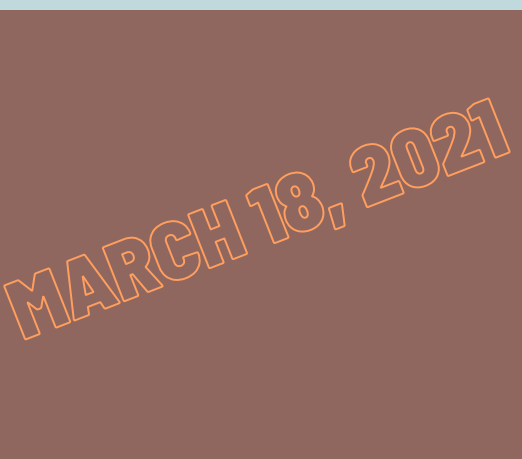


February 2021 - Winter Storm Update Included

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February 2021 Winter Storm Update Inside



Josh Prokopec,
Gas/Water Design
Engineer

OPU Commission

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

OPU MEMO

Natural gas is the earth's cleanest fossil fuel. It is colorless and odorless in its natural state. Natural gas can have a negative and false image of being dangerous and potentially harmful, but that is only the case when proper safety measures aren't followed. Safety **IS** the core value and highest priority for the natural gas industry. The thing you might not know about the Owatonna Public Utilities, along with all other natural gas transmission and distribution companies, is there is a significant amount of oversight and regulation focused on the Natural Gas Industry

to help ensure public safety. The United States Department of Transportation's (DOT) Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) sets federal safety standard for pipelines. Minnesota, like many other states, adds additional safety standards that go above and beyond DOT's regulations for intrastate pipelines. Along with hundreds of state-specific pipeline safety regulations currently in place, PHMSA also partners with state pipeline safety agencies on inspections and enforcement of intrastate pipelines.

In 2009, PHMSA published the Final Rule establishing integrity management (IM) requirements for gas distribution pipeline systems. The rule was aimed to insure pipeline integrity and further improve the safety of pipeline transportation of natural gas. The natural gas distribution Integrity Management regulations require operators, such as Owatonna Public Utilities, to develop, write, and implement an integrity management program to provide the following:

- Understanding system design & material characteristics, operating conditions and environment
- Maintenance & operating history
- Identify existing & potential threats
- Evaluate and rank risks
- Identify and implement measures to address risks
- Measure IM program performance, monitor results, and evaluate effectiveness
- Periodically assess and improve the IM program
- Report results to PHMSA, and also to MNOPS (Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety)

Owatonna Public Utilities is required to submit performance measure reports, annually, both on our integrity management program and our pipe infrastructure. PHMSA and MNOPS use the reports to monitor progress in meeting the requirements of the gas distribution integrity management regulations, and also respond to inquiries from both PHMSA or MNOPS.

Along with PHMSA, MNOPS has its own procedures to follow. MNOPS inspections include an evaluation of operator's policies, procedures, training and qualification records, along with field observation of practices and conditions. Once a year, MNOPS will schedule a three-day inspection on Owatonna Public Utilities distribution system on varying aspects. Once the inspection is concluded, a report is completed with a corresponding evaluation of possible system or operational deficiencies (if any) to be corrected with a written plan within an allotted amount of time and approved by MNOPS.

