



# OWATONNA PUBLIC UTILITIES

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# CUSTOMER UPDATE



## 2021 Construction Projects

- 2 OPU Memo
- 3 City Spot
- 4 OPU's Involvement in City Projects
- 5 OPU's Involvement in City Projects

- 6 Call Before You Dig
- 6 Clean H2Owatonna
- 7 Water Rebates
- 8 Public Awareness Mailing Notice

- 8 Gas Leak?
- 8 Conservation Tips
- 8 General Information



# OPU MEMO



Jared Hendricks,  
Energy Conservation/Key  
Accounts Officer

## OPU Commission

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

Abnormally warm weather in June, with more than 1/3 of the month exceeding 90 degrees, caused OPU to call on our customers several times to reduce electric use during peak periods. Thank you to everyone who did even the smallest action to reduce electric use, it all helps!

OPU received a few questions from customers during those Peak Alert days: Why does OPU ask customers to reduce electric use; How does it help me out when I reduce my electric consumption; Does it really help the community when I reduce my electric use? I wanted to take a little time to help customers understand WHY we want to reduce electric use during peak times, as well as what steps OPU takes beyond calling on our Energy Hero's.

To start, it's important to understand that electricity is different from water and natural gas because there isn't large scale storage. Electricity must be created at the same exact time as it's being used. When you flip on a light at your house, that electricity has to be generated at a power plant at the same time before traveling through the wires, to your house, and finally powering your light. The more lights you turn on, the more the power plant must generate.

Eventually, a power plant reaches its maximum output, and another power plant has start running to provide the electricity for the next light. These additional power plants that start up are referred to as "peaking plants". Their ability to start up quickly, and smaller size, mean they are not the cheapest way to generate electricity

causing prices to increase. This increase in price the main driving factor why utilities like OPU ask customers to reduce their electric use on peak days.

OPU utilizes many "tools" to reduce electric use during peak days, some of them you may not be aware of. OPU will actually stop pumping water into the towers on peak days. Our water towers store enough water that we can turn off the wells and let the water drain down before refilling them again overnight (that's also a great reason to conserve water on peak days).

Another step we take is to use our air conditioner load management program (LM). This is the program that will turn off air conditioners for a short period of time during the afternoon and early evening to reduce the electric use. Although not all air conditioners are part of the program, and OPU is not adding any additional customers to the program, it is an important tool to reduce demand and how much higher priced electricity is being used.

Peak Alert announcements calling on our Energy Hero's to reduce their electric use is also a valuable tool to reduce electric use during peak times. During Peak Alerts, OPU asks customers to take extra steps that reduce a little bit of energy use across the entire town add up to big reductions in use. Big actions such as avoiding running high energy appliances such as your stove, clothes washer, and dishwasher until after the Peak Alert is over, as well as small actions such as using a table lamp instead of a room light all add up to reduce the high-priced electricity used.

It isn't just homeowners and small businesses that OPU calls on to reduce consumption during peak periods. OPU works with some of the largest electric consumers in town to reduce large amounts of energy use. Some of the actions our large users take include turning the temperature up in large office buildings by a few degrees, switching to backup generators to power their business, or even completely shutting down production for the day.

These tools combine efforts by OPU and all of our customers to keep the cost of your electricity from going up. I want to say Thank You. Thank you for doing your part, big or small, to keep costs down.

### Lake Kohlmier Equipment Rental and Concessions

#### Open Hours and Fees

- Thursday/Friday: 1:00-7:00PM
- Saturday/Sunday: 12:00-7:00PM
- Group rental times also available during non-open hours
- Rental Rates: \$6.00/hour per equipment rented

#### Available Rental Equipment

- Water Equipment: Canoes, Single and Double Kayaks, Peddle Boats, Hydro Bikes, Paddle Boards
- Trail Equipment: Electric Assist Trike, Tandem Bike, Tag-a-long Bike
- Safety Equipment Available (including lifejackets, Helmets and Safety Vests)

#### Waiver Required to use the equipment

Visit the Owatonna Parks and Recreation Website @ [ci.owatonna.mn.us/283/Parks-Recreation](http://ci.owatonna.mn.us/283/Parks-Recreation) for additional details

### Brooktree Golf Course

If you haven't already played a round, Brooktree Golf Course is in fine shape! Summer specials include Senior Monday special \$30 – 18 holes/cart or \$20 – 9 holes/cart. And on Wednesdays, enjoy an 18-hole round of golf for just \$32 with a cart and a burger and fries after your round. The specials are until 2 p.m. and do not include league players. The clubhouse opens at 7 a.m. daily, so grab your clubs and head to the links!

