



# City of RIVER FALLS NEWSLETTER



January 2013 • VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 1

## Mayor's Message



Happy New Year to all of you! I hope 2013 finds you all in good health and good spirits. It's a new year full of great possibilities and new chances for everyone.

With the New Year, it will be another year of decisions on what charities, nonprofit organizations or benefits do I want to donate to or belong

to. I hope that all of us can find it in our hearts to help out wherever we can, either financially or through volunteering. I personally will try to volunteer more. I think it brings us closer together as a community through volunteerism.

I know that we are all very busy with children, work and everything else that we already have going on in our lives, but just think how much better or easier we could make somebody else's life by just volunteering a couple of hours of our time each week. I know the feeling of happiness it gives you will far outweigh the feeling of frustration you have at first trying to find the time, which will get easier to find each week as you go.

River Falls is already a very caring and giving community, I am amazed each day by the amount of generosity that I witness. Every organization that I talk to is very appreciative and thankful for your acts of kindness. Because of that I feel guilty of asking even more from you, but nothing gets done without asking. So please, if you have any time or can make any time available, please pick an organization or a charity that is near and dear to your heart and offer to help. I promise that you will get twice as much as you give.

As long as we are talking about volunteering and helping out, we are always looking for more people to become involved in City government. We have several different boards, committees and commissions on which citizens can be appointed. You can find more information by viewing the City's website at [www.rfcity.org](http://www.rfcity.org). Just send me an email ([dtoland@rfcity.org](mailto:dtoland@rfcity.org)) expressing your interest (you can specify a certain one if you want) and detailing your experience. If there is not a vacancy for the board you are interested in, I will keep your email on file until there is an opening.

Take care and remember it's your town. Be proud and enjoy it! ~

Go Pack!

Dan Toland

## 2013 Park and Recreation Activity Guide

The River Falls Park and Recreation 2013 Activity Guide will be inserted in the *Western Wisconsin Buyer's Guide* that is delivered to mailboxes in early March. The activity guide can also be viewed on the City's website, [www.rfcity.org](http://www.rfcity.org). The edition will be packed with programs/activities to help keep you and your family occupied throughout the spring/summer with a healthy balance of recreation, entertainment, and fun.

The City is also excited to offer online registration that is user friendly with no processing fees. Go to [www.rfcity.org](http://www.rfcity.org) and click on "Department", then the "Park & Recreation" link. If you have questions regarding activities anytime during the year, please call the River Falls Park and Recreation Department at 715-425-0924. ~

## RF EMS Receives Approval for Critical Care Paramedic Level

The State of Wisconsin recently notified River Falls Emergency Medical Service (RF EMS) that their proposed Operational Plan for 2013-15 has been approved and accepted. RF EMS is now licensed to operate at the Critical Care Paramedic level effective January 1, 2013. The upgrade allows them to continue to provide the highest quality EMS service to the residents of River Falls and the surrounding communities. Training was completed early in 2012 in anticipation of the upgrade. Ten River Falls Paramedics have been licensed to practice at the critical care level. The upgrade allows staff to continue to transport patients receiving blood products as well as to continue to administer multiple continuous medication infusions at one time. New skills that staff will be able to use include placing and monitoring chest tubes and using more specific ventilation equipment, and monitoring central venous/arterial pressures/lines. Advanced equipment has been purchased and is in place for the January upgrade. River Falls Ambulance is honored to have the ability to serve the community in their time of critical need. We thank the community for its support. ~

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City of River Falls  
Web Site  
[www.rfcity.org](http://www.rfcity.org)

# Calendar of Events

- January 1 . . . . . **City Offices and Library Closed**
- January 2 . . . . . **Final day to file nomination paper for City Offices, 5 p.m., City Hall**
- January 2 – 18 . . . . . **Curbside Christmas Tree Pickup**
- January 2 . . . . . **Dog licenses for 2013**  
available at City Hall
- January 21 and February 18. . . . . **Out of School Event**  
at River Falls Public Library
- January 31 . . . . . **Property Taxes Due to County**
- February 3 – March 10. . . . . **River Falls Reads –**  
A One Book, One Community Reading Event
- February 3 – March 10. . . . . **The Civil War Revisited**  
at the River Falls Public Library Gallery
- February 19 . . . . . **Primary Election** (if needed)
- March . . . . . **Watch for Community Recreation Guide**
- March 2 . . . . . **Dr. Seuss: Read Across America**  
at the River Falls Public Library
- March 14 . . . . . **3rd Annual Peeps Diorama Contest**  
- entries due 8 p.m. at the River Falls Public Library
- March 16 . . . . . **“Walking the Appalachian Trail”**  
at River Falls Public Library
- March 17 – April 21 . . . . . **“Hearthwarming”**  
**Annual Quilt Show** at the  
River Falls Public Library Gallery
- March 25 . . . . . **Emergency Weather Siren Test, 1 p.m.**
- March 25 – April 28 . . . . . **Foreign Film Series,**  
Mondays 7 p.m., River Falls Public Library
- April 2 . . . . . **Spring Election**
- April 5-6. . . . . **American Cancer Society, Relay for Life,**  
River Falls High School
- April 18 . . . . . **Emergency Weather Siren Test, 1:45 p.m.**
- April 18 . . . . . **“Inside the Criminal Mind”**  
at River Falls Public Library
- April 28 – May 24. . . . . **“A Wild Imagination:**  
**The Annual All-School Art Show”**  
at the River Falls Public Library Gallery
- May 16. . . . . **Open Book, 12 Noon-8 p.m., City Hall**
- May 17. . . . . **Open Book, 8 a.m.-12 Noon, City Hall**
- May 21. . . . . **Emergency Weather Siren Test, 1 p.m.**
- June 6 . . . . . **Board of Review, 9 a.m.-11 a.m., City Hall**



**Like us on Facebook**

City of River Falls  
River Falls Municipal Utilities  
River Falls Police Department  
River Falls Public Library



**Follow us on TWITTER**

City of River Falls (@CityRiverFalls)  
River Falls Police Department (@rfpolice)



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in a recycling bin.

*Thank You!*

# 2012-2013 Property Tax Payments



For the third year the County Treasurers will be collecting the first installment of property tax payments for City of River Falls property owners. The County Treasurer's name and address is printed on your tax bill. Both counties offer the ability to pay with credit cards, and to make online payments.

Real Estate Tax bills are mailed in mid-December. Full payment is due by January 31 to the County Treasurer in which the property is located. However, if you choose to pay in two installments, the first payment is due to the County Treasurer by January 31 and the second payment is due by July 31 to the County Treasurer.

The counties also have online tax information for current and previous years at the following sites:

## Pierce County:

Website: [www.co.pierce.wi.us/Treasurer/Treasurer\\_Main.html](http://www.co.pierce.wi.us/Treasurer/Treasurer_Main.html)

County Treasurer: Phyllis Beastrom, 715-273-6743

## St. Croix County:

Website: <http://stcroixcowi.wgxtreme.com/>

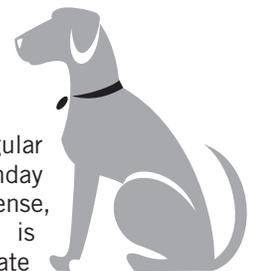
County Treasurer: Laurie Noble, 715-386-4645

The City contracts with Associated Appraisal to administer the property assessment rolls. Information regarding the assessed value of your home or property can be obtained from Associated Appraisal by calling 1-800-721-4157.

City staff will continue to answer questions regarding the property tax process, and will help with other tax related issues.

Please note: the City cannot make name or address changes to your tax bills. Contact your County Treasurer's Office for information on how to make the needed changes. ~

# 2013 Dog Licenses Available



Licenses are issued at City Hall during regular business hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. In order to process a dog license, a current rabies vaccination certificate is required. The certificate must include the date the rabies vaccination was given, when the shot expires, the manufacturer of the vaccination, the serial number of the vaccination and also whether the dog is spayed or neutered. If you do not have this information, it can be obtained from your veterinarian.

The license fee for a spayed or neutered dog is \$5 and \$10 for intact dogs. There is a \$5 late fee for licenses issued after March 31, unless you have owned your dog for less than 30 days.

If processing a license through the mail is more convenient, please include a copy of the rabies certificate, your name and phone number, the appropriate fee and send to: **Dog License, City of River Falls, 222 Lewis Street, River Falls, WI 54022.** The license and tag will be returned to you by mail. If you have any questions, please call Bridget Hieb at 715-426-3419.

