



# Power Lines

Shakopee Public Utilities

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## OPower Home Energy Reports

### Helping SPU Customers Save Energy and Money

Like most customers, when you receive your SPU bill in the mail, you probably take a quick glance at the total amount due. If the bill is higher than you expected, you tell the kids (and yourself) that you need to start turning the lights off more often. Turning off the lights is a good first step, but there's more you can do. Home Energy Reports are a useful tool to help you understand how you use energy. Plus, they provide personalized energy saving tips.

In July, 2011, SPU partnered with OPower to help customers use energy more efficiently. As a result, many SPU customers have received Home Energy Reports to arm them with information they can use to adopt changes to reduce their energy use and save money.

13,057 eligible SPU customers were randomly selected to participate in the program, so not all customers receive a report. To be eligible, customers must have at least three months history at their current premise. Customers must also meet a minimum usage threshold, which indicates that the property is not vacant. If you haven't received a report, we still encourage you to learn ways to save money on your electric bill. Visit <http://spucweb.com/customer-service/energy-reports/> where you'll find helpful tips on saving energy.

The Home Energy Reports compare your energy use to approximately 100 nearby, occupied homes with similar characteristics, such as square footage. These homes represent homes in Shakopee, but do not necessarily include homes on your block. The reports are only intended to help you better understand how you use energy and offer tips to help you save money. Although your usage information may be used in generating reports for your neighbors, your identity is kept completely anonymous. Only you can see your own energy use.

In 2011, Home Energy Reports helped program participants collectively save 894,000 kWh – approximately \$88,327 savings on their electric bills!

To make your Home Energy Report custom analysis and advice even better, you can update the information about your home at <http://spucweb.com/customer-service/energy-reports/>. To log in, simply enter your SPU account number as it appears on your Home Energy Report. You can also create a personal energy savings plan, sign up to receive your report by email, and more.



In 2011, Home Energy Reports helped program participants collectively save 894,000 kWh – approximately \$88,327 savings on their electric bills

# WEATHERING THE STORM

## Be Prepared if the Lights Go Out

At SPU, we're proud of providing reliable delivery of energy service. Regardless of how we work, though, power outages can still occur.

### Be Prepared

Whether a power outage is momentary or more prolonged, they can be an inconvenience. Prior planning and preparation can help make you more comfortable during an outage.

Prepare an emergency kit of essential supplies to help you weather the storm until service is restored. An emergency kit should include:

- ▶ Flashlights and extra batteries.
- ▶ A battery-powered radio.
- ▶ A telephone that does not require electricity. (Cordless phones do not work without electricity.)
- ▶ Private water systems, such as wells that use electric pumps do not work during a power outage. The American Red Cross suggests storing one gallon of water per person.

### If a Power Outage Occurs

Power interruptions are usually caused by something out of SPU's control, such as severe weather. Outages generally do not last long, but there are some basic steps you can take to be prepared.

- ▶ Look for anything unusual, such as a downed power line, or a tree limb on a power line.
- ▶ Call SPU (952.445.6681) to report the outage.
- ▶ Stay away from downed powerlines.
- ▶ Unplug sensitive electronic equipment.
- ▶ Turn off and/or unplug air conditioners, dehumidifiers, and other appliances (except the refrigerator and freezer), as well as light switches to prevent an overload when the power is restored. Leave one or two light switches on, though, so you'll know when the power has been restored.
- ▶ Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to keep the cold air in.

### Medical Emergency

For some, a power outage can present a life threatening situation. If you, or someone you know, relies on electricity to power life-sustaining equipment, please notify SPU. Your account will be noted and priority will be given, when possible, to restore your home first during an outage.

To be prepared for an outage:

- ▶ Invest in power supply backup equipment, such as a battery backup, for medical equipment.

# ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG



**Safe Digging is No Accident:  
Always call 811 Before You Dig**

One free, easy call  
gets your utility lines marked  
AND helps protect you  
from injury and expense.

- ▶ Call two days before you dig to get utility lines marked.
- ▶ Mark the proposed digging area with white stakes or white spray paint prior to calling to ensure the proper area is marked.
- ▶ Gopher State One Call can only locate services that utilities have installed.
- ▶ Hand digging is required within two (2) feet either side of the utility markings.