### River Springs Water Park

#### Open Swim Hours

Monday-Friday: 12:00pm-7:00pm

Saturday and Sunday: 12:00pm-8:00pm

#### Rates

June 4 - August 8:

\$7.00 per person 48" and above

\$5.00 per person under 48"

\$4.50 Twilight Fee (5pm-Close)

August 9 - August 22:

\$4.50 per person

\*\*All summer children under two are free with a paid adult.



### Summer Weekend Out

Mark your calendars for July 23-25 for our annual Weekend Out! We'll offer a variety of activities including a Movie in the Park, River Springs Water Park Specials and Lake Kohlmier Specials. Check our website for details on events and activities at [www.ci.owatonna.mn.us/283/Parks-Recreation](http://www.ci.owatonna.mn.us/283/Parks-Recreation).

### Day Camp

There are a few spots left in some of our day camps. Check availability and register now at <https://secure.rec1.com/MN/owatonna-mn/catalog>.

### Swim Lessons

Registration for August swim classes will start at 7am on July 12. Check availability and register at <https://secure.rec1.com/MN/owatonna-mn/catalog>.

### MAYOR

Tom Kuntz

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

David Burbank

Nathan Dotson

Jeff Okerberg

Kevin Raney

Greg Schultz

Brent Svenby

Doug Voss



## OPU's Involvement in City Projects

OPU is heavily involved in all City of Owatonna projects and we thought it would be informative to give you a background into OPU's involvement in each project. Each project consists of months of planning and coordination with the City of Owatonna to come up with the best solutions possible.

### Truman Avenue

#### Water

Truman Avenue is a very extensive project which allows OPU replace a good chunk of problematic water main that has a very extensive record of breaks. Water-main replacement will consist of removing and replacing approximately 3,300' feet of watermain with new PVC pipe. It will consist of replacing 34 gate valves and boxes, 5 hydrants, and reconnecting approximately 44 services. While the water work is being completed, a temporary water service will be installed for all residents involved.

#### Gas

In anticipation of the Truman Avenue project a small gas main replacement project took place in 2020 to eliminate any possible utility conflict areas. Work consisted of removing old steel gas main that was located in the street and relocating the new 2" PE gas main behind the curb and out of the street. This work included replacing 9 old steel services with new PE pipe, reconnecting 3 services to the new gas main, and abandoning the old steel gas main until it's removed during the reconstruction project.

#### Electric

There were only a few electric crossings that were affected by the Truman Ave project. Both crossing were secondary

underground services. It also gave OPU a chance to replace some old cracked/broken conduit on one of the secondary crossings that could have potentially caused outages in the future.

### Bridge Street

#### Water

Bridge Street is another full reconstruct project that allows OPU the ability to shore up a couple problem areas while street work is being performed. This street project allows OPU to eliminate a bottle neck of water main that existed and install the proper sized pipe through the problematic area, which will improve water flow to the Industrial Park Area. The work consists of replacing approximately 300' of undersized water main with new 16" PVC water main and eliminating the existing bottle neck. OPU will also be replacing a couple hydrants and gate valves as a part of the project. Approximately 160' of 16" PVC water main needed an offset to dive below the proposed RCP storm crossings and get the proper clearance below the future storm pipe.

#### Gas

With the new street section being installed on Bridge Street, OPU needed to lower a 4" PE gas main crossing to get the proper clearance below subgrade of the proposed rock section. Also a new ditch section on the north side of Bridge Street created an issue for an existing 2" PE gas main which needed to be moved further north and bored in at an increased depth to allow for proper cover over the pipe.

#### Electric

Another road project that didn't have a whole lot of impact to OPU's electric system. A few street light poles are going to

have to be relocated on the East side of the project. Most of the involvement for OPU's electric crews will come at the intersection of Bridge St and 24th Ave NW, where the proposed roundabout will be installed. OPU is going to have to move a few poles and also rework two circuits coming out of the West Owatonna Substation at the roundabout location in order to achieve proper clearance from the new roundabout.

### N. Cedar Streetscape

#### Water

The N. Cedar Streetscape will allow OPU remove and replace the 1890 water main with new PVC pipe. The project consists of replacing the old cast iron water main with approximately 1,100' of new 8" PVC water main and stubbing out 8" PVC east and west at each intersection preparing us for future road projects downtown and increasing the flow capacities on each side street. With this project approximately 1500' of 6" PVC water services are being installed to accommodate future fire flow needs. Approximately 50 water services will be affected, 3 hydrants will be replaced, and 43 gate valves installed. A temporary water service will be needed for each block to supply water while work is taking place.

