

CUSTOMER UPDATE



FEATURING: BACKFLOW PREVENTION

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|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 2 OPU Memo | 5 Well Owners Notice | 7 Weather-Sense Irrigation Controllers |
| 2 Conservation Tips | 5 Contractor Change | 8 Stay Away from Power Lines |
| 3 City Spot | 6 Call Before You Dig | 8 COVID-19 Update |
| 4 Backflow Prevention | 6 Clean H2Owatonna | 8 General Information |



OPU MEMO



Josh Prokopec,
Gas/Water Design
Engineer

OPU Commission

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

Have you ever wondered how much water we use, on average, in one day as a community? How about how much water is used, on average, in a single household? These are common questions you might consider, but never ask. Whether the answers mean anything to you or not, it's still interesting to hear the amount of water consumed by all of us.

So far in 2020, as a community, our lowest day of water consumption was 2,631,000 gallons and occurred on Wednesday, January 1, 2020. Our highest day, occurred Thursday, May 7, 2020 with 4,339,000 gallons consumed. Average water consumption, to date, as a community, is 3,054,000 gallons per day.

To put 3,054,000 gallons of water into perspective:

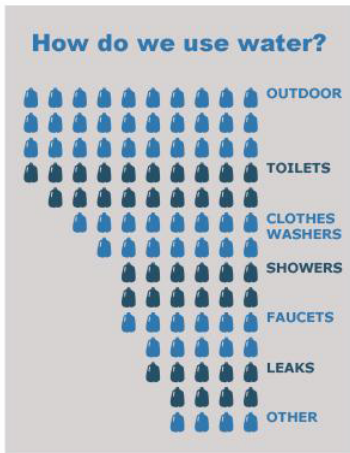
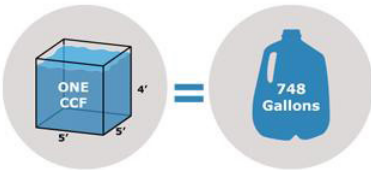
- A "good-sized bath" holds 40 gallons of water, so 3,054,000 gallons of water would be approximately 76,350 "good-sized baths"!
- The length of nearly 3 football fields together, 50 feet wide and 10 feet deep would hold 3 million gallons of water.
- An Olympic sized swimming pool measures approximately 164 feet long, 82 feet wide and 9 feet deep and holds roughly 600,000 gallons of water. You would need at least 5 Olympic size pools side by side to use up 3 million gallons of water.



On a much smaller scale, the average household in Owatonna consumes approximately 130-170 gallons of water per day, which is roughly 4 "good-size baths" per day. One gallon of water weighs 8.34 pounds. Imagine dumping eight 5 gallon pails of water (approximately 42 lbs.) for each bath. Using the 600,000 gallons of water to fill an Olympic size pool, the water would weigh approximately 5 million pounds and it would take roughly 11 years for the average Owatonna household to fill it up! As a community, on an average day, we use 25,470,360 pounds of water.

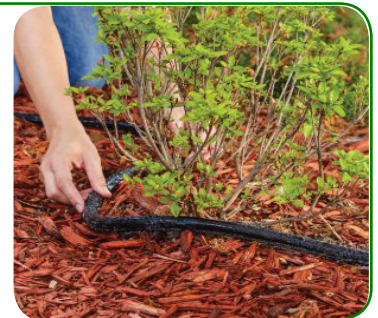
In regards to your OPU water bill, water is measured in hundreds of cubic feet (CCF) by your water meter. One CCF used is displayed on your bill as 1 unit and one unit equals approximately 748 gallons. So, the next time you look at your OPU bill, we hope you have a better understanding of how your water amount is calculated.

Hopefully, you can use your new knowledge to have a new perspective on how much water you are using and consider things that can be done inside your home to conserve unnecessary water use.



CONSERVATION TIP\$

Save on the water used for your landscaping by using a soaker hose. When used properly, soaker hoses slowly release water allowing it to soak down into the soil in the "root zone" of your flowers and shrubs without excess water running off. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations on proper operations, including reducing the water pressure by only turning the water valve a little, not all the way, and locating the hose close to the base of the plant.



CITY SPOT

HIGHLIGHTING: OWATONNA PARKS AND RECREATION

OWATONNA CITY COUNCIL

Brooktree is OPEN, things are just a little different.

Season passes are available! New this year, annual cart rental for families or singles, available to season pass holders only. Discounts available for new members (2-year) and last year's members who recruit a new member (1-year)!

Please be aware that guidelines must be strictly adhered to, and guidelines may change at any time. The Brooktree Golf Course website (brooktreegolfcourse.com) will have the most current guidelines.

