



**OWATONNA**  
**PUBLIC UTILITIES**

VOLUME 32 | ISSUE #7  
JULY 2022

# CUSTOMER UPDATE



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# OPU MEMO



Jared Hendricks, Energy  
Conservation/Key Ac-  
counts Officer

## OPU Commission

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

Renewable Energy. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear that? Most likely you immediately jump to a mental image of solar panels on a roof. This makes sense as we are seeing more rooftop solar in Owatonna every year.

But what about someone who is a renter, someone who does not have a good location for solar, or someone who simply doesn't want to invest that much money into a solar array? That is where Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) come into play.

Our feature article this month focuses on what RECs are, so I won't spend a lot of time discussing the details here, but simply put RECs are the "renewable attributes" of wind, solar, or other renewable generation that can be purchased as a way to ensure the energy received at your home is renewable instead of fossil fuel based. Customers who purchase RECs pay for those attributes above and beyond their normal utility billing.

Owatonna Public Utilities now has a Residential REC Purchase Program available to our customers so you can purchase renewable without owning your own generation.

OPU's Residential REC Program will allow customers to purchase any quantity of RECs up to the maximum based on your annual electric consumption. If you choose to purchase RECs, you will pay for the RECs as a one-time purchase for the year with the ability to automatically renew your purchase the following year. To purchase RECs, complete a Residential REC Application and submit it to our Customer Service Department. Your purchase will be added to your next bill.

### What is the maximum number of RECs I can purchase?

To determine your maximum number of RECs, add your electric consumption for the last 12 months (your electric consumption is the number of kWh used each month, found on the second page of your bill), then divide by 1,000 and round UP to the nearest whole number. RECs can only be purchased in whole units. For example:

- 6,300 kWh annual consumption
- $6,300 \div 1,000 = 6.3$  MWh
- 7 REC maximum

### What will it cost to purchase RECs?

Each REC has a cost of \$5/REC. If the example customer above purchased their maximum of 7 RECs, they would have a total cost of \$35 to be powered completely by renewable energy for the year.

### What if I am new to Owatonna and do not have 12 months of electric consumption yet?

Customers who have been an OPU customer for less than one year will be able to purchase up to 8 RECs for their first year. The following year, a new application to purchase RECs will need to be completed using your actual consumption to determine your new maximum.

### Where is my renewable energy coming from?

If you purchase RECs through our program, your renewable energy is coming from the Stoneray Wind Farm in Pipestone, Minnesota.

## CONSERVATION TIP\$

Adding a simple hose timer to your garden sprinkler is a great way to reduce water runoff and save money on your water bill. Overwatering your garden can be damaging to your plants as well as waste water through excess runoff. Timers will turn off your sprinkler to reduce waste while also providing convenience.





# CITY SPOT

HIGHLIGHTING: OWATONNA PARKS AND RECREATION

## OWATONNA CITY COUNCIL

### Lake Kohlmiere Equipment Rental and Concessions

How does spending more time at Lake Kohlmiere sound this summer? New this year, you can now purchase a membership to take out a stand-up Paddle Board, Canoe, Kayak, or Paddle boat during regular hours. For those that are not ready to commit to a full membership don't worry we also have the option to pay by the hour. A membership for the entire summer is only \$75, or if you want to purchase a monthly membership the rate is \$30 for June, \$30 for July and \$25 for August. The hourly equipment rental is \$6. Lake Kohlmiere is open Thursday and Friday from 1-7 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 12-7 p.m. If you are planning an event this summer and looking for a fun activity to get everyone involved, let us help you! We rent out our equipment for group rentals during non-open hours, just give us a call at 444-4321 or visit the Owatonna Parks and Recreation website at [Owatonna.gov](http://Owatonna.gov) for additional details.

### River Springs Water Park

River Springs is open seven days a week, Mondays through Fridays from noon until 7 p.m. and weekends from noon until 8 p.m. for open swim. Various other programs are also offered including Water Walking, Lap Swim, Water Aerobics, Swimming Lessons, Log Rolling and Tiny Tot Time.

### Check out these other options for enjoying River Springs this summer:

#### Daily Specials

- Mondays are Grandparents Day, grandparents get in free with a paid grandchild Tuesdays are Twilight Day, \$4.50 admission all day
- Wednesdays are Family Day; families get in \$4.50 per individual or \$13.50 per family of up to six all day
- Thursdays are Mystery Concessions Day with a different mystery special every week
- Fridays are Facebook Friday, follow the River Springs Water Park Facebook page and watch for the weekly post announcing the special

#### Rates:

- June 2 - August 7: \$7.00 per person 48" and above, \$5.00 per person under 48" , \$4.50 Twilight Fee (5pm-Close)

- August 8 - August 21: \$4.50 per person, all summer children under two are free with a paid adult.
- Find out more by checking out the Parks and Recreation webpage at [owatonna.gov](http://owatonna.gov), following the River Springs Water Park Facebook page or by calling (507) 774-7370.

### Summer Weekend Out

Mark your calendars for July 22-24 for our annual Summer Weekend Out! This is a family fun weekend with a variety of activities for the entire family to participate in!

