



Northside News



March 2015

A print-link for neighborhoods of change

Vol V, Issue 3

How to Save Money on Your OWASA Bill By Orange Water and Sewer Authority Staff

Do you wish your monthly water and sewer bills were lower? Each time you turn the water on, do you think about how much it costs to use that water, and how much you can lower your bill by reducing your water use? The Orange Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA) is working with the Jackson Center and other service agencies on ways to help OWASA customers in financial need, and we want you to know some quick and easy ways to reduce your water and sewer bills.

Over the last several months, the Jackson Center, Inter-Faith Council for Social Service (IFC), and EmPOWERment have worked with OWASA to study water use at about twenty homes, mostly in the Northside and Pine Knolls neighborhoods. We found that two of the best ways to reduce water bills are:

- Checking for and fixing leaks (over 40% of the homes we studied had leaks).
- Taking short showers (5 minutes or less).



What are the best ways to reduce OWASA's bills?

(Savings estimated below are for a typical family using 4,000 gallons per month. Your savings will differ depending on your monthly water use.)

- 1. Take short showers instead of baths –** You'll save money on both your water and energy bills and you'll get just as clean. Challenge everyone in your family to reduce the time they spend in the shower – that could add up to big savings each month!
A bath takes about 35 gallons, compared to 12.5 gallons for a 5-minute shower.
By taking a 15-minute shower each day (using a 2.5 gallon per minute showerhead), one person uses more than 1,100 gallons a month. This adds about \$14.50 to the monthly OWASA bill.
Save almost \$10 a month: With a 5-minute shower per day, one person would use 375 gallons a month. They would save more than \$9.50 a month on their OWASA bill, and save on water heating bills.
- 2. Install a WaterSense-certified, low-flow showerhead to save even more.** A daily 5-minute shower with a 1.5 gallon per minute showerhead will use 225 gallons per month, and cost less than \$3 a month. To get a free WaterSense showerhead from OWASA, please call 919-968-4421 or send an e-mail request to info@owasa.org.
- 3. Check for water leaks, and quickly repair any leaks you find.** Leaks can waste a lot of water and money, and may also cause property damage. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, on average, an American home wastes more than 10,000 gallons of water every year due to running toilets, dripping faucets, and other household leaks. If your bill spikes significantly one month, there is also a good chance you have a leak!
Toilets are one of the most common places for leaks, and many of them can be silent water wasters. To test for a toilet leak, put a couple drops of food coloring in the toilet tank, then wait about twenty minutes without flushing. If the color seeps into the bowl, there's a leak. Fix it quickly and you'll start saving water and money.

***If you are an OWASA customer and you find and fix a leak at your home or business, please contact OWASA Customer Service (e-mail to customerinquiries@owasa.org or call 919-537-4343) to see if you might be able to receive an adjustment on your OWASA bill. Billing adjustments must be requested within 90 days of the date of the high water bill resulting from the loss/leak, or OWASA notifying you of high water use (whichever is earlier). Accounts may be adjusted due to leaks only once every three years.*

FACT: A toilet leaking one gallon of water every hour can add more than \$9 to your OWASA bill. A toilet leaking 10 gallons an hour wastes more than 7,000 gallons of water each month, and adds more than \$90 to your bill.

- 4. Reduce the amount of water you use for toilet flushing.** Toilet flushing is the largest single water use in a typical residence, accounting for 25 to 30% of indoor water use. You can save water by flushing only when necessary, and by not using the toilet as a trashcan. The folks at OWASA will be glad to give you information about how to reduce water use for flushing.
- 5. Run your clothes washer and dishwasher when you have a full load.** You will use the same amount of water whether you run a full load or a partial load.
- 6. Turn off the tap while you brush your teeth, wash your face, shave, etc.**
- 7. Soak pots, pans, and dishes instead of letting the water run while you scrape them clean.** Don't let the water run while you are washing the dishes – fill the sink basin or a container with wash water and rinse when all of the dishes have been soaped and scrubbed. (Also, fat, oil and grease should be put in the trash and not go down the drain.)
- 8. Insulate hot water pipes–** (to help keep the hot water warm, so you won't have to waste water letting the water run until it warms up at the faucet or shower.)
- 9. Install a shut-off nozzle on your hose to turn the water off while you wash your car or water outdoors.**

Thank you for using water wisely! For information about how to check for leaks, or to request a review of water use at your home, please call OWASA at 919-968-4421, send an e-mail to info@owasa.org, or check out the conservation information on OWASA's website at www.owasa.org.

