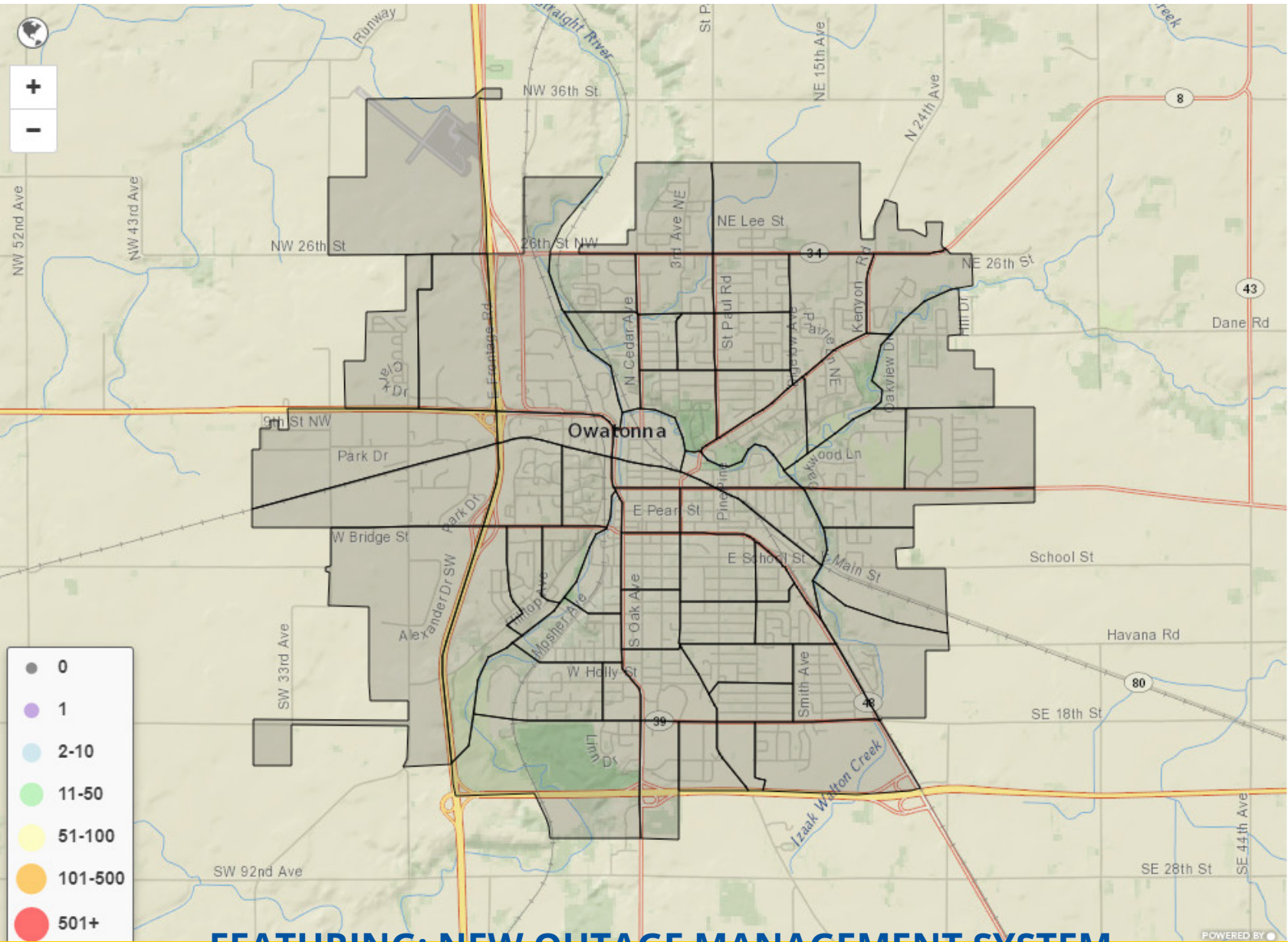




OWATONNA PUBLIC UTILITIES

VOLUME 29 | ISSUE #7
JULY 2019

CUSTOMER UPDATE



FEATURING: NEW OUTAGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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WWW.OWATONNAUTILITIES.COM

