

Comp time to be used or cashed out by March 31

Do you have more than 40 hours of compensatory time on the books?

You have until March 31 to use the hours over 40 or the overage will be cashed out for you.

You can accrue up to 150 hours of comp time a year and use 120 hours. The reporting year ends on March 31 and you are only allowed to carry over 40 hours into the new reporting year.

If you have any questions, you can always ask your supervisor or Racquel Vaske.

Matt Paulson starts work in the treatment plant

Matt Paulson has been hired at SPRWS as a water treatment plant operator II. His first day was Feb. 25.

He reports to Chad Wrightson.

Please welcome Matt to the water utility when you see him.



Matt Paulson

A seemingly never-ending job



With snow falling at a rate of 1-2 inches an hour Wednesday morning, Feb. 20, Vadnais crew members were hard pressed to keep the sidewalks clear of the ever-accumulating snow. The crew has been kept busy clearing snow from our properties during the snowiest February on record. Their hard work and timely snow removal improves the safety of all employees and customers as they come to our facility or have to move around in it. The constant upkeep is much appreciated and is noticed. Thank you, Vadnais crew!

Case of the flu verified at the utility

Last issue, the *Pipeline* carried information on how to distinguish cold and flu symptoms and advice on staying home when ill.

The utility has had at least one verified case of the flu this season. It is likely that others have suffered

from the illness without getting an official doctor's diagnosis.

Please care for yourself properly and consider staying home if you are experiencing flu symptoms. It will help protect your co-workers from the easily-spread virus.

As cold temps continue, frozen water service lines return



Seneca Kruse, water utility tech., works on thawing out a commercial water service line back in 2014, when we had more 800 frozen water services.

In addition to measurable snowfalls on a regular basis in the last month, the cold air temperatures have created frost in depths exceeding five feet at several locations throughout our service area.

We have also received first reports of water service lines freezing in the right-of-way. In response, the utility has implemented phases one and two of our frozen services policy.

Phase one involves notifying some 40 accounts that they should run water at the premises to avoid having their water service line freeze. These accounts froze in the bitter cold of 2014 and have shown a history of freezing in the street during three or more different winters. Phase two triggers mailings to an additional 125 customers who have a history of freezing in the street in two or more different winters, including in 2014, or froze in three or more winters regardless of year.

The notification letter asks the person at the affected address to run water from a cold water faucet continuously at a rate of a quarter of a gallon per minute until notified or April 1.

SPRWS will make adjustments to these accounts of up to 15 units of water (11,220 gallons) for each month that they are asked to flow water.

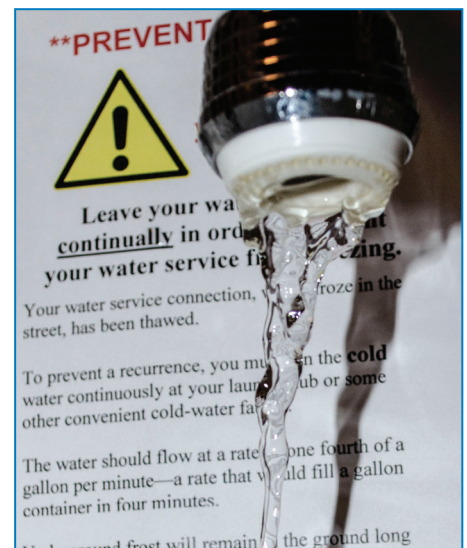
Sending out the notification letters and subsequent bill adjustments will be completed by the customer service staff. Customers will be charged for the thawing of water service lines if the lines are located in private property, of which we have done several this year. Charges will also be added if the water service line in the street has already been thawed once this year and the line re-freezes.

Dispatch staff discern whether a caller's lack of water is from a frozen service or other causes. Staff members will try to walk the caller through a pipe frozen within the home to see if that will alleviate the problem. If not, staff from the turn-on truck will be sent out to assess the need for thawing and the location of the blockage in the service line.

If blockage is found, distribution staff will be given a work order to thaw the water service line. Hot water jetting is the preferable, and first attempted, method. If the electric thawing method is required, the damage prevention staff must perform tests to confirm electrical continuity to prevent damage and fires.

Once the process of notifying customers is underway, maps and records staff, along with staff in the distribution division, will map and analyze new frozen water service lines for the current year to identify patterns and clusters in the freezes. This may provide additional lists of addresses that should be sent letters based on their spatial proximity to other freezes and shared characteristics with nearby frozen services, such as the length of the service lateral. This will be an ongoing process every year and may occur at any point following the first freeze of the season.

Information on frozen services and frequently asked questions are located on our website at stpaul.gov/water.



A faucet runs with a reminder tag in the background. 2014.