

FY
2023



Oklahoma City Water Utilities Trust
YEAR IN REVIEW

PREPARED BY



The City of
OKLAHOMA CITY
Utilities Department

We serve more than 1.4 million Oklahomans, including you.

The Oklahoma City Water Utilities Trust (OCWUT) service area includes the corporate limits of Oklahoma City, select cities within our combined statistical area, and areas along the raw water pipelines to Lakes Atoka and McGee Creek. **Those who receive one or more of our services:**

Atoka	Moore	Piedmont
Atoka RWD #4	Mustang	Pottawatomie County RWD #3
Blanchard	Newcastle	Shawnee
Canadian County Water Authority	Nichols Hills	The Village
Edmond	Norman	Tinker Air Force Base
El Reno	Oklahoma City	Warr Acres
Lattimore Materials Corp.	Oklahoma Gas & Electric Company	Yukon

Individual water and wastewater service is also provided to a number of unincorporated areas within the counties surrounding OKC.

SUPPLY RESERVOIRS:

Atoka Reservoir
Canton Reservoir
Hefner Reservoir
McGee Creek Reservoir
Sardis Reservoir
Stanley Draper Reservoir

CUSTOMER ACCOUNT GROUPS:

Water	236,445
Wastewater	223,908
Solid Waste	223,475



McGee Creek Authority

The McGee Creek Authority (MCA) is operated for the benefit of The City of Atoka, Atoka County, and The City of Oklahoma City. MCA staff manage the daily operations and maintenance of the water storage, pumping, pipeline, and related properties to ensure reliable delivery of water to its beneficiaries along the McGee Creek pipeline. In FY 2023, MCA pumped 7.7 billion gallons of water from McGee Creek Reservoir.

ATOKA RESERVOIR & PIPELINE

OCWUT pumped 23.5 billion gallons from Atoka Reservoir in FY 2023.

The contributions from the staff servicing these two Southeastern Oklahoma water systems are greatly appreciated.



Each year, we compile this report to share the numerous projects we undertake and the progress we've made. You'll be surprised at just how much the Water Trust does to make Oklahoma City's water, wastewater, and trash collection services reliable, innovative, efficient, and affordable for you.

In addition to stats and updates, we'll share a few stories that showcase how we're serving our mission — and you — every day.

**Thanks for reading,
and for your continued
support and confidence
in the Trust.**

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A Letter from **CHRIS BROWNING**

OKLAHOMA CITY WATER UTILITIES TRUST GENERAL MANAGER

From mealtime to bath time, for every load of laundry washed and every dish cleaned, residents and businesses in Central Oklahoma rely on us to keep their water running, wastewater collected, and to keep their neighborhoods free from litter and debris.



Chris Browning

Few organizations are tasked with the kind of responsibilities assumed by utilities, where the services we provide support the health and well-being of our customers and the environment, the safety of our community, and the economic prosperity of the region.

Our motto is clear: *100% Accountability — Zero Excuses*. This fundamental principle is practiced throughout every facet of our utility. Whether it involves ensuring the safe and reliable treatment and distribution of drinking water to over 1.4 million people in Central Oklahoma, safeguarding our environment through the collection and responsible discharge of treated wastewater, or efficiently managing the collection of trash, recycling, and bulky waste from over 220,000 customers each month, our commitment to this principle remains unwavering.

Our utility consists of more than 800 employees who work to ensure our valued customers are provided services 24/7. Continually, the results of Oklahoma City's resident satisfaction survey

reflect a level of service consistency and quality far above like services offered in similar-sized cities across the U.S. We appreciate the support of our dependable contractors, such as Inframark and Waste Management, and we want to thank our many suppliers, service providers, and engineering and construction firms that work alongside us day in and day out.

Earlier this year, we polled our employees about their experiences in our organization, and one resounding theme stood out; our employees take immense pride in knowing their efforts contribute to the prosperity of our community and the customers they serve.

That's why we strive to not only continuously improve the services we provide today, but seek new technologies, processes, and programs to ensure the longevity of our utility well into the future.

IT STARTS WITH INFRASTRUCTURE

Communities depend upon clean water to thrive. We cannot live up to our promise of delivering clean water into the future without ensuring a reliable and resilient infrastructure today. To meet future needs, we are investing \$1.79 billion in capital improvements over the next five years to enhance the efficiency of our water and wastewater treatment plants along with the 7,000-plus miles of water and wastewater pipes we maintain. This past year alone, we invested more than \$460 million in treatment plant and system improvements, including contracting for three additional sections of the 72", 100-mile second Atoka Pipeline.