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

## 2012 Scholarship Winners



Scholarships will be awarded to Janneta Tabakov and Jessica Willard, this year's first and second place winners in this year's Tom Bovitz Memorial Scholarship contest.

SPU sponsors an essay contest for high school seniors in the SPU service area who will pursue post secondary education.

The scholarship is in memory of Tom Bovitz, president of the MN Municipal Utilities Association (MMUA) in 1994-1995, who's vision was the promotion of higher education.

Janneta, daughter of Anatoliy and Irina Tabakov, was awarded \$1000, for the winning essay, and Jessica, the daughter of Michael and Michelle Willard, was the second place winner. Jessica received a \$500 scholarship for her essay.

Janneta's winning essay was forwarded on to MN Municipal Utility Commission for consideration in a statewide competition.

Congratulations Janneta and Jessica!



## PLANT A TREE TO SAVE ENERGY

According to the MN Department of Commerce Energy Information Center, strategically placed shade trees can reduce an air conditioning bill by up to 25%.

### Strategic Shade

The best place to plant trees for shade is due west of west windows (best) and due east of east windows (second best). Select trees that can be planted within 20 feet of the window and will grow 10 feet taller than window height. Generally, the bigger the tree, the more environmental benefits it provides.

### Planting the Right Trees

Deciduous (leaf-dropping) trees that provide maximum summer shade are ideal for reducing air-conditioning use. Properly placed, their leaves provide shade in the summer and their leafless branches allow the warmth of the low-angled sun to penetrate in the winter.

The shape of a tree is an important consideration. A broader crowned tree with dense foliage casts a much larger shadow than a pyramidal shaped tree of the same height. Ask your nursery which types of trees would make good "solar-friendly" trees.

### Be Careful When You Dig!

Remember, Call 8-1-1 at least two days before digging to get utilities marked.

Please avoid planting trees and shrubs near electrical boxes or overhead power lines.



## Sprinkling Restrictions Reminder

To reduce peak demand on the water system and promote water conservation, SPU has adopted an odd/even and time-of-day sprinkling restriction policy from May 1 to October 1. Before watering your lawn:



### Check the calendar.

If your home or business address ends in an odd number, you may only water your lawn on odd numbered days. If your address ends in an even number, you may only water your lawn on even numbered days.



### Check the time.

No sprinkling is allowed between 12 noon and 5:00 p.m. Water your lawn before noon and after 5:00 p.m. to avoid the heat of the day, when a great percentage of water simply evaporates. Watering your lawn during the morning hours is recommended to avoid lawn fungus.

Exceptions are allowed for new seed or sod. While new sod or seeded lawns do need watering more often, please keep in mind that they do not benefit from prolonged watering.

In the event of repeat violations, a \$50 charge per occurrence will be assessed after two notifications.



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**Shakopee Public Utilities**

"Lighting the Way--Yesterday, Today and Beyond"

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Please note: Our website address has changed. Our new web address is

[www.spucweb.com](http://www.spucweb.com)

Please bookmark our new address for quick access

## The Spotlight's on... Faith Kaiser, Customer Service

You may notice a new, friendly face when visiting SPU's Customer Service Center. Faith Kaiser joined SPU as a customer service representative on April 2, 2012.

As a customer service representative, Faith is responsible for establishing service for new customers, assisting customers with questions on their SPU bill, receiving payments, plus much more.

"Faith has extensive customer service experience," said Julie Ambach, Marketing/Customer Relations Director. "She's a welcome addition to SPU's customer service staff."



Faith Kaiser, Customer Service

Faith has held various customer service representative positions. Her most recent position as a utility customer service representative enhances her abilities and knowledge. "I thoroughly enjoy working with the public," said Faith. "I look forward to meeting and helping SPU customers."

Faith has been a resident of Minnesota for 26 years.. Her husband, Randy, is a co-owner of Clancy's, a family restaurant located in Jordan. In her spare time, Faith enjoys golfing, walking, reading and visiting family in Florida.

Welcome, Faith!