



OWATONNA
PUBLIC UTILITIES

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APRIL 2022

**Spring Water Main
Flushing Info Inside**

CUSTOMER UPDATE

**APRIL IS
SAFE DIGGING
MONTH**



DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S BELOW?

- 2 OPU Memo
- 2 Conservation Tips
- 3 City Spot
- 4 Know What's Below GSOC

- 5 Drone Safety
- 5 Backflow Prevention
- 5 Ceiling Fans
- 6 Call Before You Dig

- 6 Clean H2Owatonna
- 7 Energy Star Appliances
- 8 National Lineman Appreciation Day
- 8 General Information



Spring Water Main Flushing Info Inside

OPU MEMO



Christian Fenstermacher,
Director, Engineering &
Field Operations

OPU Commission

Mr. Matt Kottke
Mr. Kent Rossi
Mr. Randy Doyal
Mr. Jay Johnson
Mr. Doug Zirngible

April brings the start of another busy construction season, scheduled with many projects throughout Owatonna. Working at those many construction projects, OPU has ten electric line workers, six gas & water service workers, six meter service workers and five engineering staff. These utility workers may be your friend, neighbor or family member so we're certain you want them to come home safely each and every evening. We do too! Safety is one of our most important goals at OPU and we take the safety of our employees very seriously. We ask that you do too and we appreciate your dedication to their safety.

Some of the many projects you may see OPU utility workers at include:

- Cedar Ave Streetscape
- Bridge Street Reconstruction
- 2022 Street and Utility Reconstruction Project
 - Linn Ave from 18th to 16th
 - 15th St Ne the three block east of Cedar Ave
 - Selby Ave SW
- 5lb to 50lb gas main conversion project
- Electric Undergrounding project
- Electric Outage and water main break restorations
- Other development projects

Although our utility workers enjoy talking with you, please remember to stay out of work zones as a pedestrian. Your own safety, as well as the worker's safety, relies on the proper training when in a work zone. Follow worker instructions and construction signs to ensure safety for all.

Each year, OPU employees attend safety training sessions on topics such as trench safety, safe gas work practices, confined space safety, bucket rescue, first aid and many more. One of those training sessions offered to OPU employees is safe and defensive driving. Here are a few of the many guidelines key to safe and defensive driving in a work zone:

- Avoid Distractions – Distracted driving in a work zone can have deadly consequences. Put down your phone and keep your eyes on the road.
- Pay Attention to Other Drivers – Narrowed traffic patterns provide less ability to maneuver around other vehicles safely. Paying attention can prevent the need for evasive actions in work zones.
- Don't speed or tailgate – Keep a safe distance from the vehicle ahead of you and don't speed. Tailgating and speeding lead to crashes with other vehicles and field workers.
- Obey Road Crews and Signs – Flaggers know how best to move traffic safely in work zones. The warning signs are there to help you and other drivers move safely.
- Be Patient and Stay Calm – Work zone crew members are working to improve the road and make your future driving better. Stay calm and drive safely.
- Expect the Unexpected – Work zones change often. The area you drove yesterday may look different today.

Remember: *Work zone safety is everybody's responsibility. When you see the orange "Utility Work Ahead" signs, please stay alert, slow down and give our workers a brake!*

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), there were over 840 work zone fatalities in the U.S. in 2019. The portion of those fatalities in Minnesota was 11. We all play a part in keeping these numbers low and protecting your utility workers.



CONSERVATION TIP\$

Fixing a leaking toilet may be as simple as replacing the rubber flapper in the tank. To ensure you get the right replacement part, turn the water off to your leaking toilet, remove the old flap and bring it with to the hardware store.



Spring is here and we are looking forward to another busy year of road construction and street maintenance. Here is what has been going on in the Public Works Department.

Notable Staff Updates – Sean Murphy has been selected as the new Assistant City Engineer; he takes over the position following Bill Pekuri, who retired last fall. Rick Olson, Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager, retired on April 1st after 25 years of service with the city.

2022 Street and Utility Project – This project includes reconstruction on 15th Street NE (From Cedar to cul-de-sac), Linn Avenue (from 16th Street to 18th Street SW), Selby Avenue (from Mound Street to Lemond Road). Construction is anticipated to begin in early June but is dependent on the weather.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion – Plans and Specifications are complete for the expansion project and are currently out for bids. This will increase the capacity 80% from the existing 5.0 million gallons per day to 9.1.