Along with all the rules and regulations that exist in the natural gas world, public awareness is probably the most important. Public awareness, education and damage prevention are interconnected initiatives aimed at increasing the understanding and knowledge of people who work and live near pipeline rights-of-way. Federal pipeline safety regulations require each pipeline operator must develop and implement a written continuing public education program that follows the guidance provided by the American Petroleum Institute (API) Recommended Practice (RP) 1162, "Public Awareness Programs for Pipeline Operators." Under the regulations, an operator's program must provide pipeline safety information to four stakeholder audiences, including the affected public, emergency officials, local public officials, and excavators. OPU must provide the public with information about how to recognize, respond to, and report pipeline emergencies. Teaching the importance of the one-call notification system prior to excavation is to be emphasized for all stakeholders. Emergency officials and local public officials must be provided the location of distribution pipelines to enhance emergency response. Also, Owatonna Public Utilities is a sponsor of the Minnesota's Pipeline CAER (Community Awareness Emergency Response) Program. Minnesota Pipeline CAER and Minnesota Distribution Operators work together jointly to support efforts increasing awareness of pipeline damage prevention to excavators, emergency, and local officials by developing a customized (real-life) pipeline safety training scenario involving local transmission or distribution pipeline companies which will collaborate for the best response possible with all parties directly involved.

As you can see, natural gas distribution operators, like OPU, take great pride and responsibility in teaching safety and awareness of our distribution system. Not many people are aware of the lengths operators go to, ensuring the community a safe and reliable distribution system.

CITY SPOT

HIGHLIGHTING: CITY OF OWATONNA PARKS AND RECREATION



Greetings, I'm Jenna Tuma the new Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Owatonna! My first day was February 8, and I'm thrilled to be part of the Owatonna team and leading the Parks and Recreation Department.

A little bit about myself, I graduated from Northfield High School, grew up in the rural Webster area, and I currently live in Prior Lake. I've been in the Parks and Recreation field for over 20 years and feel like I won the lottery by finding this career! I worked for Three Rivers Park District for 20 years managing the parks in Scott County and recently worked for Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board; both are outstanding organizations. Becoming a Director of a Parks and Recreation Department has been a career goal

of mine and I look forward to sharing my knowledge to help evolve the park system here. My 6-month goal is to get to know the staff, the parks and meet the residents, users and stakeholders to work on ways to collaborate to continue building an exceptional park system for the community. I look forward to meeting you! If you'd like to contact me my email Jenna.tuma@ci.owatonna.ci.mn or call me at 507/744-7361.

Registration dates for spring and summer programs are listed below. Mark your calendars so you don't miss it! Please note that dates are subject change due to governors' orders and restrictions.

Registration 1

- February 22 to March 4
- Little League
- Minor league
- Mini/Junior Crush
- Crush Traveling program
- Tackle Football 3-6 grade program
- Association Golf

Registration 2

- March 10 to March 18
- Soccer
- Spring swimming

Summer Registration

- May 3 to 12
- Tee-ball
- Mini Sluggers
- TR Friday Camp
- Summer Swimming
- Girls Lacrosse

Registration System

We have a new registration system so if you have not created your account please do so by following the instructions below.

Creating your new account:

1. Visit the Owatonna Park & Rec website: <http://ci.owatonna.mn.us/parks-recreation>
2. Click on the Register Now button
3. On desktop, select Log in/Create Account in the upper left corner, then

select Create your OWMMPR Account.

4. On a mobile device, select Account in the upper right corner and then select Sign Up.
5. Fill in the required information.
6. To receive text alerts (i.e. activity cancellations, facility closings), indicate your mobile carrier next to your cell number.
7. That's it! You're ready to register for our programs.
8. Add additional members (spouse, children, etc.) at any time in your account settings. Keep your entire household on one account!
9. When you've found a program, make sure to select the correct account member before adding it to your cart.

River Springs Water Park

- River Springs features a Lazy River, Climbing Wall, Body Slide, Tube Slide, Zero Depth Pool Area, Activity Pool, Lily Pad Walk and a Zero Depth Play Feature. River Springs is open 7 days a week and offers Lap Swim, Water Walking, Water Aerobics, Tiny Tot Time, Swimming Lessons and Open Swim. We are located at 3065 St. Paul Road on the north side of Owatonna, just off of 26th Street. River Springs Water Park offers Daily Pass Punch cards as well as Season Passes, both are now available for purchase online or in person at the parks and Recreation office. You can find out more information by checking out the Parks and Recreation website @ ci.owatonna.mn.us/parksrecreation, becoming a Fan of the River Springs Water Park Facebook page or by calling us at 507-774-7370. We look

OWATONNA CITY COUNCIL

MAYOR
Tom Kuntz

COUNCIL MEMBERS

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

forward to spending the summer with you!

