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Pipeline Express

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

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Launching the Next Wave of Leaders at SPRWS

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This month, SPRWS proudly launched the inaugural Next Wave Emerging Leaders Development Program, a new leadership initiative designed to invest in the future of our organization by developing employees to become stronger leaders, communicators, collaborators, and change-makers.

The program brings together 13 employees from across SPRWS who have demonstrated initiative, curiosity, and a commitment to serving both their teammates and our customers. Over the next six months, participants will engage in monthly leadership development sessions focused on self-awareness, communication, conflict resolution, collaboration, influence, and professional growth. Participants will also complete a 360-degree feedback process, develop a work-related leadership project, and deliver a final presentation to supervisors and executive leadership in December.

Next Wave is built on the belief that leadership is not defined by title alone. Every day, employees across SPRWS demonstrate leadership by solving problems, supporting one another, embracing new challenges, and finding better ways to serve our communities. This program is designed to recognize that while providing participants with the tools, relationships, and experiences to continue growing their impact.

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Launching the Next Wave of Leaders

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While this first cohort began in July and will conclude in December, the long-term vision is for Next Wave to become an ongoing leadership development opportunity. A second cohort is anticipated to launch this winter, with the program transitioning to an annual offering in the years ahead.

Interested in participating? If you are interested in being considered for a future Next Wave cohort or if you know a coworker who should be included in this program, we encourage you to reach out to Adam Worm. Employee nominations and expressions of interest will help shape future cohorts as we continue growing leadership development opportunities across SPRWS.

Leadership development is an investment not only in individual employees, but in the future of SPRWS. Congratulations to our inaugural Next Wave participants. We look forward to watching your continued growth and the positive impact you will have on our organization and the communities we proudly serve.

Highland Tower Open House Draws 1,769

Visitors to the Highland Tower open house talk over information at the information table on July 19. The flow of visitors remained steady through the weekend, with 1,769 attending through July 18 - 19.

Elizabeth Valdez Carreon starts as Accounting Technician I

The utility welcomes Elizabeth Valdez Carreon to the team. As an Accounting Technician I, Elizabeth will be helping with administrative tasks and accounting processes to help the accounting department run efficiently and smoothly. She says she really enjoys learning new things and working with numbers, and she is excited to be part of the team.

Outside of work, she enjoys taking her dog for walks, reading, swimming, and spending time with her family. She has two adult children, and family is very important to her. In her free time, she also likes exploring new places, watching movies, and challenging herself self with new skills and experiences.

Saint Paul Regional Water Services Receives National Recognition for Lead Free SPRWS Program

Saint Paul Regional Water has received national recognition for its Lead Free SPRWS program, earning the Enabling Equal Access to Lead Service Line Replacement and Associated Jobs award from the Lead Service Line Replacement Collaborative.

The award recognizes utilities and organizations that are removing barriers to lead service line replacement while ensuring customers have equitable access to safe drinking water and the benefits of infrastructure investment.

The recognition comes as SPRWS continues to expand its Lead Free SPRWS program, replacing more than 5,000 lead service lines since 2022. The utility plans to replace approximately 2,200 lead service lines in 2026, keeping Saint Paul on pace to eliminate all lead service lines by 2034, three years ahead of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's national deadline of 2037. In 2025 alone, SPRWS replaced 2,249 lead service lines—an 86% increase over the previous year and the program's highest annual total to date.

"We're honored to receive this national recognition," said General Manager Racquel Vaske. "Lead Free SPRWS is about more than replacing pipes. It's about protecting public health, investing in our communities, and ensuring every customer has access to safe, reliable drinking water."

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Rob Isabel, CDM Smith Project Manager; Racquel Vaske, SPRWS General Manager; and Luke Sandstrom, SPRWS Engineering Division Assistant Manager, receive the Enabling Equal Access to Lead Service Line Replacement and Associated Jobs award from the Lead Service Line Replacement Collaborative during the American Water Works Association's Annual Conference & Exposition (ACE) held in June. The Lead Service Line Replacement Collaborative is a coalition of 28 national organizations dedicated to accelerating lead service line replacement throughout the United States. The collaborative recognized SPRWS for its commitment to making lead service line replacement accessible to all customers while protecting public health.

Utility Receives National Recognition for Lead Free SPRWS Program

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The Lead Free SPRWS program is supported through a combination of state, federal and local funding, including approximately $35 million from the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority for 2026.