If you no longer have your dog, please contact Bridget at 715-426-3419 or [bhieb@rfcity.org](mailto:bhieb@rfcity.org). Thank you. ~

# We're Hiring!

## ***Upcoming Job Opportunities with the City of River Falls***

The City of River Falls strives to be cautious and deliberate in our hiring practices. With every retirement and vacancy, the City carefully evaluates the vacant position and reflects on the long-term staffing plan for the City that has been established by the Council and Administration.

In order to keep operating costs down, the City of River Falls in the 2010 and 2011 budgets approved position reductions and eliminations. Over these two budget cycles, a total of 10 positions were eliminated and seven positions had a reduction of hours.

As a result of careful planning and evaluation, starting in 2013, the City of River Falls will begin to fill some of our vacant positions. To continue our level of service to the community and to fulfill our organizational goals, hiring new employees in 2013 will be critical. Due to this need, the City of River Falls will have several job opportunities in the upcoming year. The positions we will be recruiting for include the following:

- Utility Director (Recruitment for this position started in November of 2012)
- Compensation and Benefit Coordinator
- Management Analyst for Community Development
- Paramedic (full-time and part-time)
- Assistant Engineer
- Accountant
- Account Clerk
- Community Service Officer (part-time)
- Public Works Maintenance
- Water/Sewer Supervisor

In addition, the City will be hiring a Police Officer from the eligibility list and seeking a new class of volunteer paid per call Firefighters and EMTs.

The City of River Falls is seeking motivated candidates to help contribute to our organizational goals. The City is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity at all levels of its workforce. Job opportunities will be posted on the City's website, [www.rfcity.org](http://www.rfcity.org). Keep a look out for these exciting opportunities in the months to come. If you have any immediate questions, please contact Human Resources Director, Karen Bergstrom, at [kbergstrom@rfcity.org](mailto:kbergstrom@rfcity.org) or 715-426-3444. ~

# New Voter and Change of Address Registration

## **New Voter Information**

- You must have lived at your current residence for **28** consecutive days prior to the election to register with that address.
- Voters must provide their Wisconsin Driver License number or Wisconsin issued ID Number when registering to vote.
- Voters must provide their most recent address where they were previously registered to vote.
- College students may establish residency for registration by using the combination of a college ID with a photo and a fee payment receipt that contains the student's River Falls address and is dated no earlier than nine months before the election.
- Proof of residency is not required when registering to vote in the Clerk's Office or with a Special Registration Deputy 20 days prior to an election.
- Proof of residency must be included with your mailed in registration application if you are a first time Wisconsin voter.
- Proof of residence must be provided during the late registration period and on election day.
- Last day to register to vote in the Clerk's Office is the Friday prior to the election.
- An elector can no longer use a corroborating witness to register.
- Voters can register to vote, check your voter registration status, find your polling place, see your sample ballot, request an absentee ballot (military and permanent overseas voter only), and check provisional ballot status at [myvote.wi.gov](http://myvote.wi.gov).

## **Absentee Voting**

- You must be a registered voter to vote by absentee.
- A voter can vote absentee in the Clerk's Office the two full weeks prior to the election. The Friday prior to the election is the last day to vote absentee in the Clerk's Office.
- A voter may request an absentee ballot be mailed to them. They must provide their full name, address, date of the election and where the ballot needs to be mailed to, if different than your voting residence. This request must be signed. Last day to request an absentee ballot by mail is the Thursday prior to the election.

Voters do not currently need to show a photo ID to receive a ballot because the voter photo ID provisions of 2011 Wisconsin Act 23 have been enjoined by the courts. The cases are currently on appeal.

Additional voter information may be obtained at <http://gab.wi.gov/> ~

# Library Programs and Events Spring 2013

Check the library website, [www.riverfallspubliclibrary.org/events.html](http://www.riverfallspubliclibrary.org/events.html) or our Facebook page for the most up-to-date information and events not included in this list or call 715-425-0905. Library programs are free of charge. Registration is not required unless noted.

## Closed Dates

- **January 1**

Drop boxes will be open; renew materials online at the MORE website, [www.more.lib.wi.us](http://www.more.lib.wi.us) or by calling telephone renewal 1-866-697-3639.

- **March 29, 30, 31**

## Events and Programs

### Hudson Bay Adventure – January 17, 2013, 7 p.m.

River Falls Public Library Community Room

Having first given us a taste of dog sledding along the Iditarod Trail, Jim Ryder will be back to talk traveling the Hudson Bay area by dog sled.

### River Falls Reads 2013 – February 3 – March 10

A One Book, One Community reading event. This year, our book will focus on the Civil War, commemorating the sesquicentennial of this pivotal American event. We will be reading The Killer Angels, Michael Shaara's Pulitzer Prize winning book about the Battle of Gettysburg. There will also have a bibliography of other titles of interests, both fiction and non-fiction, as well as a list for children. Not all programs and dates have finalized as of press time. Please pick up a flyer at the library, or check the library website for further information.

- **Sunday, February 17, 2 p.m.** - David Midboe, presenting musical selections of the era.
- **Sunday, March 3, 2 p.m.** - A retrospective look at the life of Mary Todd Lincoln, from her youth up to the assassination of her husband, as presented by actress Jessica Michna.
- Kathie Otto of the UWRF Area Research Center will be making a presentation on Civil War history particular to Wisconsin and Minnesota involvement. Kathie has been doing a daily blog of Civil War events, using letters, diaries, and newspaper articles collected at the University Area Research Center and elsewhere. *Date to be announced.*
- Mondays, February 11, 18, and 25, 7 p.m. - Film series
- Civil War exhibit in the gallery
- **Sunday, November 18, 1:30 p.m.:** **Once Upon a Land:** An Afternoon of Celtic Story, Music and Song, featuring Irish piper, Jim Britton; Scottish Balladeer, Katharine Grant; and storyteller, Tracy Chipman.

### Dr. Seuss: Read Across America – March 2, 10:30 a.m.

Celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday and have some fun with books and crafts at the library.

### 3rd Annual Peeps Diorama Contest – beginning March 14

Entries due Thursday, March 14, 8 p.m. Judging will be held March 15. People's Choice voting March 15-21. Winners announced March 22.

Another helping of fun—show off your creativity, and your ability to make anything related to marshmallow chicks and bunnies. Entries should be no bigger than 18"X18" and must include at

least one Peep. Imagination and bad puns are encouraged, but please keep in mind that the library is a family-friendly place. Earn a brand new toothbrush for your entry, courtesy of our local dentists.

### Walking the Appalachian Trail – March 16, 10:30 a.m.

On August 24, 2008, Pam Flowers reached the summit of Mount Katahdin in Maine's Baxter State Park, which is the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail. Her plan was to hike the entire Appalachian Trail with her dog, Ellie. Their goal was Springer Mountain, the southern terminus of the Appalachian Trail, 2,174 miles to the south in the State of Georgia. Come hear about the adventure of a lifetime!

### Foreign Film series – March 25 – April 28, 7 p.m.

River Falls Public Library Community Room

Six Mondays featuring award-winning international films, both current and classic. Film list available in early March. Free popcorn!

### Drew Nelson, Folk Artist – April 10, 7 p.m.

River Falls Public Library Community Room

Michigan-born Navy veteran Drew Nelson is a storytelling songwriter and multi-instrumentalist. A fly fisherman and world traveler, he writes as a witness to the lives and journeys of those he has met along the way, mixing Americana and roots-rock with traditional folk styles.

### Inside the Criminal Mind – April 18, 7 p.m.

River Falls Public Library Community Room

Presented by Dan Craft, a retired FBI agent who worked as a profiler in some of the most notorious murder cases in recent history.

## Children/Youth Programs

The **Teen Book Discussion Group** meets the second Tuesday of each month at 4 p.m. in the Board Room. The next dates are January 8, February 12, March 12, April 9 and May 14. The group is open to youth 6-12 grade.

The **4th-5th Grade Book Discussion Group** meets the third Tuesday of each month at 4:15 p.m. The next dates are January 15, February 19, March 19, April 16 and May 21. Books are selected by group members. Participants sign an agreement to attend the discussion and receive a copy of the book to keep. See Monica at the Children's Desk or call the library for more information.

### Legos

Join us for a fun hour of building Lego creations. We provide the Legos; you provide the imagination. Open to children K-Grade 5. Please register to participate – limit of 20 per session.

Dates: January 17, 31; February 14, 28; March 14, 28; April 11, 25; May 9, 16.

