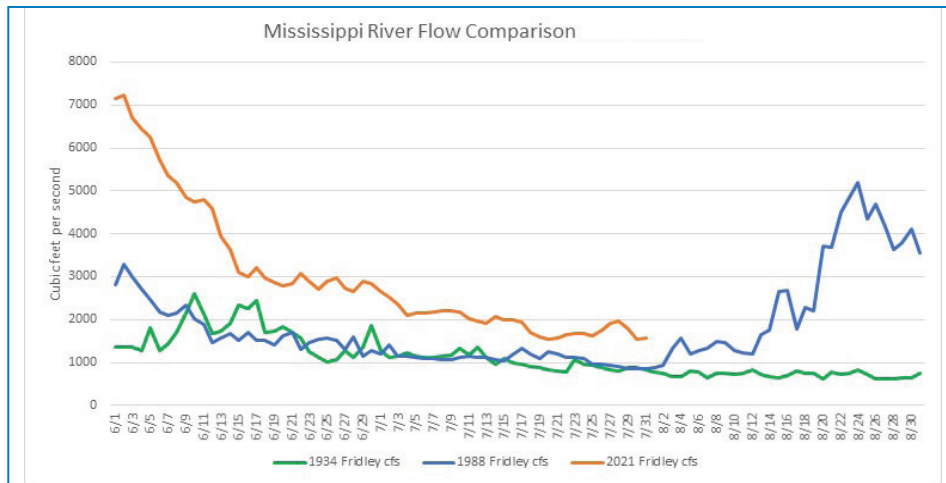


## How does 2021 compare with other dry years?



**Mississippi River flows as measured in cubic feet per second at the Fridley intake station in 1934 (green), 1988 (blue), and 2021 (orange). The lowest flows in 90 years were in 1934, during the first wave of the dust bowl. This drought affected prairies across the country and Canada, whipping up dust storms that displaced people, destroyed homes, and damaged the ecology and agriculture of the prairies.**

**The last drought in Minnesota significant enough for the water utility to require watering restrictions occurred in 1988. Water levels started off low in 1988 due to low rainfall amounts the prior year. In 1988, we drew water from our wells and Centerville Lake, which is last time we used Centerville as a water source. The fall of 1988 marked a turning point as water levels began to rise after rainfall resumed.**

**This year, the water flow began at normal levels and has continued to fall as higher than normal temps occurring for longer periods of time have combined with significantly lower amounts of rain. Weather predictions have the lower rainfall amounts continuing well into fall.**

## Masks are back as Delta variant spreads

Masks are back at all city-controlled properties. This includes all public or shared indoor city spaces when other individuals are present. This requires all employees and visitors to wear a face covering, regardless of vaccination status. Employees and visitors are not required to wear a face covering while outdoors, unless at an activity specifically designated and posted by the city as requiring a face covering.

The announcement was made Aug. 3 due to the ongoing spread of the COVID-19 Delta variant in communities across the country, and following recent Center for Disease Control guidance updates that include a recommendation for fully vaccinated people to wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission.

*Masks continued on page 2*

## Use vacation hours over 120 or risk losing them

If you have quite a few vacation hours still on the books, you might want to start planning when you are going to use those hours before it gets too late in the year. Don't wait until the last minute to try to use your vacation hours.

You can carry over 120 hours of vacation into the next year, but anything over that amount will go back to the city. You will effectively lose that time off.

You can apply for vacation carry over if you have

extreme circumstances. However, those requests have to be approved by the department director and the city human resources director. Requests for such carry over can be made to Sandy Kimbrough by Oct. 31.

The carry over must be used by March 31, 2022, if granted. The carry over does not have to be allowed, so please take that into account when applying.

Without carry over, any hours left above 120 will be lost on Jan. 1, 2022, if they aren't used by Dec. 31, 2021.

## College courses available to sign up for fall semester

You can take free professional skills courses to help you keep current with today's business environment through a partnership between the utility and Century College.

A fall class catalog was emailed to staff this week. These continuing education courses start in September and run through December.

If you wish to see a catalog and did not receive the email, please contact Sandy Kimbrough at 266-6510 or at [Sandy.Kimbrough@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Sandy.Kimbrough@ci.stpaul.mn.us).

Courses will be offered both onsite and online via Zoom.

The catalog will indicate classroom location for courses held at the main Century College campus in White Bear Lake.

Students will receive an email by the evening before the class is to run with links to pick up materials, enter the virtual environment, and evaluate the class. Participation is an expectation of enrollment.

Attendance will be taken at a

variety of points during the session.

Course topics incorporate several timely topics, such the *Impact of Bias and Stereotyping in the Workplace* or *Fostering an Inclusive Climate*.

Other topics include a series of shorter (90 minutes) Zoom sessions on project management, and courses on leadership, negotiating, and planning an effective meeting.

You can still learn how to improve your Power Point presentations, sharpen your communication skills, improve customer service, or how to deal with conflict.

On campus class students will receive certificates of completion at the end of class. Virtual class attendees will be sent their certificate to the email used upon registering within 10 business days after completion of class.

Classes are offered on a first-come, first-served basis as the utility has two seats available for each course. You must obtain management

## CENTURY COLLEGE



approval prior to signing up for the course(s) you are interested in.

Once you have obtained approval, send an email to [sandy.kimbrough@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:sandy.kimbrough@ci.stpaul.mn.us) with the course name, ID number and date. You will then receive an email either confirming your registration or letting you know that the available seats have already been filled.

Additional questions can be directed to Sandy at 266-6510 or at [sandy.kimbrough@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:sandy.kimbrough@ci.stpaul.mn.us).

## Masks are back at all city properties as Delta variant spreads

[Masks continued from page 1](#)

City employees are strongly encouraged to get the COVID-19 vaccine. The use of a face covering, in addition to the vaccine, will assist in stopping the spread of COVID-19 and the Delta variant, as we continue our work to support our community.

Employees are required to follow the guidance below related to wearing masks:

- In any city vehicle with another person(s) shall wear a mask.
- Any city employee interacting with a member of the public shall wear a mask.
- Any city employee in a shared area or congregate setting (such as an elevator, elevator lobby, kitchen, break room) of any city building shall wear a mask.

Employees who are not in a congregate setting and

are alone in their assigned workspace may refrain from wearing a face covering. A congregate setting is a common area: an environment where a number of people work, meet, or gather in proximity for either a limited or extended period. Any specific regulations for individual city spaces will be published on the city web site and posted at each location.

The water utility has resumed its internal COVID-19 meetings, and management is evaluating current workplace and work-from-home practices.

Employees are asked to get vaccinated, wear a mask, get tested regularly, and stay home when sick.

We need to continue to protect our co-workers and our community in the fight against this pandemic.

More COVID-19 information is available on Waternet.