

# CUSTOMER UPDATE

## GET BONUS GREEN FOR BEING GREEN!

In addition to our base rebates, Owatonna Public Utilities is now offering **BONUS REBATES** for the following efficient natural gas equipment purchases made through December 31, 2021:



### NATURAL GAS EQUIPMENT

	STANDARD REBATE	BONUS REBATE	TOTAL REBATE*
Retrofit Furnace ≥92% AFUE	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$300.00
Retrofit Furnace ≥95% AFUE	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$600.00
Retrofit Furnace ≥97% AFUE	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$800.00
Smart Thermostat	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$100.00
Boiler ≥85% AFUE	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$400.00
Boiler ≥90% AFUE	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$800.00
Boiler ≥95% AFUE	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$1,000.00
WaterSense Showerheads	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$50.00
Attic Insulation – Self Installed	\$125.00	\$125.00	\$250.00
Attic Insulation – CEE Contractor	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$700.00
Attic Air Sealing	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$400.00
Rim Joist Sealing/Insulation	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$300.00

\*Combined total rebate not to exceed purchase price

Visit [www.owatonnautilities.com](http://www.owatonnautilities.com) to learn more and download a Natural Gas Rebate Application with complete terms and conditions.

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# OPU MEMO



Roger Warehime,  
General Manager

## OPU Commission

Mr. Matt Kottke  
Mr. Kent Rossi  
Mr. Randy Doyal  
Mr. Jay Johnson  
Mr. Doug Zirngible

Winter is coming, and unfortunately, the cost of staying warm is going to be higher than it has been in recent years. Current estimates for wholesale natural gas prices across the Midwest this winter are approximately double what they were last year. Fortunately for OPU customers, we prepurchase much of the gas we will need and we control our distribution costs. This means the impact to our customers will be “only” 30-40% higher, compared to last winter.

So why the dramatic increases this year? There are two key factors that are causing this significant increase. First, prices last winter were at all-time lows (excluding the February gas event where gas prices spiked to astronomical levels for a few days). By comparison, even returning to historically “normal” prices this winter would mean a price increase.

Second, demand coming out of the pandemic has increased faster than supply, causing natural gas in storage to be less than the market expects for this time of year. In addition, a colder-than-average winter is predicted which means consumption goes up creating even greater demand. As you probably remember from your high school economics class, when supply goes down and demand goes up, prices increase.

On top of the expected 30-40% higher prices this winter, we still have the “true-up” costs from the February cold snap in Texas which is being added to each customer’s monthly bill until March of 2022. I know I am not painting a very pretty picture, we just feel it is important for you to have this information.

Fortunately, if we were to experience another short-term price spike this year similar to what happened in February, we are protected. We have put into place some new measures that provide us with price protection from momentary price spikes. These measures include a combination of pre-purchasing more natural gas than we have in the past, along with additional balancing services we have added to our contract with the pipeline.

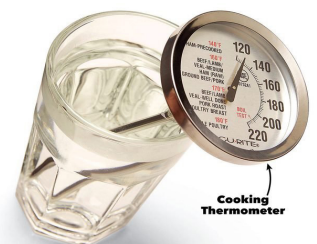
We know these price increases are not good news. Still, it’s important to keep in mind that despite these increases, natural gas prices are still lower than what they were 10-15 years ago, and natural gas is still the most affordable heating fuel. While we may not be able to control the rate we have to pay, we can each control how much natural gas we use. To help you take control of your bill, we have doubled our rebate amounts for conservation measures which save natural gas such as insulation, high efficiency furnaces, and programmable thermostats. You can get more information about these programs in this newsletter and on our website.

For those of you who may still struggle to pay your bill, please contact our customer service representatives at 507/451-2480. They can work with you to set up a payment plan and they may also be able to connect you with energy assistance resources.

Let’s all hope the weather predictions turn out to be wrong and this winter ends up being mild!

## CONSERVATION TIP\$

Save on natural gas by setting your water heater to 120 degrees. To check the water temp you will need a glass and a thermometer such as a meat or candy thermometer. Place the thermometer in your glass and run hot water into the glass until the water is as hot as it gets. After adjusting your water heater, wait 24 hours and check the temperature again.



