



# Customer Service *Connections*

A publication of Saint Paul Regional Water Services

Winter 2018

On Page Two

**Cold Temps Can  
Cause Cloudy  
Water**

**To Serve You  
Better**

## Board of Water Commissioners

### President

Matt Anfang

### Vice President

Amy Brendmoen

### Commissioner

Rebecca Noecker

### Commissioner

Will Rossbach

### Commissioner

Mara Humphrey

### Commissioner

Chris Tolbert

### Commissioner

Jeffrey Dains

### SPRWS General Manager

Steve Schneider

### Customer Service

*Connections* is published by the Board of Water Commissioners, 1900 Rice Street, Saint Paul, MN 55113-6810. (651) 266-6350. Web: [www.stpaul.gov/water](http://www.stpaul.gov/water). Distributed to all Saint Paul Regional Water Services customers. © 2018

## Water rates rise by 3.1 percent in 2018

Water charges went up 13 cents a unit as of January 1, 2018.

This increase in water rates will cost the average consumer \$2.21 more per quarter than water did last year, or \$8.84 more for the year.

There will be no other changes to the water service base fee or the water main replacement surcharge.

The rate increase is necessary to continue investing in system renewal and to perform critical operations and maintenance.

The average single family household uses 17 units of water per quarter.

Based on this average, that same single-family household in St. Paul can

expect to pay a total annual cost of \$295.36 in 2018, or \$73.84 a quarter.\*

This equates to a 3.1 percent overall increase in rates and fees for the average, residential, single-family customer living in St. Paul. Individual results will vary.

These water rate changes do not include charges by your local municipality, such as sewer, recycling, street lighting, and other fees that could change in 2018.

Please refer to the back of your bill for more information, and call your local municipality listed there with any questions.

If you have questions about your water rates, please call SPRWS customer service at 651-266-6350.

\* The water usage charges apply to the cities of Saint Paul, Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Maplewood and West Saint Paul. All other customers pay 20 percent more.

## SPRWS continues to invest in main replacement

Every morning you fill up a pot with water to make coffee or get ready for the day with a shower. That water is there at the turn of a faucet day or night, whenever you need it.

That water doesn't simply appear. It travels through water main, sometimes miles of it, to get to you.

Water main, as much as we rely on it, won't last forever. It needs to be replaced.

Almost 40 percent of our water mains were installed prior to 1930.

We have 1,190 miles of water main in our system, providing

425,000 people with safe, reliable drinking water and fire protection.

We replace water main where we can in areas in which the streets are being reconstructed to avoid tearing up the street twice and to save street restoration costs. We also are using other methods of replacing water main, such as pipe bursting, which reduces the amount of street area that needs to be opened and reconstructed.

Over the last 15 years, we have averaged a replacement rate of slightly more than 8 miles of main a year.

We will invest \$9.037 million in water

*Invest continued on page 2*

***Our mission is to provide reliable, quality water and services at a reasonable cost.***

## To Serve You Better

To talk to a customer service representative call customer service at (651) 266-6350 and press "0" between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday - Friday.

### Bills may be paid in the following ways:

#### Credit Card

We accept Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express credit/debit cards. To make a credit card payment, or to get information on your account status 24/7, call (651) 266-6350 or go online to: <https://billpay.saintpaulwater.com>. Or pay in person at McCarrons Center, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 1900 Rice St., Maplewood

#### Money Order or Check

In person, by return mail with your bill stub, or in our drop box:

**For next-day processing,** at McCarrons Center. The drop box is located in the visitor parking area; available 24 hours a day.

#### Cash

In person only, at McCarrons Center, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

#### Direct Payment Plan

Have your payment deducted electronically from your checking or savings account. You'll still receive a statement; it will indicate which date the payment will be deducted from your account.

## Winter cold contributes to appearance of cloudy water

In the winter months, many people notice a milky or cloudy appearance to their tap water. This is caused by air bubbles trapped in the water. The air bubbles are harmless and will rise to the surface and disappear after a few minutes.

This phenomenon occurs more often in the winter due to the colder temperatures. Cold water can trap and hold larger amounts of dissolved oxygen than warm water. Most of our water comes from the Mississippi River, which then travels through a chain of lakes before arriving at our plant. This surface water is much colder in the winter months. Not only is the water cold coming into our treatment plant, but the pipes that deliver the water to your home from the plant are cold as well.

In addition, water in the pipe is under pressure. That pressure makes it impossible for the air in

the water to get out while it is still in the pipes. Once it comes out of your faucet, it is no longer pressurized and the air begins to escape, like opening a pop can. The warmer room temperature also contributes to the release of air bubbles, as warmer water cannot hold as much air. As the air escapes and the bubbles rise to the surface, it looks cloudy. Sometimes there are enough bubbles that it looks like there is debris or small particles swirling around your glass. As the air dissipates, the water clears from the bottom of the glass to the top. Bubbles may attach to the sides of the glass as the water clears.

Trapping air is a natural phenomenon associated with cold water, and it does not affect water quality. If you have questions or concerns, you can always call our office at 651-266-6350.

## SPRWS invests in water main replacement, reduces breaks

*Invest continued from page 1*

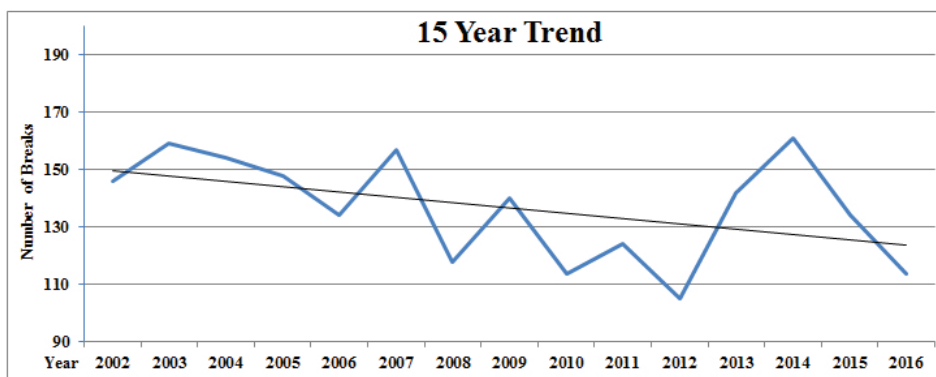
main replacement in 2018 as part of our capital improvement plan.

These investments have helped to reduce main breaks

over the past 15 years, as noted in the chart below.

The water main replacements will also help to improve water

quality, and ensure that we have a safe, reliable water distribution in our communities for years to come.



*Main replacement efforts have targeted areas in need of replacement and this work has produced results in the reduction in our overall number of main breaks per year over time.*