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## **Reliable, Sustainable, and Affordable Utility Services**

While living in Willmar, Minnesota, it has become apparent that having reliable, sustainable, and affordable utility services is needed to live a happy and healthy life. It is hard to imagine a life without necessities such as running water, working lights, and working heat. Unfortunately, this is the reality for many individuals, as well as families, across the world today. Thanks to Willmar Municipal Utilities, this is not the reality for many families in our community of Willmar, Minnesota. In my hometown of Willmar, Minnesota, the utility company, Willmar Municipal Utilities, has provided, and continues to provide, reliable, sustainable, and affordable utility services to maintain the needs of their customers' daily lives.

Since 1891, Willmar Municipal Utilities has continued to provide reliable utility services for its customers. By doing so, many families in the town of Willmar have been able to live worry free. Customers of Willmar Municipal Utilities can rely on working utilities 99.995% of the time. Their company operates continuously and efficiently to maintain their customers number one priority, reliability. Willmar Municipal Utilities strong record for reliability does not go unnoticed as in 2023 they were awarded the 2023 Excellence in Reliability Certificate. This recognition for their exceptional services shows much prominence to their customers. Willmar Municipal Utilities maintains their reliability by having annual maintenance tasks such as oil sampling and thermal imaging, monthly substation inspections, as well as 24/7 alarm monitoring. These annual maintenance tasks maintain the company's outlook on reliability which is vital to the lives of their customers.

Along with reliability, sustainability is another number one concern among consumers. Willmar Municipal Utilities works hard to maintain a constant and steady service, therefore,

providing its customers with sustainable services. To maintain their sustainability, Willmar Municipal Utilities provides energy-saving tips for residential and business customers. These tips come in a wide variety from sealing air leaks and drafts to installing weather stripping and doorsweeps. These tips help many customers of Willmar Municipal Utilities reduce and save energy to maintain sustainability in their services. Along with providing helpful tips, Willmar Municipal Utilities has invested in clean energy projects to provide its customers with sustainable resources. An example of these projects include Hometown Windpower which helps to provide clean and renewable electricity. To provide their customers with equal care, Willmar Municipal Utilities continues to provide its customers' sustainable services including energy and power.

In today's economy, another important factor for utility services is affordability. While looking for a reliable and sustainable service, consumers tend to also look for services that are affordable for their budget. Willmar Municipal Utilities supplies its customers with affordable prices. Customers who use Willmar Municipal Utilities pay lower wholesale power supply costs compared to the average cost of any other regional supplier. The average cost of other suppliers is 7.6 cents per kWh compared to Willmar Municipal Utilities at the rate of 6.2 cents per kWh. Customers of Willmar Municipal Utilities on average pay 1.4 cents less per kWh compared to other suppliers. While thinking about affordability, 1.4 cents less than the average supplier is a large sum saved to consumers. These affordable rates provided by Willmar Municipal Utilities are extremely beneficial to the average consumer.

While growing up in Willmar, Minnesota, it is hard to imagine a life without working energy. Because of my hometown's municipally owned utility service, Willmar Municipal Utilities, many families in our community can strive off of their provided services that are reliable,

sustainable, and affordable. These three characteristics are vital as they remain the top concerns for all utility consumers. Willmar Municipal Utilities have been recognized on many accounts for their reliable services offered to people in Willmar, Minnesota. In 2023 they were presented with the Excellence in Reliability certificate, honoring them for their services. Willmar Municipal Utilities provided families across the town of Willmar with three beneficial characteristics including, reliability, sustainability, and affordability to guarantee families in our community have the opportunity for a great utility service.