Cooking Thermometer

## Winter Parking Ordinance

The Owatonna Police Department would like to remind our community members of the upcoming winter parking clause to the City of Owatonna parking ordinance which goes into effect beginning November 15, 2021 and remains in effect until March 31, 2022. The purpose of the ordinance is to facilitate snow removal and street maintenance. If it is necessary for you to park a vehicle on the street between 12:01 AM and 12:00 PM (noon), you should park on the even house numbered side of the street on even numbered calendar days and likewise, park on the odd numbered house side of the street on odd numbered days. If you park your car after 12:00 PM (noon) and intend to leave it parked overnight, you should anticipate the midnight date change. Also keep in mind that in December and January, we will have two odd days in a row, December 31st and January 1st. It is the responsibility of hosts to notify visitors or guests of the odd/even side parking restriction.

Odd/Even parking enforcement is not contingent on an impending snowstorm or a snow event. It is the objective of the Owatonna Police Department to educate our community members and seek voluntary compliance before enforcement action is necessitated. Education and voluntary compliance, followed by consistent enforcement, results in a significantly more effective and efficient street maintenance operation.

### **WINTER PARKING MAP WEBAPP**

Use the new Owatonna Winter Parking Map WebApp to see where to park for the winter parking restrictions in Owatonna that runs November 15 – March 31.

The Winter Parking Map WebApp will show where parking is allowed and those areas that are exempt from the winter parking restriction.

Easily search an address to determine the odd and even side.

Please review the initial screen when accessing the WebApp for pertinent information that explains how to interpret and understand the winter parking restriction.

A green line indicates the side that is even.

A red line indicates the side that is odd.

A black line indicates this area is exempt from the winter parking ordinance due to restrictions.

A yellow line will appear during 12:01 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. (noon) to indicate the side of the street you should park on if the area is not restricted.

Access the Winter Parking Map WebApp at <https://gis.ci.owatonna.mn.us/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a514111773524a1fa3f266bfa1c5b7ed> or scan this QR code with your phone.

The Owatonna Police Department would like to thank everyone for taking the time to adhere to this ordinance. The general intent of this ordinance is to provide on street parking for our residents and visitors and to assist the city street maintenance crews by ensuring efficient and effective snow removal that benefits all of us.

The Owatonna Police Department wants to wish everyone a safe and joyous holiday season, and travel with care! For more information, please call the Owatonna Police Department at 507-774-7200.

### **MAYOR**

Tom Kuntz

### **COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Dan Boeke

David Burbank

Nathan Dotson

Kevin Raney

Greg Schultz

Brent Svenby

Doug Voss



**SCAN ME**

# GET BONUS GREEN FOR BEING GREEN

## DOUBLE REBATES ON SELECT NATURAL GAS EQUIPMENT

### CONSERVE & \$AVE®

Natural gas is used in most homes for not only home heating but water heating, as well. Replacing older equipment with new high efficiency equipment will provide long term utility savings without having to sacrifice comfort. Some upgrades, like showerheads, are inexpensive while others can be more expensive and difficult for customers to afford. In an effort to help more customers make upgrades to their homes, OPU is offering bonus rebates that will DOUBLE the normal rebate through the end of this year.\*

Bonuses are available for:

- Furnaces – Up to \$800
- Boilers – Up to \$1000
- Smart Thermostats – Up to \$100
- Showerheads – Up to \$50
- Attic Insulation – Up to \$700
- Attic Air Sealing – Up to \$400
- Rim Joist Sealing and Insulation – Up to \$300

\*Terms and conditions are found on applicable rebate forms at [OwatonnaUtilities.com](http://OwatonnaUtilities.com). Rebates cannot exceed purchase price of equipment.

Upgrading equipment provides the most energy and cost savings (up to \$200 savings in heating costs per year with a new furnace), but upgrades are only one of the ways customers can save on natural gas costs through the year. The following tips can also reduce natural gas use and cost:

- Open shades and blinds during the day when the sun is shining. Radiant heat from the sun reduces how much heating equipment needs to operate, lowering heating bills. Make sure to close shades

when the sun has passed to help insulate windows and reduce heat loss. Even double and triple pane windows benefit from this.