“... Our employees take immense pride in knowing their efforts contribute to the prosperity of our community and the customers they serve.”

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Strong financial management is the mainsail of our organization. Our long-term and short-term debt strategies remain stable, even amid significant pricing increases in our treatment chemicals, infrastructure materials, vehicle and equipment costs, and supplies. Further, we proudly continue to hold the distinction of maintaining AAA and Aaa bond ratings accorded to us by Standard & Poor's and Moody's Investor Services, respectively. These distinctions position us within the top 7% and 5% of water and wastewater utilities nationwide as rated by Standard & Poor's and Moody's, affirming our adherence to prudent financial practices that reinforce our financial stability and reliability in the industry.

DRIVING OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Working smarter is key to our success. This year, we began implementation of a multi-year project to upgrade our meter reading process through the introduction of Automated Meter Reading technology. This transition will improve billing efficiency and accuracy and enhance worker safety. We also launched a new online permitting system for our Wastewater Commercial Pretreatment Program that allows customers to self-renew and manage their permit accounts online. Finally, we stood up a new enterprise asset management system, enabling us to evaluate, monitor, and maintain critical assets and equipment throughout their entire operational lifecycle.

INVESTING IN OUR EMPLOYEES

While service to our customers is what drives us forward, it is the dedication of our employees that makes that service happen. We invest in their success through ongoing licensure and education programs, including our Utilities University and Lean Process training. This year, we worked to expand our mobile workforce development, and recently we have initiated a new employee engagement program resulting in ongoing improvement for internal communications and recognition.

In FY 2023, we not only maintained, but continued to improve upon our culture of workplace safety. As a result, we had one of our best years on record. Evidenced by our end-of-year safety report, we achieved a remarkable 20% reduction in injuries compared to the preceding fiscal year.

Thanks to our efforts in employee development and judicious financial stewardship, our utility standards are lauded as best-in-class by the Oklahoma Quality Foundation, an alliance partner of the esteemed Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. We have undertaken the process of applying for the award to help us analyze and better understand all aspects of our utility with an emphasis on continuous improvement and innovation.

These initiatives, along with our ongoing long-range planning for system resiliency and reliability, are part of a commitment we make to deliver on our promise of accountability and exceptional service to our customers and the communities who rely upon us each and every day. It's a job we take seriously, and one for which we are immensely proud.



CHRIS BROWNING

OCWUT General Manager

BY THE NUMBERS:

236,445

WATER
CUSTOMER ACCOUNTS

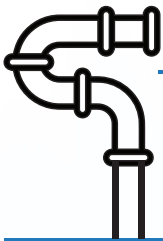
223,908

WASTEWATER
CUSTOMER ACCOUNTS

223,475

SOLID WASTE
CUSTOMER ACCOUNTS

MILES OF — **WATER PIPELINE:** 4,178
WASTEWATER PIPELINE: 3,165



808
OF BUDGETED
EMPLOYEES

OF EMPLOYEE TRAINING
HOURS COMPLETED
27,613

OF GALLONS OF
WASTEWATER TREATED
24.4 Billion

**Inbound Calls to Utilities
Customer Service:**
413,054



OF GALLONS OF
WATER TREATED:

41.75
Billion

**TONS OF TRASH
COLLECTED:**

263,488



**NUMBER
OF METER
READINGS:**
3,001,136



TONS OF RECYCLING PROCESSED



16,312

OF REGULATORY
DRINKING WATER
TESTS PERFORMED:
23,578



**ENGINEERING
DEVELOPMENT
PLANS
REVIEWED:**



**LINE MAINTENANCE
WORK ORDERS COMPLETED:**

16,618

**Tons of Bulky
Waste Handled:**
44,384

1,065

97 PERCENTAGE OF
UTILITIES FLEET
VEHICLES IN
SERVICE DAILY



of wastewater
pretreatment
customers
inspected **3,635**

**NUMBER OF
BILLS ISSUED:** **3,121,474**



FROM LEFT: TOMMY ADAMS, MAYOR DAVID HOLT, TORVON ARLEDGE

From Line Maintenance to Life-Saving

HOW TOMMY ADAMS & TORVON ARLEDGE SAVED A LIFE

For employees of the Oklahoma City Utilities Department, community and service are not mere talking points or words on a bulletin board. They represent the foundation of everything we do. From treating and delivering fresh drinking water, to caring for our watersheds, and keeping neighborhoods clean and safe through waste collection services—every aspect of our utility is built around the idea of making our community a better place to live and grow.

