



OWATONNA
PUBLIC UTILITIES

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CUSTOMER UPDATE

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OPU MEMO



Josh Prokopec,
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OPU Commission

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Cybersecurity has been a hot topic recently, with a particular focus on the vulnerabilities of local water systems. It is considered the top threat to businesses and critical infrastructure in the U.S., according to reports from the Director of National Intelligence, the FBI, and the Department of Homeland Security. Consequently, cybersecurity is now a crucial function for water utilities. The American Water Works Association (AWWA) has developed extensive guidance to help water utilities understand policies, comply with requirements, and implement best practices.

Many drinking water and wastewater utilities today rely on computer networks and automated control systems to manage processes such as treatment, testing, and water movement. These industrial control systems (ICSs) have improved service and reliability. However, reliance on ICSs, like Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA), makes the water sector and other critical infrastructures vulnerable to cyber-attacks or accidental cyber events. An attack on water services could undermine public confidence and potentially cause significant public health and economic consequences.

Establishing facility and information access controls, including cybersecurity measures, is a key feature of an effective protective program. The U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA), in collaboration with the water sector, developed key features to enhance the security and resilience of water systems against all hazards.

A cyber-attack attempts to undermine ICSs or track individuals' online movements without permission. Such attacks may be undetectable but can disrupt a water utility's network. Cyber incidents can disrupt water system operations and potentially harm public health and the environment. Effective cybersecurity programs should build on strong organizational policies, security awareness, and physical security practices.

On October 23, 2018, the America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) was signed into law. Section 2013 of AWIA amended the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), requiring community water systems (CWSs) serving more than 3,300 people to develop or update risk and resilience assessments (RRAs) and emergency response plans (ERPs).

OPU completed its Risk and Resilience Assessment by the June 30, 2021, deadline and subsequently completed its Emergency Response Plan within six months to gain EPA certification. This certification process allows utilities like OPU to prepare for, respond to, and recover from cyber incidents through a checklist of activities, which can be added to an ERP for cybersecurity response.

OPU has always prioritized cybersecurity, ensuring the protection of its water distribution system at all times.

CONSERVATION TIP\$

Humidity is just as important to consider as overnight temperatures when opening windows at night. If the outdoor air is too humid, it may make your home uncomfortable even with a lower temp, and make your A/C work harder the next day. The best way to determine if it's a good night to open your windows is when the dew point falls below 55 degrees, though some people might find a dewpoint of 50 degrees or lower more comfortable.



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

A warm welcome and hello from your Owatonna Public Library! OPL is open 9am – 8pm on Mondays and Thursdays, open 9am – 5pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, & Fridays, and open 9am – 12 noon on Saturdays. The website and online resources are available 24/7 at owatonna.gov/library.

Children's Summer Reading Program

ADVENTURE — BEGINS AT — YOUR LIBRARY™

The theme of the 2024 Summer Reading Program is "Adventure Begins at Your Library." Join us when the program kicks off June 5 from 3:00-6:00pm in OPL's first floor Children's Services area. Pick up a reading log, ice cream and tattoos. Explore the world of reptiles and amphibians with the Zoo Man at 3:15pm.

Read for at least 20 minutes on at least 10 days during June and note it on your reading log. The June Bookfair will be June 27 from 10am until 6pm. Bring your completed reading log to the Bookfair and pick out a free book!

Fun programs are planned throughout June including Magic Norm, "Circus on Strings" marionette puppets, and more! Go to owatonna.gov/library for all the Summer Reading Program details.

MAYOR

Tom Kuntz

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dan Boeke

David Burbank

Nathan Dotson

Kevin Raney

Greg Schultz

Brent Svenby

Doug Voss

IMAGINE OWATONNA

2050 Comprehensive Plan

Provide input before June 30th

What is your wish for Owatonna in the next 20 to 30 years? The City of Owatonna is developing a Comprehensive Plan through the Imagine Owatonna 2050 process to address this question. The plan will help City leaders, developers, business owners and citizens shape how Owatonna will grow over the next 20-plus years. You can provide input on the draft Imagine Owatonna 2050 plan online by scanning the QR code or visiting engageowatonna.com before June 30. This is an opportunity for every community member to help guide future planning for land use and development, parks, trails, transportation, housing, economic development and the environment!