- Program a thermostat setback or manually turn your thermostat down at night. Reducing the temperature in your home slows heat loss during the night, lowering utility costs. Turning your thermostat down by 8 degrees for 8 hours can save up to 8% on heating costs. Customers who prefer to stay warmer at night can use a heated blanket or heated mattress pad to stay warmer at night while letting the house or apartment cool off.
- Have furnaces and boilers cleaned and tuned every 2 years. A clean and tune not only extends the life of equipment, it also reduces heating costs about 2%. Rebates are available for Furnace and Boiler Clean and Tunes.
- Replace worn weather stripping on doors and windows. A small gap in the weather stripping around a door can act like a 2 inch hole in your wall letting cold, outdoor air in quickly.
- Use a humidifier and turn down the temp by 1-2 degrees. Dry air in the home feels cooler than properly humidified air.
- Wash clothes in COLD water. Modern washers and laundry detergent are just as effective using cold water and reduces how much water heaters run.

Following these tips and tricks will help reduce your utility bill this winter. For additional tips, visit our Conservation Tips page at: <https://www.owatonnautilities.com/residential-customers/conservation-tips/>

# Myth Busting



	Outdoor Temp	No Setback		Setback to 60°F	
		Indoor Temp	Cost of Furnace	Indoor Temp	Cost of Furnace
8:00:00 PM	30°F	68°F	\$ 0.1644	68 °F	\$ 0.1644
9:00:00 PM	30°F	68°F	\$ 0.1644	65 °F	\$ -
10:00:00 PM	30°F	68°F	\$ 0.1644	63 °F	\$ -
11:00:00 PM	30°F	68°F	\$ 0.1644	62 °F	\$ -
12:00:00 AM	30°F	68°F	\$ 0.1644	61 °F	\$ -
1:00:00 AM	30°F	68°F	\$ 0.1644	60 °F	\$ 0.1302
2:00:00 AM	30°F	68°F	\$ 0.1644	60 °F	\$ 0.1302
3:00:00 AM	30°F	68°F	\$ 0.1644	60 °F	\$ 0.1302
4:00:00 AM	30°F	68°F	\$ 0.1644	60 °F	\$ 0.1302
5:00:00 AM	30°F	68°F	\$ 0.1644	64 °F	\$ 0.4316
6:00:00 AM	30°F	68°F	\$ 0.1644	68 °F	\$ 0.4453
7:00:00 AM	30°F	68°F	\$ 0.1644	68 °F	\$ 0.1644
		Total	\$ 1.9728	Total	\$ 1.7262
				Savings per day:	\$0.2466
				Savings per month:	\$7.40

There is a misconception that setback thermostats don't save money. During the winter, homes constantly lose heat to the outside. Without discussing home upgrades, the major factors in how fast a home loses heat depends on the indoor temperature and the outdoor temperature. The greater the difference, the faster a home will lose heat.

As a home loses heat, the furnace runs to add heat back to the house. If a thermostat is set at a constant temperature, the furnace will provide the same amount of heat that is lost. Setting the temperature colder reduces the difference between the outdoor and indoor temperatures and slows down heat loss to the outdoors. As you can see in the example, although a furnace may have to work harder to warm a house back up, the benefits of a setback thermostat still provide energy and cost savings.



## LED Light Bulbs

**ON SALE NOW**

Reduced pricing through December while supplies last at these participating retailers:



Alexander Lumber Co.  
Arrow Hardware & Paint  
Batteries + Bulbs  
Lowe's  
Walmart



## TOYS FOR TOTS



U.S. MARINE CORPS RESERVE

OPU is proud to be a drop off location, again this year, for Toys for Tots. Bring your unwrapped toy to our office before December 10th and receive an LED light bulb for free!

# Carbon Monoxide Poisoning or COVID-19?

**SYMPTOMS:**  
Headache • Dizziness  
Drowsiness • Weakness  
Nausea • Vomiting  
Convulsions

**NO CO DETECTOR?  
Feeling symptoms?  
Do not call OPU. Call 911**

**CO DETECTOR ALARM?  
No symptoms? Get out!  
Call OPU: 507.451.1616**

Learn more at [OwatonnaUtilities.com](http://OwatonnaUtilities.com)



## Clean Streets for Clean Water!

In urbanized areas, stormwater carries phosphorus and other pollutants directly into Minnesota's water resources through the drainage system. Unlike Owatonna's household wastewater, stormwater does not go through the Wastewater Treatment Facility. In many cases, stormwater is discharged directly to our rivers and creeks.