All golfers must have a tee time and check in 10 minutes prior. NO walk-in tee times. Credit Card payments only. One person per cart unless immediate family. Do not touch flagsticks. Some commonly touched items are removed: rakes, ball washers, scorecards, pencils, water coolers, towels & seed bottles. Golfers are responsible for their own trash.

The clubhouse is closed. Food and beverage is available for pick-up by calling 774-7130.

Practice safe physical distancing, 6 feet apart at all times, before, during and after play. Intentional and deliberate failure to abide by any of these rules is subject to expulsion from the grounds without a refund.

MAYOR

Tom Kuntz

COUNCIL MEMBERS

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

Owatonna
Park & Trails
Call
507-444-4321
for more
information.



B - BEACH
BR - BIKE REPAIR STATION
D - DISC GOLF COURSE
DP - DOG PARK
W - WATER PARK
M - MUESUM

NAME	ADDRESS	ACRES	SHED	RESTROOM	HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE	PICNIC GROUNDS	PLAYGROUND	PAVED TRAILS	GRASS / WOOD CHIP TRAILS	CROSS COUNTRY SKIING	MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS	BIKE / SKATE PARK	FOOTBALL	SOCCER	SOFTBALL / BASEBALL	BASKETBALL COURT	TENNIS COURT	INLINE / ICE / HOCKEY RINK	HORSESHOE	SAND VOLLEYBALL	SWIMMING	FISHING	BOAT ACCESS	BOAT RENTAL	PICKLEBALL / RING PONG /	BOCCIE BALL / BEAN BAGS	OTHER AMENITIES	UNDEVELOPED	
NORTH BLUFF PARK	2965 RTHRIDGE LN NE	0																											
ARCHERY PARK	711 ELM AVE N	2																											
BROOKTREE GOLF COURSE	1369 Cherry St	128																											
BROWN PARK	400 16TH ST SW	7																											
BUECKSLER PARK	1755 SMITH AVE	5																											
CASHMAN PARK	455 26TH ST NW	8																											
CENTRAL PARK	100 MAIN ST E	2																											
COUNTRYVIEW PARK	2409 TIMBERWOOD LN NE	1																											
CROCUS PARK	465 Glendale St	0																											
DARTS PARK	600 Cherry St	23																											
FAIRGROUNDS PARK	450 18th St SE	16																											
FALKLAND MEADOW	DANE RD	7																											
FREMONT PARK	505 N GROVE AVE	0																											
HAMMANN PARK	1225 RICE LAKE ST	11																											
HAZEL PARK	425 KELLY ST	0																											
JAYCEE PARK	631 RICE LAKE ST	9																											
KAPLAN'S WOODS PARK	1205 SW 18TH ST	154																											
KAPLAN'S WOODS PARKWAY	1205 18TH ST SW	122																											
KRIESEL'S PARK	26TH ST NE	20																											
KRIESEL'S WOODS PARK	DANE RD	10																											
LAKE CHASE	1915 STATE AVE NW	15																											
LEO RUDOLPH NATURE RESERVE	855 YOUNG DR	58																											
MANTHEY PARK	225 24TH ST NE	30																											
MAPLE CREEK	1015 ELM AVE N	21																											
MINERAL SPRINGS PARK	1025 MINERAL SPRINGS PARKWAY	43																											
MOREHOUSE PARK	350 SCHOOL ST	28																											
DAIKIN SOCCER COMPLEX	1102 RICE LAKE ST E	17																											
OWATONNA SOCCER COMPLEX	14TH ST SE	16																											
RIVER SPRINGS WATER PARK	3065 ST PAUL RD	10																											
SID KINYON TENNIS COURTS	899 HAVANA RD	1																											
STRAIGHT RIVER PARKWAY	NORTH ST W / 26TH ST NW	42																											
SUMMER PARK	3105 CEDAR AVE N	8																											
WALTER H. GAINEY PARK	431 Selby Ave	3																											
WEST HILLS	502 DUNNELL DR NW	39																											
WILLOW PARK	305 HIGHLAND AVE	0																											



BACKFLOW PREVENTION

Spring is in full bloom and summer is almost upon us. It is the time of year when irrigation systems fire up to shower water onto lawns to help keep their green color. With more and more people staying home and doing improvements, it is ever so important to understand how you can keep your lawn beautiful and keep our drinking water safe.