**Storytimes** – class size is limited, so please call to register your child. Any changes in classes or dates will be posted on our website or check with the Children's Desk. Storytimes are cancelled on school snow days. There are three programs for children of different ages:

- **Babytime:** Ages 0-23 months and a caregiver, Tuesdays 9:30-9:50 a.m. beginning January 15, 22, 29; February 5, 12, 19, 26; March 5, 12, 19; April 3, 10, 17, 24; May 1
- **Toddler Lapsit:** 24-36 months and a caregiver, Tuesdays 10:30-11 a.m. beginning January 15, 22, 29; February 5, 12, 19, 26; March 5, 12, 19; April 3, 10, 17, 24; May 1

## Library Programs and Events

(continued from page 4)

- **Preschool Storytime:** 3-5 years old, Thursdays 10:30-11:15 a.m. and 1:00-1:45 p.m. beginning January 17, 24, 31; February 7, 14, 21, 28; March 7, 14, 21; April 5, 12, 17, 26; May 3

### School In-Service Days

**January 21 and February 18, 10:30 a.m.**

The library sponsors programs on in-service days when there is no school. Watch for information about the programs on the City's website.

### In the Lower Level Kleinpell Gallery

**December 16 - January 24 – Motorbikes**

Classic to custom motorbikes.

**The Civil War Revisited – February 3 – March 10**

A commemoration of the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War, 1861-1865. This exhibit will be running in conjunction with the River Falls Reads program.

**Hearthwarming: The Annual Quilt Show – March 17 – April 21**

A favorite show featuring local quilt artists--a bright bit of colorful cheer to hasten us into Spring.

**A Wild Imagination: The Annual All-School Art Show – April 28 – May 24**

A celebration of art in our schools. ~

## Tax Forms Available at the Public Library

Free Federal, Wisconsin, and Minnesota tax forms and instructions will be available in the lobby of the library, beginning in early January, although some don't arrive until the end of the month. Staff puts out forms as soon as they are received.

Reproducible forms and instructions will be available in the reference area by the information desk. The copier is self-serve and copies are 10¢ per page. You can also go to the websites listed below and print them out at the library or at home.

To find forms online, visit the following websites:

Federal forms: Internal Revenue Service

Website: [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

Wisconsin Forms: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Website: [www.dor.state.wi.us](http://www.dor.state.wi.us)

Minnesota Forms: Minnesota Department of Revenue

Website: [taxes.state.mn.us/pages/index.aspx](http://taxes.state.mn.us/pages/index.aspx)

Links to other states' Department of Revenue:

<http://www.taxadmin.org/fta/link/>

For a listing of helpful agencies, phone numbers, and websites, go to the library's webpage, [www.riverfallspubliclibrary.org](http://www.riverfallspubliclibrary.org), and click on the 'Helpful Links' button on the left side of the page, or call the library, 715-425-0905.

Please note: The library staff cannot answer specific tax questions or help you fill out your taxes. Nor can they help you determine which forms you need. If you need assistance, please consult a tax professional. ~

## Emergency Weather Warning Siren Test Dates 2013

The City of River Falls will be performing audible testing of the outdoor warning siren system on Thursday, April 18, 2013, at 1:45 p.m. in conjunction with the National Weather Service.

If actual severe or threatening weather exists on this date, the test will be postponed until Friday, April 19, at the same time. Listed below is the audible test schedule for 2013. If severe or threatening weather exists on any of these scheduled dates, the test will be the next day (Tuesday) at the same time. All times are 1 p.m. except for April 19.



- Monday, March 25, at 1 p.m.  
Make-up date – Tuesday, March 26, at 1 p.m.
- Thursday, April 18, at 1:45 p.m.  
Make-up date – Friday, April 19, at 1:45 p.m.
- Monday, May 20, at 1 p.m.  
Make-up date – Tuesday, May 21, at 1 p.m.
- Monday, June 24, at 1 p.m.  
Make-up date – Tuesday, June 25, at 1 p.m.
- Monday, July 22, at 1 p.m.  
Make-up date – Tuesday, July 23, at 1 p.m.
- Monday, August 26, at 1 p.m.  
Make-up date – Tuesday, August 27, at 1 p.m.
- Monday, September 23, at 1 p.m.  
Make-up date – Tuesday, September 24, at 1 p.m.

It is important to remember the City of River Falls does not sound an "all clear" after an actual activation of the outdoor warning system.

All community members are encouraged to familiarize themselves with safe practices regarding severe weather. Information can be obtained at the National Weather Service website at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/safety.php> or Wisconsin Emergency Management website at: <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov> or by calling the River Falls Police Department. ~

## LED Holiday Light Exchange a Success!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the LED Holiday Light Exchange at City Hall the end of November. This year approximately 900 LED strands were distributed in exchange for over 1,000 incandescent strands being recycled. ~



## Fire Inspections Program... on Target

Last spring, we provided goals for the City of River Falls Fire Department's Commercial Fire Inspection Program. Our goals were three-fold:

1. Make sure that all commercial properties are inspected at least once per year,
2. Provide consistent inspections for the various property types, and
3. Maintain an easily accessible records database for all inspections.

The State asks that all commercial properties be inspected a minimum of once per year to ensure that businesses maintain a "fire-safe" environment for their employees and the public. In 2011, 264 commercial properties were inspected. This is a little over half of all the business locations in the City. By the end of 2012, we will have inspected over 375 properties. Our inspectors are working hard to make sure we visit businesses at least once per year and hope to reach this goal in 2013.

Consistency is important when inspecting various property types. Some of the property types we inspect include: educational facilities, industry, retail stores, health care facilities and apartment buildings. Our inspectors meet regularly to ensure that they are all interpreting the fire codes correctly and educating our customers in the same manner. While at a property, our inspectors perform a visual inspection of any fire protection system that may be present, check extinguishers and make sure exits are marked and unblocked. In addition, they check for general housekeeping items that may be a fire hazard, such as improper use of extension cords or improper storage of flammable items.

We have worked diligently to put information into our new web-based records management system. In addition to providing property information for our inspectors to use in the field, this program generates informational letters that can be printed and sent to our business owners. This information is also available to our fire officers in the event of an emergency. We continue to input and update this information to keep up with changes in occupancy and ownership.

The River Falls' Commercial Fire Inspection Program is managed by the Assistant Fire Chief of Inspections with oversight from the Fire Chief. Firefighters who have been specially trained perform our inspections. Our emphasis with the program is to educate business owners on fire code issues and the importance of keeping their property "fire safe" for their employees and customers. ~

## Adopt A Hydrant

The winter months bring a special concern to the Fire Department. Winter storms can often hide fire hydrants under a mountain of snow making them impossible to find quickly. In the event of a fire, firefighters have to locate and often shovel out fire hydrants before hooking up to them. Precious time is lost. We are asking that you help us keep the fire hydrant closest to your residence or business clear after each and every snowfall. Please consider helping a neighbor with a medical condition or who is elderly, by shoveling out a hydrant in front of their home. This act of kindness will benefit the entire neighborhood. Clearing a path approximately 3 feet around the hydrant will allow the firefighters room to work should the need arise. Thank you for your help. ~



## Carbon Monoxide – the Deadly Winter Hazard

Carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning can happen at any time of the year, but the danger is greater during the winter when doors and windows stay closed and fireplaces, gas heaters, or other fuel burning appliances are in use. In addition, people can also be exposed to deadly CO levels when "warming up" their cars in garages or keeping them running when stuck in snow.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness or death when inhaled. This is called CO poisoning. CO is found in fumes from cars, portable generators, heating systems and more. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says CO is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in the U.S. Nearly half of those deaths happen during the winter.

Unintentional CO poisoning is almost entirely preventable. The River Falls Fire Department reminds residents to make sure that fuel-burning appliances and heating devices are properly installed, vented, and maintained. DO NOT use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline or charcoal burning device inside the home, basement, or garage or near a window.