**Disposal of yard waste including grass and leaves is strictly prohibited by City Ordinance.**



## Fall Clean Water Tips

1. Have a storm drain near your home? Volunteer to adopt it through the City's Adopt a Catch Basin Program and receive a complimentary rake to keep it free of leaves and debris.
2. Sweep up your grass clippings, leaves, and other debris from driveways, sidewalks, and the street. Don't forget to keep the gutters cleared.
3. Clean up any excess fertilizer that has spread onto hard surfaces during application.
4. Even as the weather turns cold, continue scooping your pet's waste.
5. During routine fall tune-ups check your vehicle and outdoor equipment for leaks.

Learn more about the **Adopt-A-Catch Basin Program** by contacting Bradley D. Rademacher, Water Quality/Stormwater Specialist at (507)-774-7300 or [Bradley.rademacher@ci.owatonna.mn.us](mailto:Bradley.rademacher@ci.owatonna.mn.us)

# Celebrate with Savings!

## BUY ENERGY EFFICIENT HOLIDAY LIGHTS OR DECORATIONS & APPLY FOR A REBATE:

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <p><b>1.</b> Purchase new LED holiday plug-in (not battery or solar operated) lights and decorations by December 31, 2021.</p> | <p><b>2.</b> Complete this page and submit it to your utility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• by March 31, 2022</li> <li>• with original sales receipt</li> <li>• with packaging showing the LED logo and number of lights per string (one package per type)</li> </ul> | <p><b>3.</b> Rebate is limited to 50% of LED string or package cost, tax excluded, up to maximum amounts listed below.</p> |
|--|---|--|

Customer Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Installation Address (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone # (with area code) \_\_\_\_\_  Home  Cell  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Account # \_\_\_\_\_  Residential  Commercial

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Date Purchased (MM/DD/2021)	Lamp Size	# of Lamps per String	Cost per Package	Qty of Packages	Total Cost of Packages (D X E)	Rebate Amount	Total Rebate (F X G) (up to max amounts*)	OFFICE USE ONLY
___/___/2021	<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other		\$		\$	50%	\$	\$
___/___/2021	<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other		\$		\$	50%	\$	\$
___/___/2021	<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other		\$		\$	50%	\$	\$
___/___/2021	<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other		\$		\$	50%	\$	\$
___/___/2021	<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other		\$		\$	50%	\$	\$
___/___/2021	<input type="checkbox"/> Mini <input type="checkbox"/> Other		\$		\$	50%	\$	\$

**\* Rebate is 50% of string or package cost (tax excluded), up to maximum amounts listed below:**

# of Lamps	Maximum Rebate per String
less than 99	\$3.00
100 - 199	\$6.00
200 - 299	\$9.00
300 or more	\$12.00

**OFFICE USE ONLY:** ID# \_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE Received \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date Processed \_\_\_\_\_

**GRAND TOTAL REBATE:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*(Rebates under \$75 will be applied to your account.)*

**TEAMING UP TO SAVE YOU MONEY**

**CONSERVE & \$AVE**

**Austin Utilities**  
 Attn: Rebate Processing  
 1908 14th St NE  
 Austin, MN 55912  
 507-433-8886  
 www.austinutilities.com  
 rebates@austinutilities.com

**Owatonna Public Utilities**  
 Attn: Rebate Processing  
 P.O. Box 800  
 Owatonna, MN 55060  
 507-451-2480  
 www.owatonnautilities.com  
 rebates@owatonnautilities.com

**Rochester Public Utilities**  
 Attn: Rebate Processing  
 4000 E River Rd NE  
 Rochester, MN 55906-2813  
 507-280-1500  
 www.rpu.org  
 rebates@rpu.org

Recipient must be an electric customer of Austin Utilities, Owatonna Public Utilities, or Rochester Public Utilities. Valid only on purchases made by December 31, 2021. All Utility Rebate terms and conditions apply.

0921



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](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.

## DON'T THROW AWAY OLD HOLIDAY LIGHTS.

# RECYCLE THEM!

Once you've purchased all the new energy efficient LED holiday lights you need this season (and applied for your rebate from Owatonna Public Utilities; see our website), what should you do with the old ones?

### Owatonna Public Utilities will recycle all of your old holiday light strands for FREE!

It's easy - just bring your old strands of lights into the Owatonna Public Utilities lobby and drop them in the bins designated for holiday light recycling.

Available now through January 31



*OPU will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 25 and 26 in observance of Thanksgiving. We will reopen on Monday, November 29 at 8:00 a.m. We wish all our customers a very blessed Thanksgiving.*

### 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.

