

## 2016 open enrollment information session set

It's time to think about your benefits for next year.

To answer any questions you might have, an information session will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 7 in McCarrons room at the water treatment plant.

Field employees should come between 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. while office staff should plan to attend between 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Representatives from HealthPartners, CelioStar, ING, MN Deferred Comp, Aon, Standard,

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## Prepping the pipe to replace a valve



**Jeff Abbott's crew works on cleaning off the water main in preparation for replacing the 24-inch valve at the intersection of Larpenteur Ave. and Sylvan Ave. on Sept. 21. From upper left clockwise are, Paul Schmitz, water utility worker; Elmer Stevenson, water system worker; Nate Pearl, water utility worker; and Dustin Schluessler, water system worker. Chad Sandwick was the HEO on the project.**

## Make sure you are punching in and out on time

All employees are expected to work their full work day, from the time the day is slated to start until the time of day it is scheduled to end. Anything less is taking time away from your employer.

This means punching in no later than your assigned start time and punching out no earlier than your assigned end time.

Employees should look for a memo from administration addressing the topic in the near future.

The TASS system rounds the punches to the nearest quarter hour, allowing for seven minutes before or after the quarter hour to round to that quarter hour. However, how the system rounds up or down is not how your hours are to be entered into TASS.

If your regular start time is 8 a.m., you are expected to

be punched in no later than 8 a.m., though you can punch in up to seven minutes early. Punching in after 8 a.m. is considered being late.

Punching out of the time clock should be done in the same manner. You can punch out up to seven minutes after the assigned end time, but not before. Punching out beforehand is considered leaving work early.

Employees should have no expectation of being paid for time that they are not actually at work.

Situations where this activity is occurring will be evaluated and dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Methods to change such behavior could include disciplinary actions.

## 2016 open enrollment session Oct. 7

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and MN Life (life, short- and long-term disability insurance, long-term care insurance, etc.), and employee benefits (VEBA, Healthy Saint Paul) will be there. Sign up for benefits begins on Monday, Oct. 5 and must be completed by midnight on Friday, Oct. 16 online at BenefitReady.com.

You should receive two emails from BenefitReady if you have used this online enrollment in the past. One will contain your login information; a separate email will remind you of your password. If

you are new to BenefitReady, you will need to enroll.

If you have no changes to your benefits, or simply do not enroll at BenefitReady by midnight on Oct. 16, your medical coverage plan will remain the same. (Flexible spending accounts must be enrolled in every year.)

It is helpful to bring a copy of your current benefits with you to the information sessions.

Free flu shots are available for those with HealthPartners ID cards.

## Imagine a Day Without Water

SPRWS is taking steps to ensure that we keep our infrastructure in good working condition

*Editor's note: This article was scheduled to run as a guest editorial in the Pioneer Press the week of Oct. 6 in recognition of the national Imagine a Day Without Water campaign.*

Imagine a day without water. No morning shower or toilet. No early morning cup of coffee. That's just in your household as you get up. Head out into the day to local restaurants and to the local manufacturing plants or take in an evening without the products of the local craft breweries that dot the city of Saint Paul and find out how they would fair without water for the day. We all need water. Water keeps our lives and our economies flowing.

At Saint Paul Regional Water Services, we know that water is essential to life. That's why we are part of a nationwide educational effort called "Imagine a Day Without Water." Other water agencies, community members, governing officials, and more are joining the effort. Even though water is an essential part of our daily lives, because it is so easily gotten, it is easily forgotten. The water treatment plants, pipes, and valves that bring water to the faucets in our homes are mostly underground and out of sight.

We don't notice them until they no longer work. But right now, work they

do. They function every minute of every day all year long to bring safe, reliable water to your home or business at a reasonable cost. Some parts of our water treatment plant are more than 90 years old and will need renovations. We have more than 1,100 miles of water main in Saint Paul and the surrounding communities we serve. Some of that pipe needs to be replaced or repaired. At SPRWS, more than 27 percent of our water main was laid more than 100 years ago. More than 55 percent of our pipes are older than 50 years old. Only 10 percent of our water main was laid during this century.

Because water main is buried beneath our roads and streets and under our feet, it is invisible. We don't worry about it until we can't pour ourselves that cup of morning coffee or take a shower. Saint Paul Regional Water Services has been investing in that invisible resource for many years. We have taken the initiative to keep our water flowing safely and reliably to our homes and businesses. We have started to replace water mains at a rate of 8-10 miles a year, on average. This costs us \$6-8 million dollars a year. Add to that the cost of other capital improvements, the cost to treat that river and well

## Hydrant Hysteria winners at MN AWWA in Duluth



**Bob Meyer, water dist. supervisor, and Jim Duffy, water system worker, compete in Hydrant Hysteria at the MN AWWA conference on Sept. 16 in Duluth. The pair put together a fire hydrant in the best time. They will go on to compete next year in Chicago.**

water to make it potable and all other maintenance necessary to get it to your tap and we spend \$64 million a year. That is money well invested, as no matter how much or how little water we use, the costs to keep our infrastructure healthy increase every year.

Over the next decade, we anticipate spending nearly \$300 million to improve and upgrade our existing water treatment plant and water delivery system. These improvements will include a new water tank in West Saint Paul, several upgrades to many of our water treatment plant processes, a new water reservoir that serves downtown Saint Paul, and rehabilitating our raw water conduits. With our investments in replacing water main, our work to keep our water treatment plant more efficient with new technologies, and with new studies in place that will help us predict where the next main breaks will be and replace that main before an incident occurs, we can actually save money in the long run by being proactive instead of reactive.

If we keep investing in the future of our water facilities, the families and businesses in Saint Paul and the cities that we serve may never have to imagine a day without water.