Stormwater Management Plan – The City of Owatonna completed a stormwater management plan in January 2006. Due to changing regulations, the current plan is due for an update. The City has contracted with WHKS to bring the plan up to date with current regulations, work towards compliance with total maximum daily loads and create an interactive plan. In addition to the regulatory compliance activities, the proposed plan will model the entire stormwater system throughout Owatonna. This will help identify any areas of deficiency and develop a capital improvement plan to direct capital expenditures to the areas with the most need. It will also position the city for growth going forward.

Downtown Streetscape Project – Construction on the Downtown Streetscape Project is set to resume this spring. The 200 & 300 Blocks of North Cedar Avenue will have landscaping, permanent streetlighting, alleyways and amenities completed. The 100 block of North Cedar will have underground utilities, sidewalks, street surfacing, landscaping and amenities completed. The project has a completion date of July 20th.

Truman Avenue – Construction began in 2021 on Truman Avenue (From Main to Havana) but was not completed. Items to be completed include final asphalt, concrete sidewalk sections and turf restoration. It is anticipated that this project will be completed in early June.

Other planned projects include seal coating, sanitary sewer pipe lining, and street overlay.

The Street Department will be busy with street sweeping, pothole repair, boulevard tree planting and maintenance, and Emerald Ash Borer preventative actions. Street maintenance requests can be submitted online: <https://www.owatonna.gov/FormCenter/Public-Works-11/Public-Works-Maintenance-Request-137>

The Compost Site, operated under contract with an independent service provider, will open this spring as weather permits and the ground dries out. The hours of operation are available on the Public Works Department's webpage.

Roundabout Reminder – Since the roundabout was installed at Rose Street and Grove Avenue there has been an increase in traffic accidents and near-miss accidents. See roundable reminders to the right.

As you can see, the City of Owatonna Public Works Department will be busy throughout the summer. We appreciate everyone's patience with construction work. Please stay slow down and be attentive while in work zones.

For more information or to sign up for updates, visit our website: <https://www.owatonna.gov/780/2022-Projects>



Roundabout Reminders

- **SLOW** down when approaching a roundabout
- Obey speed advisory signs while in the roundabout
- Never drive straight across the roundabout
- Driving over the solid yellow line is prohibited
- Drive in a circular path
- Traffic entering the roundabout **YIELDS** to the traffic already in the roundabout, merge into the flow of traffic when it is safe
- Yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk
- Continue through the roundabout until exiting without stopping or passing unless it is necessary to yield to traffic or pedestrians

MAYOR

Tom Kuntz

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dan Boeke

David Burbank

Nathan Dotson

Kevin Raney

Greg Schultz

Brent Svenby

Doug Voss

APRIL IS SAFE DIGGING MONTH

DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S BELOW?

April is Safe Digging Month. Did you know, in the State of Minnesota, it is required by law, any person doing any type of excavation using machine powered equipment of any kind, or explosives, must file a locate request at least 48 business hours prior to excavation. Also, the State of Minnesota adopted Gopher State One Call as our statewide one call center.


The following is an excerpt from the 2022 G.S.O.C. Handbook. "Gopher State One Call, a non-profit organization, was formed in 1987 in response to the legislature's adoption of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216D. G.S.O.C. was approved by the Commissioner of Public Safety in 1988 as the statewide one call center and has served in that roll ever since. Chapter 216D requires anyone who engages in any type of excavation using machine-powered equipment of any kind, or explosives, to file a locate request at least 48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays, before excavation can begin."

It is extremely important as a homeowner/property owner, to NOT remove any type of flag or marking from your property especially if you did not call the locate in. The company or person performing the excavation is responsible for removing all markings and flags once the excavation has been completed. Any removal of markings or flags will only cause delays for the excavation. The company, or person, performing the excavation will have to file another locate request, and have to wait another 48 hours to dig.

There are many ways a locate request can be submitted. The easiest and quickest way is online with ITIC. Go to www.GSOCSUBMIT.org. ITIC is a full featured, web-based interface providing user friendly access to enter and view tickets 24-7. The Gopher State One Call ITIC system allows you to map the entire worksite using a visually driven user interface. Also don't forget the State of Minnesota requires that all excavations are marked in white. This tells all facility locators that come to fulfill the locate request, exactly where and what is happening.

More info pertaining to excavations and locating can be found on Gopher State One Call's website as well as the G.S.O.C. handbook. Excavators may also call 811 on the telephone to contact G.S.O.C. 811 is also extremely helpful if you are out of state, as it will put you in contact with call centers in different areas.

Ever wondered what the different color paint or flags represent? Take a look at the color chart to the right.



