



OWATONNA
PUBLIC UTILITIES

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CUSTOMER UPDATE



FEATURING: WATER MAIN TYPES

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 OPU Memo | 5 Work Zone Safety | 6 Clean H2Owatonna |
| 2 Conservation Tips | 5 Keep it Up Minnesota | 7 Rebate Submittal |
| 3 City Spot | 5 Utility Scams | 8 Concrete Won't Grow |
| 4 Water Main Types | 6 Call Before You Dig | 8 General Information |



OPU MEMO



Jared Hendricks,
Key Accounts/Energy
Conservation Officer

OPU Commission

Mr. Matt Kottke
Mr. Kent Rossi
Mr. Randy Doyal
Ms. Dena Keilman
Mr. Jay Johnson

From time to time I get asked why a Utility would pay rebates for using less of the products we sell: electricity, water, and natural gas. I wanted to spend some time answering that question this month. To simplify things, I will focus on electric rebates in this memo.

Think of electricity as a car driving down the road, and the wires that bring the electricity to your house like the Interstate and other roads. When you are the only one on the road you don't have traffic to contend with. You get where you're going without any problems or slow-downs.

Now imagine everyone turns on ALL of their appliances at the same time everywhere in the state. You can think of this like trying to drive down an interstate during rush hour traffic. The road isn't big enough for everyone, it takes longer for you to get to your destination, there is simply too many cars on the road for everyone to move about efficiently and effectively. With electricity, that would mean that all of the power plants are operating in order to fill everyone's needs.

One way to speed up traffic would be to build more roads or widen the existing roads. More roads would mean more cars can travel at the same time but it's extremely expensive to do that. Another problem with building more roads just for rush hour traffic is that new road would be completely empty much of the time. Building more roads would be like building more power plants and adding more wires to provide that maximum amount of electricity that is needed, but those new power plants would be shut down most of the time. That is a very expensive way to fulfill the electricity needs of everyone and can require higher rate increases to cover the cost of the power plants.

Now, what if we take half the people driving on the road and put them on buses, or shift what time they have to drive by an hour? This would reduce the number of vehicles on the road at the same time without having to invest in new roads and would allow everyone to get where they need to in an efficient manner. This is really what rebates do. Rebates are a way to reduce how much electricity is used at once. Utilities offer rebates for energy efficient equipment to help you use electricity wisely and efficiently. By doing this, the demand for "road space" (electricity) stays down and the need for extremely expensive power plants and transmission wires is avoided. In turn, by avoiding these expensive costs, utilities are able to keep rates low.

So, the next time you need to buy a new appliance, consider an energy efficient one, get your rebate, and know you are helping keep utility rates low in Owatonna.

CONSERVATION TIP\$

Cooking with your oven during the hot summer days makes your air conditioner work harder costing you more on your bills. Taking advantage of nice weather to grill instead. It is not only a fun way to cook your food with more flavor, but also helps keep your utility bills down!



CITY SPOT

HIGHLIGHTING: CITY OF OWATONNA ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

OWATONNA CITY COUNCIL

As you have probably noticed, the City of Owatonna is busy working on several construction projects this year. The following is a recap of the major projects:

Steele County and the City of Owatonna are cooperating on the development of a Transportation Plan for the City and an update to the County's Transportation Plan. There will be opportunity for public comment on transportation issues during the plans development. This plan looks at all modes of transportation from freight to pedestrian.

The Bridge Street Project from Interstate 35 to 24th Avenue has been postponed until the 2021 Construction Season. A virtual drive through of the project can be seen at the City of Owatonna Public Works homepage <http://www.ci.owatonna.mn.us/482/Public-Works>.

Cherry Street from the Maple Creek Bridge to the golf course parking lot is planned for a new bituminous surface. The water main and storm sewer installation and curb and gutter work has been completed. Some concrete driveways and bituminous paving remain to be completed.

Greenhaven from Crestview to just north of Keller Place is planned for a new bituminous surface. The roadway surface has been removed. Curb removal and regrading has been completed.

Shady Avenue from East Rice Lake Street to School Street is planned for new aggregate base and bituminous surface. The roadway surface has been removed. Subgrade removal and replacement has been completed.

Cardinal Drive Stormsewer Project involves installing a new storm pipe across county Road 48 (Bixby Road) and the Canadian Pacific Railway to help alleviate localized flooding and the north end of Cardinal Drive. Construction has been ongoing. Since July 20th the road has been detoured. Please follow the posted signs. The detour is expected to last 2 weeks

The CIPPS (Cured In Place Pipe System) Project is underway. Initial surveying has been completed. The next step is the lining process, which began at the end of July. This process is expected to take 2-3 weeks.