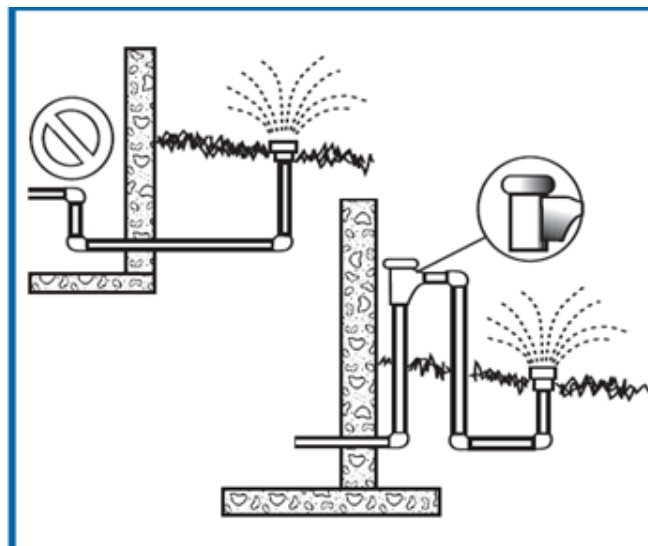
For the inexperienced irrigation owner, turning on the system sounds like a simple enough task but there might be more to it than you think. For starters, every residential irrigation system in Owatonna that is connected to city-supplied water requires backflow preventer testing at least once a year. The backflow preventer has to go through an annual inspection per Owatonna Public Utilities specifications.

The backflow preventer keeps irrigation water from entering and potentially contaminating drinking water lines. You need to have a certified person install, maintain and test it, they should have paperwork for you to fill out that they'll turn into Owatonna Public Utilities. Not every irrigation contractor is a certified backflow tester, so it's important to ask to see the contractor's certification number.

What is backflow? Backflow is the reversal of water flow from its intended direction. Whenever a water utility connects a customer to its water system, the intention is for the water to flow from the water system to the customer, and not the other way around. OPU doesn't want it back, because it's our responsibility to provide clean safe water. A backflow event occurs when water is unintentionally pulled or pushed back into a public water source. The problem is, the water could contain anything from generally offensive pollutants to fertilizer, animal waste or pests from the irrigation system. Residential irrigation sites are a frequent source of water contamination.

In response to this, OPU is extremely dedicated to creating tools and programs to protect our public water supply systems. These tools, like backflow prevention, function as public health protectors. They protect you, your family, friends and neighbors.

Simply put, backflow prevention is to protect our drinking water. So, the good news for people with irrigation systems is, contamination can be contained with adequate backflow prevention assemblies, and a better understanding of backflow prevention.