Know the Color Code	
WHITE:	Proposed Excavation
PINK:	Temporary Survey Markings
RED:	Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit and Lighting Cables
YELLOW:	Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum or Gaseous Materials
ORANGE:	Communication, Alarm or Signal Lines, Cables or Conduit
BLUE:	Potable Water
PURPLE:	Reclaimed Water, Irrigation and Slurry Lines
GREEN:	Sewer and Drain Lines

Remember to keep drones away from power lines



Flying too close to power lines may affect your drone's signal. Landing on power lines could damage your machine or cause a power outage.

If a drone you are operating comes in contact with a power line, call us at 507-451-2480 immediately. Do NOT try removing it yourself.

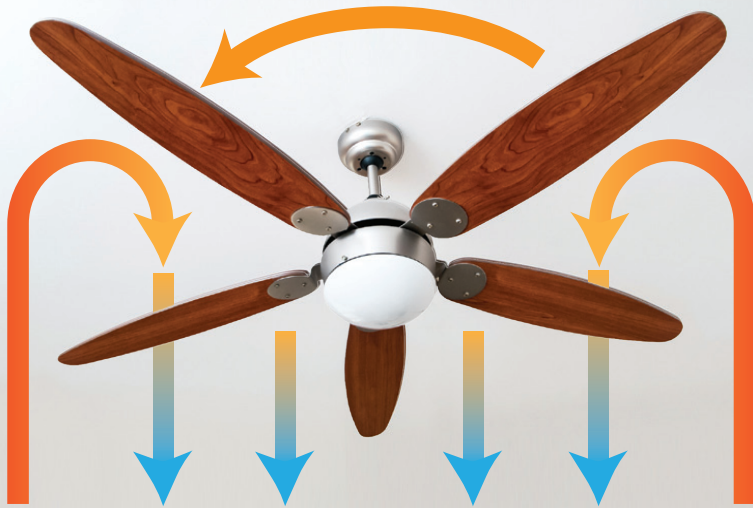
Do Your Part to Keep Our Drinking Water Safe

Backflow is a term used when water flows in the opposite direction from its normal flow. This can happen when the supply is somehow interrupted and pressure drops and in fact goes negative, drawing water back from the end user. This water could contain chemicals or be otherwise contaminated and end up contaminating the entire building, block or City water system.

A good rule of thumb is: If you don't want to drink it, don't connect your water system to it.

Ceiling Fans for Year-Round Comfort

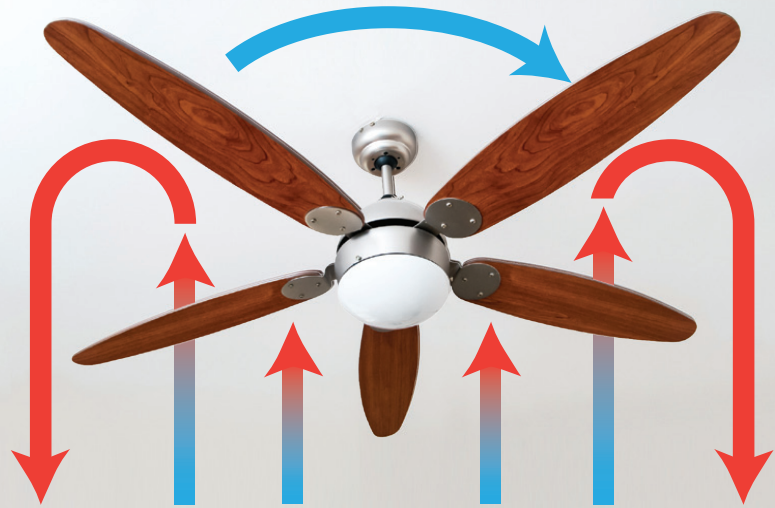
Summer – Counterclockwise



DOWNDRAFT

1. Cooling wind chill effect on your skin makes a room feel up to 8° cooler.
2. Save up to 40% on air conditioning costs.
3. Reduce use of central or window air conditioning units.

Winter – Clockwise



UPDRAFT

1. Redistribution of warm air makes a room feel warmer and more comfortable.
2. Save up to 15% on heating costs.
3. Reduce clutter and electric hazards such as space heaters and heating blankets.

Did you “Gnome” you must call 811 before you dig?

Call 811 or visit gopherstateonecall.org
at least 48 hours in advance,
not including weekends and holidays.



Do not remove flags or stakes from your yard
until the project is complete.



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.



