

Pipeline Express

Provide high-quality water and exceptional services to the people and communities we support.

UDF and LVEX:

What do They Stand for and Why do I Care?

By Graeme Chaple

As a utility, we perform preventative maintenance on all sorts of systems, from pumps to hydrants to our tunnel system. The UDF, Uni-Directional Flushing, and LVEX, Large Valve Exercise, programs are the two preventative maintenance programs specifically targeting watermains and valves.

Uni-Directional Flushing is a 5-year cycle program where we operate valves and flush small diameter (8" and smaller), watermains. Routes are determined for all of the small mains, then valves are strategically closed to force the water within the system to flow in one direction discharging from a hydrant with the routes working over from the plant to the outer edges of the system. The primary purpose is to remove any excess treatment sediment from the water mains to improve water



Bob Meyer gathers a water sample to test the chlorine levels and the turbidity in the water during a Uni-Directional Flush of a water hydrant in this file photo.

quality. Water samples checking chlorine and turbidity are taken and tracked to monitor the water quality. The huge side effect of this process is the valve operation. To achieve the needed isolation, a large

percentage of our system valves need to be operated. To operate the valves, each valve needs to be located, the valve box cleaned out,

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Explaining UDF and LVEX

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and then verified that the valve works properly. Thus, even though UDF is about water quality in the main, the system valves which control the flow are the major benefactor of the process.

The Large Valve Exercise program, LVEX for short, picks up where UDF leaves off. Because UDF is limited to 8" and smaller mains, larger valves sized 12" and greater are missed as a result. The remaining mains that not a part of UDF are also grouped into routes for ease of coordination. Within these routes, any valves that are connected to the large mains are located, valve boxes cleaned out, and either fully operated or verified that they operate. These larger valves tend to be critical valves, ranging in size up to 42" within the distribution system.

There is additionally a separate special route that includes all the finished water valves within the campus.

Due to the nature of these activities, specifically flushing involved with UDF, this preventative maintenance work is done late March through November and put on hold during the freezing temperatures of the winter. From spring to fall, there is generally a 5-person crew dedicated to UDF routes and they focus on UDF for most of the construction season. For LVEX, two smaller crews of 2-3 people work on those routes generally in the mid-summer through late fall as crew availability allows with construction. Unfortunately, the demands of a construction season can adversely affect how well these routes can be done.

Some years, such as this year, preventative maintenance has to take a back seat to construction. This year's planned UDF crew had to pivot to a new role setting up, maintaining, and taking down the extensive temp water system that was in place in downtown Saint Paul. Because of that need, we will be entering the winter at a disadvantage as valves have not been checked or operated within their 5-year cycle as they should have been. This also creates a trickle-down effect of placing the program a year behind. So even this seeming easier work will affect the crews this winter season, thus highlighting again why preventative maintenance is so critical and needed to keep our system running.

RIP RAP INSTALLED TO PROTECT FRIDLEY STATION



Crews laid rip rap in front of the Fridley pump station to prevent scouring from the Mississippi River at the base of the pump station on Thursday, Oct. 23. The crews used the bucket and arm of the backhoe to move the barge across the river to the pump station, and then to place the large rocks in front of the building.



Give Blood, Give Hope: SPRWS Blood Drive Nov. 14

We're proud to host the Memorial Blood Center blood drive right here at SPRWS! Mark your calendars for Friday, November 14, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The bloodmobile will be parked on the east end of the Administration Building near the picnic tables.

Every two seconds someone needs blood. Do your part to make sure the blood they need is available when they need it.



Memorial Blood Center bloodmobile will be on site on November 14 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

How to Register

You can register by scanning the QR code below or visiting mbc.org/searchdrives.

When prompted, enter sponsor code 5257.

Early registration is encouraged — other City departments will also be participating, and spots tend to fill up quickly.

Donor Perks

All presenting donors will be entered to win a \$50 gift card.

Midwest Vending is offering additional gift cards for donors.

