



# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

SPENCER MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

JUNE 2018

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Help Keep Locators Safe
- Water Quality Report Available
- Streetlight Outages
- How to Maintain Electrical Transformers in Your Yard
- Contact Info

## Help Keep Locators Safe

Summer is a busy time for our staff out locating underground utilities to help keep you safe after contacting Iowa One Call before any digging project. In a previous newsletter this year, we talked about the importance of contacting Iowa One Call before any digging project and how to prepare the area to be located by marking it in white.

Another thing to keep in mind before contacting Iowa One Call is what you need to do to help keep locators safe. Some examples of ways you can assist with this are:

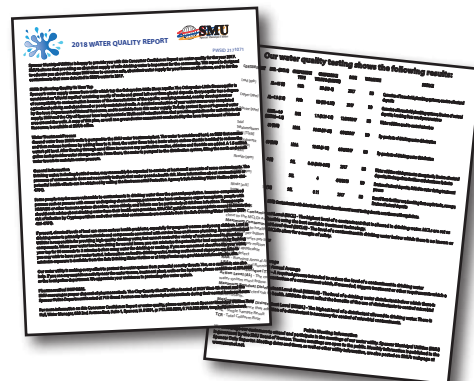
- Free the area of any construction debris that is in the area to be located
- Put pets away so they are not in the locate area
- Clearly mark the area to locate with white

By properly preparing for locates, our locators can do their job and provide accurate locate marks to prevent service disruptions, fines, personal harm and other unintended damages. Thanks for your help in keeping them safe!



## Water Quality Report Available

You should have received a copy of our water quality report with your last statement. If you missed it, find a copy online at smunet.net or we have additional copies available in our office. Feel free to stop and pick one up.



## CONTACT INFORMATION



Have you changed any of your contact information in the last year? If so, please call SMU at 580.5800 during normal business hours Monday-Friday from 8am to 5pm to make sure we have the correct information associated with your account.

## Streetlight Outages

It is easy for you to let us know if there is a streetlight out in your neighborhood by visiting our website. Simply fill out the online form located on the bottom of our homepage at www.smunet.net. All you'll need to know to fill out the form is:

- Your contact information in case we have questions
- The street address of the light location
- If the light is completely out or not
- If the light is blinking or not
- Additional comments to tell us what you have been noticing with the streetlight in your neighborhood



# How to Maintain Electrical Transformers in Your Yard

There are over 1,600 ground-level pad-mounted transformers and cabinets throughout Spencer, and these take the place of utility poles, overhead power lines and overhead electric service lines to our homes and businesses. Here in Spencer we are over 90% underground with our electric services and while we don't have the overhead poles to look at, many of us have a 'green box' near our home. These transformers enclose energized electrical conductors and distribute voltages from 50V to around 15,000V and are highly hazardous when damaged.

With many of these located throughout the community in residential areas, they may be part of the landscaping or areas we mow, making them susceptible to contact with mowers or landscaping equipment.

The National Electric Code states to allow at least 10 feet in front of them and 3 feet on the sides and back of transformers for our staff to be able to access the cabinet and work in it if needed. This means trees, shrubs, bushes, fencing or other landscaping must be the distance listed in the codes away from the cabinets. This is also important to keep them from overheating and causing a service interruption, as they need plenty of air circulating around them.

When mowing up next to them, be sure to stay clear of the transformer. We appreciate mowing right around them so there isn't tall grass around them if we need to access them.

If you notice any damage to a transformer, contact us at 580-5800. Our staff conducts annual inspections of a portion of the transformers throughout Spencer to look for any issues in a 10 year cycle. You may be the first one to notice something unusual before they do.

It is also a great time of the year to remind parents to teach their children to stay clear of transformers. Sometimes our staff sees children playing on top of them, and they should know this is dangerous with the high voltage in them.



Here is an example of the warning label on the front of each transformer box. Notice they have a reminder on them regarding the space needed around them as well as the hazardous voltage warning.



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