The following streets are being overlayed in 2020: Mound St SW – Allan Ave to Hilltop Ave, Thomas Ave SW – Mound St to LeMond Rd, Robert Pl SW – Mosher Ave to Circle, Linn Ave SW – Plainview St to Southview St & Holly St to Barney St, Southview St SW – Linn Ave to West, Almar Pl SW, Kellford Pl SW, Hobart St SE – Cedar Ave to Elm Ave & Elm Ave to Grove Ave. The streets have been prepped for bituminous overlay, scheduled to begin July 27th.

The roundabout at Grove and Rose has been completed. No Parking signs have been posted near the roundabout. Please be patient as drivers continue to acclimate to the new traffic flow.

Miscellaneous catch basin and pothole repair is ongoing. Please contact the Public Works Office to request maintenance or to report a concern regarding city streets.

Weekly updates from the City Engineer's Office are posted to the City of Owatonna Public Works Website every Friday. Updates can be found at <http://www.ci.owatonna.mn.us/Blog.aspx?CID=2>

Please stay safe in workzones, your safety and the safety of the workers depends on you. Slow down and be attentive.

MAYOR

Tom Kuntz

COUNCIL MEMBERS

David Burbank

Nathan Dotson

Jeff Okerberg

Kevin Raney

Greg Schultz

Brent Svenby

Doug Voss



WATER MAINS

What's the difference between a water main feeder and a distribution water main? It seems like water main should be water main, right, but it's typically broken down into a few different categories depending on its use. The following will give a quick overview of the difference.

Water systems are typically broken down into three classifications of pipe to transport water throughout the community.

1. **Primary Feeders:** These are typically the largest pipes in our system and range in diameters from 12 to 16 inches. These primary feeders transport water from well sites throughout the City of Owatonna to major storage locations within the community.
2. **Secondary Feeders:** These are connected to the primary feeders to transport water along the major streets in Owatonna. The secondary feeders need to be in place to supply commercial properties, main public buildings, and larger private sector buildings that have a need for larger fire flow demands. Secondary feeders are typically 8 to 12 inches in diameter.
3. **Distribution Mains:** These are connected to the secondary feeders to transport water to individual streets throughout the community that have small businesses and residential homes. These mains are used to supply water to the individual consumers. In our community these pipes range from 3 to 8 inches in diameter, and as a general rule these are the small mains in the water supply system.

Hopefully this give you some insight into the world of water mains and a little history of how they become categorized certain ways.

Things have been very busy around OPU and in May, Owatonna Public Utilities recently commissioned a new pressure zone in the Industrial Park area to fulfill fire flow demands for future commercial and industrial developments. This pressure zone was created to provide sufficient capacity to maintain minimum pressure during periods of maximum use and to provide sufficient

volumes of water at adequate pressures to provide the expected average daily consumption plus fire flows at a minimum energy loss. A 20-psi residual pressure under fire flow conditions shall be maintained in the distribution system.

This spring and early summer have been busy in terms of gas and water construction. On the water side, the commissioning of a new pressure zone in May was just the next step in a list of steps to solidify the average pressure and available fire flows in the Southwest portion of Owatonna (Industrial Park). The last big step was recently closing a loop from the west end of Bridge Street to the west end of 18th Street SW at 39th Avenue SW. This 5,500' of 16 inch feeder main was the final step in a three year process to close the loop and fulfill demands for future development.

When possible, OPU will evaluate each section of water main during any upcoming City or County proposed street project to improve our current water system. In doing so, during a recent City street project, OPU replaced about 550' of water main along Cherry Street that has been prone to breaks over the last few years.

From the natural gas side of things, OPU just completed a critical gas main extension in the SW portion of Owatonna. In addition to the recent update to our water main system, OPU has also added an 8,400 foot 6" natural gas main extension to close a critical loop in our system. Closing the 6" loop will help solidify the area and also give us many options for future development.

In the next few weeks, the ongoing 5 psi to 50 psi upgrade project will kick off. This project continues to improve our natural gas system and allows OPU to be ready for increased gas loads stemming from the increased installation of large appliances, such as, on-demand hot water heaters and back-up generators.

WORK ZONE SAFETY



Our 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.

- Expect the Unexpected. Work zones change often. The area you drove yesterday may look different today.
- 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.

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!

STAY SAFE MN

Keep it up, Minnesota!