To detect potentially deadly conditions, CO alarms should be installed and regularly maintained in all households. State law requires that every house have a carbon-monoxide detector in the basement and on every floor. A final reminder to residents is to test their detectors regularly and change the batteries annually. ~

## Cascade Avenue Ribbon Cutting



*From left to right: Alderperson Christopher Gagne, Mayor Dan Toland, Alderperson Jim Nordgren, Alderperson Scott Morrisette, UWRF Chancellor Dean Van Galen, Alderperson Tom Cafilisch, Public Works Director/City Engineer Reid Wronski, UWRF Parking Operations Program Associate Wendy Penny, Wisconsin Department of Transportation Northwest Regional Planning Chief Tom Beekman, WI System Board of Regent Tracy Hribar, State Senator Sheila Harsdorf, City Administrator Scot Simpson, SEH Project Manager Dave Simons and St. Croix Gas President Don Piegras*

On a sunny Friday, October 12, 2012, a ribbon cutting ceremony marking the completion of the Cascade Avenue project was held on the University of Wisconsin-River Falls campus. Partners of this project including staff from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Short Elliott Hendrickson, the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, the City of River Falls, State and local government officials and community members, were in attendance to mark this important milestone that was several years in the making. ~

## City Named a Bronze Bicycle Friendly Community

Recently, the League of American Bicyclists announced the latest round of Bicycle Friendly Communities (BFC) and City of River Falls has been named a Bronze BFC.



“We are excited that River Falls recognizes that simple steps to make biking safe and comfortable pay huge dividends in civic, community and economic development,” said League President Andy Clarke. “Bicycling is more than a practical, cost-effective solution to many municipal challenges – it’s a way to make River Falls a place where people don’t just live and work, but thrive.” The Whitetail Ridge trails which are maintained by the Kinnickinnic Off-Road Cyclists are a huge reason for the Bronze Award as well as biking programs provided by the Police Department, good maps and a new bike committee, “We Bike River Falls”, that hosts community rides. The City of River Falls has dedicated time and resources to enhancing the bicycle systems for residents and visitors!

The Bronze BFC award recognizes City of River Falls’ commitment to improving conditions for bicycling through investment in bicycling promotion, education programs, infrastructure and pro-bicycling policies.

River Falls’ designation is valid for four years and will be due for renewal in 2016. At that point our community may be reevaluated so we will need to continue to make as many improvements as possible in the meantime. ~

*Below are Wisconsin Communities which are designated Bicycle Friendly Communities 2012. Wisconsin is rated sixth in the Nation.*

City	Award	Population
Madison	Gold	221,551
LaCrosse	Silver	51,818
Eau Claire	Bronze	101,353
Fitchburg	Bronze	25,260*New
Milwaukee	Bronze	554,966
<b>River Falls</b>	<b>Bronze</b>	<b>15,308*New</b>
Sheboygan Cty	Bronze	115,507
Shorewood	Bronze	13,267



## City Wins Water Efficient Utility Award for 2012



On September 27, the Wisconsin Water Association awarded River Falls Municipal Utilities its Water Efficient Utilities Award for 2012, the only utility to receive the award. River Falls Municipal Utilities won the award for the efforts to improve water delivery and usage efficiency.

River Falls Municipal Utilities demonstrated leadership in customer and employee education, partnerships with other utilities, dedicated personnel, and adopting water rates that promote water conservation and efficiency. River Falls Municipal Utilities has shown its commitment to community and employee education by hiring an Energy Educator, forming a Green Team, and participating in educational events throughout the community. Dedicated utility personnel have made significant, measurable contributions to awareness, innovation and efficiency. In 2012, River Falls Municipal Utilities submitted a rate case for the first time in 14 years. The new rate was designed to reflect the true cost of water and thus promoted water efficiency. Lastly, kudos for this award goes to the water customers for their adherence to the odd/even watering ordinance showed the rest of the state our progressive spirit and environmental consciousness. ~

## City Staff Participate in Sharing Families Program

The City of River Falls employees recently participated in the Sharing Families program sponsored by the River Falls Journal. Sharing Families was started in 1988 and exists to facilitate neighbors

helping area neighbors in times of need, especially during the holidays. Families are screened by the Ecumenical Giving Tree program based in River Falls and are then available for adoption. The Journal also collects toys, clothing, and monetary



donations to help fulfill the family lists. *Bridget Hieb and Kayla Burt with Sharing Families donations.*

Last holiday season, Sharing Families helped 53 families consisting of 82 adults and 148 children.

This was the ninth year that City employees helped area families. Three families with a total of 14 members were adopted and their wish lists fulfilled by all branches of the City. Items donated included warm winter clothing, household supplies, gift cards and toys. ~

# The 2013 Approved Budget



The City's annual budget for fiscal year 2013 totals \$41.3 million and accounts for City services such as police, fire, street maintenance, utilities and library services. The majority of the property-tax funded services is recorded in the City's general fund, which is primarily comprised of wage and benefit expenses. Other major general fund costs are insurance, utilities, street maintenance and fuel. The amount levied in local property taxes to support the 2013 budget was \$4,609,064, which is an increase of \$112,355 or 2.5 percent over the previous year's levy.

The budget has been prepared using conservative revenue estimates and historical data. Certain revenues sensitive to the economy such as building permits and court revenues have been moderately reduced to avoid overstating future funding. Projected revenues from the State of Wisconsin have also been decreased by \$20,000.

The budget also includes the continuation of stabilization funding for future capital equipment and maintenance costs for the fire and library departments. The Fire Department will need replacement of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs) in four years, and \$30,000 is being set aside for this future project. The library building is now 15 years old and will need building upgrades such as replacement carpeting within five years. Funds are being set aside to minimize the impact of these purchases on the tax levy.

The 2013 budget includes several positions that are vacant with the expectation that these positions will be filled in 2013. These positions include Assistant City Engineer, Utility Director, Accountant, Management Analyst and Water/Sewer Operations Superintendent. An additional police sergeant has also been approved and included in the budget, bringing the total to five.

## Capital Improvement Program

The City Council has included the following projects and equipment in the budget:

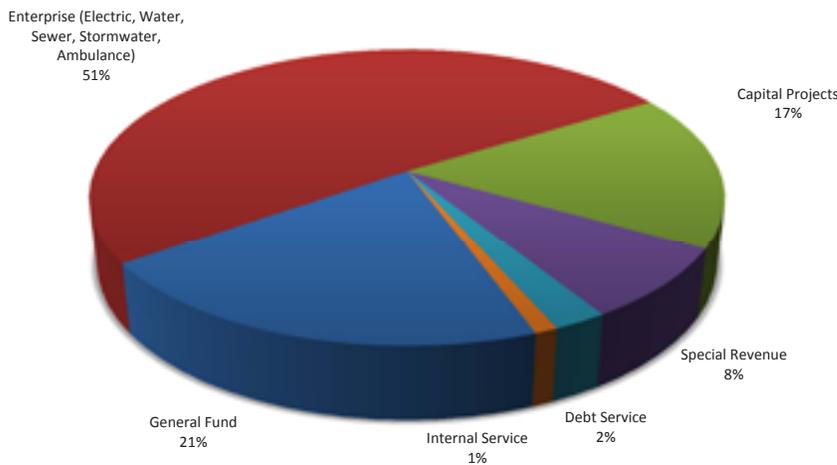
- Radio Road Interchange project (local share)     \$4,393,693
- South Main Street Rehabilitation                     435,000
- Hoffman Park Safe Room                                 300,000
- White Pathway Extension                                 180,000
- Replacement vehicles and equipment                 215,500

Funding sources include property tax levy, grants, long term borrowing and non-General fund operating revenues.

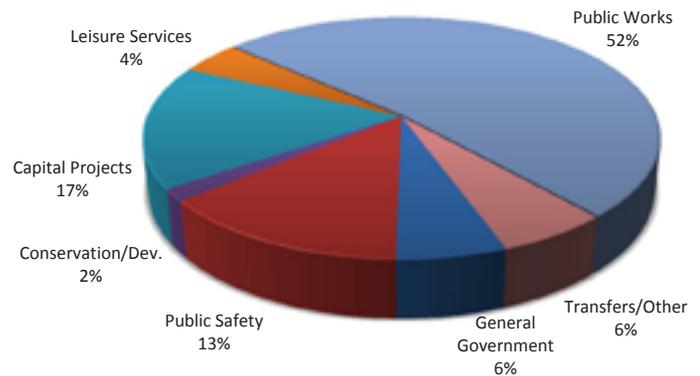
The following graph represents the funding sources for all budgeted funds in 2013.

The following graph illustrates the uses of funds included in the 2013 budget.

