

# CUSTOMER UPDATE

## Coming in September...



### FEATURING: SMARTHUB

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# OPU MEMO



Beth Fondell  
Chief Financial Officer

## OPU Commission

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

September 4, 2018 will be an exciting day in the history of Owatonna Public Utilities. Besides being the day after a national holiday, it is the day we will begin using a new customer information system for billing, customer records, payments, and an online customer portal. National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC) is our new software vendor and their product, iVUE, will bring many benefits to customers and the utility.

Your monthly bills will look very similar to what you now receive, but we will have the ability to include many types of informative messages on the face of the bills. With iVUE, we can alert you when your credit card for recurring payments is going to expire and provide you with information on what your new budget payment will be when it is scheduled to recalculate for the following month's bill. You will receive an insert with your September statements explaining how to read your new bill, as some information (such as your customer number) will change with iVUE.

A significant item to note involves credit cards. Customers calling to make a credit card payment over the phone will be directed to a third-party automated service. This is an important change in process because it will allow us to better protect customers' credit card information and become compliant with credit card data security standards. Without these protections in place, there is a risk that customer credit card information could be compromised in the event of a cyber-security or other data breach. A data breach could be as simple as someone overhearing a

spoken credit card number. Customers will still be able to pay by credit card in person and online as they do now.

Speaking of online, the new customer portal will be new and improved! Customers currently using our CustomerWeb site will need to re-register for the new customer portal site. It will be worth your time to do so, as you will have access to more robust consumption and billing history information as well as the ability to sign up for e-billing, automatic recurring payments, and various notifications via email and text message.

Customers will also be able to use "Pay Now" functionality to pay your bill online on a one-time basis, without setting up a user name and password. You will just need some account information from your monthly bill to utilize this feature.

Besides benefits to customers, iVUE will allow Owatonna Public Utilities to become more efficient in how we do work. Field crews will have iPads so work completed can be documented at the job site, eliminating paperwork and allowing for follow-up tasks to be noted and immediately scheduled by our dispatchers. More transactions will flow through various systems automatically, eliminating manual work that takes more time and can result in errors.

Future phases of the new system implementation include the financial package rollout in February 2019 and an Outage Management System in June 2019. These additional products will be fully integrated with the customer information system to allow for seamless flow of information.

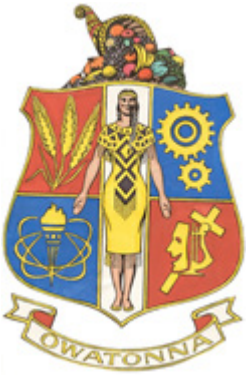
Stay tuned as we provide more information on features available with the new system over the next several months.

## CONSERVATION TIP\$

Take advantage of the August Heat and hang your clothes out to dry! Breezy days help soften the fabric too. If you still find you need a little softer fabric, put them in the dryer on air fluff for a few minutes.

Go to [www.tinyurl.com/OPU-Tips](http://www.tinyurl.com/OPU-Tips) for more conservation tips.





The City of Owatonna has a busy construction season planned for the summer of 2018. The following updates are for the projects in the works for 2018:

- **2018 Street and Utility Project** – This project includes reconstruction of Mill Street from Cedar Avenue to School Street. The pavement surface will be removed, bad spots in the curb will be repaired and there is a minor amount of watermain work on Mill Street. Project hasn't started yet.
  - **2018 Downtown Alley and Parking Lots** – The alley between Cedar Avenue and Oak Avenue on the north Side of US Bank is under construction. Owatonna public utilities is making some modifications to the electrical system in the alley. Once the electrical modifications are complete, the work on the alley will resume. In addition to the work on the alley, the parking lot to the west of Tone Music will be reconstructed at the same time. The Chamber of Commerce parking lot and lot by Bubba's Bar have been completed.
  - **Hemlock Avenue** – Hemlock Avenue will be reconstructed between 16th Street NE and 20th Street NE. The storm sewer will be upgraded along with removal and replacement of the street surface. Repairs will be made to the concrete curb as necessary. The sections from 14th Street to 16th Street and from 20th Street to 22nd Street will receive an overlay. Work has started on the reconstruction section and on the sidewalk along the east side of the roadway
  - **18th Street SW concrete repair and trail.** The concrete pavement on 18th Street SW is being repaired as needed. The new bituminous trail connecting from Linn Avenue to the Kaplan's Woods parking lot is almost complete.
  - **Park Drive** – The roadway will be reconstructed from St. John Drive to 21st Avenue NW and from 24th Avenue NW to 32nd Avenue NW. Realignment will be completed on the west end at 32nd Avenue. In addition to the concrete pavement reconstruction,
  - OPU is planning to install a new watermain from the tower location to Bridge Street. The new watermain will help for future needs of the industrial park.
  - **McKinley Street concrete repair** – Work has started on the section between Elm and Cedar where new curb will be poured on the north and south side of the street along with a new sidewalk for the bus transfer area at Roosevelt School building. Work is expected to be completed in the next few weeks.
  - **Mosher Avenue Sanitary Sewer** – There is a section of sanitary sewer from McKinley Street to approximately 1,500 feet north along Mosher Avenue that needs replacement. The sewer will be placed in the east boulevard of Mosher Avenue. Work hasn't started yet.
  - **Kohlmeir Drive**, which is the entrance to the beach at Lake Kohlmeir will be reconstructed. The proposed work includes reconstruction of the trail and removal of the retaining wall and overlay of the existing parking lot. The work is expected to be completed after labor day in order to reduce the impact to people using the beach.
  - **CPR – CSAH 45 and 19.** Steele County and the City are working together to bring improvements to CSAH 45 (Oak Avenue) from Holly Street to School Street. Work is planned to repair the offset joints in the pavement during the fall of 2018. Rose Street from Oak to Willow will be addressed in 2019.
- Thank you for your patience as the City works to deliver better roadways for the citizens of Owatonna. Please contact the engineering department at 507-444-4350 with any questions or concerns.

