

News releases by OWASA and Orange County during and following the water emergency from February 2nd to the 5th, 2017

- [Thursday, February 2, 6 PM](#): OWASA receiving water from Durham due to fluoride overfeed, customers asked to conserve, water may be discolored
- [Thursday, February 2 at 11 PM](#): OWASA receiving water from Durham, water is safe, customers asked to conserve; clarification that discolored water use not encouraged for aesthetic reasons
- [Friday, February 3 at 8:01 AM](#): Customers asked to limit water use to essential purposes due to reduced storage tank levels caused by major water line break, water safe
- [Friday, February 3 at 11:20 AM](#): OWASA directs customers not to use OWASA water due to pressure loss and potential for contamination
- [Friday, February 3 at 11:54 AM](#): Orange County relays OWASA news release directing no use of OWASA water
- [Friday, February 3 at 2:16 PM](#): Orange County Health Department directs no use of OWASA water
- [Friday, February 3 at 10:22 PM](#): Orange County publicizes locations of water distribution points.
- [Saturday, February 4 at 2:19 PM](#): Do Not Use directive lifted based on water quality testing, customers asked to limit water use to essential purposes
- [Saturday, February 4 at 7:50 PM](#): OWASA resumes operation of Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant, customers asked to
- [Sunday, February 5 at 9:32 AM](#): OWASA operations are normal, water safe, water use not limited to essential purposes
- [February 6 at 6:34 PM](#): Customers invited to receive information at February 9th Board meeting
- [February 8th at 1:32 PM](#): Timeline of actions by OWASA and Orange County Health Department regarding water emergency
- [February 10 at 12:17 PM](#): Outside consultants' reports on fluoride overfeed and water line break are available at OWASA's homepage, www.owasa.org
- [February 13 at 4:43 PM](#): Inter-Faith Council for Social Service seeks donations to emergency assistance fund for residents in water line break area

Orange Water and Sewer Authority

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

NEWS RELEASE February 2, 2017

OWASA temporarily receiving drinking water from City of Durham; water continues to be safe to drink

Due to an accidental overfeed of fluoride within the water treatment process, OWASA began receiving drinking water from the City of Durham late Thursday afternoon.

OWASA said the water continues to be safe for customers to drink because the overfeed of fluoride was contained within the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant. No water with higher than normal fluoride reached the water pipe system supplying OWASA customers.

OWASA expects to continue receiving water from the City of Durham for a few days while facilities affected within the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant are cleaned.

During this time, OWASA asks customers to continue to use water wisely.

OWASA customers are not expected to experience changes in water pressure, reliability of service or quality and safety of the water.

However, customers may notice some discoloration in water. The discoloration, which results from stirring up sediment in water pipes, does not make the water unsafe but it should not be used for laundry, cooking, drinking, etc. Customers are asked to report discoloration to OWASA by calling 919-968-4421 (24-hour number).

OWASA reported the fluoride overfeed within the water treatment plant to the NC Department of Environmental Quality. The incident Thursday does not involve a violation of drinking water standards because the affected water was contained within the treatment plant, as noted above.

OWASA and other utilities add fluoride to drinking water to help prevent tooth decay.

For more information

- Todd Taylor, P.E, General Manager of Operations, 919-537-4216 or ttaylor@owasa.org
- Ken Loflin, Water Supply and Treatment Manager, 919-537-4232 or kloflin@owasa.org
- Monica Dodson, Operations Supervisor, 919-537-4205 or mdodson@owasa.org
Katie Harrold, Laboratory Supervisor, 919-537-4227 or kharrold@owasa.org

Orange Water and Sewer Authority

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

NEWS RELEASE February 2, 2017 at 11 PM

**OWASA receives drinking water from City of Durham;
assures customers water is safe to drink;
asks customers to conserve water until further notice**

(This news release clarifies and adds to information released at 6 PM Thursday.)

Due to an accidental overfeed of fluoride within the water treatment process, OWASA began receiving drinking water from the City of Durham late Thursday afternoon.