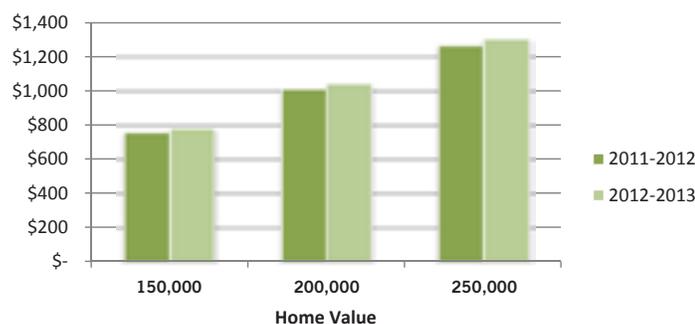
**2013 Revenues - All Funds**



**2013 Expenses - All Funds**



**Tax Comparison by Home Value**



# Employee Spotlight

## Janis Bock, Police Sergeant

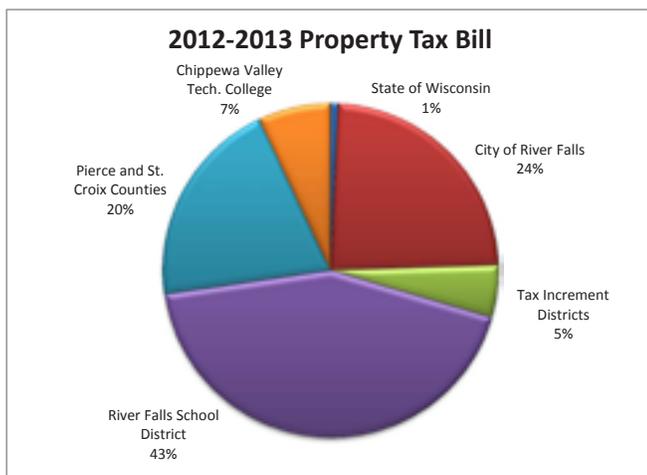


Janis Bock was hired as a Police Patrol Officer in September 1990. She was promoted to Police Sergeant in May 1998. Janis has been an integral part of the Police Department's Management Team. She oversees the Police Reserve Program, Citizen Police Academy and in planning and coordinating the Police Department's role in facilitating community events and new officer training.

After dedicating her career to serving the River Falls community, Janis retired on December 18 after 22+ years of service. Janis said, "The time has flown by, and I have enjoyed working here. I am looking forward to spending more time with my husband and my three boys as well as my extended family. I am going to definitely enjoy being in Florida for the winter as I have never liked the cold! I will miss my co-workers and the people I have met here in River Falls."

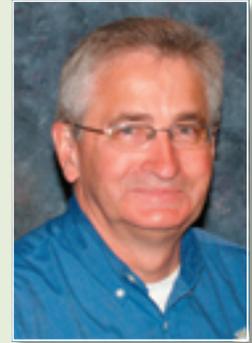
Janis would like to thank Chief Leque for the excellent training she received while working for the City of River Falls, and for the Chief's leadership and guidance. She would also like to thank her co-workers for their camaraderie and enthusiasm for the job. Janis especially wants to thank the office staff for all the years of behind the scenes hard work and assistance. It's been fun! ~

The City of River Falls is one of the taxing jurisdictions included on the property tax bill. Levies from the River Falls School District, State of Wisconsin, Chippewa Valley Technical College and the counties are also included. The following is a graph of the allocation of general property taxes by entity.



The adopted budget is available on the City's website [www.rfcity.org](http://www.rfcity.org), at City Hall and the River Falls Public Library. For more information, please contact Julie Bergstrom, Finance Director, at 715-426-3416 or by email at [jbergstrom@rfcity.org](mailto:jbergstrom@rfcity.org). ~

## Carl Gaulke, Utility General Manager



Carl Gaulke was born and raised on a family farm just outside of Spooner, Wisconsin. Carl is the fifth of eight children in his family of six sisters and one brother.

Carl earned an Associate Degree in Accounting from Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College in Rice Lake, Wisconsin. Upon graduating, Carl immediately started work at River Falls Municipal Utilities as the Utility Accountant in September of 1971.

Over the years, Carl was promoted to Office Manager, Utility Finance Director, and in September 2001 to his current position of Utility General Manager. He has served on several county and state utility organization boards such as WPPI Energy, Municipal Electric Utilities of Wisconsin (MEUW), and West Central Wisconsin Biosolids Facility.

One thing Carl likes about his job is the everyday activities of being a part of serving the customers with electric, water, and sanitary sewer services. Being able to assist in providing great service to customers and the necessary capital upgrades that help improve reliability are standards he strives to achieve.

Gaulke stated, "Customers don't appreciate power outages, water outages, and certainly don't want to have to deal with a sanitary sewer back-up in their basement." Over the years, Carl has assisted in minimizing such occurrences and maximizing customer satisfaction.

Carl is married to Brenda (Kelly), a lifelong resident of River Falls, and has two grown children. Jonathan works at American Testing Center in River Falls, is married to Megan, and has two children, Charles and Everett. Tiffany recently returned back to River Falls after attending graduate school and working in Arkansas. She is now employed at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. Carl is extremely grateful to have both children living close by. Carl and Brenda are excited to also be a host family this year to an exchange student from Germany.

Outside of work, Carl enjoys fishing, walking, serving on the "Chain Gang" for River Falls' high school and college home football games, and attending local sporting events. Carl has also been an active member on the River Falls Fire Department for 40 years. Carl also enjoys additional community involvement in River Falls Jaycees, River Falls Youth Hockey, the Masonic Lodge, and the United Methodist Church.

After being employed for 41 years at River Falls Municipal Utilities, Carl has decided to retire with his last day of work being December 31, 2012. Upon retirement, Carl looks forward to spending more time fishing, getting back into gardening, completing minor house projects that have been put off for some time, and perhaps some bow hunting. Of course, much time will be spent with his wife, children, grandchildren, and likely some traveling. ~

# Electric Crew Dispatched to Assist on East Coast

Prior to Hurricane Sandy hitting the east coast the end of October, the national electric groups issued an estimate of the need for 20,000 distribution linemen to assist with restoration efforts. The storm damage to electric distribution was, in some cases, worse than predicted. The damage was widespread. This led to a call from power companies outside the region to assist.

In 2000, River Falls Municipal Utilities signed a mutual aid agreement to assist other municipal utilities in restoring power to customers following major storm events. It is rare that this mutual aid call requires crews to be sent outside of Wisconsin, but with the recent disaster on the east coast, the local choice was to



take action as we would appreciate if ever found to be in a similar situation.

On Thursday, November 1, through a coordinated effort with Municipal Electric Utilities of Wisconsin (MEUW), River Falls Municipal Utilities sent a two-man crew consisting of linemen, Dan Treichel and

*River Falls Municipal Utilities' Tim Wiste (left) and Dan Treichel (right) were dispatched to the East Coast after Hurricane Sandy*

Tim Wiste, and a truck to join over a dozen other municipal electric utility crews from Wisconsin already in route to Pennsylvania. Utility General Manager Carl Gaulke stated, "We are very proud of both Dan and Tim for offering to help restore service from this disaster. This is something nobody ever wants to experience in their community."

After over eighteen hours of travel in a rough and tough line truck spanning over two days, work began immediately to provide assistance to Pennsylvania Power and Light located in Tannersville, Pennsylvania. Work there primarily consisted of rebuilding new lines along narrow roads within the heavily wooded areas of the Pocono Mountains. Never knowing what each new day would bring, work began most mornings at the break of dawn and often went into the dark of the night, depending on the job tasks assigned that day. With leadership from each host utility and assistance

*River Falls Municipal Utilities' electric crew: (L-R): Jeff Ploeger, Dan Treichel, Wayne Siverling, Chuck Beranek, Virgil Johnson, Tim Wiste, Brian Hatch, and Derrick Peterson. Having the rest of the crew available to service River Falls customers, allowed Dan and Tim to assist storm crews in Pennsylvania.*

from MEUW supervisory personnel, the staging areas were highly organized, materials were available, and crews were efficiently dispatched. Once power was restored in Tannersville, their journey continued east toward the coast to assist Met-Ed in the area of Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. Prior to relocating to each new utility, a mutual aid agreement was put in place to assure reimbursements for expenses incurred were guaranteed. The final leg of the trip was to assist Jersey Central Power & Light in Livingston and Newport, New Jersey areas before returning home on November 14.

When asked if they would consider doing something like this again in the future if needed, both Wiste and Treichel responded "definitely" without a second guess.



*Crews in action restoring power to residents in Pennsylvania*

"Over the nine plus years working at River Falls Municipal Utilities, this was by far the most beneficial thing I have ever been a part of. I really wish others from our utility could have the same opportunity at some point; it really puts things in perspective," stated Treichel.

