

THE POWER OF LOCAL OWNERSHIP

Community Minded

Community Proud

Community Owned



November, 2009

PUBLIC NOTICE TO ALL WASTEWATER CUSTOMERS OF RICE LAKE UTILITIES



Make your holidays a little brighter!

Receive an instant \$3 rebate on LED holiday lights now through December 31st or while supplies last when purchased through participating dealers. LED holiday lights last for almost 20 years and they consume almost 80% less electricity than incandescent bulbs and because each bulb has its own LED, when one bulb goes out the rest remain lit!

For more information log onto focusonenergy.com or call 1-800-762-7077.

During the past year the Rice Lake Utilities Commission has been conducting a rate study for the Wastewater Utility. After careful review, the Rice Lake Utilities Commission has approved the recommendation to increase wastewater rates. The increase is necessary to earn an adequate rate of return to conduct the operations of the Wastewater Utility.

The total increase in wastewater revenues recommended is \$477,173. If the new rates are implemented, the wastewater bill for an average residential customer who uses 4,000 gallons of water per month will increase from \$11.64 to \$16.72. The new rates would become effective January 1, 2010.

Currently Rice Lake Utilities sewer rates are among the lowest 2% in the State of Wisconsin. Out of 312 municipal sewer rates surveyed in 2008, only 6 sewer utilities had a lower rate. After the increase, Rice Lake Utilities sewer rates will still be in the lowest 13% of all sewer rates in the State of Wisconsin. This means that out of the 312 municipal sewer rates surveyed in 2008, only 40 would still have lower rates than Rice Lake Utilities.

The last rate adjustment, effective October of 1991, was over 18 years ago and that adjustment was actually a decrease.

The Rice Lake Utilities Commission will be conducting a public hearing at the next regularly scheduled commission meeting held on Thursday December 10, 2009 at 3:45 in the conference room of the Rice Lake Utilities building at 320 W. Coleman Street, Rice Lake, WI. If you have any questions, please contact Kristi Nelson, Office Manager/Rice Lake Utilities at (715) 234-7004.

Rice Lake Utilities will be closed on the following dates to celebrate the holidays with our families: Thursday, December 24th, Friday, December 25th, and Friday, January 1st. Our phone lines will still be answered 24 hours a day by Gold Cross Services in Eau Claire who will dispatch personnel in an emergency. All non-emergency matters will be handled the following working business day.

Rice Lake Utilities would like to thank all of our consumer/owners for giving us the pleasure to serve our community and fellow citizens. May the holidays bring peace and goodwill to you and your families.

With the desire to be as energy efficient as possible, one of the areas our city officials are reviewing is our municipal street lighting system. The current system puts lighting at all intersections and for the most part, one at mid block. One option is to eliminate the mid block light to save energy and costs for which you, the ratepayer, are paying through your street lighting bill. We have a few questions that we need your input on to make an informed decision. Please take a moment to fill out the short survey below and mail it back with your utility payment or place it in one of the many drop boxes around town. (*Locations of drop boxes can be found on the back of your billing statement.*)

Thank you for taking the time to respond to the survey. Your input is greatly appreciated.

Do you like the current street lighting system and want no change because of the benefits that it provides to you as a citizen or business of Rice Lake. Yes _____ No _____

Comments: _____

Do you believe the street lighting system should be modified (i.e., upgraded to LED) only when new technologies become available and affordable? Yes _____ No _____

Comments: _____

Would you favor the elimination of most mid-block lights in residential areas if it resulted in a reduction in your monthly street lighting charges? Yes _____ No _____ If yes please indicate the percentage of reduction you would expect: _____ (for example, 10%).

Comments: _____

THE SURVEY SAYS.....

Back in September of 2009, the Rice Lake Economic Development Corp. in conjunction with the Marketing and Technology Department of the Rice Lake High School asked the Rice Lake community to participate in a survey on how the Economic Development Corp. can continue to make Rice Lake a community that is attractive to people who currently reside here, future residents, as well as prospective businesses. Listed below are the results of the survey.

Reasons for living in Rice Lake:

- Job & Career 26%
- Family Reasons 26%
- Quality of Life 20%
- Retirement 10%
- School System 7%
- Health Care System 6%
- Other 5%

Top Three Things About Rice Lake:

- Beautiful, Friendly City 26%
- Municipal Government 15%
- Shopping, Retail 11%
- Healthcare 10%
- Fishing/Hunting 9%
- Quality of Education 8%
- Location 7%
- Churches 7%
- Parks 6%
- Rice Lake Weighing Systems 1%

Desired Amenities in Rice Lake:

- More Restaurants, Retail Stores, Grocery Stores & Bakeries 35%
- Community Center like Barron 19%
- Lengthen Cedar Side Trail 15%
- Teen Activities 9%
- Frisbee Golf Course 8%
- Dog Park 7%
- Water Park like Menomonie 7%

Rice Lake Utilities will **NOT** be authorizing city wide running of water this winter. According to Wisconsin Administrative code PSC 185.35(7), Rice Lake Utilities will be contacting individual customers with known susceptibility to freezing and will work with them on preventing freeze ups.