You can also contact the Jackson Center at 919-960-1670 and we'll provide you a copy of OWASA's brochure about how to check for leaks around your home or business.

For more information, please contact either of the following OWASA staff members:

Patrick Davis – by phone at 919-537-4210 or via e-mail to pdavis@owasa.org

Greg Feller – by phone at 919-537-4267 or via e-mail to gfeller@owasa.org

A Brush with Kindness by Adwoa Asare and Rebecca Ogus

Cora Burchette has lived in her home on Knolls Street for over 50 years. It is the home where she lived with her husband of 32 years, raised 6 children, and where she has continued to live since his death. The memories that are part of Mrs. Burchette's home are just one reason why it was so meaningful to have it repaired.

Sunanda Dillon, Mrs. Burchette's youngest daughter, explained that her mother was excited for the new life that ABWK repairs would give her house. Little things, like fixing the railings on the porch, made a big difference in her mother's daily life, allowing her, for example, to lean on them as she chats with her neighbors outside. Growing up, Sunanda remembers how her parents sang in the Almee Jubilee Singers, a gospel group that traveled and performed on the radio. In addition to singing, Mrs. Burchette is known for baking delicious 7Up pound cakes!

Sunanda reminded everyone during the repair dedication that, "People can be kind, but they don't have to be kind to you." These are powerful words that we should consider daily. Who have you been kind to? Who have you not been kind to? The volunteers and staff from Habitat for Humanity are thankful that the Northside & Pine Knolls communities have been kind to us and welcomed us into their community as friends and partners.

In just two years, 15 A Brush with Kindness exterior home repairs were completed in Northside and Pine Knolls! Our hope is to continue at that pace and include TOWN OF CARRBORO residents this year. To learn more about the program or receive an application call Adwoa Asare at (919) 932-7077 ext 233.

Mrs. Burchette and Volunteers pose for a picture after her A Brush with Kindness Home Repair.

Join us Tuesday, March 31st from 6:00-7:00pm at St. Paul AME Church for an ABWK interest meeting.

Visit us at www.jacksoncenter.info or drop by 512 W. Rosemary Street or call us at (919) 960-1670!

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Home Repair Experience from Student Volunteers

I'll admit that I was slightly anxious upon arriving at the home of Effie Merritt on a cool spring morning last year for *A Brush with Kindness*. "Am I going to be of any use here?", I thought to myself, concerned that my lack of carpentry skills and limited experience with tools would constrain my ability to contribute to the team's efforts. Fortunately, my anxiety was quickly relieved when I was handed a can of paint and a brush and got to work painting the exterior of Ms. Effie's home. It didn't take long for conversations to begin. We got to know each other as we scraped, painted, and cleaned. Some were students like myself, others were residents of Northside or other neighborhoods in Chapel Hill. But while working together, we felt like one community. At the end of the day, we cleaned up and waved goodbye to the Merritt home. We felt good about the valuable work we had done that day, but even better about the relationships and sense of community we forged amongst ourselves as well. **By Patrick Carney: UNC student class of 2014**

Recently, I had the pleasure of volunteering through *A Brush With Kindness* to help renovate Dollie Hinch's house in Pine Knolls. I suspected that this volunteer experience would be analogous to others I had participated in, where I would be drafted to a mundane task for a set amount of time and then leave, somewhat unclear about the impact I was truly making. I was pleasantly incorrect. At Ms. Hinch's house, I was thrust into the process of installing an accessibility ramp with other volunteers. I was excited to work with a group of people who were excited about what they did, and even had the opportunity to interact with family members at the house who expressed their gratitude. This was the second time I had helped out with *A Brush With Kindness*, and each time, I had a gratifying experience that encourages me to go back. **By Luke Miller: UNC student class of 2017**

ASK KEITH

Ms. Keith Edwards is a lifetime resident of McDade Street and lifelong advocate for the community. Keith is widely known as a fighter for justice and receives



calls from neighbors asking her about programs and referrals for help with household and community issues. To submit questions for "Ask Keith," call the Jackson Center at (919) 960-1670 or email us at contact@jacksoncenter.info.

What is UNC-Chapel Hill, Town of Chapel Hill's, Self-Help, along with the Jackson Center's monetary Initiative for the Northside Community?

