



VOLUME 29 | ISSUE #6
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CUSTOMER UPDATE



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OPU MEMO



Roger Warehime,
General Manager

OPU Commission

Mr. Dale E. Simon
Mr. Matt Kottke
Mr. Kent Rossi
Mr. Randy Doyal
Ms. Dena Keilman

In the January newsletter, I talked about how our mission statement included the idea of “enriching the quality of life in our community” through the services we provide. Another way we do this is through our direct involvement with the Owatonna Partners for Economic Development (OPED). OPED is a collaborative relationship between the City of Owatonna, Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism, Owatonna Area Business Development Center, Steele County, and OPU. Its primary goal is to remove barriers and foster an environment for existing and newly locating businesses to expand. Although each member of OPED represents the interest of their own organizations, all are united in the goal of developing a growing and sustainable employment base in the fields of industry, retail, service, medical and technology in Owatonna.

When I speak with economic development people in other cities, I realize how fortunate Owatonna is to have such a unique arrangement as OPED. In other cities, the different entities are almost at odds with one another and communication does not flow freely. How fortunate we are in Owatonna to have OPED.

The group meets weekly to share information about potential projects, coordinate services, accommodate requests, and fast-track decisions. They work proactively to foster and encourage business growth and expansion. In 2018, over 45,000 square feet of new commercial and industrial space was created, 150 new housing units were constructed, and \$8.3 million was invested in redevelopment projects

including Torey's Restaurant, Home Town Credit Union, and the new apartment complex on Vine Street.

The need for utilities is a critical component of most business expansion projects, so OPU's involvement in the process is vital. For companies looking to locate in Owatonna, our reliability and competitive rates are a strong selling point. For locating and existing businesses alike, our early involvement, ensures the utilities they need are available and there won't be unpleasant surprises after the project starts.

A key focus area in OPED's current strategic plan is attracting and educating a quality workforce. Through Steele County Works and the “Made in Owatonna Days” program, 220 high school students were impacted and exposed to job opportunities that exist for them right here in our community.

OPED also works collaboratively with regional and state partners, markets downtown redevelopment, and leverages investment incentives. They make presentations to at least 200 real estate decision-makers, and meet with corporate leaders of companies already doing business in Owatonna.

In the coming months you will hear about a number of new businesses opening and expanding in Owatonna. When you hear about them in the news, know that OPED was working behind the scenes to make sure the project happened.

I'm proud of OPU's involvement in OPED and happy to be able to contribute to helping our community remain vibrant through economic expansion and development.

CONSERVATION TIP\$



When boiling water for cooking, use only as much water as necessary to avoid wasted energy. The more water in a kettle means it takes longer to bring it to a boil, wasting both time and energy. Covering your kettle will also reduce the energy used to bring water to a boil.

CITY SPOT

HIGHLIGHTING: OWATONNA PUBLIC LIBRARY

OWATONNA CITY COUNCIL

WELCOME! ¡BIENVENIDO! NYOB ZOO! KU SOO DHAWOOW!

A warm welcome and hello from your Owatonna Public Library! Warmer weather is here and we have returned to staffing the building for you every day except Sundays. Owatonna Public Library is open 9:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. on Monday through Thursday, open 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. We are closed on Sundays, May through September. If you have Internet access, the website and online resources are available 24/7 at www.owatonna.info.

OPL Mobile

If you have a smart phone or a tablet you can take your library with you! Find the free OPL Mobile app in the app store for your device. You can also go to owatonna.boopsie.com to install OPL Mobile or to preview it. With OPL Mobile you can search the library catalog, check your account, find OPL events, take a look at monthly Staff Picks, ask a question, check out and download eBooks or eAudiobooks. Use your card to download or stream music from Freegal (Free + Legal!).

Hoopla

The Owatonna Public Library is now offering Hoopla to its Patrons. What is Hoopla? Hoopla is a digital media service that allows you to borrow movies, music, audiobooks, ebooks, comics and TV shows to enjoy on your computer, tablet, or phone – and even your TV! With no waiting, titles can be streamed immediately, or downloaded to phones or tablets for offline enjoyment later. We have hundreds of thousands of titles to choose from, with more being added daily. Hoopla is like having your public library at your fingertips. Anytime. Anywhere. If you have any questions please contact the library.

Children's Programs

Our Children's Services Summer Program is ramping up! The Summer kickoff in Children's Services was a complete success! The Teddy Bear Band performed for the kids and Ice cream was served. We will be featuring a Book Fair in June, July and August so please plan to attend. Activities being held at the Library this summer are Zoo Man, a Magician, Children's Museum of Southern MN will present "A Healthy Me – What's on the Inside?" Also featured is Fun and Games – Stars Wars Style, Lego Mania, Climb Theatre: The Lion and the Mouse and Singer Will Hale. Bakken Museum will present: The Science of Me and Create-A-Craft. There are so many things to see and do at the Owatonna Public Library!

Movies offered at OPL

Movies at the Library are presented on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month, with showings at 2:00 p.m. in the 3rd Floor Gainey Room.

