

OWASA Board authorizes procurement, implementation planning for Advance Metering Infrastructure (AMI).



On March 24, the OWASA Board of Directors authorized staff to proceed with the procurement process and implementation planning for an AMI system.

The Board's decision followed a study of meter technologies with a consultant and a community engagement process with information provided to all accountholders and multiple opportunities to comment to the OWASA Board. More than 70 citizens have asked questions or commented on AMI since mid-February 2016. Most people who commented expressed support for AMI.

AMI is a meter reading system in which battery-powered transmitters at water meters send water use data to radio antennae located throughout the community. The antennae then relay the water use information to a secure database. OWASA and customers with on-line access can then check water use for irregularities or patterns which may indicate a water leak.

An AMI system will:

- Enable OWASA to notify customers about apparent water leaks.
- Allow customers to monitor their water use daily.
- Help limit the impact of leaks in private plumbing systems by identifying them much more quickly than is currently possible.
- Eliminate the need for OWASA employees to travel in the community to read water meters monthly, thus reducing vehicle and fuel costs, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from conventional fuel use.
- Cost about **\$6 million**, but will pay for itself over time through increased efficiency and eliminating planned investments in our current meter system. Savings would average about **\$325,000** per year.
- Not require an increase in our monthly water and sewer rates.

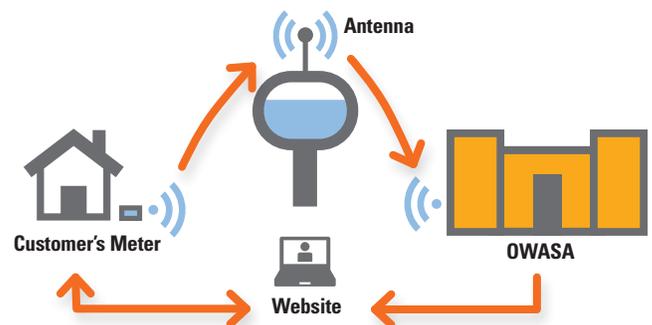
- Not require layoff of utility mechanics who read meters. They will be assigned to other tasks. Through normal turnover, OWASA will reduce its workforce by 8 positions over time due to the greater efficiency of AMI.
- Use low-power radio signals for intermittent (not continuous) data transmissions from a meter.

We estimate that preparing bid documents, receiving bids and awarding a contract(s) may be completed in 2016. Installing the AMI system may take about 18 months to two years, but this estimate will be refined after we receive and evaluate bids.

Questions or comments?

Please contact us at **919.968.4421** or info@owasa.org.

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)



Also in this issue:

- Results from 2015 Customer Survey.
- Annual mowing and clearing. (please see other side)

CONTACT US

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400 Jones Ferry Road, Carrboro, NC 27510
Customer Service phone and e-mail:
919.537.4343 • customerinquiries@owasa.org
Office Hours: 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday-Friday
Emergencies and Main Office phone:
919.968.4421 • www.owasa.org • info@owasa.org

Results from 2015 Customer Survey

In the fall of 2015, we invited citizens to participate in a survey about our services and related items.

We sincerely thank everyone who gave us feedback through the survey. Feedback from the community is essential as we work to continuously improve our services! Customers gave us positive ratings on many aspects of our services and identified opportunities to improve as well.

More than 800 people responded to our survey. The survey was open to anyone and not intended to get replies from a representative sample of customers. The survey results included:



75% rated the value of our services as good to excellent in light of the cost, quality and reliability.

 **88%** rated the taste of our water as good to excellent.

 **79%** rated the health and safety of our water as good to excellent.

For a compilation of the survey results including comments, please visit our website, owasa.org; or contact us at **919.968.4421** or info@owasa.org.

Annual Mowing and Clearing of Sewer Easements Helps Prevent Wastewater Overflows

Each spring, we start our annual program of mowing and clearing our sewer easements. The purpose of this program is to maintain safe, timely access to our sewers for various kinds of work, and to help prevent wastewater overflows.

The roots of trees and shrubs are naturally attracted to sewers because of the water and nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen compounds) in wastewater. When roots get into a sewer through even a tiny crack, the roots can grow to form a dense mass that will block the flow of wastewater. When wastewater cannot flow in a sewer, the result is an overflow,

typically from a manhole uphill or “upstream” of the blockage.

In many locations, we allow trees and shrubs to be planted in the outer 5 feet of both sides of an easement. Our easements are often 30 feet wide (15 feet on each side of the sewer).

If you wish to plant in an easement or if you are not sure whether there is an OWASA sewer or easement on your property, please call our **Water Distribution and Wastewater Collection Systems Department** at **919.537.4292** or send an e-mail to info@owasa.org.

Recreation Days and Hours at Our Lakes Through Mid-November 2016

Our Lakes	Open Days	Hours	Locations	Information	Fees
University Lake	Friday,* Saturday and Sunday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM	West side of Carrboro via Old Fayetteville Road	919.942.8007 rglosson@owasa.org	Depend on age, type of recreation/rental and whether lake patron is an OWASA customer or an Orange County resident.
Cane Creek Reservoir	Friday* and Saturday		North side of NC 54 about 8 miles west of Carrboro Plaza	919.942.5790 jriley@owasa.org	

* The lakes will be open for the Memorial Day, July Fourth and Labor Day holidays.

Español

Este boletín informativo contiene información sobre los servicios de agua y alcantarillado de **OWASA**. Para obtener una traducción, por favor llame al **919.537.4221** o mande un correo electrónico a: info@owasa.org. ¡Muchas gracias!