



## WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

*"Willmar Municipal Utilities will provide safe, reliable & quality utility services at competitive rates for their customers."*

### 90 years of Minnesotans working together to put safety first

Imagine you were a Minnesotan headed off to work in 1928. Back then, your odds of getting killed on the job were more than twice what they are today.

And while we must always strive to make Minnesota workers – and all of our state's citizens – safer, in the last 90 years we've made tremendous progress by working together. Since the Minnesota Safety Council was established, it has partnered with us and with thousands of Minnesota employers, government agencies and many others to help Minnesotans work safe, live safe and drive safe.

In 1928 – the year the Minnesota Safety Council was founded – 100 Minnesotans died on the job. In the 90 years since, our population has more than doubled from 2.6 million to 5.3 million, but workplace death rate has been cut in half. While the 94 workers who died on the job in 2016, the latest year for which data is available, are still far too many, there's plenty of evidence that by working together we're making progress.

Willmar Municipal Utilities (WMU) has been a Minnesota Safety Council member for over 40 years. This isn't just a box we check. It's an investment in our commitment to safety and, most of all, an investment in our employees and our communities. Doing things the right way – the safe way – every day is at the core of who we are and how we operate.

In 2017, WMU was awarded the Diamond (highest) Level of the Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) program by the American Public Power Association. This designation shows staff's commitment to workforce development while striving for system improvements that promotes a safe and efficient environment. To compliment the RP3 Diamond designation, as of November 15, 2018 WMU staff have had over 700 consecutive days of no lost time injuries. Employees attend monthly safety training, as well as job-specific training. With this impressive record, it represents the strong safety culture and is a direct result of the desire to be safe in the workplace.

The strong safety culture is also a commitment to our business' future. Today, Minnesota enjoys an unemployment rate of about 3 percent, well under the national average. We all know workplace demographics are changing as Baby Boomers retire. In this competitive job market, many prospective employees want to work for a company that values safety. For example, a 2017 survey by the insurance company, Employers, found work environment safety was among the top criteria employees consider when evaluating a new job offer. It ranked just behind things you'd expect like compensation, type of



700 SW LITCHFIELD AVENUE · P.O. BOX 937 · WILLMAR, MN 56201  
PHONE: (320)235-4422 · FAX: (320)235-3980  
EMAIL: [wmu@wmu.willmar.mn.us](mailto:wmu@wmu.willmar.mn.us)  
VISIT US AT: [www.wmu.willmar.mn.us](http://www.wmu.willmar.mn.us)



work and proximity to home, but ahead of factors such as the quality of potential coworkers and professional growth opportunities. In addition, today strong safety programs and safety performance are often requirements for gaining new business contracts.

There's no question, safety commitment makes a difference. Each year, more than 65,000 people from organizations like ours and beyond attend one of nearly 3,000 Minnesota Safety Council classes, events and other programs. And our state continues to make safety progress. Minnesota saw the number of work-related injuries and illnesses fall from 121,600 in 2006 to 89,700 in 2016; a 26 percent decrease.

But there's more we can do. Even one preventable injury or death is too many. Continued working partnerships of our state's businesses and their employees, the Minnesota Safety Council, government entities and all of our citizens can tackle important issues like workplace fatigue, distracted driving, falls by our seniors, and risks to our children. Together we can achieve the most important goal of all – getting everyone home safely every day.



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PHONE: (320)235-4422 · FAX: (320)235-3980  
EMAIL: [wmu@wmu.willmar.mn.us](mailto:wmu@wmu.willmar.mn.us)  
VISIT US AT: [www.wmu.willmar.mn.us](http://www.wmu.willmar.mn.us)