While a considerable amount of work is yet to be done before permanent power is completely restored, many of the areas our crew worked at already had temporary backup generation in place. Residents were found to be extremely appreciative and generous, especially when learning how far utilities crews, such as ours, traveled to assist in cleanup following such a disaster. Wisconsin utilities were praised for their extremely skilled ability to rebuild lines in a highly efficient and safe manner. Wiste stated, "No matter how busy we are, we should respond when mutual aid is requested, just as we would want assistance if ever put in a similar situation." ~



# Academy Building

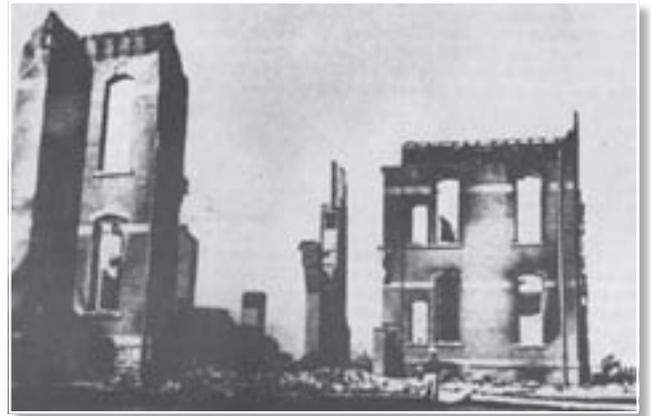
The School District of River Falls has determined it is not economically feasible to maintain and operate the 1926 portion of the Academy Building and therefore wishes to divest itself of the 1926 portion of the Academy. The District does not consider the 1926 building to be compatible with future educational programs in accordance with the District's Strategic Plan and does not intend to invest district resources in the 1926 portion of the building. To help the District determine the future of the building, they created a Citizens' Advisory Committee. The committee's purpose is to recommend an alternative owner to develop and maintain the 1926 portion of the Academy Building. The timeline for the committee to complete its work and provide recommendations is no later than May 2014.

## Committee Process:

- Board reviews proposal for Citizens' Advisory Committee (March 2012)
- Board approves proposal (April 2012)
- Board solicits members for the Committee (April 2012)
- Board appoints the members of the Committee (May 2012)
- Committee convenes (First meeting was August 8, 2012)
- Committee meets on regular basis to address the Committee's purpose (May 2012- May 2014)
- Committee keeps the Board apprised of progress at least each quarter through Board presentations/memos (September 2012- May 2014)
- Committee makes final recommendation to the Board regarding alternative owner(s) (by or before May 2014)

## Committee Stipulations:

- New use of the 1926 portion of the Academy Building must be compatible with the district's programs which continue to operate in the 1949 and 1991 sections of the building.
- District resources will not be invested in the 1926 building. The 1926 building must be owned, operated, and maintained as a separate entity from school district property.



*River Falls School District Academy ruins after the fire in 1926*

- The Committee must investigate the legality of public/private joint ventures and present a recommendation to the River Falls School Board that is fully legal.
- Long-term use of the 1949 and 1991 sections of the Academy cannot be negatively affected by the use of, nor dependent on, the 1926 section of the building under new owners.

## Committee Membership: (10-12 members)

- School Board Member Representative
- District Administrative Representative
- River Falls Historical Preservation Society Representative(s)
- City of River Falls Representative(s)
- Neighborhood Representative(s)
- Community Representative(s)
- Business/Chamber of Commerce Representative(s)
- Parent Representative(s) from Renaissance and Montessori

## Committee Co-Chairs:

- School Board Representative and Community Representative

As of today the Committee has met four times. The first meeting was to outline a plan of action. The second meeting was a tour of the 1926 Academy Building. The third meeting was a presentation from a representative of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Architects and developers that have renovated historic buildings. The fourth meeting looked at costs to keep the building in usable condition. At their next meeting the committee will start to look at potential developers, review sources and users.

Please stay tuned for updates to the future of the Citizens' Advisory Committee for the 1926 Academy Building. If you have any ideas please forward them to the School District of River Falls, Citizens' Advisory Committee, 852 East Division Street, River Falls, WI 54022. ~



*New Academy building under construction in 1927*



*River Falls School District Academy 1927-1950*

# NPDES Annual Report

Water pollution degrades surface waters making them unsafe for drinking, fishing, swimming, and other activities. As authorized by the Clean Water Act, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program controls water pollution by regulating point sources (pipes or man-made channels) that discharge pollutants into surface waters. The Phase I of this program targeted cities with populations of 100,000 or more. Phase II of this program targeted cities with populations of 10,000 or more. The City of River Falls received its Phase II Permit October 1, 2006. UW-River Falls has their own Phase II permit; we have signed an intergovernmental agreement with them in 2009 to work together on many of the requirements of these permits.

In most cases, the goal of the permit is to improve water quality; however, the Kinnickinnic is a water resource where the water quality is already exceptional. In River Falls, our goal is to maintain this exceptional resource; this is done through six, regulated, minimum control measures:

- 1. Public education and outreach.** The City of River Falls maintains a website with storm water information, prints articles in the city-wide newsletter, participates in Earth Day events and other similar activities, and runs articles in the River Falls Journal when applicable.
- 2. Public participation and involvement.** The City runs an Adopt A Pond Program and a storm drain marking program. We also try to promote citizens to actively do the same thing on their own property through education and other items such as a rain barrel rebate.
- 3. Illicit discharge detection and elimination.** We passed an ordinance in 2007 prohibiting illicit connections to the storm sewer system. This ordinance also gives us authority to force disconnections of illicit connections we become aware of. We also conduct inspections of outfall pipes. Outfalls with high risk of illicit connections are inspected annually; the others are inspected on a three year rotating basis.
- 4. Construction site pollutant control.** An ordinance is in place requiring construction site erosion control. We also conduct weekly construction site inspections for erosion control.
- 5. Post-construction stormwater management.** An ordinance, which is more stringent than state standards, is in place requiring rate and volume control for nearly all new and re-development activities within the City.
- 6. Pollution prevention/good housekeeping.** We have a proactive snow and ice removal policy. We also conduct regular maintenance on fleet vehicles and sweep City streets on a regular basis. The City owns and maintains a compost site for residents' use. We also inspect and maintain the storm sewer system. The City only applies fertilizer to City properties after conducting soils tests to ensure we are only applying what is needed.

There will be a presentation of specifics on the annual report at a City Council Meeting, most likely in late February 2013. ~

## Simple Ways to Pay Your Utility Bill ~ Wherever You May Be!

It seems that electronic advances are making things more and more convenient. You don't even have to leave the house to shop anymore. You can have virtually anything delivered. You don't even have to walk out to the mail box to pay your electric, water and sewer bill anymore. It can all be done electronically from the comfort of the living room with a home computer.

### Online Account Payment

Access My Account is a service that allows you to view your utility account history and pay your bill online – at NO CHARGE. With this service, you will be able to review your account information 24 hours a day, seven days a week, pay your bill, view and print energy usage information and billing history, and submit a service request. Before you can view your account information or make a payment, you will need to login to our secure site. To get started, click on the orange “Pay Your Bill” tab on the front page of River Falls Municipal Utilities' website at [www.rfmu.org](http://www.rfmu.org). After carefully entering your name and account number exactly as it appears on your bill, you will have the ability to review your account.

### Electronic Bill Payment

Take advantage of our FREE electronic bill payment service. You can have your electric, water, and sewer bill electronically paid from any bank, savings and loan, or credit union account at no cost. Sign up today to start enjoying the benefits of not writing a check, not paying postage, and avoiding late payment charges. You will still have control of your utility payments. When you receive your monthly bill, simply record the amount in your checkbook register. Your bill will state “P.A.P. DO NOT PAY” (P.A.P. means pre-authorized payment). The due date that appears on your bill is the date that funds are withdrawn from your account. If this day falls on a weekend, the funds are withdrawn on the next business day.