OWASA said the water continues to be safe for customers to drink because the overfeed of fluoride was contained within the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant. No water with higher than normal fluoride reached the water pipe system supplying OWASA customers.

OWASA asks customers to conserve water because OWASA expects to continue receiving water from the City of Durham for a few days while facilities affected within the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant are cleaned.

For more information on how to conserve water, please visit www.owasa.org, and click on the Conservation and Education tab.

OWASA customers are not expected to experience changes in service quality and safety of the water.

Some customers may notice discoloration in their water. In this event, customers should run cold water for 5 to 10 minutes. If this does not clear up the water, OWASA suggests for aesthetic reasons not using the discolored water for laundry, cooking or drinking and that customers contact OWASA at 919-968-4421 (24 hour number).

OWASA reported the fluoride overfeed within the water treatment plant to the NC Department of Environmental Quality. The incident Thursday does not involve a violation of drinking water standards because the affected water was contained within the treatment plant, as noted above.

For more information

- Todd Taylor, P.E, General Manager of Operations, 919-537-4216 or ttaylor@owasa.org
- Ken Loflin, Water Supply and Treatment Manager, 919-537-4232 or kloflin@owasa.org
- Monica Dodson, Operations Supervisor, 919-537-4205 or mdodson@owasa.org
- Katie Harrold, Laboratory Supervisor, 919-537-4227 or kharrold@owasa.org

Orange Water and Sewer Authority

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

NEWS RELEASE February 3, 2017

URGENT MESSAGE

OWASA asks customers to limit water use to essential purposes due to reduced water levels in storage tanks; water remains safe to drink

OWASA asked customers Friday morning to limit water use to essential purposes because water supplies in its storage tanks have fallen to reduced levels.

OWASA expects to continue to receive water from the City of Durham for a few days due to an incident at its Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant as reported Thursday (more information is below).

However, water flow through connections between the Durham and OWASA systems has not been adequate to fill OWASA's tanks to normal levels. Customers are therefore asked to use water only for essential purposes.

OWASA is working to restore the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant to normal operation as soon as it is safe to do so. OWASA expressed deep appreciation to its customers for conserving and to the City of Durham for its invaluable help with water supply.

Best ways to conserve water

- Flush toilets only when necessary.
- Take short showers (less than 5 minutes); shower instead of taking a bath, which uses more water.
- Turn off water when not in use for brushing teeth, etc.
- Wash only full loads of clothes and dishes.
- Use paper plates and plastic utensils to reduce dishwashing.
- Check for and fix any leaks in toilets, faucets, hoses, pipes, etc.
- Defer washing vehicles with drinking water. (Some car washes use well water.)

For more information on how to conserve water, please visit www.owasa.org, click on the Conservation and Education and then click on water conservation tips.

Background information

Due to an accidental overfeed of fluoride within the water treatment process, OWASA began receiving drinking water from the City of Durham late Thursday afternoon.

The fluoride overfeed was contained at the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant. No water with higher than normal fluoride reached the water pipe system, so the water is safe to drink.

Some customers may notice discoloration in their water because changes in water flows can stir up sediment in water lines. To clear the water, customers should run cold water for 5 to 10 minutes. If this does not clear the water, OWASA suggests for aesthetic reasons not using the discolored water and that customers contact OWASA at 919-968-4421 (24 hour number).

For more information: Greg Feller, Public Affairs Administrator, 919-537-4267 or gfeller@owasa.org

Orange Water and Sewer Authority

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

NEWS RELEASE February 3, 2017 at 11:20 AM

EMERGENCY—DO NOT USE OWASA WATER

Water supply is running out, OWASA directs customers not to use water until further notice

OWASA directs its customers to not use OWASA water until further notice.

Due to a shutdown of the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant and a major water main break Friday morning on the northeast side of Chapel Hill near Dobbins Drive, the water supply in the OWASA system has reached very low levels. Using water could result in contamination of the OWASA system.

Customers are encouraged to use bottled water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene.

Customers can use bottled water to flush a toilet, after pouring water into the tank. If a toilet does not have a tank, it may be possible to pour water into the bowl to flush.

