



OWATONNA
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**Spring Water Main
Flushing Info Inside**

CUSTOMER UPDATE

Midcontinent Independent System Operator

MISO... Who are they?... Part 1

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Spring Water Main Flushing Info Inside

OPU MEMO



Roger Warehime,
General Manager

OPU Commission

Matt Kottke
Kent Rossi
Randy Doyal
Jay Johnson
Doug Zirngible

This month, we're launching the first installment of a three-part featured article series to educate you about MISO - the Midwest Independent System Operator. If you're not in the utility industry, you may not have heard of MISO before. They work behind the scenes to operate the high-voltage transmission grid, which spans across 15 U.S. states, including Minnesota. As a not-for-profit organization, MISO's primary responsibility is to ensure that the electric grid is stable, reliable, and secure at all times.

Recently, MISO has been facing capacity constraints, meaning there may be times when we have to ask customers to use less electricity to maintain the grid's stability. We previously discussed the importance of MISO in relation to Grid Alerts, which we're preparing for. While we didn't need to execute the plan last summer,

we received a warning on December 23, which made us realize we need to be prepared for a Grid Alert in all seasons, not just during summer peaks.

Through this three-part series, we aim to explain what MISO is, why it exists, and how it's adapting to ensure grid stability in light of the rapid increase of renewable energy sources. We'll also delve into MISO's relationship with our power agency, SMMPA, and OPU, exploring how these organizations work together to provide reliable and affordable electricity to customers. In the final part, we'll discuss Grid Alerts in more detail, explaining what happens during a Grid Alert and why it's crucial for customers to react if we need to call one.

Our goal is to help you understand how we're all "in this together" and how MISO's operations impact you. We hope you find this information interesting, useful, and informative.

CONSERVATION TIP\$

Make the most of the extended daylight and stronger sun rays by opening your shades and letting the sunshine warm up your home. You can even dial down the furnace a few degrees and bask in a sunny room to experience greater comfort at a slightly lower temperature.



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 – Assistant City Engineer Sean Murphy has been selected to serve as the Public Works Department's next Director. Murphy's promotion became effective March 12, 2023.



2023 Reconstruction Projects

- **2023 Street and Utility Project** – The City Council has designated the street reconstruction and bituminous rehabilitation projects that will be completed during the 2023 construction season. The following areas will be included in the 2023 Street & Utility Projects:
 - Butternut Avenue SW from McKinley Street to Riverview Place
 - Riverview Place SW from Butternut to the cul-de-sac
 - School Street East from Main Street to Partridge Avenue

The 2023 Street & Utility Project is estimated at \$1,416,539 and will be financed through City funding and assessments. Approximately 31 property owners will be impacted.

- **Havana Road** – The 2023 Havana Road State Aid Project includes Havana Road from Truman to Smith Avenue. The Havana Road State Aid Project is estimated at \$1,179,226.63 and will be paid for using State Aid funds, City funds and assessments. Approximately nine property owners will be affected.

The streets proposed for bituminous reconstruction in the 2023 Improvement Projects are deteriorating and in need of both pavement rehabilitation as well as utility (water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer) upgrades.

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

Boulevard Tree Maintenance

- **Tree Trimming:** Street Maintenance crews perform all trimming of trees located within the boulevard. Tree trimming takes place for a variety of reasons:
 - Removal of dead limbs that could fall and cause damage or injuries.
 - Removal of overgrown limbs that could obstruct large vehicle traffic such as emergency vehicles, street sweeper, or delivery vehicles.
 - To establish good structure and maintain the tree's shape. Storm-damaged boulevard trees are trimmed or removed depending on the damage severity.

The City of Owatonna asks that residents do not perform tree maintenance on trees located within the boulevard. To request boulevard tree maintenance, contact our office at 507-444-4350.

These actions are in accordance with the City of Owatonna Code of Ordinances – §97.04 Planting, Removing Trees in Boulevards.



Emerald Ash Borer Treatment

The City of Owatonna proactively treats ash trees for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). This effort is expected to delay the spread of EAB. There are approximately 1,200 boulevard ash trees, and the City intends to treat approximately 1/3 each year, resulting in a three-year treatment rotation. The treatment of the boulevard trees benefits private trees as well. As the bugs travel from tree to tree, they die when they eat from treated tree. Not all trees need to be treated for the program to be effective.

The Compost Site located at 400 W 32nd Avenue will open this spring as weather permits and the ground dries out. The site is operated under contract with an independent service provider. The hours of operation will be available on the Public Works Department's webpage.

