



OWATONNA
PUBLIC UTILITIES

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CUSTOMER UPDATE

COMMUNITY powered



FEATURING: PUBLIC POWER

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WWW.OWATONNAUTILITIES.COM

OPU MEMO



Jared Hendricks,
Energy Conservation &
Key Accounts Officer

OPU Commission

Mr. Kim Cosens
Mr. Dale E. Simon
Mr. Matt Kottke
Mr. Kent Rossi
Mr. Randy Doyal

November is here, which means it has been more than a month since we implemented our new software system. We have been very excited about the many opportunities this provides us as a Utility, as well as you as our customer.

Opportunities for YOU, the Customer

Our new system gives you access to a mobile app called SmartHub. You can download the app to your mobile device for quick access on the go, login from your computer at owatonnautilities.smarthub.coop or visit our website at owatonnautilities.com. You will notice right away, SmartHub can do much more for you than allow you to view and pay your bill. You can sign up for automatic payments, change contact information, set notifications, and look at your past utility consumption. Best of all, you can even sign up for paperless billing!

Another change the new system brings about is OPU will be saying good-bye to the Home Energy Reports you have received in the mail for years.

Home Energy Reports (HERs) have been a very successful conservation program in Owatonna since 2008 when they first came to town. OPU, along with Austin Utilities, received a grant from the Minnesota Office of Energy Security that laid the groundwork for HERs to qualify as a conservation program in Minnesota. HERs engaged customers to be more conscious of their energy use habits through tips, education, and the inherently competitive nature of people. In Owatonna alone, HERs were responsible for enough energy savings to power 2200 homes and heat 730 homes for an entire year.

The program has been one of the most cost effective and successful conservation programs OPU has offered and many customers have come to appreciate them. It was a tough decision to discontinue the reports; however, we felt it was necessary due to the costs associated with continuing the HERs in our new software system.

Some of the benefits the HERs and Opowers website offered our customers, such as the ability to view detailed consumption graphs and benchmark year to year, can now be accessed through SmartHub. Other changes to our online Conservation Tips Page will be coming soon. These changes will give you quicker access to other great resources to help you save on your utility bills. As always, OPU will be exploring new and different ways to expand our conservation programs and help you use energy more wisely.

For OPU

One of the ways the new system increases efficiencies for OPU is through an in-house mobile app. Crewmembers now use this mobile app to access and conduct their work in the field. Instead of returning to the office to pick up a printed service order, or delivering the service order back to the office when it's complete, crews now get this information real time right on their iPads. They are also able to get better weather alerts, check on utility locate tickets, and view up to date GIS maps right on the job site.

In the office, the interactive voice response (IVR) system for credit card payments helps free up the customer service representatives for other duties, and assures the security of your credit card information.

CONSERVATION TIP\$

Replacing old holiday lights, decorations, and pre-lit trees with energy efficient LED holiday lights and decorations can save over 90% in utility cost to run your holiday display.



Reminder: Odd/Even Winter Parking Ordinance resumes

The Owatonna Police Department will place "Notification" flyers on all vehicles parked on the street from November 8 - 14, one week before the ordinance goes into effect. In addition, officers will place "Warning" flyers on vehicles from November 15 - 21 that are in violation of the ordinance the first week of the enforcement period. This approach is intended to be educational and bring awareness to the winter parking ordinance and to reduce fines and costly vehicle impound fees. Starting November 22, officers will issue citations to violators, regardless if snow is present. To view the ordinance, visit www.ci.owatonna.mn.us and under the Government tab select City Codes, Section 72.02 Parking during Street Maintenance and Snow Emergency. The ordinance reads:

72.02 PARKING DURING STREET MAINTENANCE OR SNOW EMERGENCY.

- (A) (1) No person shall park or leave standing any vehicle on any street in the city on any day between the hours of 12:01 a.m. and 12:00 noon from November 15 through March 31, except as hereinafter provided:
- (a) On even-numbered calendar dates, vehicles may be parked on the near side of the street adjacent to lots and houses which have been assigned even numbers; and
 - (b) On odd-numbered calendar dates, vehicles may be parked on the near side of the street adjacent to lots and houses which have been assigned odd numbers.
- (2) This division (A) does not apply to any street where parking is limited to one side, to any cul-de-sac which has combined even and odd house numbers, nor to any street which has more restrictive parking requirements.
- (3) This division (A) does not apply to street parking within a two-block radius of duly constituted churches for regularly scheduled weekend services, holiday services, funerals and weddings. Street parking is allowed one hour prior and one hour after the scheduled service times.
- (B) Signs announcing the existence of the winter parking ordinance and the hotline telephone number shall be placed at all entrances to the city.
- (C) No vehicle shall be parked or be permitted to remain on any street in or serving the Business District, as defined in § 71.065 of this code of ordinances, between the hours of 2:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. on any day, contrary to the signs ordered by the Council to be posted on such streets. Signs in place effective upon the adoption of this chapter shall be in effect until ordered changed.

(D) Any violation of this section shall be subject to the penalties set forth in § 71.999 of this chapter.

(1992 Code, § 700:05) (Ord. 1098, passed 11-1-1994; Ord. 1128, passed 10-3-1995; Ord. 1192, passed 10-20-1998; Ord. 1408, passed 2-20-2007; Ord. 1416, passed 5-1-2007) Penalty, see § 72.99

Streets exempt from winter parking ordinance: *All cul-de-sacs (any street with the word "PLACE" in its name). *Any "DRIVE" or "LANE" where the house numbers change from even to odd on the same side of the street. Exempt Streets: Arglen Drive NW, Autumn Drive SE, Cardinal Drive SE, Colonial Manor Streets, Greenhaven Lane NE, Greenwood Drive NE, Linn Drive SW, Morning Drive SE, Oakwood Lane NE, Richway Lane SE, Willow Creek Drive NE

*Any street where parking is limited to one side.

*Any street that has other more restrictive parking requirements.

The Owatonna Police Department would like to thank everyone for taking the time to adhere to this ordinance. The general intent of this ordinance is to assist city street maintenance crews and enhance operations to ensure efficient and effective snow removal that benefits all of us. The Owatonna Police Department wants to wish everyone a safe and joyous holiday season, and travel with care! For more information, please call the Owatonna Police Department at 507-774-7200.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT RESERVE UNIT

The Owatonna Police Department has an open application process and is currently recruiting Owatonna citizens for the volunteer police reserve unit. The police reserve unit is an opportunity for service-minded individuals to represent and serve their community in a unique and honorable way. Applicants do not need to be in the law enforcement field of study to apply.

For more information see our website at <http://www.ci.owatonna.mn.us/242/Reserve-Officer-Program> or please contact Captain Jeff Mundale at 507-774-7202.

MAYOR

Tom Kuntz

COUNCIL MEMBERS

David Burbank

Nathan Dotson

Jeff Okerberg

Kevin Raney

Greg Schultz

Brent Svenby

Doug Voss



PUBLIC POWER

Information for this article provided by American Public Power Association.

Community-owned, not-for-profit public power utilities power homes and businesses in 2,000 communities — from small towns to large cities. They safely provide reliable, low-cost electricity to more than 49 million Americans, while protecting the environment. Public power utilities serve customers in 49 states —all except Hawaii — and the territories of American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Public power supports local commerce, employs 93,000 people in hometown jobs, and invests more than \$2 billion annually directly back into the community.

Most public power utilities have fewer than 4,000 customers, and collectively, these utilities serve 1 in 7 electricity customers across the U.S.

History of Public Power

Citizen-owned public power utilities first appeared more than 100 years ago when communities created electric utilities to provide light and power to their citizens. The number of public power utilities has grown from fewer than a dozen in 1890 to nearly 2,000 today. While many utilities were sold to large corporations during the 20th century, others chose to preserve community ownership and local control of their power supply. Some communities previously served by private utilities have formed a public power utility.

Public power utilities often have to fight to keep their communities powered affordably and reliably. A sea of often conflicting laws and regulations can constrain power supply sources and increase costs. For decades, public power utilities fought for the right to access wholesale power from federal dams at cost. Today, public power continues to push for effective competition in wholesale electric markets so they can get power at reasonable rates for their customers.

In the 1950s, public power utilities within the same state or region moved toward joint ownership of power supply resources. The joint action movement has contributed to the continued success of public power and played an important role in advancing nuclear generation in the U.S.

