

# How Willmar Municipal Utilities Makes Life Easier for Their Customers

**By James Dickman**

There are so many ways that the Willmar Municipal Utilities make life easier for its customers. Examples of this include reliable and constant service, the benefits of being a customer, and safety.

The first way Willmar Municipal Utilities makes life easier is through reliable and constant service. I can say I have only been through a few instances where my family didn't have power in our home, while my family were customers of Willmar Municipal Utilities, this was only for a short time during severe weather. This has not always been the case for my family. While my family lived in South Dakota more than 15 years ago, we lost power from an ice storm for ten days. It was a very scary situation, and we needed to buy a generator for power. We took for granted reliable electricity. We could not run the water to use the bathroom, heat our home in the winter, power our cell phones, use lights or even keep food frozen. We didn't miss the luxury of electricity until it was gone. We are very blessed to have power for our everyday lives and lucky to have the power system that we have in the United States of America.

Another way Willmar Municipal Utilities make life easier is through the benefits of being a customer. The electricity bill each month for my family is very reasonable for what we receive. On the Willmar Municipal Utilities website there is a calculator to calculate the amount of electricity used in a certain appliance. Maybe we don't need to run the dryer and can hang up clothes to save us on our monthly bill. They also have rebates for when we buy a new appliance that has an Energy Star label. Because my family was customers were able to receive free items, like new LED lightbulbs for our house.

The final way Willmar Municipal Utilities makes life easier is through safety. They provide safety education when it comes to power. My favorite educational tool was when the Willmar Municipal Utilities had a free supper at the Civic Center and they had an educational board to show a kid touching the power lines with a kite or ladder. It would show the kid getting electrocuted when touching the power lines. This really stuck with me as a child, and I didn't want to go near those lines. Only linemen should go near the downed power lines to be safe too. I also remember learning about Gopher State One and how I should call 811 before you dig and someone will locate your utilities. We also have had to use the services of the Willmar Municipal Utilities when my family moved our house from Litchfield. The lineman had to carefully move the lines, while the structure moved underneath. The final way they help with safety is by updating power equipment and lines. We have had the power lines buried near our house, so we don't need to worry about weather affecting the lines and our power supply.

As you can see there are many ways Willmar Municipal Utilities make life easier for their customers through reliable service, benefits to customers, and safety.