- Friday, July 22 - Movie is Disney Pixar "Up" movie starts at sunset and is located at Lincoln. There will be games and activities prior to the movie, beginning at 8 p.m. Lake Kohlmiere will have \$1 off rentals all weekend and fishing poles will be available to check out for free and fish with corn for bait.
- Saturday, July 23 River Springs Water Park will feature a few fun events including Battleship from 9-11 a.m. \$15 per team and Cardboard Boat Regatta, call the Parks and Recreation office to register 507-444-4321.
- Sunday, July 24 River Springs has a Super Splash Special and admission is only \$3 a person all day.

### Register for one of our new Family Programs:

- **Family Archery**- this is a great activity for the whole family. Join us as we learn the basic components of a bow, how to shoot a bow, and to have fun shooting traditional and animal targets. We provide all the equipment. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Each session costs \$6 per participant.
- **Family Geocaching for S'mores**- ingredients for our delicious treat have been hidden throughout the park and it is your job to find them. During this program you are given a GPS that leads you to them, but it won't be that easy. You still must play and seek once you get close to finding your treat. At the end we will all sit around and enjoy ourselves. All children must be accompanied by an adult. July 10 from 6-8 pm Location Kaplan's Woods, cost is \$4.
- **Family Fishing**- Bring the whole family to Lake Kohlmiere and learn how

### MAYOR

Tom Kuntz

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dan Boeke  
David Burbank  
Nathan Dotson  
Kevin Raney  
Greg Schultz  
Brent Svenby  
Doug Voss

to prepare equipment, what bait to use and how to deal with fish once you catch them. All equipment will be provided. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Fishing licenses will be provided for the duration of the class. July 16 from 9-11 a.m., cost is \$4.

### Brooktree Golf Course:

Book a tee time online ([brooktreegolfcourse.com](http://brooktreegolfcourse.com)) or call 774-7100. Relax and enjoy the new patio furniture and grab a bite to eat at the new restaurant, Tavern Nine.

Steele County and the City of Owatonna will be hosting an open house to present the preliminary design and to accept feedback for the East Side Corridor Project. The project will construct a north-south route on the east side of the City of Owatonna from the 218/18th Street SE intersection to 26th Street NW. Traffic currently has no direct route for traveling between the northeast and southeast part of Owatonna. Existing highways and streets direct traffic towards the downtown area adding unnecessary traffic in the downtown area and increasing travel times.

Watch the City of Owatonna website ([owatonna.gov](http://owatonna.gov)) for more information regarding the date of this open house. Please call 507-444-4350 with any questions.



## Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs)

*This article is based on information from EIA Green Power Partnership*

### What is a REC?

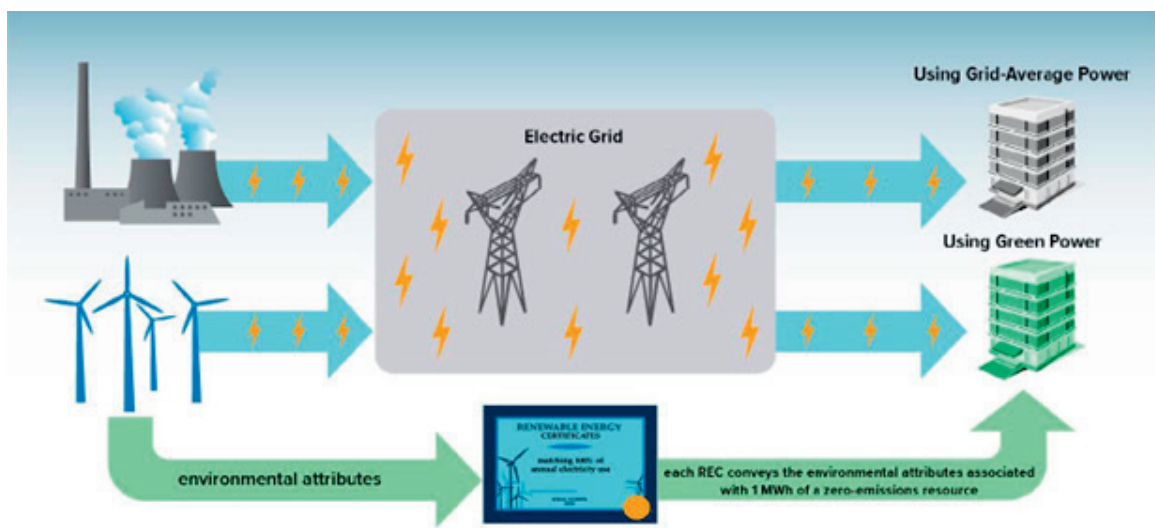
Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs, sometimes stated as Renewable Energy Credits) are the legal instruments used in renewable electricity markets to account for renewable electricity and its attributes whether that renewable electricity is installed on the organization's facility or purchased from elsewhere. The owner of a REC has exclusive rights to the attributes of one megawatt-hour (MWh) of renewable electricity and may make unique claims associated with renewable electricity that generated the REC (e.g., using or being supplied with a MWh of renewable electricity, reducing the emissions footprint associated with electricity use). Claims to the attributes of the electricity from a REC can only be made by one party. The purchase or use of renewable energy, verified with RECs, is a decision an organization, or individual, makes to ensure its electricity is provided from renewable sources that produce low-or zero-emissions, thereby reducing the customers market-based scope 2 emissions.