#### Gas

The existing gas main on this project will remain in place since this is still a part of our 5# delivery system. Hopefully as new businesses are added downtown or new ownership updates the existing buildings, we can update the gas to our 50# system and move gas meters to the outside on the back side of the buildings to maintain a clean look on the building fronts.

### Electric

The N. Cedar streetscape project gave OPU an opportunity to clean up the old existing streetlight feeds that power the lights along this project. OPU has decided to abandon all existing feeds and have the electrical contractor that is hired by the city just install all new feeds for the new lights.

## **Courtyard by Marriot**

### Water

The new hotel downtown will require a new water service which will accommodate both domestic water use and the fire suppression system. The proposed water service will feed the hotel from Pearl Street. Any existing services from previous buildings will be cut and capped at the water main in the street to prevent any problems in the future.

### Gas

At this point the proposed PE gas service will be located on the east side of the new hotel towards the north side of the building. The building will require a larger sized meter set to properly supply the required load of all amenities requiring gas. Existing gas services and a portion of the gas main have been cut, capped and removed to prepare for the new building site, including future demolition of old buildings and construction of new hotel.

### Electric

The new hotel downtown gave OPU an opportunity to relocate most of the existing overhead electric wires in this block underground. The hotel will be fed from a 3-phase pad mount transformer on the east side of the building. OPU has also proposed the new underground primary to tie into the block to the North so that the hotel and new Pearl Apartments are on a loop feed instead of a radial. Which should help to cut down on outage times for either building.

## **'The Pearl' Apartments**

### Water

The Pearl Street Apartments have begun construction and the water service will come from Pearl Street, supplying both domestic water and a fire suppression system.

### Gas

The gas service to the apartment complex has been stubbed into the lot and will eventually run from Pearl Street to the north wall towards the east corner of the building. The Pearl will consist of 43 units, which will require a meter set that can accommodate 44 meters. A meter set of that size will roughly be 18' wide

and about 7' tall. This type of meter set is welded up by OPU's Gas Crew internally and installed by them also.

### Electric

This block is another block that OPU decided to take the opportunity and relocate most of the overhead primary electric lines underground. This building will be fed from a new 3 phase pad mount transformer on the north side of the proposed building. Like mentioned in the Courtyard by Marriot article, this building will be tied into a loop with the new hotel.

## **Future Owatonna High School**

### Water

OPU has been heavily involved with the new High School planning to make sure utilities are properly designed and services appropriately sized. The water service to the High School will accommodate domestic water, irrigation and a fire suppression system. The water service will come from 18th Street SE on the west side of the property, wrap around the back side of the building and on the east side of the property tying back into the water main on 18th Street SE creating a loop. By creating a loop on the service will allow for continuous water flow and eliminate colored or stagnant water at a dead end.

### Gas

Due to the size of the building and loading requirements, the gas service to the new High School is rather large. OPU will be extending a 4" PE gas service to the south side of the new building from an existing 4" PE stub as the primary gas service and a second gas service, 1" PE, will be required to supply the proposed storm shelter. OPU's Gas Crew will be installing both services and welding the large gas meterset, potentially for a fall/winter 2021 installation.

### Electric

The electric service for this project is very extensive and involves a lot more than just finding a location to place a transformer and then finding a way to get wire to that transformer. OPU is basically starting back at the beginning for this electric service. By beginning, I mean we are starting all the way back at the East Owatonna substation where the proposed high school service will be fed from. Due to the size of service required by the new O.H.S. OPU is going to have to reconductor the circuit (upsized the wire) from where it exits East Owatonna Substation all the way to where

the circuit ends. Also OPU has proposed a plan to build new 3 phase overhead on the south side of 18th St SE all the way across Bixby Rd. This new proposed line is what will feed the new O.H.S. OPU plans to install a second primary feed into the new O.H.S. transformer for reliability reasons.