For background on Imagine Owatonna 2050, maps and other information, please visit www.owatonna.gov/imagine2050.



BE AWARE OF OUR WORKERS

Don't Drive Distracted.



Information for this article obtained from information provided by the US Department of Transportation and the National Work Zone Safety Information Clearing House

Work zones play a key role in maintaining and upgrading our nation's roadways as well as keeping utility services reliable. In Minnesota, drivers are required to slow down or move over for emergency vehicles parked or working on the side of the road with their emergency lights activated. "Emergency vehicles" brings to mind police cars, fire trucks, ambulances, and tow trucks. What you may not know is this also includes utility company vehicles, freeway service patrol vehicles, road maintenance vehicles or other construction vehicles with warning lights activated.

Work zone incidents impact everyone. Nationally, in 2022, 891 people died in work zone crashes. While this is down from 963 in 2021, it is still too many.

In 2021, distracted driving in total, not just in work zones, claimed 3,522 lives. Distracted driving first brings to mind texting on your phone. However, it also includes talking on your phone, eating or drinking, talking to other people in your vehicle, or fiddling with the radio, entertainment or navigation system. It is anything that takes your attention away from the task of safe driving.

Our utility workers may be your friend or family member so we're certain you want them to come home safely each and every evening. We do too! Safety is one of our core values at OPU. Each year our workers take work zone safety and coning classes to stay abreast of the most up-to-date requirements. They use proper coning techniques when working in roadways and place a cone behind their work vehicles when parked. The cone serves as a reminder to walk around the vehicle before leaving a work zone to ensure nothing has changed since arriving on site. Our workers also wear high-visibility vests and clothing to ensure they are seen. Yet, with all the precautions our

employees take, they still report near misses from drivers not paying attention in the work zone. We take the safety of our employees very seriously, and ask that you do, too.

So what can you do?

- Expect the Unexpected. Work zones change often. The area you drove yesterday may look different today.
- Avoid Distractions. Distracted driving in a work zone can have deadly consequences. Put down your phone and keep your eyes on the road.
- Pay Attention to Other Drivers. Narrowed traffic patterns provide less ability to maneuver around other vehicles safely. Paying attention can prevent the need for evasive actions in work zones.
- Don't speed or tailgate. Keep a safe distance from the vehicle ahead of you and don't speed. Tailgating and speeding lead to crashes with other vehicles and field workers.
- Obey Road Crews and Signs. Flaggers know how best to move traffic safely in work zones. The warning signs are there to help you and other drivers move safely.
- Be Patient and Stay Calm. Work zone crew members are working to improve the road and make your future driving better. Stay calm and drive safely.

Remember: Work zone safety is everybody's responsibility. When you see the orange "Utility Work Ahead" signs, please stay alert, slow down and give our workers a brake!



DO NOT HANG SIGNS ON POWER POLES

While there is equipment to help linemen reach lines on power poles, as long as there are power lines on a pole, there may be a need to climb the pole. Signs (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.