Local Governance and Regulation

Like public schools and libraries, public power utilities are owned by the community and run as a division of local government. These utilities are governed by a local city council

or an elected or appointed board. Community citizens have a direct voice in utility decisions and policymaking. Business is conducted in the open and citizens know where their power comes from and how and why decisions affecting their utility bills are made.

In general, a governing body — a city council or independent utility board — has authority over a public power utility's retail rates. In some states, and in certain circumstances, a state regulatory commission may have jurisdiction.

Affordable

Public power utilities are not-for-profit entities that provide electricity to customers at the lowest rates. Homes powered by public power utilities pay nearly 15 percent less than homes powered by private utilities. Businesses that get electricity from public power utilities also pay less than businesses that get electricity from private utilities.

Reliable

Customers of public power utilities lose power less often. Customers of a public power utility are likely to be without power for just 59 minutes a year, compared to customers of private utilities that may lose power for 133 minutes a year — provided there are no major adverse events.

Diverse Sources

Public power generates 10 percent of all electricity in the U.S. and distributes — or sells at the retail level — 15 percent of all power flowing to homes and businesses. Public power utilities buy or generate electricity from natural gas, coal, and nuclear, as well as renewable energy sources such as solar, water, and wind.

Giving Back

When customers are the utility's shareholders, serving the community is the utility's top priority.

Each dollar of a public power utility employee's paycheck circulates through the community an estimated five times. On average, public power utilities pay 5.6 percent of electric operating revenues back to the community — through taxes, fees, and special services. Public power gives 33 percent more back to the community than private utilities.

Visit www.WeAreCommunityPowered.com for more information.

EQUIPMENT SERIES



SENSIT Gas Leak Detector

Owatonna Public Utilities provides our gas personnel with gas detection devices to insure their, and your, safety. Code requires us to add an odorant to natural gas to insure it is readily detectable by a person with a normal sense of smell at a level that is 20% of the lower explosive limit. This added odorant has a smell similar to that of rotten eggs. Even in the

absence of odor, these instruments can detect the presence of gas and quantify the amount present including very small amounts. With this information, our personnel can determine if it is safe to enter an area and helps responders pinpoint the source of a leak in most cases. Often, this allows us to isolate a single, faulty appliance without shutting off an entire home.

This same device is also used to test for the presence of carbon monoxide (CO). CO is colorless, odorless, and tasteless, but highly toxic. The most common symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may resemble other types of poisonings and infections, including symptoms such as headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, fatigue, and a feeling of weakness. Affected families often believe they are victims of food poisoning. Carbon monoxide can come from any fuel-burning appliance that is malfunctioning or improperly installed.

The Owatonna Fire Department uses the same equipment, although their focus is to identify the presence of a hazard and save lives, generally through evacuation. In a gas odor or CO call, they will also notify OPU.

If you smell gas, or suspect carbon monoxide, leave the area and please call 911.

OPU HIGHLIGHT



OPU is pleased to be a dropoff location again this year for the Toys for Tots of Steele County campaign. Drop off new, unwrapped toys before December 12, 2018 for distribution to less fortunate children here in Steele County at Christmas time.

BUDGET BILLING RECALCULATION

ATTENTION!
Budget Billing
customers

In November, all budget billing customers' monthly amount will be recalculated. Our new software system handles the calculating of the budget amounts on an annual basis. Going forward, this recalculation will happen every November for all budget billing customers regardless of which month you start the program. We chose November due to being "in between seasons", if you will. The summer cooling season is over and the winter heating season hasn't really started. Most utilities who offer budget billing programs have similar recalculation procedures. We are hopeful calculating budget billing amounts once a year will alleviate some of the confusion caused by the way our legacy system calculated them. If you have any questions, please contact any of our customer service representatives at 507-451-2480.

CARBON MONOXIDE

Getting to know your carbon monoxide (CO) detector can mean the difference between knowing when to replace your batteries, when to replace your detector, or when to get out of your house.

Your CO detector will start beeping when its batteries are low and require replacing. This alarm is different than the alarm that sounds when it detects dangerous levels of CO. It is recommended that you replace the CO detector battery once a year, or more frequently if the low battery alarm sounds.

New CO detectors also have an end of life alarm. Although many manufacturers already included it, the law required it starting in 2009. This alarm will be different than the low battery alarm and will not go away with fresh batteries. Most CO detectors have a 10-year life and should be replaced at this time.

