



## FOR QUALITY AND VALUE: OWASA TAP WATER

Looking for high quality drinking water with documented laboratory test results and a reasonable price? If so, just turn on your faucet!

### How good is OWASA tap water?

OWASA tap water meets and exceeds all of the standards under the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act and related State requirements.

We test our water more than 50,000 times each year for more than 100 contaminants. The test results are published each year in our Water Quality Report Card, which is mailed to OWASA customers and posted on the Water System section of the OWASA Website, [www.owasa.org](http://www.owasa.org). We invite you to read our laboratory test results and compare them to those for commercial bottled water. (Commercial bottlers can be contacted through toll-free phone numbers on their labels to ask about water quality testing.)

### What does OWASA water cost?

Our water cost averages one penny per gallon for a typical family using 6,000



*Our plant operators check some water characteristics to supplement extensive laboratory testing. Overall, we test our water more than 50,000 times a year.*

gallons of water per month. (Over a full year, the monthly bill for 6,000 gallons averages \$59.88, including sewer service. Because we have seasonal water conservation rates, actual bills vary by time of year.)

### How good are OWASA's water sources?

Our community gets its water from two carefully protected sources, the Cane Creek Reservoir and University Lake.

Orange County and the Town of Carrboro have adopted stringent development regulations to protect the lakes. As a re-

sult, the watershed areas which drain to our lakes are largely rural with low-density residential development and no industries or wastewater treatment plants.

### How is OWASA water filtered and disinfected?

We filter our water through layers of fine sand and carbon and use chemicals to enhance the filtration process. Our Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant in Carrboro is capable of removing particles as small as 0.3 thousandths of an inch (about 8 microns, in metric terms).

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*In June, 2005, OWASA received a Director's Award from the Partnership for Safe Water for excellence in operating and managing our Jones Ferry Road Water Treatment Plant. The Partnership is a national organization of water resource agencies and utilities including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.*



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*Lakes 85% full in late January; conservation remains important.  
Gordon Merklein appointed to the OWASA Board.*

Este boletín informativo contiene información sobre los servicios de agua y alcantarillado de OWASA. Para obtener una traducción, por favor llame al **537-4221**, mande un correo electrónico a [webmaster@owasa.org](mailto:webmaster@owasa.org), o visite la página de Internet [www.owasa.org](http://www.owasa.org). ¡Muchas gracias!

# LAKES 85% FULL; OWASA CONTINUES TO MONITOR WATER SUPPLY AND DEMAND

The Cane Creek Reservoir and University Lake were about 85% full as of late January, up from 56% in late November, thanks to increased rainfall and flow in the streams feeding the lakes. Our current water storage level of 2.8 billion gallons would provide about 10 months of supply at an average water use rate of 9 million gallons per day,

which is consistent with recent years. While our water supply and demand outlook appears favorable for most of 2006, we continue to look longer into the future. If our lakes are not substantially full by March or April, additional water use restrictions could become necessary to reduce the risk of shortages in 2007. Therefore, we are continuing to monitor

daily water supply, demand and streamflows into our lakes; and year-round water conservation requirements remain in effect for OWASA customers. Please visit the OWASA Website, [www.owasa.org](http://www.owasa.org), for information on how to conserve water or visit our Water Watch section on current water supply, demand, rainfall and related items.

## *Gordon Merklein appointed to the OWASA Board*

The Chapel Hill Town Council has appointed Gordon Merklein to the OWASA Board of Directors.

Mr. Merklein is the Chief Operating Officer for Commercial Carolina, a regional real estate services firm. His primary responsibilities include business development, strategic planning, operations and client services.

He has previously worked for Commercial Carolina's international partner, Cushman & Wakefield, and as a planning consultant with the firm EDAA.

Mr. Merklein received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Southern Methodist University and a Master of City Planning degree from the Georgia Institute of Technology. He holds the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) professional designation.

Mr. Merklein will serve on OWASA's Budget/Financial Planning Committee. In addition to serving on the OWASA Board, he is a member of the Board of Directors of the Orange Community Housing Land Trust and serves on the Chapel Hill Inclusionary Zoning Task Force.



*Gordon Merklein*

## THE QUALITY AND VALUE OF OWASA DRINKING WATER

*(continued from page 1)*

We normally disinfect (kill germs in) our water with "chloramines," a compound of chlorine and ammonia. Every March, we disinfect only with chlorine in accord with a State requirement.

We began using chloramines in 2002 to control the level of certain disinfection by-products.

Also, the chemical stability of chloramines helps ensure that the water carried in our 330 miles of water mains will continue to be safe when it reaches your tap.

### **Is lead a problem in OWASA drinking water?**

In 2005, we tested the tap water from 30 homes in Chapel Hill and Carrboro for lead. All of the test results, as certified by an outside laboratory, were below the detectable level of 3 parts per billion. (One part per billion is equivalent to one penny in \$10 million.) Federal drinking water standards limit lead to a maximum of 15 parts per billion.

All known lead pipes and fittings in the OWASA water system have been removed or abandoned.

However, solder, pipes and fittings in private plumbing systems may contain lead that can be released into drinking water due to normal corrosion. For more information about precautions and testing the water from your plumbing system, please contact our Water Treatment Plant Laboratory staff at 537-4227 or send an e-mail to [webmaster@owasa.org](mailto:webmaster@owasa.org).

**Comments or questions?** Please tell us what you think about our drinking water, and let us know if you want more information. We encourage you to contact us at 968-4421 or by e-mail to [webmaster@owasa.org](mailto:webmaster@owasa.org).

**A QUICK REMINDER:** To help us read our meters safely, efficiently and on schedule, please trim shrubs and trees to leave about 3 feet clear around the OWASA water meter for your residence, office or business. Please do not cover the water meter with leaves, trash, mulch, etc. Thank you!