Donors will receive 250 Healthy Saint Paul Points — the code will be provided after donation.

(Remember, employees can only donate blood once every two months.)

Day-of Instructions

When you arrive:

Enter through the east employee entrance to check in and confirm your registration.

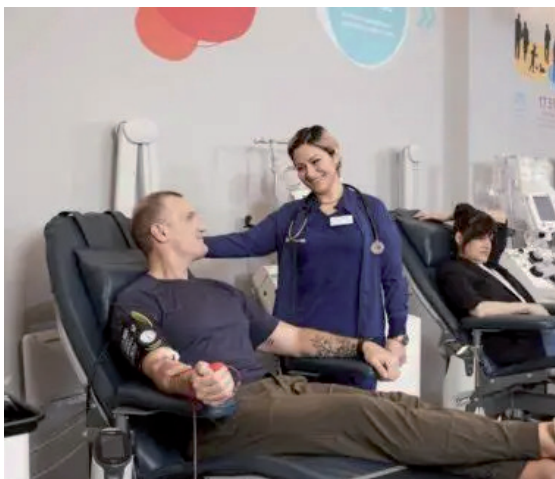
You'll be asked to "stage" inside before heading out to the bloodmobile.

Relax, give blood, and know you're making a difference!

Let's make this a successful drive and show our commitment to saving lives.

Thank you in advance for your generosity and participation!

Enter 5257 as the sponsor code when registering.



Strengthening Our Partnerships: Using CERT to Source Local, Diverse Vendors

By Mike Twu

At Saint Paul Regional Water Services (SPRWS), our mission is to provide high-quality water and exceptional service to the people and communities we support. Achieving that mission takes more than pipes, pumps, and treatment plants — it depends on strong partnerships with qualified vendors, contractors, and service providers who help us operate, maintain, and improve our water system.

One of the most effective tools available to SPRWS staff for expanding those partnerships and supporting our organizational values is the Central Certification (CERT) Program.

The CERT Program is a collaborative initiative between the City of Saint Paul, City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, and Ramsey County. It was created to make it easier for public agencies like SPRWS to connect with small, minority-owned, and woman-owned businesses across the region. Once a business completes the CERT application process

and meets program criteria, it's added to a shared vendor directory used by all four participating jurisdictions.

Through this directory, staff can quickly access a robust database of certified businesses offering a wide range of goods and services — including construction, engineering, IT support and more.

Using the CERT directory is an excellent way to strengthen our procurement process and broaden our pool of qualified vendors. It enables project managers, buyers, and contract leads to identify businesses that help us meet our diversity, equity, and inclusion goals while also promoting competition and improving value. The directory can be searched by company name, service type, certification type, and other criteria, allowing staff to efficiently find vendors who meet project needs and send solicitations directly.

Incorporating CERT vendors into our sourcing efforts also reflects SPRWS's broader commitment to supporting the local economy and representing the diversity of the communities we serve. By intentionally engaging certified businesses, we not only increase opportunities for small and underrepresented companies but also foster innovation and strengthen relationships with local partners. Many CERT-certified businesses bring unique expertise, creative solutions, and specialized skills that



enhance the quality and effectiveness of our projects.

Accessing the CERT directory is simple. Once staff members have access through the program's website, they can immediately begin exploring potential vendors. Mike Twu is currently compiling a list of staff from our division to submit for CERT program website access. If you'd like to ensure you're included, please email Mike at Michael.Twu@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

As we continue to invest in infrastructure, improve service delivery, and plan for the future, leveraging the CERT program is another way SPRWS can ensure our work benefits the entire region. It's an opportunity to advance equity, expand competition, and deliver better outcomes for the residents and businesses that depend on us every day.

All SPRWS staff involved in purchasing, contracting, and project management are encouraged to become familiar with the CERT directory and make it a regular part of your vendor outreach process. Together, we can strengthen our supplier network and continue building a more inclusive, innovative, and resilient water utility.

