



OMU QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



OWNED BY THE PEOPLE IT SERVES

MARCH 2023 VOL. 59 ISSUE NO. 1

KEEP METERS SAFE

Please keep all your meters (electric, gas and water) visible and accessible. Our meter reader needs to access your meter each month to obtain correct readings and keep our billing accurate. The gas department also needs quick access in case of an emergency. Make sure to carefully clear snow and ice around your meters. Do not kick or hit the meters or piping to break away any ice. Use a broom to gently remove the snow. Please also do not shovel any snow up against your meter.

Please also keep any gate openings free of snow and make sure they are unlocked.

We appreciate your assistance in this matter. Thank you!



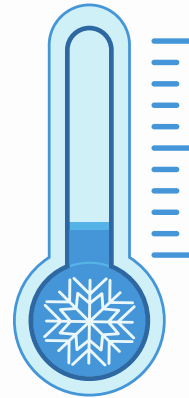
The OMU offices will be closed on Friday, April 7th for Good Friday.

Try this...

As we are in our cold weather season, here are some tips to help conserve natural gas.

1. Turn your thermostat down 3-5 degrees
2. Avoid using gas fireplaces
3. Lower the temperatures on your water heater to 120 degrees

With a community effort in conserving natural gas, we can help reduce the demand and minimize the cost for all.



BUDGET BILLING PAYMENT OPTIONS

As the seasons change and we are experiencing higher than normal energy costs, it can be very difficult to anticipate your monthly utility bill.

Flexible payment options are available to OMU customers to help take the guesswork out of bill paying. Budget billing is a free service that helps even out the fluctuations in the electric and gas portions of your utility bill. This is not a discount program and offers no savings or lower rates, however customers get the convenience of a more predictable bill.

The amount you pay OMU each month is determined by dividing your previous 12 months of electric and gas usage into 12 equal payments. This designated amount is payable each month regardless of actual monthly usage.

Some charges cannot be included in the budgeted amount and will be due in addition to the regular budget billing. What we can budget for is your electricity and gas. Water and sewer are billed at their consumption.

Accounts are reviewed yearly on your anniversary month to determine if the budget amount needs an adjustment to better match your usage. Your budget balance is the difference between your charges and your actual energy use. This will either be a charge or a credit and can be found on the back of your bill. If you would like to adjust your budget amounts, please call our office to do so.

To achieve the most accurate budget billing amount, OMU recommends that customers have 12 months of usage history before signing up for this service. You can choose to stop budget billing at any time. Any remaining balance will be added to your next bill in your total amount due. Certain OMU programs may not be eligible for budget billing, and you must have no prior balances due to qualify. For more information or to see if you qualify, contact Customer Service at 641-832-3731.



National Do Not Call Registry



The National Do Not Call Registry was created to stop unwanted sales calls. It is free to register your home or cell phone and it never expires. Your registration with the national Do Not Call Registry will help to prevent most unwanted calls. Either sign up at www.donotcall.gov or call 1-888-382-1222. If you register your number at their website, you will receive an email with a link you need to click on within 72 hours to complete your registration.

- Telemarketers update their lists every 31 days, so you can expect fewer calls after 1 month.
- You can file a complaint if you are still receiving telemarketer calls after 90 days of registering with the Do Not Call Registry. Call their number above or visit their website.
- Registering will not stop calls from certain non-profit and political organizations and calls from organizations with which you have established a business relationship.

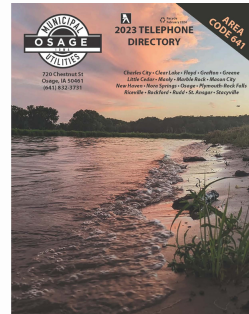


Project Share is an energy assistance program sponsored by Osage Municipal Utilities. Emergencies and challenging economic times can often make it difficult for people to pay their utility bills. Programs like Project Share can provide a way for you to help those that are truly in need. When you donate to Project Share, you help local families. Simply choose the amount you would like to contribute, call OMU at 641-832-3731 or stop by our office and this amount can be added to your monthly utility bill. If you prefer, you can also make a one-time donation. All donations are tax-deductible. Thank you for past donations and making a difference in your community.

OMU PHONEBOOKS



OMU phone directories were delivered in early February. If you are needing any additional phonebooks, you can pick them up at the OMU office.



Congratulations to Carolyn Duncomb, the winner of our 2023 Phonebook Cover Contest. The picture featured on our cover was taken on the banks of the Cedar River by Duncomb Hill. Thank you for all of the entries!