We are now hiring for part-time, seasonal positions for spring and summer. Keep checking the website, <http://agency.governmentjobs.com/owatonna/default.cfm>, for a complete listing and application deadlines. Many positions offer a variety of duties and shifts available, including grounds, maintenance and guest services at nearly all of our facilities.

Communication is very important to us, and we use a variety of outlets:

- Owatonna People's Press – Wednesday's article has West Hills Social Commons information, and Saturday's article has upcoming Parks & Recreation events and focuses on different areas each week.
- Steele County Times – monthly calendar of events, and quarterly Park & Rec happenings.
- Website - www.ci.owatonna.mn.us/parksrecreation
- Facebook Pages – Parks & Recreation, Brooktree Golf Course, River Springs Water Park, SeniorPlace, West Hills Tennis & Fitness and Owatonna Dog Park

How to reach us:

Office Hours – Monday through Friday – 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. – 540 West Hills Circle
Main office line: 507-444-4321
E-Mail: parkrec@ci.owatonna.mn.us
Message us on Facebook

MARCH 18

Natural Gas Utility

Workers' Day



Be a Leak Detective



for Fix a Leak Week

MARCH 15-21, 2021



Leaks Can Run, but They Can't Hide!

Are you ready to chase down leaks? Household leaks can waste nearly 1 trillion gallons of water annually, nationwide, so each year we hunt down the drips during Fix a Leak Week. The EPA's Fix a Leak Week is March 15 through 21, 2021, but remember, you can find and fix leaks inside and outside your home to save valuable water and money all year long.

The average household's leaks can account for nearly 10,000 gallons of water wasted every year and ten percent of homes have leaks that waste 90 gallons or more per day. Common types of leaks found in the home are worn toilet flappers, dripping faucets and other leaking valves.

Below are some easy tips for finding leaks in your home:

- Take a look at your water usage during a colder month, such as January or February. If a family of four exceeds 12,000 gallons per month, there are serious leaks. (748 gallons of water = 1 CCF (100 cubic feet))
- Check your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter changes at all, you probably have a leak.
- Identify toilet leaks by placing a drop of food coloring in the toilet tank. If any color shows up in the bowl after 10 minutes, you have a leak. (Be sure to flush immediately after the experiment to avoid staining the tank.)
- Examine faucet gaskets and pipe fittings for any water on the outside of the pipe to check for surface leaks.

Join countless other Americans from coast to coast in finding and fixing water leaks during Fix a Leak Week.



K A H E C O K W O J U T G W G O D H T A
M I G G S R E C R E A T I O N T O T L F
K Y M A D X Y Z X Z J B E I D R G I A D
A Y L S V A N X Z N N T F M H L D S E W
P I P E L I N E G L Z Z N F F F L O T F
A P A R K S Y V P V S A U D A L X T Z A
R G J G C K F X N I R M I Z D R Y P B M
R E G I S T R A T I O N E V O E F C O L
Q M R M T D W H Y S G O E L L G X H I E
N H C H L O R I D E M J G S L U U L L B
A Y F T W F U R N A C E U F F L N E E Q
I N R R G A T C E O M B U E X A F A R J
H A W U U L T H N B D O N X Z T O K W V
A T O D N L I E A U A O S H U I S J D X
U U R E X O E V R N K T Z K B O S U J R
W R K A B U F S W S K U E B Y N I X J E
L A E B D S O F O W E S K X B S L U G G
D L R C Q G U T N X W N V Z E J S T O U
L B V O B P F A A H X A S A K D I R T W
R A I N W A T E R F N G A E J M B T P U

Take a Break From the Hectic

Take a little break from the hectic of everyday life and find these words in the word search to the left.