Continue to follow safe practices:



① Wash your hands



② Get tested when sick



③ Stay 6 feet from others



④ Wear a mask



⑤ Stay home when able



⑥ Work from home when able

mn.gov/covid19

m MINNESOTA

UTILITY SCAMS

The Scam

Utility phone scams typically involve callers claiming to represent a utility company attempting to trick people into paying them money by threatening to turn off their services. The scammer usually insists the victim pay immediately with a pre-paid debit card (i.e. Green Dot MoneyPak card), which provides them easy access to your money.

What To Do?

Hang Up. If there is any doubt about the authenticity of a caller, hang up and call OPU directly to verify your billing and payment status.

Report it. Contact law enforcement and OPU to report theft or attempted theft due to scams.

Beware. Never give out personal information, debit/credit card numbers, or wire money as result of an unexpected or unsolicited call.

Get it in Writing. Customer will typically be contacted several times via U.S. Mail about past due bills before their service is turned off.

Know your Options. OPU provides many options for payment and never REQUIRE the use of a pre-paid debit card.



**CALL
BEFORE
YOU DIG**

**DIYer by
day and
streamer
at night?**



Stay safe during social distancing by calling 811 before starting any new project, so you can stay connected to the internet and utility services you rely on.

**Call 811 or go
to your state 811
center's website
before digging.**



Call811.com/811-your-state

Take Action for Water Quality in Your Community!

MS4 Program Available 24/7 Online for Comment

Take the opportunity to learn a little bit about what the City of Owatonna has been working on as well as the opportunity to comment and review the City of Owatonna's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan as part of the communities MS4 Program. You may comment by filling out a survey on the City's website at <http://ci.owatonna.mn.us/stormwater>. Your input is greatly valued!



Save the Date - 12th Annual Watershed Wide Clean-up – Straight River Site

The 12th Annual Watershed Wide Clean-up will take place in Owatonna on September 19th from 9am to 12 noon at Morehouse Park. The event is hosted in conjunction with the Cannon River Watershed Partnership, who helps to find sponsors and coordinate the clean-up event.

For the past 11 years, volunteers have combed the stream banks and waterways around Owatonna with the goal of cleaning trash and debris from the Straight River. With every passing year, more and more garbage is removed by hard working individuals and businesses who are dedicated to making a difference. Since 2009, residents of Owatonna and the surrounding Cannon River watershed have volunteered cleaning up local creeks, the Cannon and Straight River.

*****Important COVID-19 Changes**

There will be no gathering for group photos or for a lunch, 6 feet of social distancing required.

Participants will be required to put on provided gloves and face coverings prior to signing in.

Families can pick up gear from the CRWP office during the week of September 13th – 19th and complete the clean up on their own rather than attending on September 19th. Please send photos, volunteer hours, and volunteer names to CRWP.

Do not attend if you feel sick.

Get Involved! If you are interested in helping or sponsoring the event, visit www.crwpp.net. Please come and join us to ensure our waters stay clean, safe and healthy!

Learn more by contacting Bradley D. Rademacher, Water Quality/ Stormwater Specialist at (507)-774-7300 or Bradley.rademacher@ci.owatonna.mn.us

REBATES

Our office is still closed to the public,
**but we're still eagerly waiting
for your rebate applications!**

There are 3 ways to submit your rebate applications:



MAIL THEM TO:

Owatonna Public Utilities
Attn: Rebate Processing
PO Box 800
Owatonna, MN 55060



**PUT THEM IN AN ENVELOPE
AND PLACE THEM IN
ONE OF OUR DROP BOXES:**

- Owatonna Public Utilities' Parking Lot
- Cash Wise Foods
- Hy-Vee Foods



SCAN AND EMAIL THEM TO:

customerservice@owatonnautilities.com

Visit www.owatonnautilities.com to learn more and download rebate applications with complete terms and conditions.

CONSERVE & \$AVE®

www.owatonnautilities.com 7



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

Office: 451-2480 Service: 451-1616

INDICIA

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

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 629, 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.

Did you know?
Concrete won't grow.
WATER SMART!
Aim for the grass
and conserve
this precious
resource.

Visit our website at
www.owatonnautilities.com
for more conservation tips!

STOP THE SPREAD

In a continuing attempt to encourage social distancing and to protect our employees and the residents of Owatonna from the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), public access to OPU buildings will remain restricted until further notice. Our customer service reps are available by phone, during normal business hours, to help answer your questions. Utility payments can be made in a variety of ways that do not require face-to-face interaction. View the different options on the left.

Gas Leak?

If you smell gas and can't find the source immediately, go to a neighbor's house and call OPU at 451-1616.

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



WWW.OWATONNAUTILITIES.COM