River Falls Municipal Utilities payments continue to be accepted by mail and at City Hall – either in person at the front desk or via the outside payment drop box. For additional information regarding utility payment options, contact River Falls Municipal Utilities at 715-425-0906 or visit [www.rfmu.org](http://www.rfmu.org). ~

## Medical Need Customers

At River Falls Municipal Utilities, we care about our customers and recognize that some face special challenges requiring electricity for emergency medical and life-support equipment. We ask these customers to contact us to ensure placement on our medical needs list. With a written request from a physician, these customers may qualify for priority attention when restoring electricity as a result of a power outage. It is, however, important to prepare for potential interruptions in electric service and identify a location with emergency power capabilities, and make plans ahead of time to go there or to a health care facility during an outage. To learn more about signing up for medical needs electric restoration request, contact River Falls Municipal Utilities at 715-425-0906. ~

# Electric System 101

Is electricity availability the first thing that comes to mind when you are enjoying that first cup of coffee in the morning, safely traveling down a nicely lit street, or reading a book to your children before bedtime? Of course it isn't! Daily use of electricity is so easily taken for granted day after day. One of the priorities at River Falls Municipal Utilities is to provide cost-effective reliable service to our customers - so it is one less thing for you to worry about!

River Falls first had power in 1900 coming from the site of the Junction Flour Mill located along the Kinnickinnic River. Generation from this mill provided water power for lights, allowing a safer and more convenient alternative to gas lamps. With generation needs continuing to increase, more units were added to keep up with demand. In 1980, River Falls joined the municipal joint action agency now called, WPPI Energy, in an effort to provide a more cost effective source of energy to the community. Even though generating power locally proved to be a reliable source of energy for many decades, it was determined best that the local Power Plant was to be decommissioned in 2011. River Falls is very fortunate in the fact that the City is uniquely served by three major transmission lines, providing multiple sources of power. There is great comfort in knowing that if one transmission line gets destroyed during a bad storm; power distribution can be shifted to alternative sources.

With over 6,000 customers served by ten miles of transmission and 99 miles of distribution lines, three substations, and two hydraulic generating plants, providing reliable service isn't always as easy as it seems. Preventative maintenance assures the condition and functionality of a system provides top-notch reliability and customer service. There are a number of regulations that provide assistance in establishing procedures and standards to assure power is provided safely, accurately, and fairly to each and every one of our customers.

Unfortunately no matter how prepared your system is, nature occasionally takes its own course of action and outages occur. In 2003, we hit an all-time high with 64 power outages taking place during that year. Tree branches and squirrels are the most common causes of outages. Installation of squirrel guards has become a common practice. We also implemented an aggressive tree trimming program. As a result, only 43 outages took place last year.

Another important aspect of electric system is providing lighting for vehicles and pedestrians along public streets. There are 1186 lights that exist in main corridors and established areas throughout town. Your help in identifying street lights that are not working is very important. Outages can be reported on our website at: [http://www.rfmu.org/customer\\_services/streetlightoutage.asp](http://www.rfmu.org/customer_services/streetlightoutage.asp) .

Even on a high demand day such as it was in July 2011 (the all-time high of 26.9 megawatt hours), the River Falls electric system continues to provide the reliable power that we have all come to rely on. Next time you flip on the switch and think about where your power comes from, find comfort in knowing River Falls Municipal Utilities is your locally-owned utility that takes pride in providing reliable power that you have grown to trust. ~

# Local 2013 Energy Efficiency Incentive Program Offerings

Did you know that there are approximately 6,000 residential customers in the River Falls Municipal Utilities service area? We have developed local programs and services specifically with you – our residential customer – in mind. Whether you own or rent, we have something that will help you save energy, as well as money.

## Programmable Thermostat

Reduce your heating and air conditioning costs easily and dramatically with a programmable thermostat (also called an automatic setback thermostat). Programmable thermostats set the temperature back at night or while you are away from home. You can easily save 10 – 20 percent of your heating and cooling costs with a programmable thermostat. They are easy to install, program, and use; and are relatively inexpensive (\$35 - \$75). Up to 50 percent of total price, not to exceed \$50 cash incentive is offered to encourage the purchase and installation of a programmable thermostat.

## Central Air Tune-Up

An inspection and tune-up of your central air conditioner unit can improve its efficiency and increase its life span. Without regular cleaning and maintenance, an air conditioner can lose up to five percent of its original efficiency for each year of operation. Up to \$50 cash incentive is offered to encourage regular professional service inspection and tune-up of central air conditioners. Only central air conditioning units of five tons or less that have not had a tune-up within the last three years are eligible.

## Residential Tree Power

Planting trees can save money and energy in both areas of heating and cooling. Shade trees on the south and west sides of your home make hot summers cooler and let in warming sunlight when the leaves are gone in the winter. Trees are also a natural air filter, removing dust and greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, while adding oxygen. Up to 50 percent of total price, not to exceed \$50 cash back incentive is offered to encourage planting qualified shade trees to conserve energy.

## Home Energy Improvements

Homeowners can receive an energy assessment performed by a certified contractor who will then recommend upgrades specific to your home's needs. A cash back incentive is offered to pay all but \$50 of the initial home assessment cost. In addition, a combination of Focus on Energy and local incentives are available for up to 66% of the eligible project costs, up to \$3,000.

## ENERGY STAR Appliances

ENERGY STAR appliances are the most energy efficient products available; these products use less energy and are better for the environment. Appliances with the ENERGY STAR label are widely available in your favorite brands. Up to \$250 cash incentive is offered to encourage the purchase of new ENERGY STAR-qualified models. Receive \$100 incentive when purchasing a clothes washer, \$75 for refrigerator, \$50 for freezer, and/or \$25 for dishwasher. Purchase your new ENERGY STAR item(s) in River Falls and receive an additional \$10 per appliance.

These programs have a limited budget and applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, until allocated funds are spent. For additional information regarding these incentives, call River Falls Municipal Utilities at 715-426-3467 or go to [www.rfmu.org](http://www.rfmu.org). Program may be modified or discontinued at any time without notice. ~

# Balancing Snow and Ice Control with Environmental Protection

The City of River Falls takes pride in being the largest City in Wisconsin on a Class I trout stream and we intend to do all we can to keep it that way. One significant challenge for us is balancing the public's expectations for safe winter driving conditions with our desire to limit our impact on our environment, including the Kinnickinnic River. We would like to help you better understand what improvements have been made to balance our snow and ice control operations to balance our snow and ice control operation while limiting impacts on our environment.

**Pre-wetting** – The City of River Falls began pre-wetting salt that it applies to its street about 15 years ago. Pre-wetting salt before it is spread on the road surface produces a number of desirable effects.

- The pre-wetted salt is more apt to stick to the road surface rather than bouncing off the road surface and being scattered in unnecessary areas. It is estimated that this reduces salt use by 20-30 percent.
- Rock salt by itself does not melt snow and ice; it needs some liquid water to dissolve into. Pre-wetting the salt before it hits the road surface provides this liquid water and results in faster melting and allows for less salt to be used overall.

**Anti-icing** – Five years ago, the City of River Falls was near the forefront in adopting and implementing an anti-icing program to its snow and ice control operations. Anti-icing consists of applying liquid salt brine to the pavement surface ahead of an anticipated snow or ice storm. Anti-icing prevents the snow from bonding to the pavement, allowing the roads to be plowed more cleanly using less salt. Salt brine is typically applied at a rate of 20-40 gallons per lane mile which is equivalent to 45-90 pounds of salt per lane mile. Anti-icing significantly reduces the amount of salt used because it prevents snow from becoming compacted and bonded to the surface allowing easier removal by snowplows. Anti-icing can also reduce overtime costs because application can be made during regular working hours.

**Salt Storage** – The City of River Falls stores salt on an impervious surface to prohibit groundwater contamination. Furthermore, salt piles are placed in a structure protected from rainfall. The City's salt storage facility is licensed annually by the state of Wisconsin.

**Sanding** – Up until about five years ago, the City routinely applied sand to its streets to help aid with vehicle traction. Although the City has discontinued routine use of sand, we are able to purchase sand from the County in rare instances when immediate traction is needed (such as ice storms) or when temperatures are too low for salt or other de-icers to be effective. Reasons that the City has moved away from using sand include:

- Sand applied to streets, parking lots, and sidewalks eventually washes into the nearest waterway, where it can fill wetlands, lakes, and waterways, or obstruct the flow of water through storm sewers.
- Sand damages waterways by clogging the spaces in gravel where insects live, making it hard for them to cling to rocks. Insects are a key part of a Trout stream's food chain and an indicator

of stream health. Keeping sand out of the Kinnickinnic River is important to maintain a healthy fishery.

- Twenty to thirty percent of the sand is lost immediately due to scatter, similar to the loss of dry salt as discussed below.
- Sand piles trap moisture, even when covered, and 2-4 percent salt by weight needs to be added so the moist sand won't freeze. Typical application rates of 500-1000 pounds per lane mile result in 10-40 pounds per lane mile of salt.
- Sand becomes ineffective when covered by new snow and must be reapplied.
- According to WisDNR, research on friction on pavement treated with sand shows that there is little benefit when traffic is present.
- The US EPA indicates that sand loses its effectiveness as a traction enhancer on many roads after as few as ten vehicles pass.

