



What is Time-of-Use?

Time-of-Use (TOU) is a residential rate plan where rates vary according to the time of day, season, and day type (weekday or weekend/holiday). Time-of-Use pricing encourages the most efficient use of the system and can reduce the overall costs for both the utility and customers.

How can customers enroll?

To request a TOU enrollment form, visit our website at owatonnautilities.com/time-of-use-program or call OPU's customer service department at 507-451-2480 option #3.

Once enrolled, it may take a month or so before customers are transferred to the rate due to bill timing. Participation is opt-in with no penalty to leave the program after a 12-month period. After a customer has completed their 12-months, they may leave the program with a 45-day notice. If they choose to return to the program, they must wait one full billing cycle.

How is OPU's TOU rate structured?

There are three time periods of the day with three different rates:

- Critical-Peak hours are between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. during weekdays. The energy used during this time costs the most of all the periods. The rate will be higher in the summer.
- On-Peak hours are between 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. during weekdays. The energy during this time costs more than our standard residential rate.
- Off-Peak hours are between 8:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. during weekdays, weekends, and holidays. The energy during this time costs less than the standard residential rate.

Who is this program best designed for?

This program is designed for customers who can shift their energy usage to times when the electric system has lower demands. Residential customers with a lifestyle that coordinates with the rate structure (e.g., shift workers) may benefit.

Will the TOU rate save customers money?

The impact on the bill is entirely dependent upon when a customer uses energy. Without changing behaviors, some customers may have lower bills, while others may have higher bills. A customer may need to adjust their routine and lifestyle to benefit from the program.

How can customers save money on the TOU rate?

By shifting the majority of the energy, a customer uses to off-peak hours, they could see savings on their energy bill. However, not shifting and running large appliances, air conditioning, etc., or charging electric vehicles during peak hours could result in higher bills.

What if a customers' bill is higher than if they stayed on the standard residential rate, can they get a refund?

No refunds will be given if the rate results in a higher bill.

If a customer signs up for the rate and is unhappy with the results, can they change back to their old rate?

A customer can decide to leave the TOU rate without penalty after being on the rate for a minimum of one year. Once a customer leaves the TOU rate, they can be allowed back on the TOU rate when a minimum of 30 days from the cancellation date have passed.

Will customers be able to see real-time data?

No. Customers will not have information on their energy usage patterns. However, the customer's monthly bill will provide a breakdown of each period's usage and the amount charged during that billing period.

If a customer has solar on their home, can they be on the TOU rate?

No. Residential solar customers, and residential customers whose primary source of heat is electric, are excluded from this rate, at this time.

Does this TOU rate require a change to the meter?

No. As of 2023 all residential meters are capable of collecting data for the TOU rate.

What happens to the TOU meter when the time changes for Daylight Saving Time?

The meter is programmed to automatically adjust for Daylight Saving Time.

Are customers who rent an apartment or a home eligible to go on the TOU rate?

Yes. Renters currently on a residential rate are eligible for this rate.

Can customers on the TOU rate be on budget billing?

Yes. Customers will be able to see their TOU breakdown on their billing statement and the budget billing amount is calculated using the total amount of the bill.

Where can I find out more information on this program?

Please visit our website at owatonnautilities.com/time-of-use-program. If you have additional questions, please feel free to email customer service at customerservice@owatonnautilities.com or call them at 507-451-2480 option #3.