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Pipeline Express

To provide high-quality water and exceptional services to the people and communities we support

June 26, 2026

Years of Service Recipients Honored

The utility had 37 employees earn a Years of Service award, which were presented on June 11 in the cafeteria. Honored were staff with between 5 and 45 years of service.

Five year recipients were from left: Curt Waege, Tim Scott, Scott Thompson, Ilona LaDouceur, Gary Slowiak, and Dan Filiowich. Not pictured are Jon Kirk, Andrew Lardani, Jarrett Stodieck, and Steve Wimer.

Ten year recipients were from left: Lauryn Buda, Joel Koppendrayer, and Kendrick Morrison. Not pictured are Sam Caliguire, Tom Courteau, Jake Masiello, Matt Schmidt, and Adam Worm.

Fifteen-year recipients were from left: Chantha Siv, Mike Searson, and Chad Haldorson. Not pictured are: Mike Bailey, Keith Burket, Joe Garcia, Dan Gatzke, Tony Gillette, and Seneca Kruse.

Twenty-year recipients were from left: Dick Keeney and Joe Tronson. Not pictured are: Jim Duffy, Biz McAllister, and Becky McKenzie.

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Years of Service Recipients Honored

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Twenty-five year recipient Holly Overton gets her certificate while Jen Wilkins is not pictured.

Thirty-year recipients are Mollie Gagnelius and Eric Turner.

Mark Luzinski earned his 45-year award after starting with the utility in 1981. Congratulations to Mark and all the recipients of their years of service awards.

Intern Joins Water Quality Lab

Jesse Cowen

As a Water Quality Intern, **Jesse Cowen** helps support laboratory operations and water quality monitoring throughout the system. Her work includes calibrating laboratory equipment, conducting daily water quality tests, performing meter checks, and assisting with data entry. Throughout the summer, she will also collect water samples from locations across Saint Paul, helping ensure accurate testing and reliable water quality data.

Jesse is a rising senior at the University of New Hampshire, where she is majoring in Marine, Estuarine, and Freshwater Biology and minoring in Business Administration. Outside of work and school, she enjoys reading, drawing, cooking, and playing video games. She is also active in her university's Fish Club and works in a campus dining hall, where she will serve as a student supervisor this fall. Jesse is excited to learn more about laboratory operations and water treatment processes during her time at SPRWS.

Staff Earn Promotions

Rob Ralston

Keith Lubinski

Nick Peterson

Jamal Evans

Staff recently earned promotions within the water utility.

Rob Ralston is now a maintenance worker II in the treatment plant.

K**eith Lubinksi** is now a maintenance worker I in the treatment plant.

Nick Peterson and **Jamal Evans** are both water system worker II's (caulker).

Please congratulate these employees on their new roles in the utility.

Charles Washington II Passes Away

Charles Washington II

Charles Washington II, a water utility worker I, passed away on June 19, 2026, after a battle with cancer.

While Charles's time with us was all too short, his dedication to his job and quiet professionalism spoke acres of his character. Charles actively pursued improving himself while here at SPRWS obtaining a CDL through the training program with Local 49 Training Center and seeking out enrichment opportunities through professional development classes at Century College. His presence and character will be missed.

During this difficult time, we extend our heartfelt condolences to Charles's family, friends, and colleagues.

We encourage everyone to keep Charles and his loved ones in your thoughts and prayers.

As the specifics of his funeral arrangements have not yet been formalized, they will be made known once available.

Vehicle Safety Starts Before You Turn the Key

For many SPRWS employees, operating a vehicle is a routine part of the workday. Whether traveling between facilities, responding to service calls, transporting materials, or working in active construction areas, employees spend a significant amount of time behind the wheel. While driving may feel routine, vehicle collisions remain one of the most common workplace incidents and continue to be one of the leading causes of occupational injuries nationwide.

A review of SPRWS vehicle collision data highlights why vehicle safety remains an important focus area. During 2025, SPRWS recorded 21 vehicle collisions involving utility vehicles and equipment. Of those incidents, 12 were determined to be preventable and 9 were determined to be non-preventable through the utility's Collision Review Board (CRB) process.

The data also revealed several common trends. Side-swipe collisions accounted for nearly half of all reported incidents, with 10 occurring throughout the year. Rear-end, intersection, and backing incidents also contributed to the overall total. While backing collisions represented a smaller percentage of incidents, every backing collision reviewed during 2025 was determined to be preventable.

The trend has continued into 2026. Through the first part of the year, the utility has already reviewed several vehicle collisions, with many involving factors such as visibility, vehicle positioning, backing, lane changes, and situational awareness. While each collision is unique, the data shows that many incidents occur during routine driving activities and can often be prevented through defensive driving practices and increased awareness of surroundings.

Safe driving starts before the vehicle is placed in gear. Employees can reduce their risk by eliminating distractions, wearing seat belts, maintaining safe following distances, and continuously scanning mirrors and surrounding traffic. Drivers should also slow down when maneuvering in parking lots, work zones, and other restricted areas where visibility may be limited. When practical, the use of a spotter can help reduce the risk of backing incidents and vehicle damage.

Despite our best efforts, collisions can still occur. If you are involved in a vehicle collision while operating a utility vehicle, your first priority is ensuring the safety of everyone involved. Check for injuries and contact emergency services when necessary. Once the immediate situation has been addressed, employees should notify their supervisor as soon as possible and begin the utility's vehicle collision reporting process.

Timely reporting is critical. Employees should complete all required collision reporting paperwork and provide photographs, witness information, and police report information when available. Accurate reporting helps preserve important details and allows the utility to meet insurance, regulatory, and administrative requirements.

SPRWS utilizes a Collision Review Board process to review reported vehicle collisions. The purpose of the review is to identify contributing factors, determine preventability, recognize trends, and identify opportunities for training and improvement. Every review provides an opportunity to learn from an incident and reduce the likelihood of a similar event occurring in the future.

Every employee who operates a vehicle plays an important role in protecting themselves, their coworkers, utility property, and the public. By staying alert, following established procedures, and practicing defensive driving habits, we can continue reducing vehicle collisions and ensuring everyone returns home safely at the end of the day.