### How Do RECs Work?

As the physical electricity we receive through the utility grid says nothing of its origin or how it was generated, RECs play an essential role in accounting and assigning ownership to the attributes of renewable electricity generation and use. RECs legally convey the attributes of renewable electricity generation, including the emissions profile of that generation, to their owner and serve as the basis for a renewable electricity consumption claim. As such, the REC owner has exclusive rights to characterize the quantity of their purchased electricity associated with the RECs as zero-emissions electricity.

### What Is the Legal Basis of RECs?

RECs are the accepted legal instrument through which renewable energy generation and use claims are substantiated in the U.S. renewable electricity market. RECs are supported by several different levels of government, regional electricity transmission authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and trade associations, as well as in U.S. case law.





# SECURITY ENHANCEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

## Do you call into OPU to pay your bill?

Effective immediately, you will need your account number in order to access the bill pay system by phone. This change was made due to a concern brought to our attention by another utility. At this other utility, unauthorized parties were able to access account information by knowing the customer's phone number and address, giving them the potential to scam customers. To be clear, there was no risk to bank or credit card data. To mitigate this risk, OPU made the decision to require customers paying by phone to enter their OPU account number and have removed the phone number option from the system. We are dedicated to the safety of our customers and employees and that includes the security of systems and customer information.

# Go Golfing and...

**Pay your  
utility bill with  
Auto Pay!**



**Enroll online at [OwatonnaUtilities.com](http://OwatonnaUtilities.com)**



Paying your Owatonna Public Utilities bill shouldn't be a complex task, and with our SmartHub web and mobile app - it won't be.

Access SmartHub by visiting [www.owatonnautilities.com](http://www.owatonnautilities.com) and clicking the "Pay Bill" icon, or by downloading the app on your mobile device through the Apple App Store (iOS devices) or Google Play Marketplace (Android devices).

Plenty of things in life are complicated. Manage your Owatonna Public Utilities account simply, quickly and easily with SmartHub.



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

Call 811 or visit [gopherstateonecall.org](http://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.**



## ***Don't Feed The Fowl!***

Feeding ducks and geese is often perceived as a harmless and fun activity, but many people don't realize the negative effects it has on wildlife and the environment.

Unfortunately, an activity many of us enjoyed as children actually has damaging impacts not only for the waterfowl themselves but also for local water. While ducks, geese, and other waterfowl love to eat the bread, chips, and crackers we offer them, it causes them to congregate in high numbers.

This results in large, concentrated quantities of waste in and along the community's water resources. Waterfowl waste also makes your parks and trails dirty and unusable. In addition to the environmental issues, the feeding them can cause long-term health problems and other nutritional consequences for the waterfowl and other wildlife as they become overcrowded and dependent on humans for their food.

Instead of feeding wild ducks and geese, make a trip to a zoo, county fair, or wildlife preserve where you can still enjoy the beauty of our state's waterfowl.

For further information regarding our City Stormwater Management Program send us an email at [stormwater@ci.owatonna-mn.us](mailto:stormwater@ci.owatonna-mn.us) or visit <https://owatonna.gov/300/Stormwater-Management>





# Time for a new air conditioning system?

Owatonna Public Utilities offers great rebates  
on high efficiency air conditioning equipment.

Visit [www.owatonnautilities.com](http://www.owatonnautilities.com) to download rebate  
applications with complete terms and conditions.

## AIR CONDITIONING WORD SEARCH

CENTRAL	COMFORT
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COOLING	REBATE

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**Owatonna Public Utilities offers valuable rebates  
(\$200-\$8,000) for purchases of VSDs.**

Visit [www.owatonnautilities.com](http://www.owatonnautilities.com) to learn more  
and download rebate applications with  
complete terms and conditions.







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## POSTAL CUSTOMER ECRWSS

**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](http://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.



Steele County Kids Safety Camp was held June 9th and 10th with over 200 kids attending. This two-day camp is open to all students in Steele County coming out of 3rd grade and provides safety education in a fun and memorable way on 12 specific topics. This year, Joe and Tiger from the Gas/Water Crew and Nick from the Line Crew presented electrical and natural gas safety information to all 6 "teams". The electric safety city is always one of the most memorable parts of Safety Camp for the kids. Seeing what would happen to a person if they came in contact with powerlines using a hotdog and how dangerous it is to release mylar balloons are two of the highlights. If you haven't seen a video of it, mylar balloons conduct electricity very well and have periodically been the cause of major outages throughout the country. A special Thank You to Joe Bellomy, Dave (Tiger) Fox, and Nick Kleindl for their part in making Safety Camp such a great event this year!

### 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](http://WWW.OWATONNAUTILITIES.COM)