As things warm up, many people are out enjoying the weather walking their dogs. Stepping in dog waste can be a disgusting experience. Even worse is knowledge that pet waste may be polluting our drinking water and local recreational areas. When rain and snowmelt flows across the land it carries pet waste to storm drains, which eventually flow into a lake or stream. This poses an unnecessary public health and environmental risk. If you think, picking up your dog's waste is unpleasant, try swimming in it.

Did You Know: One day's waste from a large dog can contain as much as 7 Billion Fecal Coliform Bacteria!

Scooping your pet waste isn't just a courtesy for those walking behind you; it also keeps our water resources safe. Here are a few tips on how owners can protect local water and recreation areas:

- Always bring a disposal bag with you when you walk your dog
- Many trailheads in the Owatonna parks system have bag stations
- Make sure to place the bag in a proper receptacle
- Routinely clean your yard, boulevard, and paved surfaces

Take time and properly dispose of your pet's waste, remember we all live downstream!

For further information regarding the City Stormwater Management Program, contact Bradley D. Rademacher Water Quality/Stormwater Specialist, (507)-774-7300 or Bradley.rademacher@ci.owatonna.mn.us



When you're shopping for a new appliance, don't just look at the price.

LOOK FOR THE LABEL!



ENERGY STAR

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DISHWASHERS	FREEZERS
REFRIGERATORS	ROOM AIR CONDITIONERS

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C D O U C T A N M Y O X C G R R T G Z U
P B Q M B L O T F F B E L K V V C G B K
M P O H A Z O N D A A E O B C U G B B U
Z N C O X I A T T Z O E B F Y R N L X D
L Q W Z U M R Q H Y D B M J U F G Y Q E
W V T G J M D C J E E R A Y U U M Z F H
M U X J O H B I O N S V Q V Z T M J B U
R Z S D L S J Q S N L W X R N O G K I M
B D L M B U I X U H D B A G K T M Q B I
U J K S F Q B Y E P W I J S B E Y N S D
H W X E R S S K Z O Y A T S H L S D L I
Y I H G E O L N S U T O S I Q E T P R F
V A F H E N C Y C I T W W H O K R C B I
B K R C Z V D Z I M N D H D E N A S L E
A K O I E F J T P Q Y F P J L R E M Z R
Y E M N R I Q U M G H T J D H Q S R S S
H T W F S R E F R I G E R A T O R S S P
T S O P U O R L S C T C O Q S R X I V Q

Products that earn the ENERGY STAR® label meet strict energy-efficiency specifications set by the U.S. EPA **helping you save energy and money while protecting our climate.**

Plus, Owatonna Public Utilities offers great **CONSERVE & SAVE®** rebates on your purchase of the appliances listed in our Word Search!

Visit our website at www.OwatonnaUtilities.com to download an ENERGY STAR® Electric Appliances Rebate Application with rebate amounts and complete terms and conditions.

CONSERVE & \$AVE®

PARTNERING In Energy Solutions

This program connects your business with expert vendor resources, or **Energy Solutions Partners (ESPs)**. These ESPs will:

- Analyze your current and future energy use and needs
- Propose cost-cutting changes and energy efficient upgrades
- Provide payback analysis of suggested improvements
- Assist with the purchase and/or implementation of improvements
- List and apply for all available CONSERVE & SAVE® rebates
- Assist with applying for financing - 0% interest, up to \$25,000 for qualified customers!

Visit our website at www.OwatonnaUtilities.com to download a Partnering in Energy Solutions brochure with detailed program information.



P.O. Box 800 208 S. Walnut Ave.
Owatonna, MN 55060

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Saturday & Sunday:

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Payment Options

- Online at www.owatonnautilities.smarthub.coop
- Phone at (507) 451-2480
Option 2 or 1-888-228-2398
(Available 24/7)
- Automatic Withdrawal; bank
account or credit card
- Drive-up drop box located in
our parking lot
- Drop box locations at CashWise
and HyVee Food Store
- Mail to P.O. Box 800, Owatonna,
MN 55060
- ACH bank draft sent directly
from your bank

Moving?

Remember to contact the Customer
Service Department **ONE WEEK** prior to
moving, 451-2480.

April 18th

IS NATIONAL LINEMEN
APPRECIATION DAY

*Thank you to our linemen, Matt, Tony,
Tom, Jeff, Nick, Samuel, Ryan, Lance,
Jake and Brandon for all you do!*



Gas Leak?

If you smell gas and can't find the source immediately,
go to a neighbor's house and call 911.

Don't turn electrical switches on or off or use a flashlight
or cell phone in the home, because an electrical spark
could ignite the gas and cause an explosion.



WWW.OWATONNAUTILITIES.COM