"Replacing lead service lines at this scale would not be possible without the partnership and commitment of the State of Minnesota," Vaske said. "State funding is helping communities like Saint Paul make lasting infrastructure improvements that benefit current and future generations."

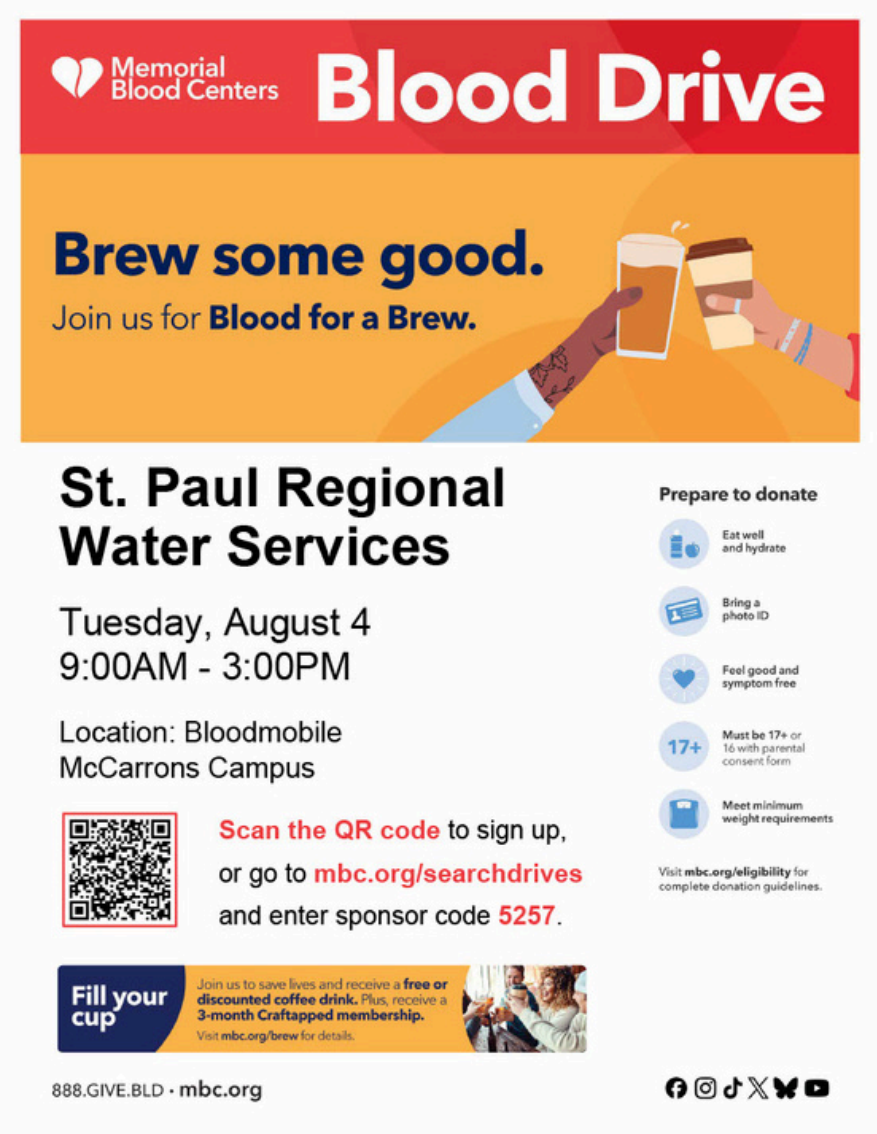
Presented during the American Water Works Association's Annual Conference & Exposition (ACE), the award is one of several presented annually by the Lead Service Line Replacement Collaborative, a coalition of 28 national organizations dedicated to accelerating lead service line replacement throughout the United States.

The collaborative recognized SPRWS for its commitment to making lead service line replacement accessible to all customers while protecting public health.

Saint Paul Regional Water Services provides high-quality drinking water to more than 450,000 people in Saint Paul and 13 surrounding communities.

Join Us for Blood for a Brew

Earn 250 Healthy Saint Paul Points for Donating Blood August 4



The utility is hosting Memorial Blood Centers for a blood drive on August 4, 2026 from 9 a.m - 3 p.m. outside the employee entrance. Scan the QR code to make an appointment, or visit mbc.org/searchdrives and enter code 5257. Join us to save lives and get 250 Healthy Saint Paul points. In addition, receive a free or discounted coffee drink from a local business, and three months free of Crafttapped Membership. With Craftapped, you'll receive 10 Buy-One-Get-One offers each month from a variety of breweries.