No more was this better exemplified than in January 2023, when Tommy Adams and Torvon Arledge with the City’s Line Maintenance division happened upon a situation that would change their lives

forever. The two were halfway through their workday inspecting manholes, when they encountered a young woman in need of help.

She led them inside a nearby home where another young woman was lying on the floor unable to breathe.

The two immediately began performing CPR and clearing the area as they waited for emergency services. “I just jumped in and used my training to do what I could,” Arledge said. Arledge continued chest compressions for about 10-15 minutes until EMSA staff arrived to take over. EMSA staff credited the two with saving the woman’s life.

“It was one of those things that kind of jolts you at first, but then you just have to get to it,” Adams added.

For their heroic efforts, the two were honored in front of City Council at their March 28 meeting, where Mayor David Holt presented them with the South OKC Kiwanis Employees of the Month award.

Updates On **PROJECTS & PROGRESS**

ADMINISTRATION

- Consolidated all safety and regulatory functions under a new Regulatory Compliance Office to improve efficiencies and ensure treatment and operations employees remain up to date on all ODEQ and EPA regulations.
- Completed our Risk and Resilience Assessments under the Federal America's Water Infrastructure Act through examination of potential system vulnerabilities and threats, which helps to plan for continuity of service in face of a disaster.
- Celebrated graduation of 41 employees as part of our Utilities University program, which introduces leadership, supervisory, and professional training to all full-time employees of the organization.
- Completed first steps in applying for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in partnership with the Oklahoma Quality Foundation, including inspections of our facilities and operations.

ENGINEERING

- Awarded construction contracts for three more segments of the second Atoka Pipeline; the 100-mile, 72-inch pipeline that connects our raw water supply in Southeast Oklahoma to the Draper Water Treatment Plant (WTP). As of FY 2023, five of the nine segments are under construction, and three of the four boreholes associated with the major crossing of the Canadian River have been completed.
- Completed the replacement of 28 segments of the 72-inch water main near the Draper WTP, which improves the resiliency of the water distribution system.

- Continued the construction of new lime facilities and ozone system improvements at the Hefner WTP. The new lime facilities are scheduled to come online by late 2024, and the ozone system will come online by mid-2025.
- Began modernizing the South Canadian Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to improve system efficiency and increase treatment capacities to keep up with projected future demand. The project is under construction with an estimated completion in 2027.
- Began construction of improvements at the North Canadian WWTP that will upgrade the electrical power system and address other aging infrastructure.
- Updated the design of significant process improvements at the North Canadian WWTP and Deer Creek WWTP to improve performance and resiliency.

FLEET SERVICES

- Maintained our Blue Seal Certification from the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) group with 91% of our mechanics certified as ASE Master Mechanics, meaning Fleet staff can keep more equipment operational and reduce the amount of equipment out of service.

LINE MAINTENANCE


- Updated 5,400 customer water meters as part of a pilot introducing new Automated Meter Reading (AMR) technology to improve meter reading efficiency and billing accuracy and ensure the safety of our meter reader workers.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)

We reduced the number of missed trash, recycling, and bulky waste calls by

47%.





Our Water Conservation team facilitated 115 educational workshops for more than

18,000

participants, including our “Mother Earth” partnership with OKC Beautiful to bring water conservation messaging to area elementary schools.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Reduced the number of missed trash, recycling, and bulky waste calls by 47% by implementing new mobile technologies to ensure route completion. Additionally, we addressed staffing gaps by filling vacancies, which provided better coverage to more effectively complete routes, further reducing the number of missed-collection complaints.
- In comparison to the three recycling audits preceding those conducted in FY 2023, we reduced the percentage of residuals collected by approximately 16% through enhanced customer communication and inspection efforts geared toward reinforcing adherence to recycling program guidelines.

UTILITIES CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Implemented an automated identity verification and credit validation program for new customers. In addition to instant deposit decisions, we can now automatically qualify customers for our low-income solid waste services rate. Since implementation, we have increased the number of customers participating in the solid waste rate-reduction program by about 207%.
- Our Water Conservation team facilitated 115 educational workshops for more than 18,000 participants, including our “Mother Earth” partnership with OKC Beautiful to bring water conservation messaging to area elementary schools.