### MAYOR

Tom Kuntz

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

David Burbank

Nathan Dotson

Jeff Okerberg

Kevin Raney

Greg Schultz

Brent Svenby

Doug Voss

# smart hub



**COMING IN SEPTEMBER...**

With SmartHub you can:

- Check your usage
- Contact our office
- Pay your bill
- Check our news feed
- Report a service interruption
- Access custom widgets

With SmartHub, the power of data is in your hands through convenient account management and detailed usage information. SmartHub, a mobile and Web app, delivers accurate, timely account information and allows you to make payments in a secure environment with the touch of a button, right from your mobile device or on your PC. The two-way communication available with SmartHub allows you to notify us of account and service issues while providing us a way to let you know about special offers, programs, events and more.

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# CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS



The security of customer credit card information is very important to us. Beginning September 4, 2018 (not before) customers wishing to make a credit card payment over the phone will be transferred to a third party automated service. This process change is important in protecting customer credit card information. It also allows us to be compliant with credit card industry standards. Customers wishing to make their credit card payments by phone will have access to this system 24 hours a day. Customers can still make credit card payments in the office or on-line.

## NEW WEB PORTAL

Beginning on September 4, 2018 (**not before**) customers wishing to view/pay their bills on-line will need to create a new account in SmartHub. We regret previous log-in information is not able to be transferred.

Click on the “Pay Bill” button on our website. When the SmartHub screen appears, click the New User link. The New User Registration window will appear (see image below). You will need your **NEW** billing account number. Your new billing account number will appear on the first bill you receive in September, or you may call customer service for it.

Customers not wanting to register for SmartHub will now have the ability to make a one time payment using the “Pay Now” feature.

SmartHub also allows users with multiple accounts to view and pay them at the same time.

Please contact customer service with any questions.

### New User Registration

To register as a new user, please enter the following information.

<b>Billing Account Number</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Last Name or Business</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>E-mail Address</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Confirm E-mail Address</b>	<input type="text"/>

# 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](http://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.



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



## Taming Stormwater Through Trees

As houses, buildings, roads, and parking lots spread and natural tree cover is lost, so is the absorbing effect of vegetation and soils. Turning rain and snow into costly stormwater runoff. Without the benefit of trees and vegetated infrastructure, waterways become polluted with oils, heavy metals, and other harmful substances that wash away for impervious surfaces. Fish and wildlife suffer, drinking water becomes expensive to reclaim, property values are reduced, and our living environment is degraded. Preserving and planting trees help minimize the consequences of urban sprawl.

### Trees provide tremendous benefits:

- Well landscaped parking lots can be designed to slow runoff and beautify the community
- Tree-lined streets retain large volumes of rainfall, cleans surface water, reduces air pollution and increases property values
- Riparian buffers along waterways slow flood waters, reduce erosion, filters runoff, and controls temperature
- Shaded residential areas conserves energy, lowers heating and cooling costs, and increases resale values

**It's never too late to plant abundant trees to retain more water onsite, enhance percolation in soil, reduce the expense of pipes and treatment systems, and protect environmental quality!**

*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](mailto:Bradley.rademacher@ci.owatonna.mn.us)*

# PROJECT UPDATE

## Summer Heat and Construction are in Full Swing!



All our crews are busy this summer with various projects throughout town. The underground conduit installation in conjunction with Jaguar Communications installation of fiber optic cable is progressing in the southeast part of town. Pictured here a newly installed underground pedestal next to a pole.

Electric Crews continue work in downtown alleys upgrading electric services in conjunction with the City of Owatonna's parking lot redesign. Pictured, right, are electric crew employees Tony Hartle, Jeff Bertram, Collin Wencil and Brandon Jech.



Our contractor, Michels, continues to work on the 5 lb. to 50 lbs. gas pressure conversion project. Upgrading this area to the 50 lb. gas system will provide a higher volume of gas to meet the needs of some more energy efficient equipment that may be purchased by customers. Pictured, right, is engineering employee, Josh Prokopec.



Work continues on the installation of 16" water main on Park Drive. The installation of this main will provide better water pressure to the Industrial Park as it continues to grow.



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](http://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.

# NOTICE!

## NO CREDIT/DEBIT CARD PAYMENTS CAN BE ACCEPTED AUG 29 – SEPT 4, 2018

During this week, cash or checks will still be accepted. Our apologies for any inconvenience this causes!

OPU is switching to a new and improved billing system that will offer many benefits such as:

- Paperless billing
- More informative web portal
- Interactive Voice Response for credit card payments



Your opinion matters to us. Please take a few minutes to tell us how we did by visiting our website at [owatonnautilities.com/customerurvey](http://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 give us a call at 451-2480 or send an email to [schmolt@owatonnautilities.com](mailto:schmolt@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.