OWASA is working to restore the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant to normal operation as soon as it is safe to do so. OWASA field personnel are working to repair the water main break as soon as possible.

OWASA will send updates.

Background information

Due to an accidental overfeed of fluoride within the water treatment process, OWASA began receiving drinking water from the City of Durham late Thursday afternoon.

The fluoride overfeed was contained at the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant. No water with higher than normal fluoride reached the water pipe system, so the water is safe to drink.

For more information: Greg Feller, Public Affairs Administrator, 919-537-4267 or gfeller@owasa.org

From: Todd McGee [mailto:tmcgee@orangecountync.gov]
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 11:49 AM
To: News Orange Co <news-orangeco@list.co.orange.nc.us>
Subject: OWASA customers asked to stop using water immediately

OWASA directs its customers to not use water until further notice.

Due to a shutdown of the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant and a major water main break Friday morning on the northeast side of Chapel Hill near Dobbins Drive, the water supply in the OWASA system has reached very low levels. Using water could result in contamination of the OWASA system.

Customers are encouraged to use bottled water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene.

Please share this information with any residents or those who you believe may be served by OWASA.



Todd McGee
Orange County Community Relations Director
(919) 245-2302 (o)
(984) 220-5412 (cell)
tmcgee@orangecountync.gov

Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 2:16 PM



Media Contact:

Stacy Shelp, Public Information Officer
(919) 636-8842 or sshelp@orangecountync.gov

OWASA Customers ordered to not drink or use water

Do Not Drink Order

Due to low pressure in the OWASA service area we are not sure if the water is safe for consumption. Until testing has been completed, the Orange County Health Department is issuing a Do Not Drink order. Boiling water is not recommended. Only bottled water is recommended.

Do Not Use Order

Because of the water main break and the subsequent shortage, we are also issuing a Do Not Use order. Bottled water should be used for all water needs including flushing toilets, washing hands, cooking, etc...

Restaurants

All restaurants served by OWASA are being ordered closed by the Orange County Health Director.

Sent: Saturday, February 04, 2017 2:19 PM

February 4, 2017



**Orange County rescinds Do Not Use order for water;
OWASA encourages residents to restrict use to essential needs**

The Orange County Health Department and Orange Water And Sewer Authority (OWASA) said Saturday afternoon that OWASA water is safe for drinking and other uses, but customers should limit use to essential purposes because water supplies remain below normal levels.

“OWASA tested samples from across the service area to ensure the water is safe for public consumption,” said Orange County Health Director Colleen Bridger. “All of the tests came back safe earlier this afternoon. In light of these results, Orange County Health Department is rescinding the Do Not Use order. Restaurants and hotels are free to re-open. However, we encourage our residents to continue to practice water conservation strategies until OWASA’s storage has been replenished to normal levels.”

OWASA officials said that residents in the Foxcroft Drive area are under a boil water advisory due to the broken water main. Residents will be notified when this precaution is no longer needed.

“Affected customers will be receiving a notice advising them to boil water before consuming it until we can confirm that the water quality is acceptable,” said Ed Kerwin, OWASA Executive Director. “We will know by 7 a.m. Sunday morning (February 5th) if the boil water advisory can be rescinded.”

OWASA said the break on the 12-inch water main on Foxcroft Drive has been repaired by a contractor and service has been restored to the approximately 250 customers served by this main. The American Red Cross will deliver bottled water to the neighborhood.

“We appreciate the cooperation of the community during this incident, and we are grateful to our partners at the City of Durham, Chatham County and the Town of Hillsborough for their assistance,” said Kerwin. “We have completed the remediation and are in the early stages of restarting the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant.”

OWASA is receiving water from the City of Durham and Chatham County due to an incident at OWASA’s Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant Thursday. OWASA is working with the Town of Hillsborough for additional supply.

The four distribution points for the public to receive bottled water will remain open until 6 p.m. Saturday or until supplies are exhausted.