**Pavement Temperature Sensors** – At a pavement temperature of 30°F, one pound of salt can melt 45-46 pounds of ice. At a pavement temperature of 20°F, one pound of salt can melt 8-9 pounds of ice. The City has begun to use pavement temperature sensors which allow us to calibrate application rates and choose the correct products based on actual pavement temperatures, not air temperatures. We often find that pavement temperatures are significantly above air temperatures.

**Street Priorities** – The City of River Falls has assigned different snow and ice control strategies to its 65 miles of roadways based on the traffic volumes and the physical characteristics of the road, such as being on a steep hill. Sixty percent of the roadways maintained by the City are classified as low priority roads for snow and ice control. Bare pavement is not the goal of the City on these streets and as

such, they do not receive routine anti-icing or de-icing. De-icing chemicals are applied sparingly on these low priority roadways at strategic locations such as approaching stop signs or in the event of glare ice.

**New Technology** – The City has been very proactive with new technology and continues to try and stay on the forefront of new technologies that may help us balance the public's expectations for safe winter driving conditions with our desire to limit impact to the environment. This year we are going to be trying a Magnesium Chloride product with an agricultural by-product that acts as a rust inhibitor.

**Supervision/Training** – As you can see, we have thoughtful approaches to chemical management. Although we actively manage the level and degree to which we use de-icing techniques, the equipment and manpower used to deploy it sometimes results in more or less usage of the products than desired. Our Street Supervisor is involved in actively monitoring plow and salting routes to detect malfunctioning equipment (like salt spreaders) and to remind operators of proper techniques regarding operation of the equipment to match application rates with the expected outcomes for de-icing.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact Reid Wronski, Director of Public Works/City Engineer, by phone at 715-426-3409 or by e-mail at [rwnski@rfcity.org](mailto:rwnski@rfcity.org).



# South Main Street Concrete Pavement Rehabilitation

The City of River Falls is planning a concrete pavement rehabilitation project for South Main Street from Cemetery Road to Locust Street. The project will also include the short concrete segments of Cascade Avenue that extend less than a block east and west of South Main Street. The roadway south of the bridge over the South Fork of the Kinnickinnic River was constructed in 1973. The concrete roadways north of the bridge were constructed in 1992.

Until 2011, most of this roadway was on the State Connecting Highway system as State Highway 29/35. In 2011, State Highway designation was moved to Cemetery Road. Under an agreement with WisDOT, the City has received funds that it plans to utilize for this concrete rehabilitation project.

The reason for undertaking this project at this time is to extend the useful life of the pavement on South Main Street. Although this pavement is 40 years old and in reasonably good condition, there are a number of pavement defects throughout the project that if left unchecked will contribute towards an earlier failure of this roadway. A rehabilitation project at this time will extend the useful life of this pavement by up to 20 years.



In general, the work involves:

- Bridge Approach Panel Repair/ Replacement
- Partial and Full Panel Replacement
- Joint Sealing
- Catch Basin Repair
- Manhole Repair
- Curb and Gutter Repair
- Sidewalk Repairs
- Signal Loop Replacement
- Pavement Striping

Work on this project is expected to take six weeks and occur between Memorial Day and

Labor Day next summer. Preliminary plans call for the road to be open to automobile traffic with a possible detour for any large truck traffic.

A Public Information Open House Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 29, 2013, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the Training Room located in the lower level of City Hall at 222 Lewis Street. Please plan to drop in anytime during that open house to discuss plans for the project with the engineers involved. If you are unable to attend the open house, you may contact Reid Wronski, Director of Public Works/City Engineer, [rwronski@rfc-city.org](mailto:rwronski@rfc-city.org), 715-426-3409, for more information. ~



# Spring Clean-Up Begins May 13



Each May, a spring clean-up is provided only for residents in the City of River Falls who are currently billed for City garbage service by Veolia. Residents bringing items for disposal will be asked to present a form of identification and a copy of a recent invoice for City garbage service from Veolia. People who do not qualify will not be allowed to dispose of their goods.

The clean-up is conducted for six days at the City Public Works Garage located at 950 Benson Street. Spring clean-up begins the second Monday in May (May 13) and runs for one week. There will also be a one week fall clean up beginning the third Monday in October (October 21). Both clean-up events will have the following hours: Monday through Friday - 4 to 8 p.m. and Saturday - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## Acceptable Items Include:

- carpet/pad
- large bulky items
- furniture
- miscellaneous garbage (less than one cubic yard)
- mattress/box spring
- minor household construction debris (less than one cubic yard)

## Acceptable Items that will be charged a fee include:

- Car Tire (\$5)
- Air Conditioner (\$16)
- Computer or Printer (\$8)
- Truck Tire (\$4)
- Microwave (\$4)
- TV Monitor < 20" (\$16)
- Appliances (\$16)
- Dehumidifier (\$8)
- TV Monitor > 20" (\$32)
- Large quantities of construction debris (varies)



## Unacceptable Items include:

- oil
- paint
- car batteries
- empty propane tanks,
- special or hazardous waste
- chemicals or waste that is generated by a contractor

Veolia reserves the right to refuse any hazardous materials. Pierce County Solid Waste (715-273-3092) does offer a clean sweep program each September for disposal of many hazardous waste products generated by City of River Falls residents who are also Pierce County residents.

Any calls regarding questions on what can be discarded should be directed to Veolia at 866-9-VEOLIA (866-983-6542). ~

# Open Book and Board of Review

The 2013 Open Book is scheduled for Thursday, May 16, from 12 noon – 8 p.m., and Friday, May 17, from 8 a.m. – 12 noon in the Council Chambers at City Hall. If you wish to speak with the assessor, you will need to make an appointment by calling Associated Appraisal Consultants, Inc., at 1-800-721-4157.

The Board of Review is scheduled for Thursday, June 6, from 9 – 11 a.m., in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Property owners must file a notice of intent to object no later than 48 prior to the meeting. Anyone wishing to appear before the Board must complete an objection form and schedule an appointment with the City Clerk. The City Clerk may be contacted at 715-426-3408 or lhecht@rfcity.org.

## FREQUENTLY CALLED PHONE NUMBERS

**General Information**  
715-425-0900

**Utility Questions**  
715-425-0906

**Police Department**  
715-425-0909

**Public Library**  
715-425-0905

**Municipal Court**  
715-426-3429

**Garbage/Recycling**  
866-983-6542

**Recreation  
Cancellation Hotline**  
715-426-3422

### NEWSLETTER TEAM:

(Please email comments or suggestions to:  
[newsletterfeedback@rfcity.org](mailto:newsletterfeedback@rfcity.org))

Kristi McKahan  
Dawn Wills  
Scot Simpson, City Administrator

### PHOTO CREDITS:

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River Falls, WI 54022

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## The Current Mayor and Common Council

Position	Name	Address	Phone	E-mail Address
Mayor	Dan Toland	420 E. Elm Street	715-426-3404	<a href="mailto:dtoland@rfcity.org">dtoland@rfcity.org</a>
At Large	Randy Kusilek	518 N. Winter	715-425-0415	<a href="mailto:rkusilek@rfcity.org">rkusilek@rfcity.org</a>
At Large	David Cronk	843 Leroy Lane	715-425-9174	<a href="mailto:dcronk@rfcity.org">dcronk@rfcity.org</a>
At Large	Scott Morrissette	2137 Rushmore Drive	715-425-8993	<a href="mailto:smorrissette@rfcity.org">smorrissette@rfcity.org</a>
District 1	Tom Cafilisch	508 Roosevelt Court	715-425-7186	<a href="mailto:tcaflisch@rfcity.org">tcaflisch@rfcity.org</a>
District 2	Jim Nordgren	1144 South Fork Drive	715-425-7327	<a href="mailto:jnordgren@rfcity.org">jnordgren@rfcity.org</a>
District 3	David Reese	425 N. Wasson Lane	715-425-9369	<a href="mailto:dreese@rfcity.org">dreese@rfcity.org</a>
District 4	Chris Gagne	1164 Bartosh Lane	715-222-3220	<a href="mailto:cgagne@rfcity.org">cgagne@rfcity.org</a>



Holiday lights at the new roundabout on Second Street and Cascade Avenue