OPU MEMO



Brian Clausen,
Water Design Engineer

OPU Commission

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

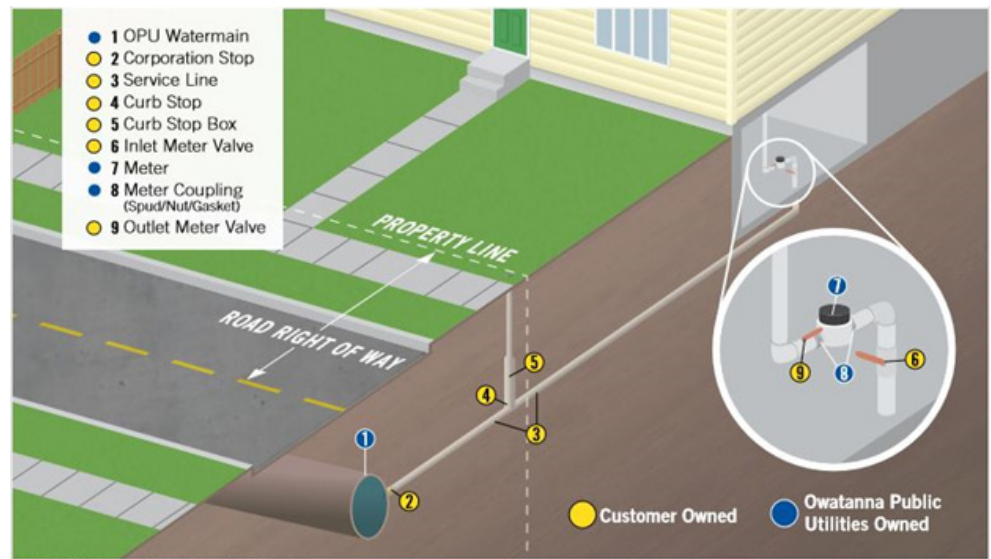
The Water Service Line Protection Program (WSLPP) is in its 4th year and Owatonna Public Utilities (OPU) is announcing some exciting changes. Starting in July, we are giving you a “choice”. You, the customer, can now hire the contractor of your choice. This change benefits you by allowing you to get the contractor you want or one you already have a working relationship with. It also allows you to find a contractor who meets your time frame and expectations. OPU will reimburse the work covered under the program to you within 21 days.

Originally started in 2016, the program is popular with over a 99% participation rate. The program provides owners of residential properties an option for affordable protection against the significant costs of repair or replacing leaking or frozen water service lines. In addition to providing a valuable service to OPU customers, the program is intended to minimize disruption and public hazard due to leaks which would not otherwise be repaired in a timely manner.

The cost is still \$0.99 per month and is offered to residential customers with a 1” of smaller water service. (Additional terms and conditions can be found at owatonnautilities.com).

Since the program’s inception we have had between 50-60 water service leaks per year that have benefited by this program. The costs of those repairs have ranged in cost from \$350-\$8800 making this a valuable program.

The graphic to the right shows what a typical water service line looks like and the ownership of facilities. In Owatonna, the property owner owns the water service from the main in the street to the meter in the house.



CONSERVATION TIP\$

An easy way to check if your yard needs water, and avoid over watering, is to step on the grass and see if your foot prints stay or if the grass springs back. Grass the springs back doesn't need to be watered.



Owatonna's 9th Annual Weekend Out – July 12-14

***All Weekend Activity: Trails Challenge** – Walk, bike or run on your Owatonna trails this weekend and be entered into a drawing for prizes! Look for details to come on this challenge on our website and Facebook page.

Friday Activities:

Movie in the Park

Lincoln Soccer Complex

Grab your blankets and lawn chairs, sit back and watch the movie *The Sandlot* under the stars! The movie will begin at sunset (approximately 8:45 – 9:00pm), pre movie activities will begin an hour before the movie – play games on the newly repurposed tennis courts! Concessions will be available. Rain date is July 13.

Saturday Activities:

Diaper Dash ~ Toddler Trot ~ Kids K Trail Runs

9:00am at Darts Park

Register at the park. Races are free, all participants finishing receive a prize. A child may register for more than one race, but will only receive one finishing prize.

- Diaper Dash – crawling only. A 10 -oot course for 24 months or younger.
- Toddler Trot – ages 2-5, a 100-meter run.
- Kids K – ages 4-12. A full K trail run – ending at Brooktree Clubhouse.

Sponsored in part by Twin Cities in Motion

Card Board Boat Regatta

10:00am at River Springs Water Park

The Cardboard Boat Regatta challenges amateur boat builders – youth and adult – to design, build and navigate boats made **entirely** of corrugated cardboard. The crafty cardboard creations then sail (or sink!) in River Springs Water Park Activity Pool as they compete for a variety of trophies. Spectators have just as much fun cheering on the courageous crews and soaking up the sun. (Registration Required) For more information please see the Owatonna Parks and Recreation website!