The Public Works Department will be busy throughout the summer. We appreciate everyone's patience with construction work. Please 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/494/Construction-Projects>

MAYOR

Tom Kuntz

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dan Boeke

David Burbank

Nathan Dotson

Kevin Raney

Greg Schultz

Brent Svenby

Doug Voss

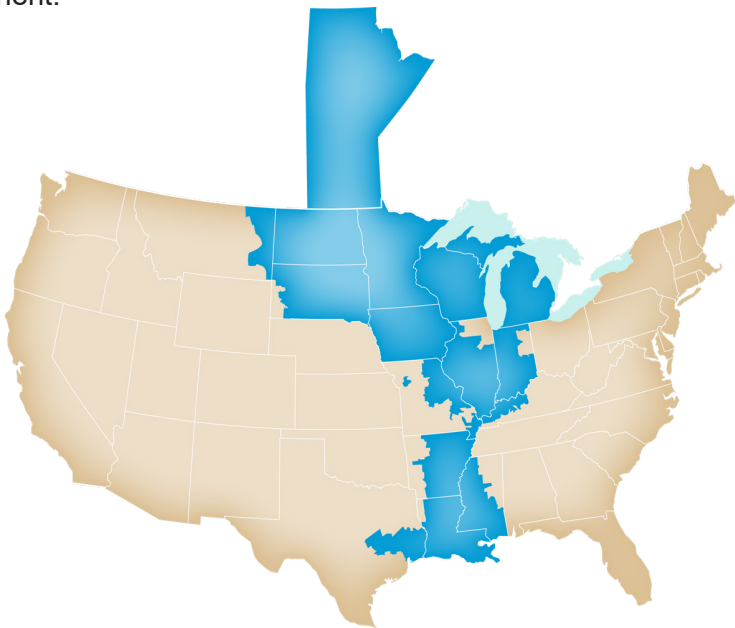
Midcontinent System Independent Operator

MISO...Who are they?...Part 1

Information for this article obtained from www.misoenergy.org

In the mid to late 90s, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) made the decision to open the bulk electric system to competition. FERC established the competition rules by issuing Orders 888 and 889. The Commission followed up with an additional order, Order 2000, that encouraged utilities to turn operational control of their transmission lines to an independent agency.

In response to the FERC orders, a handful of Midwestern transmission owners joined together and established an independent entity to oversee the flow of wholesale electricity across the region. MISO (Midwest Independent System Operator) became the nation's first FERC-approved Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) on December 20, 2001. Later, in 2013, MISO expanded its region to include portions of four southern states, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas. This expansion resulted in MISO changing the "M" in its name from "Midwest" to "Midcontinent."



MISO is an independent, not-for-profit, member-based organization. Since its founding, MISO has managed the reliable flow of electricity across its territory. Facilitating the buying and selling of electricity within its region and planning the grid of the future are two additional roles MISO plays.

What is the Electric Grid?

The electrical grid is an interconnected network for delivering electricity from producers to consumers. It consists of generating stations that produce electrical power, high voltage transmission lines that deliver electricity to sub-stations, and distribution lines that deliver power to homes, schools and business.

As a grid operator, MISO's role is to ensure the right amount of high-voltage electricity is generated and transmitted safely and reliably to member utilities. MISO does not own any equipment on the bulk electric system. The members do. It is the local utilities who are responsible for delivering electricity safely and reliably to their customers. Managing the flow of power is much like air traffic controllers managing the movement of airplanes without owning the planes, runways or terminals.

Just as air traffic controllers oversee the safe, reliable movement of people, MISO moves electricity from where it's generated to local utilities. MISO does not own pylons, transmission lines or generators; it simply ensures the right amount of electricity is delivered in the most reliable, affordable and sustainable way possible. Like an air traffic controller, MISO operators work 24/7/365 to keep its market safe and happy. While air traffic controllers help move people around the globe, MISO makes sure the lights stay on for the 45 million people in its region.

Next month, we will dive deeper into how MISO, SMMPA and OPU tie together to deliver electricity to you.

LOOKING FOR FREE WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY?

Stop by Owatonna Public Utilities and pick up water-saving and air-sealing kits for free. These kits are filled with products designed to help you save more at home. Each kit includes instructions on installing all items so you can save on your home's water and heating costs immediately. Kits can be picked up at any time at the Customer Service desk during regular business hours, while supplies last.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE KITS?