Best ways to conserve water

- Take short showers (less than 3 minutes); shower instead of taking a bath, which uses more water.
- Delay washing clothes until normal water use is allowed.
- Turn off water when not in use for brushing teeth, etc.
- Wash only full loads of dishes.
- Use paper plates and plastic utensils to reduce dishwashing.
- Check for and fix any leaks in toilets, faucets, hoses, pipes, etc.
- Flush toilets only when necessary.
- Defer washing vehicles with drinking water.

For more information on how to conserve water, please visit www.owasa.org, click on the Conservation and Education and then click on water conservation tips.

For more information

- Ed Kerwin, Executive Director, 919-537-4211 or ekerwin@owasa.org
- Todd Taylor, P.E, General Manager of Operations, 919-537-4216 or ttaylor@owasa.org
- Ken Loflin, Water Supply and Treatment Manager, 919-537-4232 or kloflin@owasa.org
- Colleen Bridger, Orange County Health Director, cbridger@orangecountync.gov
- Todd McGee, Orange County Community Relations Director, 984-220-5412 or tmcgee@orangecountync.gov
- Click [here](#) for more information.

From: David Hunt
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2017 10:22 PM
To: News Orange Co
Subject: Chapel Hill and Carrboro Water Distribution Sites



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: David Hunt, Orange County Emergency Operations Center
(919) 245-6154

Water Distribution Locations for Chapel Hill and Carrboro

ORANGE COUNTY, NC (February 3, 2017, 10:00 p.m.) – Public water distribution sites have been established for residents in Chapel Hill and Carrboro who have been impacted by the OWASA water shortage. The sites will open at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 4, 2017.

Town of Chapel Hill has two sites:

Site 1: Hargraves Community Center
216 N. Roberson Street
Chapel Hill NC 27514

Site 2: Southern Community Park
1000 Sumack Rd.
Chapel Hill NC 27615

Town of Carrboro has two sites:

Site 1: McDougal Elementary School
890 Old Fayetteville Rd,
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Site 2: Carrboro High School
201 Rock Haven Rd
Carrboro, NC 27510

###

David Hunt

Deputy Clerk / Information Specialist
Orange County, NC
919-245-2126

Orange Water and Sewer Authority

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

NEWS RELEASE February 4, 2017

OWASA resumes operation of the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant

OWASA restarted its Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant at 6:30 PM Saturday following a fluoride overfeed incident on Thursday, February 2nd.

It was necessary to stop the plant operation Thursday, and OWASA began receiving water from the City of Durham and subsequently Chatham County. The Town of Hillsborough also did extensive work to prepare for sharing water with OWASA if needed.

OWASA continues to receive water from Durham. However, the supply from the Chatham County system is no longer needed and was discontinued early Saturday evening.

OWASA is extremely grateful to the Carrboro-Chapel Hill community for its cooperation; to the City of Durham, Chatham County and Town of Hillsborough for their excellent support in sustaining the water supply; and to other partners and volunteers for serving the community very well in this difficult time.

Fluoride addition suspended pending review of overfeed incident

OWASA is temporarily not adding fluoride to drinking water pending a review of the incident Thursday, in which a higher than normal amount of fluoride was added to water contained within the plant. Water with above normal fluoride did not reach the pipe system which serves OWASA customers. The utility is investigating the overfeed and will report to the community at a later date.

Water safe, conservation requested

As publicized at 2 PM Saturday, OWASA's water has passed quality tests and is safe to drink except at about 250 residences on Foxcroft Drive who have been advised to boil water following a water line repair completed Saturday. OWASA will inform these customers when water is safe for normal use.

Customers are asked to conserve water.

For more information: Greg Feller, Public Affairs, 919-537-4267 or gfeller@owasa.org

Orange Water and Sewer Authority

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

NEWS RELEASE February 5, 2017

OWASA operations are normal, water remains safe to drink and water use is not limited to essential purposes

All OWASA operations are normal and the utility's water storage tanks are full.

Additional water testing completed at 9 AM today further confirmed that OWASA water is safe to drink.

Customers are asked to use water wisely at all times, but normal water use is now allowed.

OWASA stopped receiving water from the City of Durham Saturday at about 10 PM and ended the water transfer from Chatham County at about 6 PM Saturday.

