



Photo courtesy of J. Stephen Conn, 2025.

# Red Lake Falls

MINNESOTA

2025

## CITY FACTS

- Population 1,267 (2023, 11.3% claim veteran status); 523 residential customers & 113 commercial customers
- Average Utility Bill (Water, Sewer, Garbage) \$105/month
- 23% of city residents are over 65 years of age & on a fixed budget
- Median household income is \$63,929 (median income for the state of MN is \$87,556)
- Median Age is 44.4 (for the State of MN is 38.6)
- 5.6% of people living below the poverty line (4% of children under 18, 14% of seniors aged 65 & over)
- Median value of owner-occupied housing units is \$132,300
- Red Lake County is ranked 68 out of 87 counties for median house value (primarily due to older housing stock)
- Annual 2025 Budget is \$3.5 million
- Certified Levy 2025 is \$915,711; per capita \$723
- Annual Debt is \$400,000; \$316 per capita
- Property Tax bills Examples: Home EMV \$380,200, Total Property Tax \$7,856, City Tax \$3,665, EMV \$209,000, Total Property Tax \$4,058, City Tax \$1,854, EMV \$163,300, Total Property Tax \$3,040, City Tax \$1,368. These are without any special assessments. We have a policy to assess 30% for water, sewer, & streets, which would add more to residential taxes!


## PROJECT SUMMARY


The City of Red Lake Falls is seeking \$5,947,000 in aid from a bonding bill to assist in rehabilitating critical utility infrastructure (water main, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer) and repairing and reconstructing streets, curbs, and gutter.

The city owns and maintains more than 16 miles of water main, nearly 11 miles of gravity sanitary sewer, and another 3 miles of sanitary force main. Up until 2019, nearly all the existing underground distribution/collection lines were constructed of materials that were either failing or had exceeded their expected useful life, with some utilities surpassing 70 years of life. These aged utilities have led to excessive infiltration and inflow into the wastewater collection system, provide undersized and non-redundant water distribution systems, and experience increasing frequencies of pipe failure and associated repairs.

In 2023, the city spent over \$1,000,000 on the rehabilitation of its Water Tower. The rehab was going to be part of this 2025 infrastructure project, but the city could no longer wait for funding due to the deterioration of the current Water Tower.

With our high population of elderly residents on a fixed income and the fact that our taxes have been higher than those of area cities for many years, it is extremely difficult for the city to take on more debt for infrastructure projects. With the current taxes and then added assessments, the residents simply can't afford to pay more. The city buildings are all aging as well. The city hall was built in 1935, and the only new building we have is a water treatment plant that was built in 2010. Material costs, labor, and excessive engineering costs are tying the hands of small cities!

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