## **5# to 50# Gas Conversion Project**

### Gas

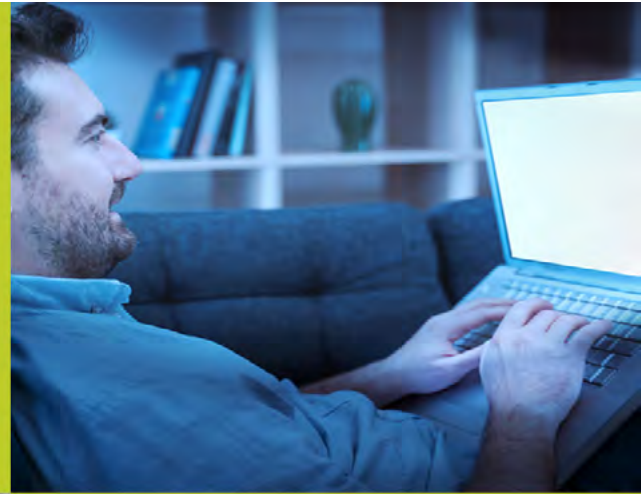
OPU continues to improve its natural gas distribution system by upgrading the remaining areas that are a 5 psig system to a 50 psig system. We are currently on year five of the project and foresee it finishing up in year 7. The current project is located in the southeast part of town bordered on the east and west by Smith Avenue and Lincoln Ave, also bordered on the north and south by Havana Road and 18th Street SE. This project is to increase the natural gas pressure throughout town to make sure OPU can keep up with demand. With the emergence and popularity of natural gas generators, on demand hot water heaters, and other equipment like this using gas at higher rates, it's important to make sure our system is as efficient and robust as possible.

As you can see it's going to be a busy finish to the year, and it doesn't look like things will slow down anytime soon.



**CALL  
BEFORE  
YOU DIG**

**DIYer by  
day and  
streamer  
at night?**



Stay safe during social distancing by calling 811 before starting any new project, so you can stay connected to the internet and utility services you rely on.

**Call 811 or go to your state 811 center's website before digging.**



**Call811.com/811-your-state**



Rain and snow melt run over hard surfaces in urbanized areas and pick up pesticides, fertilizers, oils, metals, road salt, sediment, trash and other pollutants. These pollutants are carried into storm drains which discharge directly into lakes and rivers. Stormwater runoff is the leading source of water pollution.

Learn more about our Stormwater Program and ways to help at [ci.owatonna.mn.us/stormwater](http://ci.owatonna.mn.us/stormwater) or contact Brad Rademacher, Stormwater/Water Quality Specialist at 507-774-7300 or [stormwater@ci.owatonna.mn.us](mailto:stormwater@ci.owatonna.mn.us).



## OUR WATER REBATES

# Make a Splash!



**Clothes Washers up to \$90**

**High Efficiency Toilets \$25**

**Rain Barrels \$10**

**WaterSense® Showerheads \$25\***

**Weather-Based  
Irrigation Controllers  
50% of cost up to \$75**

Look for the WaterSense®, Energy Star®, and Energy Star® Most Efficient labels.

These products are certified to use at least 20 percent less water, save energy, and perform as well as or better than regular models. Plus, you can apply for a rebate from Owatonna Public Utilities!



**Most Efficient  
2021**  
[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

\*not to exceed purchase price

Visit [www.owatonnautilities.com](http://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.smarthub.coop](http://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.

## PUBLIC AWARENESS MAILING BROCHURE NOTICE

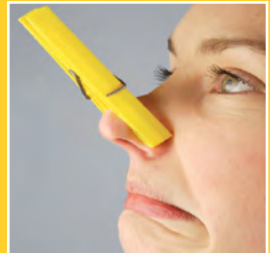
The Owatonna Public Utilities, in cooperation with state and federal agencies, is working to make the natural gas pipeline system serving its customers as safe as possible by sharing safety information with those individuals who live or work near pipelines. Key components of the education are one-call notification and response to leak complaints.

If you live or work near a natural gas pipeline operated by the Owatonna Public Utilities, soon you will receive a special pipeline safety pamphlet. This pamphlet contains critical information to educate you on safety around pipelines. Please review the information and complete and return the reply card. Your response will assist the Owatonna Public Utilities in evaluating the safety program and provide valuable information on ways to improve the program.

### Gas Leak?

If you smell gas and can't find the source immediately, go to a neighbor's house and call OPU at 451-2480 option 1.

Don't turn electrical switches on or off or use a flashlight or cell phone in the home, because an electrical spark could ignite the gas and cause an explosion.



## CONSERVATION TIP\$

Consider not sprinkling your yard during drought conditions. It's OK to let your lawn turn a little brown. Grass naturally goes dormant during low water periods and will come back to life and be just as healthy and green once it gets enough water.

