



Bagley Minnesota

A Municipal Utility Since 1907

Built on Resilience, Connected by Community

In Bagley, Minnesota, life is shaped by the land and strengthened by the people who call it home. Nestled between Bemidji and Grand Forks, Bagley is a small northern Minnesota community where logging, manufacturing, agriculture, and outdoor recreation come together to define both the economy and the lifestyle.

"It's a small community in northern Minnesota," said Lyle Mathison, City Clerk-Treasurer. "We have a lot of logging and manufacturing, and then fishing, hunting, and tourism that comes with that."

That mix creates a steady rhythm. Summers bring anglers and campers, fall draws hunters, and year-round industries and surrounding farmland provide stability. Just as important, Bagley is a place where people know each other and community ties run deep.

A Lake at the Center

At the heart of Bagley is Lake Lomond, a defining feature that offers both recreation and connection. The lake and adjacent city park include more than 40 RV sites, creating a welcoming hub for visitors and residents alike.

"We have a lake right in the middle of town," Mathison said. "It brings in a lot of families from out of town, and they use the local businesses here when they're staying."

From May through September, the 42-site campground is filled with families, travelers, and outdoor enthusiasts. Weekends are especially busy, bringing new energy into the community and supporting local businesses.

Investing in Infrastructure, Planning for the Future

In recent years, Bagley has completed one of its most significant infrastructure investments: a multiyear water, sewer, and street improvement project.

"It's been going on for about six years," said Bill Masterson, Public Utilities Superintendent. "We've done over 40 blocks of water and sewer upgrades, and all the streets got new pavement."

The project totaled approximately \$16.5 million, supported in part by \$7 million in grant funding—an investment that will strengthen the city's foundation for years to come.

It also sparked a moment of local pride. When the city couldn't fund a logo on its water tower, local businesses stepped in.

"The businesses stepped up," Masterson said. "The community came up with about \$18,000 to pay for that logo. I'm proud of the way they stepped up."

With those core systems in place, Bagley is now focused on modernization. The city has committed \$250,000 annually to begin converting aging overhead power lines to underground systems, starting in residential areas.

"Our overhead is really old," Masterson said. "We're trying to get everything underground where we can manage it."

City leaders are also watching emerging technologies—from renewable energy to electric vehicle infrastructure—while balancing innovation with affordability.

Powering Daily Life

Behind the scenes, Bagley's municipal utility plays a central role in community life, providing electric, water, sewer, natural gas, internet, and cable services. Reliability is a defining strength.

"We have very few interruptions that are substantial," Masterson said. "They're so few and far between that it's hard to even remember them."

That consistency is especially important for major employers like Team Industries, a manufacturing company that supports hundreds of local jobs and relies on steady, dependable power to operate.

Through its partnership with the Northern Municipal Power Agency (NMPA), Bagley benefits from stable rates, shared expertise, and technical support that would be difficult to maintain independently.

***"Our rates have been
really steady."
- Bill Masterson***

Strength in Partnership

In Bagley, public power is about more than keeping the lights on—it's also about local control and shared responsibility. Decisions are made close to home, with the needs of residents and businesses always front and center.

Through its connection to the Northern Municipal Power Agency (NMPA), Bagley is part of something larger: a network of small communities working together to achieve what none could easily do alone.

"Small communities can work together to provide competitive power," Mathison said.

That collaboration brings practical benefits—stable rates, access to technical expertise, and a reliable support system when questions arise.

"It's been a good organization," Masterson said. "There are a lot of knowledgeable people... and they're willing to help."

For Bagley, partnership isn't just a structure—it's also a mindset. It's how a small community stays strong, adaptable, and ready for whatever comes next.