On Saturday at 2 PM, the Orange County Health Department and OWASA had lifted the Do Not Drink and Do Not Use declarations issued Friday for OWASA water.

OWASA also reported that Sunday morning it rescinded a Boil Water Advisory for about 250 residences along Foxcroft Drive in Chapel Hill. The advisory had been distributed to residents because of a water line break Friday. The pipe repair was completed Saturday.

OWASA apologizes to customers for the significant disruption and inconvenience due to the need to cease use of OWASA water from Friday morning to mid-afternoon Saturday.

The utility reiterated its deep appreciation to the Carrboro-Chapel Hill community, the City of Durham, Chatham County, the Town of Hillsborough and other partners and volunteers for their excellent cooperation, understanding and support in the recent water supply emergency.

Due to a fluoride overfeed at the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant Thursday, it was necessary for OWASA to shut down the treatment plant and receive water from neighboring utilities.

OWASA is investigating the fluoride overfeed and water line break, and will report to the OWASA Board of Directors and the community at a later date.

For more information: Greg Feller, Public Affairs, 919-537-4267 or gfeller@owasa.org

Orange Water and Sewer Authority

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

NEWS RELEASE February 6, 2017

Customers invited to receive information on the recent water emergency by attending the OWASA Board meeting on Thursday night, February 9th

On Thursday night, OWASA staff will present a preliminary report about the water emergency from Thursday, February 2nd to early Sunday, February 5th. The OWASA Board invites residents, businesses and other members of the community to participate in the meeting and to give OWASA feedback and ask questions.

The Board meeting will begin at 6 PM on Thursday, February 9th, in the Council Chamber at the Chapel Hill Town Hall, 405 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Chapel Hill. The meeting will be televised live on cable channel 18 in the Chapel Hill area and on ATT U-verse channel 99. Additional channels are listed at <http://www.townofchapelhill.org/GovTV>.

Members of the public who attend the meeting may comment up to 4 minutes per person. They may also send comments in advance to info@owasa.org or to Andrea Orbich, Clerk to the Board, 400 Jones Ferry Road, Carrboro, NC 27510.

“We sincerely regret the significant disruptions to the community due to the emergency, and we are extremely grateful to our customers, the City of Durham, Chatham County, Town of Hillsborough and other partners and volunteers for their strong support, cooperation and understanding during this difficult time,” said John Young, Chair of the OWASA Board. “We are committed to transparency, prompt investigation and implementing improvements to minimize or prevent the potential for this kind of event,” he said.

OWASA is investigating the causes of a fluoride overfeed at the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant on Thursday, February 2nd. Due to the fluoride overfeed, OWASA shut down the treatment plant. The water with a high level of fluoride was contained within the treatment plant and did not reach the pipe system which carries water to OWASA customers. OWASA arranged to receive water for its customers from

the City of Durham and Chatham County. The Town of Hillsborough did extensive preparation to transfer water to OWASA if necessary.

OWASA is also investigating a break in a major water pipe on Friday, February 3rd at Foxcroft Drive. The line break resulted in the loss of more than 1 million gallons of water. Due to the loss of water pressure from both the broken water pipe and the shutdown of OWASA's treatment plant, it became necessary to direct customers to stop using OWASA water until it was confirmed safe to drink.

The Do Not Drink/Do Not Use directive by the Orange County Health Department on Friday, February 2nd was not related to concern about fluoride.

Based on testing completed on Saturday afternoon, normal water use was allowed as of 2 PM Saturday. OWASA's operations are now fully normal.

OWASA has hired outside engineering consultants to investigate the causes of the fluoride overfeed and water line break. The consultants' findings, when completed on a date to be announced, will be reported to the community and OWASA Board.

