrician. Separate suppressors are recommended for your cable and phone lines. Those will protect your phones, TV and fax machines.

Don't Forget to Take Advantage of Energy Rebates

- Energy Star Appliance
- Cooling Equipment
- ECM Fan Motor
- Central A/C Tune-up
- Weatherization
- Compact Fluorescent Bulbs
- Energy Audits
- Commercial Lighting Replacement
- Commercial VFDs

Go to our website www.waterandlight.info for more information.