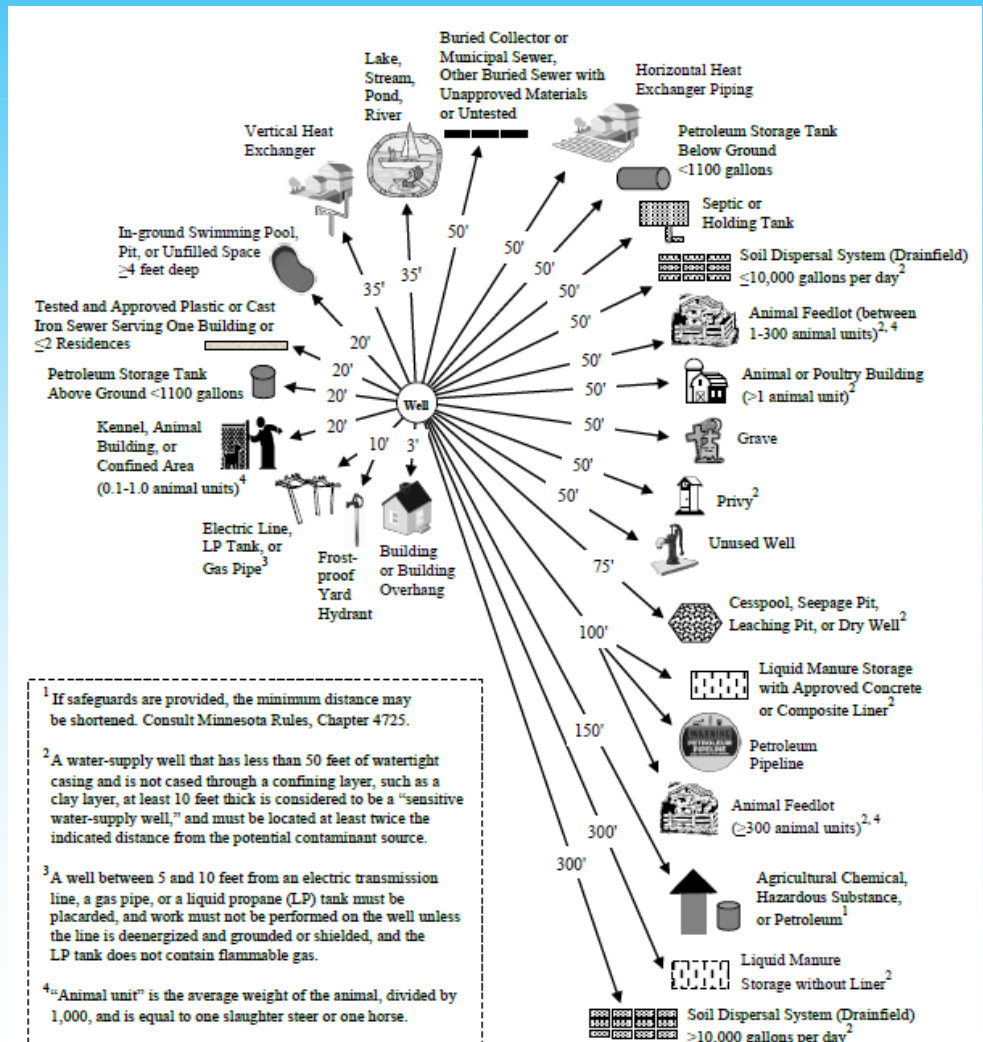


Lawn irrigation systems need a vacuum breaker backflow preventer to protect against lawn chemicals being drawn into the drinking water supply.

Important Information For Private Well Owners

As a public service, OPU is providing the following information from the Minnesota Department of Health for private well owners:

- Water with nitrate levels of more than 10mg/L should not be given to infants less than 6 months of age. Doing so may be fatal.
- You can minimize your exposure to lead and copper in your drinking water by letting the water run for 30-60 seconds before using it for drinking or cooking.
- At a minimum, private wells should be tested for Coliform Bacteria once a year and for nitrates once every two or three years.
- Test your well water at least once for arsenic.
- Private wells and public water supplies may not be interconnected. If you have a private well for lawn irrigation make sure it is not hooked up to your potable water supply in your home if your potable water comes from a public water supply.
- Steele County has a cost share program available for residents that have an abandoned well to help cover the cost of well sealing. Only a licensed well contractor may seal a well. For details call Katie Barden at 507-444-7487.
- A copy of the [Well Owners Handbook](#) and other brochures, pamphlets and fact sheets pertaining to wells and water systems may be obtained from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) at no charge by calling 651-201-4600 or by visiting their web site at; www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/wells/index.html



In the OPU Memo section of the May newsletter, we reported our advanced metering infrastructure project would be starting soon. We reported we partnered with ITRON and Keystone Utility Services, Inc. We are still partnering with ITRON, however, the new sub-contractor will be SCOPE Services, Inc. Their logo is shown here. We also reported the project would be starting the middle of June. With the issues surrounding COVID-19, the project has been pushed back slightly and will begin later in June or early July.



DIYer by day and streamer at night?

**CALL
BEFORE
YOU DIG**



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

A clean neighborhood is a clean waterway!

Yard waste contributes excess nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus, which contributes to unwanted and uncontrolled growth of algae, increases in invasive aquatic weeds, and decreased oxygen levels in nearby stormwater ponds, treatment practices, creeks and the river.

Yard waste also increases the cost of maintaining our stormwater system by causing blockages, damages to stormwater infrastructure, and requires increased mechanical street sweeping. All of which can be extremely expensive for the community.

The City currently enforces an Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Program. Stormwater Management Code 52.25 specifically prohibits disposing of yard waste in the street and stormwater system. Avoid disposing of yard waste in the storm system.

What to do with your grass clippings and yard litter:

1. Mulch and leave on your lawn.
2. Bag it and compost.
3. Don't forget to sweep and remove from the street.
4. Simply point the mower deck away from the street.

Remember: You can anonymously submit complaints regarding illicit discharge through the stormwater portion of the City's website. www.ci.owatonna.mn.us

Individuals and groups are encouraged to check out our Storm Drain Stenciling Program through The City's Stormwater Website or contact Brad Rademacher, Water Quality Specialist, (507)-774-7300 or Bradley.rademacher@ci.owatonna.mn.us



REBATES

You Can Save Water When It Rains!

Replacing a standard clock timer with a WaterSense® Weather-Based Irrigation Controller can save an average home nearly 8,800 gallons of water annually from not overwatering lawns and landscapes.

To encourage our customers to conserve this precious resource, we offer a 50% rebate per controller (not to exceed \$75 per controller).

KIDS CAN ENJOY THIS WATER SAVING COLORING PAGE!



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

CONSERVE & \$AVE®



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.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 629, 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.



**DON'T BE A DAREDEVIL.
STAY AWAY FROM
POWER LINES.**

Whether you're casting your favorite lure or moving a ladder, be safe and stay clear of all power lines. Electricity is something you don't want to tangle with.

STAY AWAY FROM POWER LINES

STOP THE SPREAD

In a continuing attempt to encourage social distancing and to protect our employees and the residents of Owatonna from the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), public access to OPU buildings will remain restricted until further notice. Our customer service reps are available by phone, during normal business hours, to help answer your questions. Utility payments can be made in a variety of ways that do not require face-to-face interaction. View the different options on the left.

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.