For more information:

- Greg Feller, Public Affairs, 919-537-4267 or gfeller@owasa.org
- www.owasa.org
- www.owasa.org/background-on-water-emergency

Timeline of Actions Taken by OWASA and the Orange County Health Department in Regards to the February 2017 Water Emergency

(Distributed on February 8th)

On February 2, 2017, OWASA's water supply was disrupted by an over-feed of fluoride at its water treatment plant on the west side of Carrboro; the contaminated water was contained within an onsite storage facility (the clearwell) and was not introduced to the public water distribution system. Water was initially supplied by the City of Durham and later by Chatham County interconnections to meet demand and maintain adequate storage volumes while the water treatment plant was out of service.

On February 3, 2017, in a separate but compounding event, a 12-inch water distribution main break occurred on the northeast side of Chapel Hill spilling more than a million gallons of water. Although, the break was quickly isolated, OWASA promptly issued a "DO NOT USE" directive due to concerns about its ability to maintain system pressures for water quality and firefighting needs. Shortly after, the Orange County Health Department issued "DO NOT USE" and "DO

NOT DRINK” directives. These directives were not made because of excess fluoride in the drinking water.

Early afternoon on February 4, 2017, after tank levels rebounded and test results confirmed that the water was safe to drink, the “DO NOT USE” and “DO NOT DRINK” directives were lifted. Between then and when the water treatment plant was restored to service on the evening of February 4, 2017, the City of Durham and Chatham County connections continued to supply water to the OWASA distribution system, and OWASA customers were asked to use water only for essential purposes.

The following timeline for particular events during the water emergency is provided to make a record of the events and their timeline during the water emergency. This chronology was prepared from materials available to us as of 10:00 am Wednesday, February 8, 2017, and are subject to amendments and corrections as may be necessary in light of further investigation.

February 2, 2017

- 3:00 pm Fluoride overfeed discovered and confirmed by OWASA Water Treatment Plant (WTP) staff
- 3:22 pm Finished water pumping from WTP to distribution system is stopped
- 3:28 pm NC Department of Environmental Quality, Public Water Supply (PWS) notified
- 5:09 pm First Durham interconnection activated to maintain system pressure and meet system demands
- 6:00 pm News release issued by OWASA advising of the event and requesting conservation
- 7:22 pm Began pumping over-fluoridated water from clearwell directly to OWASA Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)
- 8:00 pm Notified PWS of ongoing actions to empty clearwell
- 11:00 pm Second OWASA news release with additional information regarding event

February 3, 2017

- 8:00 am Third OWASA news release with additional call for conservation
- 9:30 am Began activation measures for second interconnection with Durham on Highway 54
- 9:30 am Began flushing interconnection with Chatham County
- 9:30 am Began flushing interconnection with Hillsborough
- 10:13 am OWASA water main broke in northeast Chapel Hill
- 11:00 am OWASA requested activation of the Orange County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Water Emergency Team Partners
- 11:30 am OWASA issued “DO NOT USE” directive to customers to prevent contamination and protect emergency supply
- 11:30 am Water main break isolated by locating and closing control valves
- 12:00 pm Repair work began on water main break
- 2:00 pm Orange County Health Department (OCHD) issued “DO NOT USE” and “DO NOT DRINK” directives
- 2:00 pm Second Durham interconnection activated to maintain pressure and storage

- 4:00 pm Press briefing by Water Emergency Team Partners and OWASA at Orange County Emergency Operation Center
- 5:15 pm Chatham County interconnection activated
- 10:24 pm Backup pump delivered to primary Durham interconnect and prepared for service

February 4, 2017

- 1:30 am Third backup pump activated for dewatering clearwell
- 9:00 am Began re-filling clearwell with non-fluoridated filtered water
- 10:30 am Water main repaired; flushing began to ensure water quality
- 12:34 pm All distribution samples found to be clear and absent of bacteriological indicators
- 2:24 pm “DO NOT USE” and “DO NOT DRINK” directives lifted by OCHD and OWASA
- 2:30 pm Joint news release on safety of drinking water, progress on repairs, and request for conservation
- 3:00 pm Press briefing on progress at Orange County Emergency Operation Center
- 3:30 pm Boil water advisory issued for customers near line break
- 5:56 pm Interconnection with Chatham County deactivated
- 6:30 pm Discharge from clearwell completed
- 6:37 pm OWASA Water Treatment Plant back in full operation
- 7:47 pm Second interconnection with Durham deactivated
- 9:04 pm Primary interconnection with Durham deactivated

In order to ensure that critical public health messages reached as many of our customers as possible, multiple (and sometimes overlapping) channels were used to release news of changes in status.