Lake Kohlmier Beach Party

5:00pm-7:00pm

Join us Saturday July 13 for a beach party at Lake Kohlmier. There will be activities and music and food available for sale. Watch Park and Rec Facebook Page for more information.

Lake Kohlmier Rental Special

12:00 – 7:00pm at Lake Kohlmier

Looking to try out the new equipment down at Lake Kohlmier? This is your chance to glide through the waters at Lake Kohlmier with our Summer Weekend Out Special. Lakefront rentals will be discounted to only \$3.00 per 1-hour rental! Come on out and take a Kayak,

Canoe, paddle boat or Hydro Bike for a spin!

Sunday Activities:

Super Splash Special

All day at River

Springs Water Park

\$2.50 admission all day!

Lake Kohlmier

1550 Mosher Avenue

Beginning May 25th

and ending September 2nd the Lake Kohlmier beach will be open for Boat/Bike rentals and Concessions. Lake Kohlmier will be stocked with Adult, Child and Infant sized lifejackets which are included in each boat rental. The beach is open daily. There are no lifeguards on duty – individuals will swim according to beach rules and at their own risk. Ropes are placed to indicate swim areas.

Alcoholic beverages are not allowed at Lake Kohlmier Municipal Beach or adjacent picnic area. Information regarding beach closing and swimming conditions are announced on KRFO and KOWZ radio, the Park and Recreation information line 507-444-4321, and on-line at www.ci.owatonna.mn.us/parksrecreation under cancellations.

2019 Rental/Concessions Hours

May 25-27: 12:00pm-7:00pm

June 1-2: 12:00pm-7:00pm

June 6-September 2

Monday-Friday 1:00pm-6:00pm

Saturday-Sunday 12:00pm-7:00pm

Equipment 1 Hour Rentals: Rental Charge

Kayaks (Single), Kayaks (Double), Paddle Boards, Paddle Boat, Canoes, HydroBike, Tandem Bike, Trail-A-Bike, and Electric Assist Trike. All rentals are \$5.00 for 1 hour

Punch Cards

10 punch \$40 (\$4 per punch)

20 Punch \$70 (\$3.50 per punch)

Dates to remember:

- Youth Fall registration dates: July 25-August 8
- Adult fall softball and kickball deadline for teams: July 25

MAYOR

Tom Kuntz

COUNCIL MEMBERS

David Burbank

Nathan Dotson

Jeff Okerberg

Kevin Raney

Greg Schultz

Brent Svenby

Doug Voss



NEW OUTAGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (OMS)

Bang! The TV goes dark and everything is quiet. What happened? It's a beautiful sunny day outside and I just lost power. What do I do now? Does OPU know I'm without power? How do I report my outage? What happens when there is more than one outage in town? How do I stay informed about outages? These are very good questions to ask and we want to answer them for you.

The first step to take when you lose power is indeed to report your outage, OPU does not necessarily know you are out of power. Here are ways you can report your outage:

- Over the phone by calling 451-1616
- On our mobile app, Smarthub
- On our website, www.owatonnautilities.com/outages

Once you report your outage, OPU's new outage management system (OMS) will log and track your outage, as well as others, to predict where the outage occurred at. The more outages reported, the more accurate the predictions will be.

Crews will then be sent to the predicted outage to confirm where the problem is. Before restoring power, line crews must patrol the lines to determine what caused the outage (about two-thirds of outages are caused by squirrels, trees or equipment failure) and make repairs if necessary. Knowing where the actual outage occurred means our line crew can more efficiently patrol affected areas for the cause, which reduces the time it takes for power to be restored to your home or business.

When more than one area of town is out of power, OPU prioritizes the repairs based upon how many customers are out of power. OPU will work to restore the largest number of customers as quickly as possible. Because of how our distribution system is designed, it is possible that your neighbors may be part of a different outage and might have their power restored before yours. Be assured, we will get to your outage!

Having the new OMS system also gives you the benefit of being able to stay informed and updated about outages. When you call to report an outage, you might hear a message such as "fifty other customers in your area are without power at this time." OMS also gives you a better outage map on our website that identifies what areas of town are experiencing an outage and how many customers are affected. The best way, though, is to sign up for outage notifications right to your phone or email through Smarthub. These notifications can include informing you that you are part of a confirmed outage, estimated time of restoration, and confirmation that your outage has been fixed.