UTILITIES ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS

- Integrated all 11 individual Water and Wastewater Quality monitoring systems into a single enterprise system to increase efficiency and enhance system security and reliability.
- Deployed a new electronic permitting system for the Wastewater Quality division’s commercial and industrial pretreatment program so customers can self-manage their permit accounts online.
- Began migrating our customer billing system to a new cloud-based system to streamline the billing process and improve alignment with other Utilities business systems.

WATER QUALITY

- Completed a Sanitary Survey of the City’s Water Quality treatment and distribution assets in cooperation with the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) to examine all assets of our water treatment plants, surge towers, and booster stations.
- Our Environmental Laboratory continues to install sampling stations throughout the metro for regulatory compliance testing of drinking water. These stations are tied directly into our treated water distribution system to ensure quality control.
- The Environmental Laboratory also began implementation of LabWare, a laboratory information management system, to improve data reporting efficiency and the laboratory’s ability to query, compile, analyze, and trend data.

WASTEWATER QUALITY

- Commissioned our Wastewater Quality Environmental Unit Specialists as Environmental Officers for the City of Oklahoma City to create a more efficient enforcement program and improve interactions with pretreatment permit holders.
- Modified our wastewater treatment facility inspection program to improve our ability to identify and review issues that need to be addressed by our contractor.
- Maintained high equipment reliability in our wastewater lift stations, which are an integral part of our wastewater collections system. These stations have small storage capacity and can quickly get overrun. Thanks to our staff and our preventative maintenance program, we can keep the system running efficiently and avert environmental incidents.



SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

Nurturing Nature and Community

HOW WATER BRINGS LIFE — AND FUN — TO OKC'S STUNNING BOTANICAL GARDENS

In the heart of downtown Oklahoma City rests a 15-acre jewel like no other in the country, the Myriad Botanical Gardens. With lush seasonal landscaping, enticing water features, and a 224-foot-long botanical conservatory, the Gardens offers respite, recreation, and a taste of the tropics for visitors from around the globe.

Water plays a significant role in the Gardens' many attractions. One of the biggest by far is the outdoor Thunder Fountain, which throughout the summer elicits screams of delight as children have fun playing under its iridescent structure. The fountain was inspired by an Oklahoma thunderstorm, with rumbles of distant thunder counting down the appearance of a rainy shower that thrills and chills anyone who plays underneath.

Spacious grounds feature numerous sights to see and activities for all ages.

As a valued community partner, the Myriad Botanical Gardens has helped promote our Squeeze Every Drop water conservation program through creative, interactive workshops, including home irrigation and water-saving seminars, their Water-Wise and Prairie Demonstration Gardens featuring native and low water use plants, tours promoting water conservation and drought-tolerant landscaping, and their annual Oklahoma Gardening School, Oklahoma's premier horticultural symposium focusing on vibrant, practical landscape and gardening techniques. All of these provide visitors with local, hands-on resources that encourage people to use water efficiently.

For more than 35 years, this verdant urban oasis has provided a tranquil escape for guests and an educational hub for visitors to learn more about valuing water resources. It's also been a proven boon to the local economy, drawing in more than 100,000 visitors each year through its special events and programs, including gardening and environmental classes.

"Who we are as an attraction depends upon a reliable, clean source of water as part of our outreach programs," said Executive Director Maureen Heffernan. "Water builds communities and helps to not only nourish the acres of plants and grass upon our grounds, but also the lives of the people who come to us to explore, relax, and enjoy quality of life."

Water builds communities and helps to not only nourish the acres of plants and grass upon our grounds, but also **the lives** of the people who come to us to **explore, relax, and enjoy quality of life.**"

— MAUREEN HEFFERNAN

Executive Director, Myriad Botanical Gardens



Assessing **RISK & RESILIENCE**

ENSURING RELIABLE, CONSISTENT SERVICES WHEN THEY'RE NEEDED MOST

In our operations, we confront and conquer risk on multiple fronts, from the unpredictability of weather and traffic to securing line repair sites, managing chemicals, and operating heavy equipment. While a part of our daily routine, risk mitigation extends to our long-term planning, where we strive to guarantee that, regardless of circumstances, our customers can always depend on us for the services we provide. That's why every five years, the Oklahoma City Water Utilities Trust (OCWUT) engages in a process to examine and update plans and procedures that address our organization's areas of vulnerability. The process ensures our infrastructure, business, and operations would stand ready to continue in the event of any potential catastrophe, whether natural or caused by malevolent actions.

