



ORANGE WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

A public, non-profit agency providing water, sewer and reclaimed water services to the Carrboro-Chapel Hill community.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chapel Hill Town Council

THROUGH: Robert Morgan, OWASA Board Chair

FROM: Todd Taylor, P.E., OWASA General Manager of Operations

DATE: March 28, 2018

SUBJECT: Agua Vista Update

Thank you for the opportunity to speak at your April 11, 2018 meeting about this very important initiative. On March 20, 2018, the same presentation was given to the Carrboro Board of Aldermen.

Background

Agua Vista is OWASA's new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) initiative. We are making this investment in our infrastructure to enhance our services in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro area by improving the efficiency and accuracy of water metering and billing. The system will use a radio network to very briefly transmit customer usage data to OWASA on a daily basis, eliminating the need for visual reading of customer meters. The technology is proven, reliable, secure, and safe.

There are several benefits to an AMI system:

- Water conservation from early leak detection, helping to prevent high water bills and property damage.
- Operational efficiency and increased meter reading accuracy. Our current meter reading staff will transition to other functions.
- A web-portal where customers can monitor their water use and request consumption alerts (Coming in late 2018).
- Less vehicle miles for meter reading means less carbon emissions and traffic in our community.

The project will take about two years, with an estimated completion date of June 2019. We will hold our contractor, Mueller Systems, and their sub-contractors to the same high standards for the work which we hold ourselves. The project logo (shown below) will be prominent on correspondence, vehicles, and door tags to make them readily identifiable.



System Infrastructure

We have installed over half of the infrastructure necessary to relay meter reading data from the new meters. This infrastructure includes data collectors on tall buildings and water towers and signal repeaters on street signs.

Meter Upgrades and Billing

In late 2017 and early 2018, we successfully completed two readiness tests (i.e. pilots) during which we upgraded about 500 residential and commercial water meters and processed and mailed bills for those customers.

Community Engagement

In October 2017, we mailed every OWASA customer an informational flyer letting them know what to expect in terms of timeline.

As we move through the community upgrading meters, individual customers will be notified by letter of their upcoming meter upgrade about four weeks in advance. We are also actively posting information in affected neighborhoods on Next Door in advance. Once upgraded, customers will receive a door hanger with information and link to the follow-up survey.

After approximately 75% of the meters have been upgraded, we expect to roll out a web portal for customers to access their own hourly water use data. Currently, OWASA is analyzing the data on upgraded meters and proactively reaching out to customers if their water use trends suggest a leak.

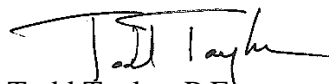
Moving Forward

We are committed to making this project a successful and positive one for our community.

For more information about Agua Vista please visit our project webpage at <http://owasa.org/metering-initiative> which contains an informative video, answers to frequently asked questions and more.

I look forward to discussing this important initiative with you at your upcoming Town Council meeting.

Best regards,



Todd Taylor, P.E.
OWASA General Manager of Operations