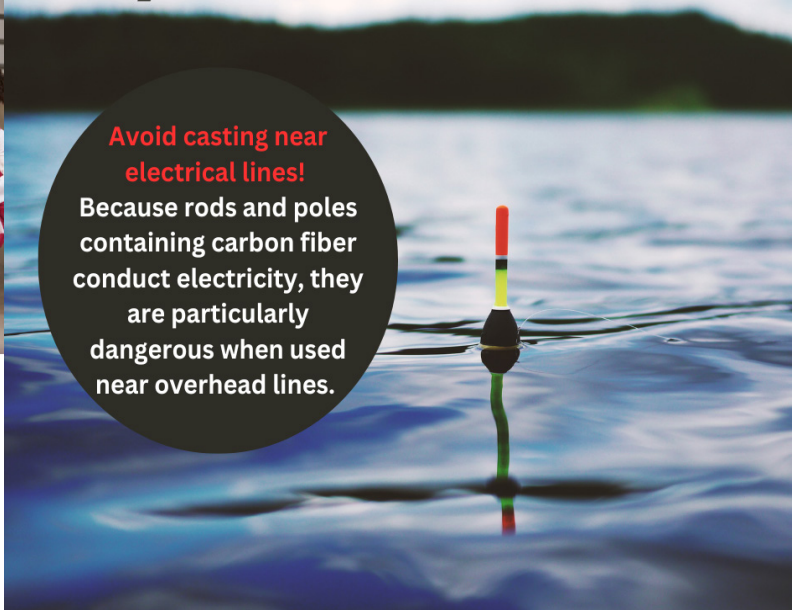
School is out!

Keep your hands on the wheel, eyes on the road, and pay extra attention to kids on bikes or ones that may run into the street after a ball. Don't drive distracted!

Stay Safe, Cast Smart.

Avoid casting near electrical lines!

Because rods and poles containing carbon fiber conduct electricity, they are particularly dangerous when used near overhead lines.



19 JUNE

JUNE TEENTH

FREEDOM DAY

Our office will be closed on Wednesday, June 19, in observance of the Juneteenth holiday.



What are those boxes?

One question we sometimes hear from our customers is, “What are those boxes? The green ones – what are those?”

We actually have many shapes and sizes of green boxes out there in the field, but I think the most common one folks ask about is underground, or “pad-mount” transformers. Some of you may have one somewhere on your property. They are a bit on the larger side and hard to miss. They’re what’s serving you and many of the people in your neighborhood via underground electrical distribution lines. Typically, the ones serving your neighborhoods are maybe

three-by-three feet wide and two-to-three feet tall - so kind of a squat but notably big box. But pad-mount transformers can get really big. The large three phase transformers that feed our commercial and large industrial customers can be around six feet tall, wider than they are tall, and just as deep as they are wide. They’re big!

The second most common box you’ll see in your yards is a pedestal. There’s a bit of variety here as well, but generally they’re maybe a foot wide and maybe three feet tall. Pedestals are where we’ve connected underground distribution wire, and it’s there that we get at them if we need to as well. The telecom companies will have similar pedestal type boxes as well, but typically a bit taller and maybe a little wider.

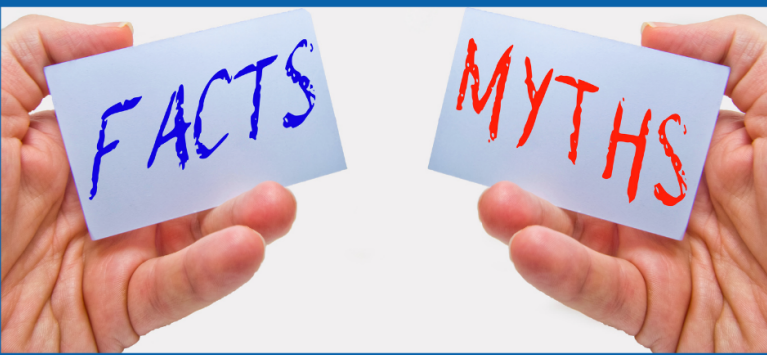
Another common box in your yard that’s ours is one that’s easy to miss, because it’s (mostly) underground. Those are typically two feet by three-foot boxes that are buried and all you can see is the green lid nestled in the grass. They go by a few different names, but usually Pull Boxes or Handholes. Those, like pedestals, are places underground distribution wire is connected to so we can get at it if we need to. They’re also often confused with irrigation boxes where your water lines meet, typically with some valves or regulators – but irrigation boxes are usually smaller; maybe ten inches by eighteen inches.