Colleen Bridger, MPH, PhD
Orange County Health Director

Ed Kerwin
OWASA Executive Director

Orange Water and Sewer Authority

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

NEWS RELEASE February 10, 2017

Independent consultants provide reports on the recent fluoride overfeed and water line break

A report by CH2M Hill North Carolina, Inc. about the fluoride overfeed in the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant on Thursday, February 2nd, and a report by AECOM Technical Services of North Carolina, Inc. about the water line break in east Chapel Hill on Friday, February 3rd are available on the OWASA website, www.owasa.org. Both consulting groups are divisions of respected, multinational engineering firms.

In its meeting last night, the OWASA Board of Directors received information from staff and comments from the community and discussed the water emergency from February 2nd to the 5th. The Board will hold further discussion at the next scheduled meeting, February 23rd at 7 PM in the Chapel Hill Town Hall, 405 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

The Board also agreed that it may hold a special meeting next week to discuss the consultants' reports.

"The reports from these consultants are a critical step in our reaching an objective, fact-based understanding of the causes of the disruptive service outage," said John Young, Chair of the OWASA Board of Directors.

"Last night, the Board agreed that OWASA would develop solutions to prevent the particular failures of last week, assess outage risks more broadly and take action to improve the water system resiliency, and review communication practices of OWASA and its partners during critical events. We may turn again to outside parties for both expertise and objectivity."

"OWASA apologizes for the significant disruptions and impact experienced by the community and thanks its many partners for their support."

Background information

The water line break was a major factor in decisions by OWASA and the Orange County Health Department to direct customers not to use OWASA water from Friday morning, February 3rd until Saturday afternoon, February 4th.

Before the water line break, OWASA shut down the Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant in Carrboro on Thursday afternoon due to a fluoride overfeed. OWASA then began receiving water from the City of Durham and Chatham County. OWASA's actions contained the fluoride overfeed within the treatment plant and no water with high fluoride reached the pipe system that carries water to customers.

For more information:

- Ed Kerwin, Executive Director, 919-537-4211 or ekerwin@owasa.org
- <http://www.owasa.org/2017-water-emergency>



IFC seeks donations to help residents flooded by water line break on Friday, February 3rd

Monday, February 13, 2017

The Inter-Faith Council for Social Service has established a donation account to assist residents of apartments near Foxcroft Drive which were flooded when a large OWASA water line broke on Friday, February 3rd.

When the pipe broke, six apartments were flooded. Two apartments were flooded to the extent that the residents had to move to a hotel until new apartments could be made available. One apartment was occupied by two graduate students. The other by a UNC staff member. The other four apartments did not have to be vacated while clean-up crews replaced carpeting and set up fans.

The IFC emphasized the need for donations from the community because State law prevents OWASA from providing financial assistance.

During the water emergency from February 2nd- 5th, OWASA customers with limited income purchased bottled water before Harris Teeter and Orange County provided free bottled water. The IFC will determine which residents would be assisted if sufficient funds are raised to cover the needs of those who were forced out of their homes.

There are three ways to donate:

1. Mail or deliver cash or a check to:

Inter-Faith Council for Social Service
110 W. Main Street
Carrboro, NC 27510

Please note Water Emergency Relief Fund on the memo line of the check or a note attached to cash.

2. On-line (by credit or debit card or PayPal): please go to <https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/flood> and fill out the form.

3. Over the phone (Visa/MC/Discover):

We are happy to accept your contribution via credit card. Please call Jeff Causey at 919-929-6380, ext.12 with your account number and gift amount. Your account information will be kept confidential.

Please indicate that your contribution is for the Water Emergency Relief Fund.

All contributions to the IFC are tax-deductible.

For more information:

Kristin Lavergne, Co-Director, 919-929-6380 or klavergne@ifcmailbox.org