After reaching out to all organizations involved with this new initiative, this is a summary of their collective response.

On March 9th, UNC Chancellor Folt and Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt of Chapel Hill, made a big announcement that the University is providing a no-interest loan of \$3 million dollars to Self-Help Credit Union, to assist the Northside community.

Self-Help, an organization which operates a non-profit credit union based in Durham, will utilize a \$3 million no-interest loan from UNC-Chapel Hill to lead the acquisition and resale of properties in Northside that will be used for housing opportunities for home ownership and rental, consistent with the community's goals and vision that the community has set over several years (not to mention decades) of forums and leadership. Self-Help's work will be done with the support of the Town of Chapel Hill, in coordination with the Jackson Center, affordable housing agencies, Northside community members and other resource partners.

In order to make this new initiative successful, Self Help and the Jackson Center will continue to seek everybody's input. It is going to take many different kinds of meetings and gatherings to make sure everyone is informed and have a chance to be involved in the process.



AHEM ATTENTION ATTENTION!



This is a save the date for May 2nd! The Jackson Center invites you to the Annual May Day Celebration! Join us for delicious food, kids' games, history exhibits, music, dancing and more. This year's theme is Promise of Home in celebration of our Promise of Home Fund! This fund has been created to assist neighbors in need of emergency repairs to ensure everyone has a safe and livable home. Come celebrate our beloved community on the lawn of St. Joseph C.M.E. Church from 11 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Free Wills Drafting Clinic!



Thursday April 2nd
Morning Session: 9:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m. at Rogers Road Community Center.
Afternoon Session: 1:30 p.m.- 5:00 p.m. At The Marian C. Jackson Center.

Services include:

- Will**— Only document with power after your death
- Living Will**— Stating your "end of life" medical wishes
- Health Care Power of Attorney**— Document naming another person to make medical decisions for you.
- Durable Power of Attorney**— Document naming another person to manage your finances.

To schedule an appointment call the Jackson Center at 919-960-1670

Transportation can be provided

Easy Tips to Weatherize Your Home!

- Cover all windows with thick plastic. Kits are usually available at Home Improvement stores. You can also use thick plastic and duck tape.
- Hang long insulated drapes on all windows. Close drapes at night to block out the cold. Open during the day to let in sunlight and the warmth it brings.
- Check baseboards for cracks and gaps seal with caulk that is also available at Home Improvement Stores.
- Use area rugs on cold floors.
- Use weather stripping around all exterior doors with gaps. If you can see light coming through gaps in the door, cold air is coming in. The idea is to block out drafts and keep in heat.

ARCHIVE TRIVIA

<i>Submitted this month by:</i> <i>Anonymous</i>	Name two Northside Residents who are older than 95!	<i>Call in by Friday, March 20 by 10am (919) 960-1670 with your answers</i>
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Community Board

Birthdays in March: If we missed yours or someone else, call us to submit birthdays so we can make sure to remember them for the future.

- Maggie West—March 12
- Khaza Demetri Young— March 16, 2015
- Delores Bynum— March 23
- **Congratulations to Ms. Janie Alston. She will be receiving a Community Service Award from the Triangle Disability and Awareness Council on Friday March 20th, 7:00 p.m. at the Friday Center.**
- **A Brush With Kindness interest meeting:** Tuesday, March 31st from 6:00-7:00pm at St. Paul AME Church
- **Northside and Pine Knolls Community Outreach Meeting:** Tuesday April 14, 6:30 p.m.– 7:30 p.m. at Hargrave's Community Center.

Submit your community posts to the Jackson Center: 1-2 sentences recognizing individuals or significant events in the life of our community. Posts for the April issue are due on Friday March 27.

Special Attention: Do you like good music of the 60's and 70's? Do you like naming that tune? Do you need to exercise? Then come and walk on the Northside Gym at Hargrave's Community Center, on Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:30 a.m.– 11:30 a.m. Lots of fun and comradery!

Northside News is produced by the Marian Cheek Jackson Center for Saving and Making History with support from EmPOWERment, Inc. as a vehicle for communication among Northsiders, Midway business owners, and friends across the towns and county. Do you have a special photo or recipe to share? A local event to report or concern to raise? Please contact the Center at contact@jacksoncenter.info or (919) 960-1670 or come by 512 W. Rosemary St. to visit us. We look forward to your contributions!