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Registration | Regulations |
| Recreation | WaterSense |
| Rainwater | Pipeline |
| Natural | Furnace |
| Chloride | Runoff |
| Worker | Boiler |
| Rebate | Thanks |
| Smell | Rules |
| Parks | Gas |
| Fossil | Leak |

can be conducted. Once the knowledge portion is successfully completed, the hands-on tasks will follow, supervised by a qualified individual. Welders will have additional modules and hands-on tasks to complete to be qualified to weld on the OPU gas distribution system. As you can see, natural gas is an essential energy which includes rigid requirements for qualification and inspection of construction techniques to maintain the integrity of our natural gas system.

OPU's Gas/Water Crew are involved in a number of projects throughout the year. Projects include exercising ALL system gas valves on an annual basis to ensure smooth operation, performing leak detection on certain parts of our gas system annually, installing new gas service lines to new houses, replacing old steel gas piping as needed, repairing gas leaks as they happen all year long, welding larger gas meter sets when required, and installing and replacing gas meters. The Gas/Water Crew also work hand in hand with the City of Owatonna's street projects to verify old abandoned gas main, rework gas piping when conflicts arise, and when necessary, replace gas mains and services to move the utility out of the street which eliminates future conflicts.

Gas is not the only utility the Gas/Water Crew is responsible for! Along with all the responsibilities that come with the natural gas system, water is also an important aspect of their daily routines. They drop everything to repair water main breaks at any time of the day or night. They, perform water main shutdowns for required maintenance, winterize water hydrants before winter and flush all hydrants each spring to ensure clean drinking water all year round. Without actually listing the tasks performed by the Gas/Water Crew, one would never know how much behind the scenes work it actually takes to ensure both the natural gas and water systems stay safe and mechanically sound both annually and on a day to day basis!

Thank you to the entire team for all you do!

The gas and water department at the Owatonna Public Utilities consists of 6 crew members. The crew members are Dan Cammock (Gas/Water Crew Lead), Jeff Wencl (Gas/Water Crew), Dave Fox (Gas/Water Crew), Byron Brady (Gas/Water Crew & Welder), Joe Cadorette (Gas/Water Crew & Welder) and Brent Glende (Gas/Water Crew). The Owatonna Public Utilities prides itself on customer relations and the Gas/Water crew are the first on the scene to help residents with a number of possible problems related to gas or water. Along with customer relations, response time is also very important to OPU. The quicker the response, the quicker the fix. Whether it's water or gas issues, this crew is an important asset to the daily operation of the Owatonna Public Utilities.

On the natural gas side of things, to become a seasoned crew member, proper training is a must as well as a federal requirement. The U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, developed the Operator Qualification (OQ) rule which was adopted into the Code of Federal Regulations. Under the rule, each pipeline operator is responsible for developing an OQ program, following their written OQ plan, establishing a covered task list applicable to their system, and defining the training and qualification requirements for personnel performing covered tasks on their pipeline facility. It is the operator's responsibility to ensure their contractors and vendors comply with their program requirements. OPU crew members are required to be Operator Qualified at a number of tasks. The knowledge requirements include; Operations & Maintenance, Emergency Plan, OQ plan, Public Awareness, and Procedure Review. The specific hands-on tasks include; Stab Fittings, Butt Heat Fusion, Sidewall Heat Fusion, Electrofusion, Socket Heat Fusion, and Visually Inspecting Pipe and Components prior to installation. There are additional tasks required for the welders including Steel Welding and Steel Welding Inspection. The OQ process begins with a number of computer modules to educate the crew members on the background of each task as well as teach them how to execute each hands-on task. Once each module is completed, a short quiz is administered which must be passed before the subsequent hands-on training

SMELL GAS?

GET OUT!