WATER SAVING KIT

- Sava Spa Showerhead
- Leak-Detection Dye Tablets
- Dual-Threaded Bubble Faucet Aerator
- Closed-Cell Polyethylene Hot Water Pipe Insulation
- Plumber's Tape

AIR SEALING KIT

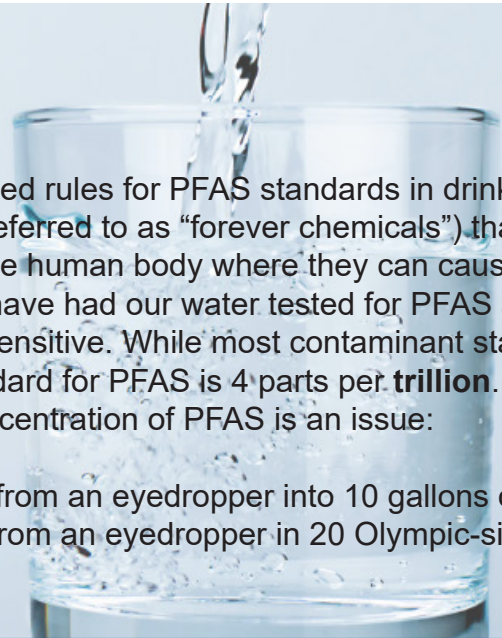
- Switch and Outlet Sealing Gaskets
- Self-Stick Door Sweep
- Adhesive Weather Stripping
- Deluxe Window Insulation Kit

CONSERVE & \$AVE

EPA Ruling on PFAS

You may have heard in the news recently that the EPA proposed rules for PFAS standards in drinking water. PFAS are a family of synthetic chemicals (sometimes referred to as “forever chemicals”) that do not break down and therefore linger in the environment and the human body where they can cause health issues. You may wonder what this means for Owatonna. We have had our water tested for PFAS and **NO** PFAS has been detected. The testing for PFAS is extremely sensitive. While most contaminant standards are measured in terms of parts per million, the proposed standard for PFAS is 4 parts per **trillion**. With some reference points, you can appreciate how minute of concentration of PFAS is an issue:

- One part per million is the equivalent to one drop of water from an eyedropper into 10 gallons of water.
- One part per trillion is the equivalent to one drop of water from an eyedropper in 20 Olympic-sized swimming pools.



Visit the Minnesota Department of Health's website for an interactive map where you can see the PFAS results at various communities across the state: <https://tinyurl.com/22pckjkz>

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.



Salt pollution comes from several sources



Too much
salt is bad for
aquatic life
and drinking
water

Help Keep Chloride Out of Our Lakes and Rivers:

1. Hire a Smart Salting Contractor, visit pca.state.mn.us to find certified contractors.
2. Educate your family, friends, and coworkers on the importance of proper and safe use.
3. Apply minimum amount necessary. Less is more.
4. Sweep up any excess salt. Remember if it is visible on pavement, it will just wash away.
5. Be patient, more salt never results in faster melting. Shovel, shovel, shovel.
6. Make sure to check your water softener for proper ratios or stop using a water softener all together.
7. If you store large piles of salt (commercial or industrial business), make sure it's covered and on an impervious surface. Furthermore, make sure continuously sweep transfer and storage areas.

Learn more about our Stormwater Program at ci.owatonna.mn.us/stormwater or contact Brad Rademacher, Stormwater/ Water Quality Specialist at 507-774-7300 or stormwater@ci.owatonna.mn.us

April Showers Bring... RAIN BARRELS!

Catch the rain and catch a **\$10 REBATE.**

Download a Water Efficiency Rebate Application with complete terms and conditions at www.owatonnautilities.com.

RAIN BARREL WORD SEARCH

RAIN BARREL
REBATE
DOWNSPOUT
CONSERVE
SAVE
WATER
REUSE
RAINWATER
GARDENS
PLANTS
FLOWERS

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



CONSERVE & \$SAVE®



COMMERCIAL CUSTOMERS CAN GET 0% FINANCING!

Financing may be available for qualifying energy efficiency projects through our **Partnering in Energy Solutions** program. This financing allows you to pay for the project on your utility bill over a one or two year period at 0% interest. The maximum loan amount is \$25,000.

Learn more at www.owatonnautilities.com or call us at (507) 451-2480.

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

Office: 451-2480 Service: 451-1616

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Wednesday:

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Thursday:

8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Friday:

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday:

Closed



Thank
you for all
you do!

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.

Lineman Appreciation Day is April 18th

Pictured (l to r): Tom, Tony, Mat, Samuel, Dalton, Jake, Jeff, Ryan, Nick, Brandon and Lance.

5 to 50 PSI Project Underway

The 2023 construction season has begun, and NPL Construction is now in the final phase of the 5 to 50 psi conversion project in the southern part of the town. They will be verifying the depths of the sanitary sewer services over the next few weeks in relation to where we plan to cross each service line with new gas main. The project is expected to continue until late fall, with white flags marking proposed construction areas in the south central and southeast parts of the town. This year's project involves replacing 800 meter sets and 200 gas services, and installing 19,000 feet of new gas main. It is the final year of the seven-year project, which has included replacing 1800 meter sets, 1000 gas services, and installing 105,000 feet of new gas main.

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.