Each CO detector's alerts may be slightly different. Please take a minute to learn what your CO detector's alarms mean. According to the manufacturer Kidde, the alarms your detector uses are commonly printed on the back of your detector. Getting to know these alerts will help you to identify when the alarm is actually detecting CO in your home or business. Remember, if anyone is showing signs and symptoms of CO poisoning including drowsiness, headache, or nausea, get out and call Owatonna Public Utilities!



Unpackage Your Life

Consumer goods, often single-use disposables, that are littered or improperly managed, find its way into rivers, streams, and other waterways. These ultimately empty to our lakes and oceans where the trash becomes marine debris. Trash, packaging, and improperly disposed of waste from sources on land account for 80% of the debris found in water and on beaches.

Often times this trash is some form of plastic and are referred to as PBT's or Persistent Bioaccumulative and Toxic. These substances build up within a single organism and biomagnify up the food chain, causing significant damage to the environment and aquatic wildlife.

Keep Our Waters Trash-free:

- Bring your own bag while shopping
- Pack waste free lunches (Each child who brings a brown bag lunch to school generates 67 pounds of waste annually)
- Use your own cup (average American uses 500 paper cups annually)
- Say no to straws (plastic straws are consistently the most littered plastic item)
- Avoid heavily packaged foods and other goods in general
- Communicate and educate, let your friends and family know

Do you part and keep Lake Koolmier, Straight River and Cannon River in pristine condition!

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

Celebrate with Savings!

BUY ENERGY EFFICIENT HOLIDAY LIGHTS OR DECORATIONS & APPLY FOR A REBATE:

1. Purchase new LED holiday plug-in (not battery operated) lights and decorations in 2018.
2. Complete this page and submit it to your utility:
 - by March 31, 2019
 - with original sales receipt
 - with LED packaging showing the LED logo and number of lights per string.
3. Rebate is limited to 50% of LED string or package cost, tax excluded.

Customer Name _____

Home Phone # (with area code) _____

Daytime Phone # (with area code) _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip + 4 _____

Installation Address (if different from above) _____

City _____

State _____

Zip + 4 _____

Account # _____

☐ Residential

☐ Commercial

A Lamp Size	B # of Lamps per String	C # of Strings	D Cost per String	E Rebate per String (D X .50) up to max amounts*	F Total Rebate (C X E)
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other			\$	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other			\$	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other			\$	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other			\$	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other			\$	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other			\$	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other			\$	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other			\$	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other			\$	\$	\$

*** Rebate is 50% of string or package cost (tax excluded), up to maximum amounts listed below:**

# of Lamps	Maximum Rebate per String
less than 99	\$3.00
100 - 199	\$6.00
200 - 299	\$9.00
300 or more	\$12.00

**OFFICE
USE ONLY:** ID # _____

DATE Received _____

Date Processed _____

**GRAND TOTAL
REBATE:**

\$ _____

(Rebates under \$75 will be applied to your account.)



Austin Utilities
Attn: Rebate Processing
1908 14th St NE
Austin, MN 55912
507.433.8886
www.austinutilities.com

Owatonna Public Utilities
Attn: Rebate Processing
P.O. Box 800
Owatonna, MN 55060
507.451.2480
www.owatonnautilities.com

Rochester Public Utilities
Attn: Rebate Processing
4000 E River Rd NE
Rochester, MN 55906-2813
507.280.1500
www.rpu.org

Recipient must be an electric customer of Austin Utilities, Owatonna Public Utilities, or Rochester Public Utilities.
Valid only on purchases made in 2018. All Electric Efficiency Rebate terms and conditions apply.

1018



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.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.

DON'T THROW AWAY OLD HOLIDAY LIGHTS.

RECYCLE THEM!

Once you've purchased all the new energy efficient LED holiday lights you need this season (and applied for your rebate from Owatonna Public Utilities; see our website), what should you do with the old ones?

Owatonna Public Utilities will recycle all of your old holiday light strands for FREE!

It's easy - just bring your old strands of lights into the Owatonna Public Utilities lobby and drop them in the bins designated for holiday light recycling.

Available now through January 31



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/customer survey or simply scan the QR code above.

From the Editors

We welcome your comments and suggestions for future issues. Feel free to give us a call at 451-2480 or send an email to schmoltt@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.



WWW.OWATONNAUTILITIES.COM