THEN CALL OPU • 24 HRS
507-451-2480

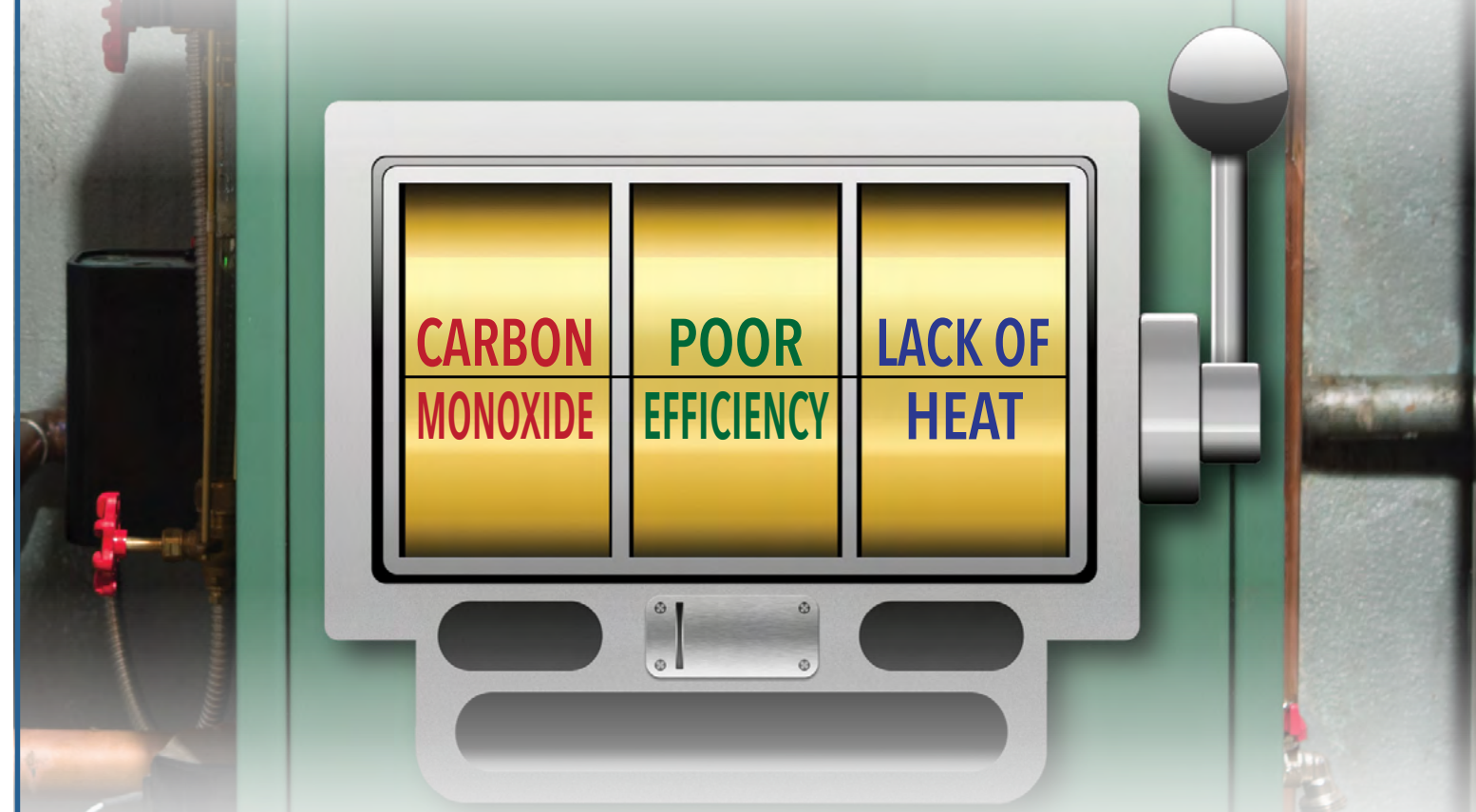


- Smell gas? (odor is like rotten eggs)
- Can't immediately find the source?
- DO NOT turn on a light switch or use the phone because the potential spark could ignite the gas and cause an explosion!
- Get out and call OPU from your mobile phone or a neighbor's house.