This year, Utilities staff worked with expert consultants to complete phase one of our three-phase process by conducting a risk evaluation of every aspect of our organization.

The Risk and Resilience Assessments that were performed follow guidelines set forth by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as part of the America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA). While they apply only to water operations and infrastructure, we include assessments of wastewater and solid waste services as a proactive measure to make certain all lines of business can withstand risk on every level.

Phase two, which will be completed in mid-2024, fulfills all AWIA EPA requirements, including updating OCWUT's Emergency Response Plan. Phase three, slated for completion by the end of 2024, commences another proactive step by OCWUT in which we will analyze business continuity, underscoring our commitment to steadfast service.

These phases are a testament to our promise to maintain services that are reliable and resilient for generations to come.

An Update On **FINANCIALS**

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- 1.** OCWUT refunded its 2013, 2015, and 2016 revenue bonds, which provided cash-flow savings of \$28,843,047 and allowed OCWUT to modify its Bond Indenture to allow for the option of a debt service reserve fund, saving the Trust 10% in future revenue bond transactions. This transaction had extensive investor interest with over \$1 billion in orders for \$267 million of bonds from 47 investor orders, with three investors putting in total orders over \$100 million.
- 2.** Our Financial Operations section processed over 4,500 invoices in FY 2023, an uptick of 35% compared to five years ago. This increase reflects the Trust's continuous initiatives and programs over the years to invest in the infrastructure needed to meet growing customer demand.
- 3.** Our Financial Operations section continues to assist the Trust with various fundraising functions, applying for six grants in FY 2023 and seeking \$31.9 million in grant funds.
- 4.** Our Financial Planning group successfully completed the FY 2024 \$848 million OCWUT budget planning and presentation on schedule.
- 5.** Amid extremely high costs for chemicals, electricity, and unprecedented supply shortages, the Financial Planning group helped guide the organization to successfully achieve its financial metrics for FY 2023.
- 6.** The financial management of the Tinker Air Force Base systems, in conjunction with the program manager, has been successfully implemented with a recently approved Contract Year 2 adjustment to the cost-of-service pricing.

2023 Unaudited Data

TARGETS & ACTUALS:

SOURCES	BUDGET TARGET	ACTUAL
Debt Construction Fund Proceeds	\$ 321,798,000	\$ 244,804,845
Water Service Charges	\$ 203,476,000	\$ 217,069,432
Wastewater Service Charges	\$ 118,939,000	\$ 126,612,110
Withdrawal from Cash Reserves	\$ 34,240,000	\$ 117,748,445
Solid Waste Management Service Charges	\$ 64,963,000	\$ 65,515,081
Other Revenues	\$ 8,034,000	\$ 18,619,056
Capital Contributions from Others	\$ -	\$ 11,257,298
System Development Charges	\$ 5,459,000	\$ 5,403,879
Flow Fees	\$ 2,236,000	\$ 2,419,953
Reimbursements from Tinker	\$ 1,343,000	\$ 1,896,781
Non-ratepayer Activities	\$ 934,000	\$ 1,288,963
TOTAL:	\$ 761,422,000	\$ 812,635,843

FUNDING ALLOCATIONS:

USES	BUDGET TARGET	ACTUAL
Capital Improvements	\$ 483,154,000	\$ 467,083,409
City Operations	\$ 108,960,000	\$ 117,146,000
Debt Service	\$ 53,612,000	\$ 52,387,458
Trust Operations	\$ 44,107,260	\$ 43,962,788
Solid Waste Management Contracted Services	\$ 38,513,000	\$ 40,499,933
Contracted Wastewater Treatment Operations	\$ 21,585,000	\$ 18,597,075
McGee Creek Operations	\$ 3,841,000	\$ 2,485,000
Non-ratepayer Activities	\$ 934,000	\$ 534,492
Deposits to Administrative Reserves for CIP	\$ -	\$ 63,223,948
Deposits to Cash Reserves	\$ 6,715,740	\$ 6,715,740
TOTAL:	\$ 761,422,000	\$ 812,635,843

