

Spent lime tank comes down after nearly 100 years



Photo by Dennis Rosemark



The old spent lime tank came down on Sept. 8 after nearly a century of use. It originally held finished water for distribution into the low service area. It was built in the early 1920s. Over time it was re-purposed to hold spent lime after the introduction of softening into the treatment process. In the months to come, the site will likely be used to stage equipment needed for the treatment plant upgrade.

Managers' Corner Customers give utility high marks in survey

By Patrick Shea

A few weeks ago, a new resident in our service area told me that she was so happy with her drinking water that she no longer is buying bottle water. For full disclosure, the resident is my mother-in-law, but her comments accurately reflect the opinions of our customers based upon our 2020 customer survey.

In fact, nearly 90 percent of residents rate overall satisfaction with Saint Paul Regional Water Services as positive and give an 87 percent positive rating on the delivery of our mission (providing reliable, quality water and services at a reasonable cost).

Measuring and evaluating customer satisfaction is specifically included in our 2019-2021 strategic plan. With the goal of providing excellent customer service, it is important we understand our customer expectations and perceptions. To meet this objective, we conduct a customer survey every 3-4 years to measure customers opinions of customer service, water quality, and billing processes. It also provides a better understanding of overall satisfaction and perception of the services we provide.

The survey was coordinated by Jodi Wallin, marketing and public relations manager, with the assistance of *The Research Edge*.

The survey indicates that most residents drink tap water (69 percent), with 25 percent reporting use of a filter or point-of-use device. The use of bottled water has doubled since our last survey in 2016, from 11 percent to 23 percent. The higher use of bottled water is being driven by younger customers

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(ages 19 - 44) for whom bottled water use tripled since 2016, from 11 to 32 percent, and by those ages 45 - 64, whose use of bottled water has doubled, from 10 percent to 21 percent.

The reasons for drinking bottled water have remained about the same, with taste being the number one driver at 37 percent. While 24 percent said it was because bottled or filtered water was safer, 79 percent of all respondents thought the safety of your tap water was good or excellent. This indicates a need for us to do a better job educating our customers about the value and safety of tap water versus bottled water.

For example, one penny will get you 1.6 gallons of SPRWS drinking water delivered to your tap any time of the day or night.

Thank you for your contribution to serving the customers of Saint Paul Regional Water Services.

A nearly 90 percent overall satisfaction rating would not be possible without the commitment of a dedicated team of water professionals (and my mother-in-law appreciates it, too).

If you are interested in learning more about the survey, please contact Jodi Wallin at Jodi.Wallin@ci.stpaul.mn.us or 266-6308.

Get ready for open enrollment as information sessions go virtual

Open enrollment will take place this year from October 12 – 23.

There will not be any in person information sessions due to the pandemic. Instead, virtual online information sessions are planned. They will be recorded for on-demand use for those employees unable to attend at the scheduled time(s). Session dates are being confirmed and will be made public once available.

Information will be provided on dental and health plans, long/short term disability and life insurance options, Healthy Saint Paul incentive programs and

other options available during open enrollment.

There will not be onsite flu shots. However, Medica will cover the cost of a flu shot at whatever location the employee chooses to get one. A list of locations was sent out by water human resources.

For more information, please contact Racquel Vaske at Racquel.Vaske@ci.stpaul.mn.us or 266-6815 or Sandy Kimbrough at Sandy.Kimbrough@ci.stpaul.mn.us or 266-6510.

You should receive additional information in the mail from the city prior to the start of open enrollment.

Senior customer service rep. opening for promotional job candidate

The utility has an internal promotional job opening for a senior customer service representative. The position is only open to those who meet the civil service promotional rule.

The successful candidate will: Perform highly skilled and complex support work involving planning, organizing, and producing work which requires independent judgment and specialized knowledge to evaluate a range of customer service needs for internal and external city contacts. Address complex requests, issues, and concerns and ensure the reliability of information provided by the assigned staff. Resolve complex customer concerns involving the interpretation and application of policies and procedures. Review and analyze customer data to determine patterns and a course of action. Assist, direct, and respond to internal and external customer concerns.

Requirements for the position may be met by having:

Six years of customer service and administrative support experience to include a majority of the following; organizing/disseminating information, assisting the public in the resolution of their concerns, leading work assignments, writing reports, assisting with projects, explaining/applying processes and procedures.

Or an associate's degree and four years of customer service and administrative support experience as outlined above

Or a bachelor's degree and two year of customer service and administrative support experience as outlined above

For more information, contact Dan Ferralez at 651-266-6596 or email jobs@stpaul.gov.

The position closes at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 5 and must be applied for online at stpaul.gov/jobs