

Customer Satisfaction Survey

As part of our commitment to continuously improve our services, it's important for us to measure customer satisfaction and identify how we can improve. In May of this year, we mailed a Customer Satisfaction Survey to a random sample of **3,000** accountholders and received **441** replies (**15%** response rate). The results of the survey are posted on our website (www.owasa.org) under *What's New*.

Generally, the survey results were very positive. Large majorities of customers responded with favorable answers to questions about the taste and safety of OWASA's water, the value of our services, the quality of our customer service, and our work to promote conservation and protect the environment.

For example, **82%** of survey participants rated the safety of our drinking water as good, very good or excellent; and **73%** rated the overall value of our water and sewer services as good to excellent.

The survey also identified several opportunities for improvement. Some customers said:

- OWASA's services are expensive.
- As customers use less water, OWASA's rates go up.
- How do I know if my water is safe?
- Sometimes I taste chlorine in my water.
- How do I know if my bills are accurate?
- I don't know about *Taste of Hope*, OWASA's customer assistance program.

In the future, we will work to address each of these issues. We also plan to survey our customers from time to time in the future to measure our progress. While we work each day to provide high quality and reliable services, we believe that understanding our customers' points of view is essential for knowing what our customers value and where improvements are needed.

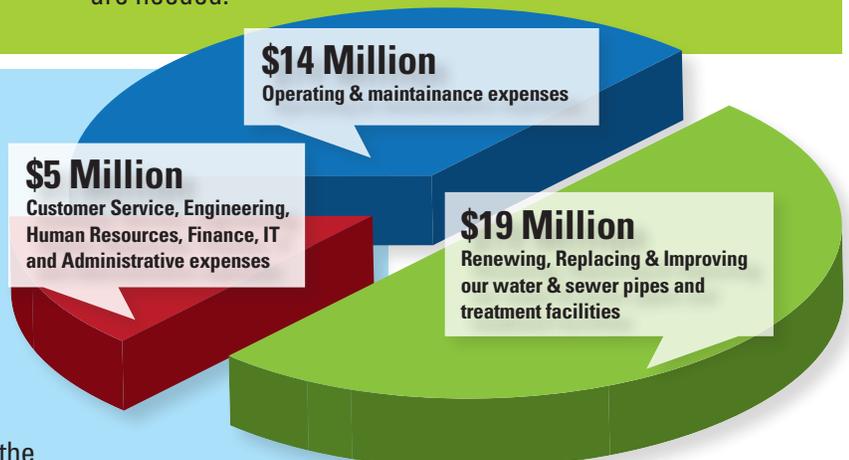
Where does the money go?

OWASA will receive about **\$38 million** in revenue this year and almost all of it will come from fees our customers pay for services. Here's how that money will be spent.

In keeping with our objective of being good stewards of the community's water and sewer system, we invest about half of every dollar in our water and sewer infrastructure. These funds are used to:

- **Renew water and sewer pipes and treatment facilities**
- **Replace aging water and sewer lines**
- **Improve our system to ensure the reliability and quality of our services**
- **Make payments on debt used to finance infrastructure projects**

As shown in the graph, the remainder of our revenue is used to provide services and maintain our facilities.



CONTACT US

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customerservice@owasa.org

Office Hours:
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Conservation Works!

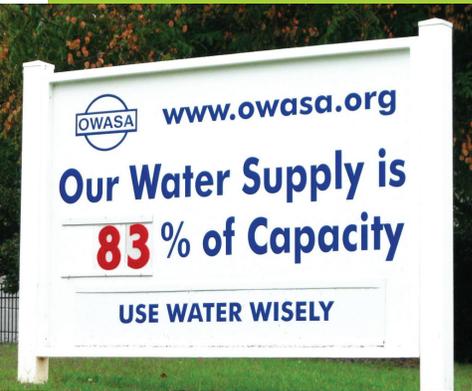
In 2000, before the severe droughts of 2001/2002 and 2007/2008, water use in single-family homes averaged about

6,000 gallons per month. Today, families in single-family homes use an average of about **4,000 gallons** per month.

Many factors influenced this significant decrease in the use of water such as the community's strong conservation

values; water-saving practices and investments such as replacing old toilets and washers; and water rates that promote conservation.

Conservation will continue to be a crucial part of our community's water resource future and we commend all of our customers for their conservation achievements. Lower water demand reduces long-term costs by deferring the need to expand our water supply sources as well as our water and wastewater system capacities. And since pumps that use conventional energy sources have to be used to move water and wastewater throughout the community, using less water reduces greenhouse gas emissions.



Tip!

If you are a residential customer and you use more than an average of **4,000 gallons** per month, feel free to contact us or visit our website for information on conservation opportunities.

OWASA's Fixed Costs

In many businesses, an organization's costs go up as its customers buy more of its products. For OWASA and other water utilities, it's different. About **80%** of OWASA's costs stay the same no matter how much water customers use. These fixed costs include testing water, repairing and maintaining pipes and equipment, personnel costs, reading water meters, etc.

OWASA's only variable costs are the chemicals used in water and wastewater treatment and a portion of the energy costs of operating the system. Unlike fixed costs, these variable costs increase when water use increases. Energy and chemical costs are significant, adding up to almost **\$4 million** per year. However, that's only about **20%** of our annual operating costs.

What is OWASA and what does it do?



OWASA is a community-owned, public, non-profit service agency that provides drinking water, sanitary sewer and reclaimed water services to the Carrboro-Chapel Hill community.

The community owns OWASA in the same way that citizens own local schools, parks, police and fire stations, and libraries.

A nine-member Board of Directors governs OWASA by setting policies; adopting annual budgets, rates and infrastructure plans; and appointing the Executive Director, General Counsel and external auditor. The Chapel

Hill Town Council appoints five of OWASA's Board Members and the Carrboro Board of Aldermen and Orange County Board of Commissioners each appoint two.

OWASA is committed to serving the community at the lowest possible rates consistent with the need to provide safe, high-quality, sustainable and reliable service; to protect the community's investments in the water, sewer and reclaimed water infrastructure; and to maintain financial integrity and stability.

Fact



Reclaimed water

is highly treated wastewater that is recycled and used by UNC-Chapel Hill for non-drinking purposes such as water in cooling towers and systems, irrigation, and toilet flushing.

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!