There may be times when you receive a notification that your outage has been fixed some of your appliances don't work, or you still don't have any power. The first step you should take before letting us know your are without power is to double check your breakers. It is possible you had a breaker trip during the outage or when power was restored. If that isn't the cause, please let us know right away that you are still without power so we can look for additional problems.

As you can tell, OMS is a great tool for OPU to both increase the speed of outage restoration as well as allow for greater communication with you, our customer. OPU is always searching for ways to improve and we hope you find this new system as beneficial as we do.


Power Outage Dos & Don'ts

- Do Report it!
- Do Keep refrigerators and freezers closed
- Do be patient
- Don't touch downed wires
- Don't use a generator in enclosed spaces

OUTAGE NOTIFICATIONS

Profile ▾ My Usage ▾ Notifications ▾ Contact Us ▾

View and Manage M SmartHub Feed Manage Contacts Manage Notifications our usage management tools!



Key Features
Analyze and understand usage trends to find ways to cut back.
Create and track a monthly budget to avoid unexpected high utility bills.
Set a point or range in time to compare differences in usage.
And much more.

Check out all the great My Usage features! [Start Now >](#)

Power out? Stay informed by signing up for outage notifications through your SmartHub account. Log in to your SmartHub account, click Notifications, Manage Notifications. Under the "service" option, you can choose if you get text and/or email notifications for planned outages, when an outage has occurred, and when power has been restored.

Don't have a SmartHub account? No problem! Visit owatonnautilities.smarthub.coop to create one. All you need is your OPU account number.

Manage Notifications

Use this page to sign up for notifications about activity on your billing account.

- ▶ Billing
- ▶ Miscellaneous
- ▶ Service**

Select Account

FROM: 000-000-0000 ▾

Alert Type	Description
Planned Power Outage	This is a notification to inform you when a power outage is planned.
Power Outage	This is a notification to inform you when a power outage has occurred.
Power Outage Restored	This is a notification to inform you when a power outage has been restored.

Text Message	E-Mail
None ▾	None ▾
None ▾	None ▾
None ▾	None ▾

DO NOT HANG SIGNS ON POWER POLES

Even though there is equipment to help linemen reach lines on power poles, as long as there are power lines on a pole, there may very well be a need to climb the pole. Signs (and more importantly the staples used to hang the signs) on power poles present a hazard for our linemen and their flame-retardant clothing. If their clothing gets even a tiny rip while climbing, they could be seriously injured or killed. The poles are there to provide electricity to the community. They are not there to provide a convenient post for individual's personal or company use. Attaching signs to OPU's poles is technically a form of vandalism. The people who feel it doesn't hurt anything probably would not feel the same if it was their property being vandalized or their loved one being put at risk. The poles are OPU's property. It is no more appropriate to nail signs on OPU's poles than it is to nail signs on OPU's main office building.



CALL BEFORE YOU DIG



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

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.

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.



Stop Poo-llution!

ing water and local recreational areas. When rain and snowmelt flows across the land it carries pet waste to storm drains, which eventually flow into a lake or stream. This poses an unnecessary public health and environmental risk. If you think, picking up your dog's waste is unpleasant, try swimming in it.

Stepping in dog waste can be a disgusting experience. Even worse is knowledge that pet waste may be polluting our drink-

Did You Know: One day's waste from a large dog can contain as much as 7 Billion Fecal Coliform Bacterial!

Scooping your pet waste isn't just a courtesy for those walking behind you; it also keeps our water resources safe. Here are a few tips on how owners can protect local water and recreation areas:

- Always bring a disposal bag with you when you walk your dog
- Many trailheads in the Owatonna parks system have bag stations
- Make sure to place the bag in a proper receptacle
- Routinely clean your yard, boulevard, and paved surfaces

Take time and properly dispose of your pet's waste, remember we all live downstream!

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



Reduce your
energy use
during peak times,
and you can become an...

ENERGY HERO



Need a little help
staying cool
this summer?

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

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

CONSERVE & \$AVE®

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.



Safety Camp is a two-day camp held annually in June for students just completing fourth grade. Thank you to Brandon Jech (left) and Byron Brady (right) who took the time to instruct the students on electric and natural gas safety. Also, thank you to Jared Hendricks for his work representing OPU on the Safety Camp board.



Your opinion matters to us. Please take a few minutes to tell us how we did by visiting our website at owatonnautilities.com/customerurvey 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.schmol@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.