Building Maintenance

Our retention pond is finally complete and is doing a beautiful job at managing the excess rain water. The garden is being planted and the tulips are blossoming. The OPL Garden has five new permanent interpretive signs strategically placed to identify the various plants.

www.owatonna.info

For more information, visit your Owatonna Public Library in person at 105 North Elm Ave. or call 507-444-2460. Visit us without leaving your couch via the OPL Mobile app or online at www.owatonna.info. Find us on Facebook and @owatonnalibrary on Twitter.

MAYOR Tom Kuntz

COUNCIL MEMBERS

David Burbank
Nathan Dotson
Jeff Okerberg
Kevin Raney
Greg Schultz
Brent Svenby
Doug Voss



OPTIONS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Pictured (L to R): Roger Noble, Ryan Haberman, Jamey Krogh, James Keltgen, Brynn Butler, Jared Hendricks and Payton Jorgenson

OPU had the opportunity this school year to participate in the Owatonna Options Mentorship Program offered at the Owatonna High School. This mentorship is an unpaid cooperative educational learning experience between the Owatonna High School and sponsoring businesses. This program offers a student the opportunity to learn about a career field, as well as, being able to engage in hands-on-experiences with a professional in the career of their choice. We had the privilege of having 3 students come to OPU.

Ryan Haberman

Ryan Haberman's interest was in the electricity field; an Electrician or Electric Lineworker. He was open to other ideas and experiences, as well. Ryan actually explored two career paths; the Electric Lineworker and the Waterworks Operator. Jamey Krogh, our Operations Supervisor, explained all aspects of an electric lineworker job, the importance of safety when working with electricity, working in all kinds of weather conditions and the long hours sometimes necessary to get the job done. Our Waterworks Operator, Roger Noble talked about the responsibilities of Waterworks Operator and its main purpose being to ensure the water delivered to our customers is safe to drink and meets their needs. Roger discussed the Minnesota Department of Health Water Operator License needed to perform his job and the on-going education needed to maintain the license.

One of Ryan's main interest was the career of an electric lineworker. He said "it was a good experience for him to see the in-town aspect of a lineworker's day in comparison to a rural coop lineworker's day". He continued "the waterworks job was so interesting. I got to see from start to finish the processes and testing of the water to make it safe for the customer to drink".

Following Graduation, Ryan will be attending Northwest Lineman College.

Brynn Butler

Brynn Butler entered the Mentorship program to determine if her skills and interest align with a career in Information Technology. James Keltgen, Information Technology Manager, greeted Brynn on her first day with a hands-on challenge of completely disassembling a PC while identifying the internal components, before reassembly and getting the PC to run again. During her mentorship, she delved into a number of different facets of IT; including physical PC repair, programming/coding, IT networking,

cyber security and physical security. Brynn completed exercises in many different IT domains to provide hands-on experience and determine which facets of IT fit her personality and interests. During her time at OPU, Brynn completed coding exercises, built and installed network cables, installed and secured firewalls and practiced other security penetration testing.

Brynn described her experience at OPU by highlighting how when she first arrived at James' office, the PC was sitting on a desk all put together. She enthusiastically described the process of dis-assembling it, identifying and learning about each component with James and then reassembling it. In much the same way each lesson in IT came back full circle throughout her mentorship. Speaking of coming back full circle; once the disassembled PC was plugged in, it ran on the FIRST TRY!!

Brynn will be a Senior next year. We wish Brynn the best in her endeavors as she continues to learn, expand, and explore her potential opportunities.

Payton Jorgenson

Payton Jorgenson's interest is in environmental studies and sustainability. Peyton choose our Energy Conservation position desiring to learn about conserving energy and how that fits in with sustaining our environment. Jared Hendricks, our Key Account, Energy Conservation Officer, was Peyton's mentor. Jared explained our "Conserve & Save" rebate program, the energy it saves and the impact of the savings to OPU and Owatonna as a community. Peyton and Jared visited one of our Key Account customers to understand the importance of collaboration and communication between our largest energy users and OPU.

Payton talked about her mentorship being a good well-rounded experience and it touched on many different topics of what I want to do in my future career.

Payton will be attending St. Olaf College in the fall studying environmental sustainability.

Thank you to Ryan, Brynn and Payton for coming to OPU to learn about the careers you were interested in and thank you to OPU's mentors, Jamey Krogh, Roger Noble, James Keltgen and Jared Hendricks.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG



Know what's below. Call before you dig.

Visit gopherstateonecall.org to learn what information will need to be given when contacting Gopher State One Call. The service is **FREE**. Call toll free at 800-252-1166 or simply dial 811.

Minnesota Law **REQUIRES** homeowners, do-it-yourselfers, excavators and contractors contact Gopher State One Call two business days prior to digging, driving stakes, or performing any other activities that involve disrupting the ground. **Never assume the depth of a utility or that the depth of the utilities are consistent.**

Gopher State One Call will contact the utility companies in the area to have underground lines marked. Once all utility lines are marked, digging may begin. Proceed with caution and avoid the tolerance zone or hand dig with a shovel within 2 feet of the marked utility lines.