Learn more about Gas Safety at www.OwatonnaUtilities.com

REBATES

DON'T GAMBLE ON YOUR FURNACE OR BOILER!



Make sure your heating system is working properly and efficiently.

Complete a Clean & Tune and apply for a

\$25 REBATE!

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

CONSERVE & \$SAVE®

www.owatonnautilities.com



Salt pollution comes from several sources

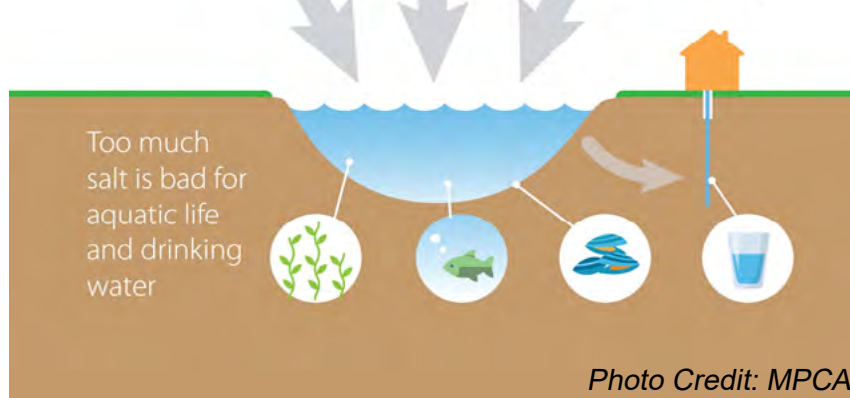
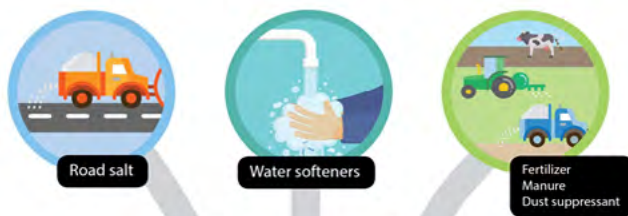


Photo Credit: MPCA

Help Keep Chloride Out of Our Lakes and Rivers:

1. Hire a Smart Salting Contractor, visit pca.state.mn.us to find certified contractors.
2. Educate your family, friends, and coworkers on the importance of proper and safe use.
3. Apply minimum amount necessary. Less is more.
4. Sweep up any excess salt. Remember if it is visible on pavement, it will just wash away.
5. Be patient, more salt never results in faster melting. Shovel, shovel, shovel.
6. Make sure to check your water softener for proper ratios or stop using a water softener all together.
7. If you store large piles of salt (commercial or industrial business), make sure it's covered and on an impervious surface. Furthermore, make sure continuously sweep transfer and storage areas.

Learn more about our Stormwater Program at ci.owatonna.mn.us/stormwater or contact Brad Rademacher, Stormwater/ Water Quality Specialist at 507-774-7300 or stormwater@ci.owatonna.mn.us



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



Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association

Tom Bovitz Memorial Scholarship Program

OPU is accepting scholarship essays and applications for the MMUA Tom Bovitz Memorial Scholarship. The essay deemed to best address the subject of "Municipal Utilities: Good for All of Us" will receive a \$500 scholarship from OPU and will be forwarded on to the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association for entry in the Tom Bovitz Memorial Scholarship state-wide contest. MMUA splits their scholarship fund into \$2,000, \$1,500, \$1,000 and \$500 scholarships.

For more information visit our website at <http://www.owatonnautilities.com/residential-customers/energy-education/>

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 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.

CONSERVATION TIP\$

Using rainwater to water plants not only keeps your plants healthier but also reduces your water bill! Other benefits of collecting rainwater include reduced storm-water runoff in your yard helping the environment.



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.