Reminder to Travelers

Please help us help you. When traveling for an extended period of time, simply call our office and leave a forwarding address. Without a forwarding address, your utility bill may be returned to OMU marked "temporarily away". Failure to receive a utility bill does not excuse assessment of a penalty if the bill is not paid by the due date. Your cooperation may help you avoid a past due penalty.



Iowa requires that all utility location requests for underground facilities go through the Iowa One Call System. Therefore, all customers or contractors who call OMU for utility locates will be referred to the Iowa One Call Service. Their toll-free number is 1-800-292-8989 or simply call 811.

Iowa One Call must be notified anytime excavation or digging is expected to exceed 12 inches in depth. Normal farming and gardening activities are excluded from this requirement. Iowa One Call asks that 48 hours' notice be given (excluding weekends and holidays) before excavating begins.





ELECTRIC, GAS, COMMUNICATIONS

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Annual FCC Telephone Battery Backup Disclosure

Modern digital telephone services will not operate without power. This was not true with historical “copper land line” telephones. Today, all electronic components associated with your telephone line now require battery backup or they will stop operation during a power outage. This has become less important with the pervasiveness of cellular phones, which usually continue working during a traditional power outage, and can therefore be used in an emergency.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT IF ANY EQUIPMENT LOSES POWER TELEPHONE SERVICES WILL NOT WORK. THIS INCLUDES 911, HOME SECURITY SYSTEMS, MEDICAL MONITORING DEVICES, OR ANY OTHER SYSTEM THAT RELIES ON TELEPHONE SERVICE FOR OPERATION.

Osage Municipal Utilities have battery backups available for both our cable modem subscribers and our fiber to the premise subscribers.

CABLE MODEM SUBSCRIBERS

When your eMTA Modem (Embedded Multimedia Terminal Adapter) was originally installed, we provided a battery that is rated at a minimum of 4 hours of idle run time. In many cases this is enough as our line department and/or generation department will have power restored within this time frame. We do have batteries rated at 24 hours available for purchase if you would like a longer available run time. The 24 hour rated batteries are not available for all eMTA devices and may require us to replace the eMTA at no additional cost. eMTA battery ratings are at idle, and any calls made will drastically reduce this time, so it is recommended that during a power outage to only use your phone as necessary. This battery will only provide power for the eMTA and phone service, it will not provide power for the cable modem for internet service. It also will not provide power to any cordless phones, medical monitors, or home security devices. If you do not have a wired telephone, or a battery back up for your cordless phone, your phone service will not work, even with a battery back up installed in the eMTA.

Also, please keep in mind that we do have active equipment in the plant that requires power. All active equipment is equipped with their own batteries with a minimum runtime of 4 hours. This is generally enough time for power to be restored, or generation of power to be started.

FIBER TO THE HOME/PREMISE SUBSCRIBERS

When your ONT Modem (optical Network Terminal) was installed, a battery backup was not installed. Osage Municipal Utilities does have battery backup units rated for 24 hours of idle time available for purchase. This battery will only provide power for the eMTA and phone service, it will not provide power for the cable modem for internet service. It also will not provide power to any cordless phones, medical monitors, or home security devices. If you do not have a wired telephone, or a battery backup for your cordless phone, your phone service will not work, even with a battery backup installed in the ONT.

Also please keep in mind that we do have active equipment in the plant that requires power. All active equipment is equipped with their own batteries with a minimum runtime of 4 hours. This is generally enough time for power to be restored, or generation of power to be started.

TESTING AND MONITORING

eMTA modems perform self-testing on the batteries, and OMU can monitor the status of the eMTA batteries. If a battery does need to be replaced, there will be a charge for the battery. Most batteries will last 3 to 5 years. You can also check the status of the battery yourself. On the eMTA if the battery light is on solid, the battery is operating normally, if it is flashing, it needs to be replaced, and if it is off, the battery is not present. To test the battery manually, you can unplug your eMTA modem from power and attempt to make a test call. This will not test any other equipment outside of the eMTA modem.

The battery backup for fiber customers do not perform a self-test, and we are not able to monitor them. If the battery needs to be replaced, the battery backup unit will make an audible beep. You can perform testing on the battery backup unit by unplugging it from power and attempting to make a call.

Battery Options

eMTA Cable Modem Options

TM822/TM804 24-hour standby time	\$70.00
TG3452 24-hour standby time	\$165.00

Fiber ONT

803G 24-hour standby time	\$150.00
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