Watch for private facilities such as sprinklers, power lines to garages or out buildings, gas grill lines or invisible fencing as these will not be located by Minnesota utility companies.

Preparing for Wet Weather

Owatonna's stormwater system is a network of open/closed conveyances, control structures, and treatment BMPs, owned and operated by both public and private entities. Efforts by both the City and individual property owners are needed to properly manage our stormwater.

What Property Owners Can Do

1. Check and clean your nearby catch basins, drains, gutters, and downspouts on a routine basis.
2. Make sure your sump pumps are properly working and consider a backup power source.
3. Make sure your private laterals are working properly and have a plumber routinely inspect them.
4. Maintain drainage easements free of debris and blockages.
5. Consider installing rain barrels, rain gardens, or simply reducing the amount of impervious surface on your property through landscaping.
6. Join the efforts through one of the City's public stormwater programs available to all residents.

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



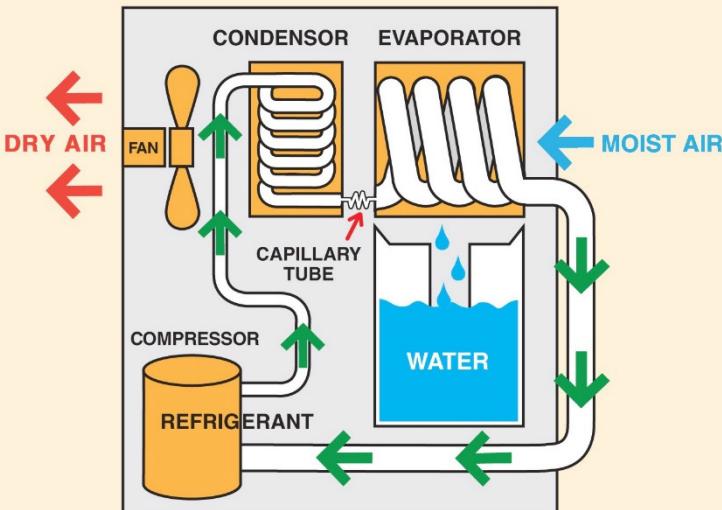
What the City Does

1. Routinely cleans catch basins and sumps.
2. Inspects the stormwater system and various public/private treatment practices.
3. Routinely maintains and repairs the aging infrastructure in the most efficient and effective manner.
4. Reviews construction plans for design requirements.
5. Routinely sweeps the streets clear of debris.
6. Continually seeks cost effective solutions to minimize damages from flooding.

WHEN TO USE A DEHUMIDIFIER

Summer in Minnesota means humidity. To combat this, many homeowners will turn on a portable dehumidifier. Is that the right thing to do? Should a dehumidifier be used with the air conditioning? These are great questions. To answer them, a better understanding of how a dehumidifier works is needed.

Dehumidifiers run on the same basic technology as an air conditioner, the refrigeration cycle. A simplified view of this cycle is to think of it as having a hot side (condenser coil) and a cold side (evaporator coil). Dehumidification happens on the cold side where moisture condenses on coils and drains into a container or floor drain. In an air conditioner, the cold side is indoors and the hot side is outside in the open air. In a dehumidifier, the hot side and cold side are both in the same appliance.



Source: Baseline Inspections; <http://baselineinspections.com>

With a better understanding how an air conditioner and dehumidifier work to remove moisture, these general guidelines can be used when determining when to run air conditioning alone, when to run a dehumidifier with air conditioning, and when to run a dehumidifier alone to reduce the humidity of a home.

When to use air conditioning alone:

- Outside air is hot and humid and air conditioner runs often

When to use a dehumidifier with air conditioning:

- Air conditioner isn't bringing humidity down far enough by itself
- Basement smells musty and/or is excessively humid with air conditioner running
- When air conditioning isn't running often

When to use a dehumidifier alone:

- Outside air is humid but not hot
- Indoor temperatures are comfortable without air conditioner
- Basement smells musty and/or is excessively humid without air conditioner

REBATES

Humidity is only fun for her. Dry up with a rebate!



- Energy Star® Dehumidifiers Rebate up to \$40 •

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

CONSERVE & \$AVE®



INDICIA

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

Payment Options

- Online at www.owatonnautilities.com
- Automatic Withdrawal; bank account or credit card
- Drive-up drop box located in the parking lot south of building
- Drop box locations at Cash Wise Grocery Store and HyVee Food Store
- Mail
- At Owatonna Public Utilities; cash, credit card, check or money order

Moving?

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



Phone Down. Eyes Up.



Don't Drive Distracted.



Tell Us How We're Doing

Your opinion matters to us. Please take a few minutes to tell us how we did by visiting our website at owatonnautilities.com/customersurvey or simply scan the QR code above.

From the Editors

We welcome your comments and suggestions for future issues. Feel free to email us at tammy.schmoll@owatonnautilities.com.

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.