There’s more, but those are the most common. And as with our meters, if you can take a minute here and there to make sure those boxes are free of overgrown plants or other obstructions, it will help us, and you, when something breaks and we have to make a service call.



What are those boxes?

Take a moment to keep the area around these boxes free from overgrown plants or other obstructions.



Claim:

My air conditioner will be more efficient if it is shaded.

Fact: Several studies, including a recent one from Texas A&M University, have shown that shading the condenser coil of a central A/C unit only minimally increases the system's efficiency during hot weather. This is because the fan draws in warm outdoor air from around the coil, negating the cooling effects of shading. In some cases, shading methods can reduce efficiency by blocking airflow, making the equipment work harder.

An air conditioner works by removing heat from a building and expelling it outside through the condenser coil. The condenser fan draws outdoor air across the coil to remove heat, and this process requires unobstructed airflow. Shading the condenser with shrubs or fencing can reduce airflow, making the system less efficient and increasing cooling costs. As shrubs grow, they can also obstruct the coil, further reducing efficiency.

Instead of shading the condenser, it's better to focus on keeping the coils clean. Leaves, dust, and debris can accumulate on the coils over time, hindering heat removal. Ensuring that the coil has enough open space around it and keeping it clean is a more effective way to keep cooling costs down.



Stay Cool and Stay Comfortable

Air-Source Heat Pumps



Residential Customers

If used for cooling only, get up to a \$220 rebate!

If used for heating and cooling, get a rebate of up to 50% of unit cost!

REBATES AVAILABLE FOR BOTH RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL CUSTOMERS!

Commercial Customers

Get a rebate of up to 50% of new equipment cost!

An air-source heat pump can efficiently provide cooling and heating for your home or business. When properly installed, an air-source heat pump can deliver up to three times more heat energy to a home or business than the electrical energy it consumes. Plus, Owatonna Public Utilities provides rebates!



P.O. Box 800 208 S. Walnut Ave.
Owatonna, MN 55060

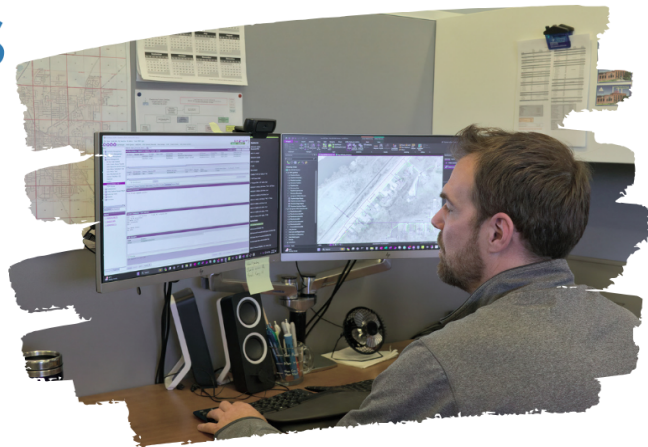
Office: 451-2480 Service: 451-1616

EXPLORE THE HIDDEN GEMS OF UTILITY CAREERS

Discover the possibilities

GIS Analyst

National salary range
\$56,800 - \$99,410



Scan to watch
Employee Interview

Job description: Create and maintain geodatabases for electric, water, gas and fiber utility systems, assuring quality and accuracy in systems and connections to other systems such as NISC and AMI. Enter edits from GPS data collection and work completed. Fulfill data and mapping requests from other departments. Stay up-to-date on new spatial analysis products and trends, and promote data literacy throughout the organization through training and outreach to other departments. Assist the GIS Coordinator in managing the Esri Enterprise system, creating and maintaining mobile inspections and maintenance reports, and all other duties that fall under the GIS Coordinator's responsibilities.

Education Requirements:

Two year associates degree in Geographic Information Systems or related field.

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
- 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

Moving?

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

