



**CITY OF VIRGINIA
ELECTION INFORMATION**
City Hall, 327 South 1st Street
Virginia, Minnesota



ELECTION DATES

PRIMARY ELECTION Tuesday, August 9, 2016

GENERAL ELECTION Tuesday, November 8, 2016

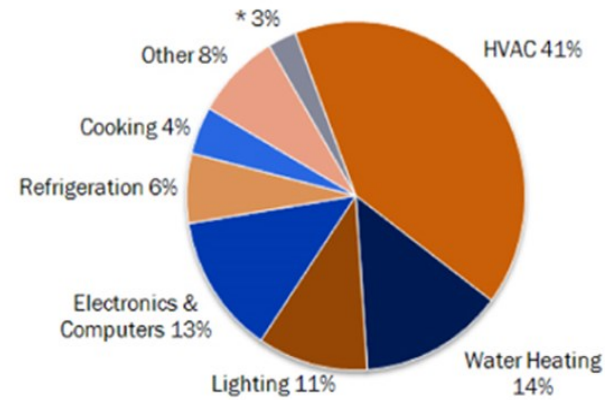
HOW DO I REGISTER TO VOTE?

Citizens can register before Election Day at the Virginia City Hall until 20 days before each election. Federal Law requires a voter to provide a driver's license, identification card or the last four digits of your Social Security number on the registration card. Voters can register on Election Day, but proof is required to verify your residence.

CAN I VOTE BY ABSENTEE BALLOT?

Absentee ballot applications are available at the Virginia City Hall between the hours of 8:00 AM to 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday, and on the City's website www.virginiamn.us. **Absentee ballots will be available by June 24, 2016, for the Primary Election and by September 23, 2016, for the General Election.**

The average home in the U.S. consumes energy in the following ways:



Source: U.S. Department of Energy, 2010 Buildings Energy Data Book, Section 2.1.5, 2010.

In 2011 VPU launched a new conservation and efficiency program to be used as a resource that homeowners, renters and landlords can use to help identify projects that save energy, while adding value and comfort to your residence. VPU will provide the customer with financial incentive to encourage implementing an energy efficiency and conservation project. **Conservation rebate forms are available in the office or on our website at www.vpuc.com**

Thinking of connecting to Natural Gas?

Please apply early so we can schedule the work this year.

The deadline to submit applications for 2016 is September 1st.



Construction Season Begins

Please watch for utility workers as you drive throughout Virginia over the next several months. With the warm weather comes repairs and upgrades to many of the utility lines located under the City's streets. In order to perform needed repairs and installations, Utility workers may have to barricade areas in the streets and alleyways.



July 2016

The VPU office will be closed on the following dates:

July 4, 2016
September 5, 2016



The VPU Customer Newsletter is published quarterly by the City of Virginia, Minnesota Department of Public Utilities.

VPU – QUICK NOTES

KNOW THE SMELL OF NATURAL GAS—BE SAFE!
If there is a faint smell of natural gas, call VPU at 218-748-7540.
If in doubt, leave the building immediately & call 9-1-1.

STREET LIGHT OUT?
If you notice a street light that is burnt out or flickering, please call VPU at 748-7540 so that we may get it fixed and keep our streets bright!

Call Before You Dig.
Be sure to call 8-1-1 or Gopher State One Call at 800-252-1166 or www.gopherstateonecall.org

CHECK YOUR WALL PATCHES
If you have steam heat in your home, or an abandoned steam line to your home....
Periodically check the wall patch where the steam enters your building for leaks.

If you have a vacant property please check property often, as damage can occur quickly...
Call 748-7540 with questions

An Informational Newsletter for Customers of the Department of Public Utilities, Virginia, Minnesota



GOING THE EXTRA MILE

I've written articles in the past thanking the vast majority of our customers who purchase our product, receive our bill, and pay in a prompt fashion. And I repeat, thank you so much. This article is meant to inform you about how we work with people who are having difficulty paying their bills. We think it's a reasonable and fair process and it's what we should be doing.

First off, a customer has about 55 days to pay the bill from the last date of consumption (the read date) to the day that we would consider shutting off power. Five days from the read date to the bill date, 20 days before the bill is originally due, 5 days grace period before we send the delinquent/shutoff notice, 20 days before the potential shutoff date and an additional 5 days before actual shutoff occurs. So someone could use 90 days of utilities before we first consider shut-off. In the winter that can become a lot of money. That's precisely why we require a deposit that is twice the highest bill for renters (and homeowners with poor payment history). Bottom line is, it protects the Utility and ultimately the rest of our customers.

It is, however, our belief that we need to work with residential customers who have difficulty paying their bills. On occasion we will also work with smaller commercial businesses and/or landlords. We have essentially one full-time employee, Mary Johnson, whose primary job it is to do just that. She coordinates efforts on the part of the County, who occasionally will provide their low income support directly to us, AEOA who runs the Energy Assistance programs, and other organizations like the Salvation Army's Heat Share program, and some local churches who provide support. This process relies heavily on a sense of trust. We grant virtually every first request for additional time to pay, and it is the performance of the customer in that first and subsequent request that helps us assess how much we are willing to work with a customer. We have some customers who we really go the extra mile for, and then we have some who we've learned to keep on a short leash.

Believe me, I sit across the hall from Mary's office and I hear it all. We've had people come in one hour after the delinquent due date, mind you they've had some 50 days to pay the bill, and they say, "I don't deserve the penalty because I was only one hour late." One young fellow shows up at 1:30 asking why his power got shut off. We say, "We told you to be here first thing in the morning but you never came." "This is my morning," he says . . .Whatda!!! It's a new world out there folks.

Our saying is, "we work with people who are willing to work with us." And we've received many thanks and similar gestures of appreciation. And we do it without a lot of losses. We write off less than one tenth of one percent of our sales as uncollectible. . . I'm very proud of the way we work with customers who are having difficulty paying while, at the same time, protecting the rest of our customers.