**OUR MOTTO
IS CLEAR:**

100%

**Accountability —
Zero Excuses.**

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

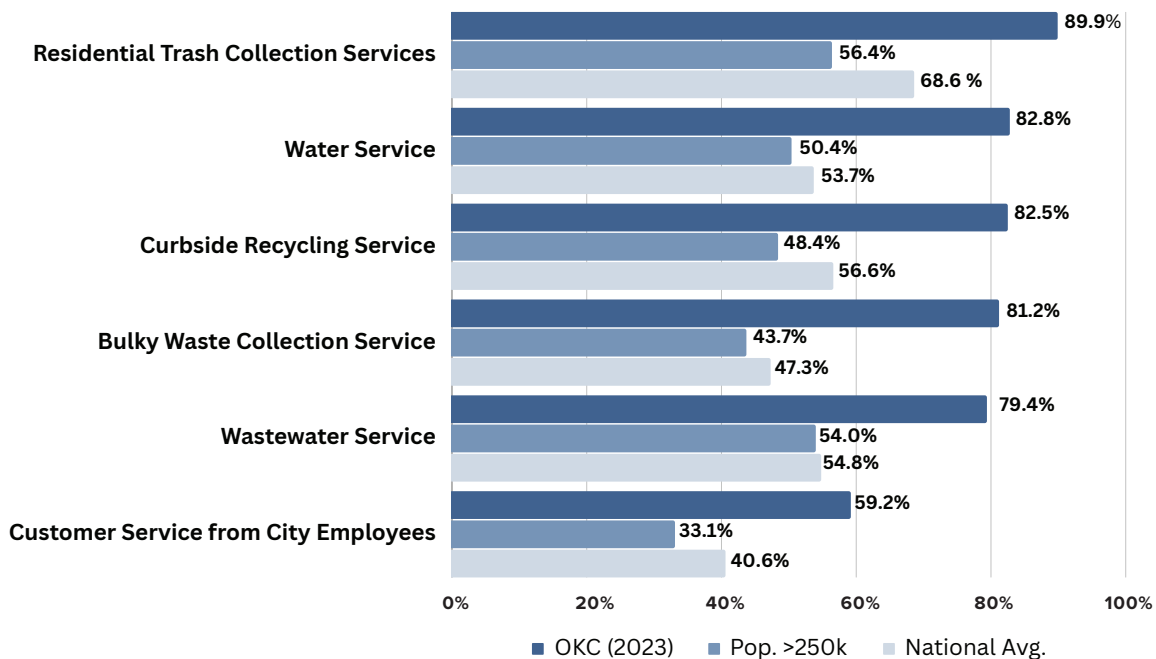
Maintaining a high level of customer satisfaction is no easy task. It takes vision, leaders who promote a customer-first culture, and a workforce that is dedicated to service. That's why our water, wastewater, and solid waste services continue to garner high satisfaction ratings among the residents we serve in Oklahoma City.

For 15 years, the City of Oklahoma City has partnered with the ETC Institute to assess resident satisfaction of major City services. And as we have over many

years past, our Utilities services rate well above cities across the United States. In 2023, we rated an average 31.5% higher than like services offered in U.S. cities with a population of 250,000 or more. Yet even with such high marks, we continue to seek ways to improve through careful evaluation of our programs and processes, the introduction of new technologies, and fostering an inclusive workforce with an emphasis on continual improvement and education. **It's how we fulfill our mission to those who rely upon us daily.**

City Utility Services

BY THE SUM PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO WERE EITHER *VERY SATISFIED* OR *SATISFIED* (EXCLUDING *DON'T KNOW* RESPONSES).



2023 City of Oklahoma City Resident Survey





Thank you for reading.

Have a question or concern, a project we should consider, or a problem we need to solve? We're here to help. To share your thoughts with us, visit our website at okc.gov/utilities, then click on the Customer Service link at the top of the page and use the Feedback option to send us a message.

If you're on a mobile device, scan the QR code below to visit our Customer Service page.

***PS:** If you've had a great experience with us, we'd love to hear that, too. Please let us know!*



OUR MISSION:

We are committed to providing water, wastewater, and trash collection services throughout Central Oklahoma to safeguard public health and the environment, support public safety, and enable economic prosperity.

OUR CORE BUSINESS INITIATIVES:

Safety/Water Supply/Financial Management/
Customer Service/System Resiliency/
System Reliability/Regulatory Compliance

OUR VISION:

To be an example for others to follow.

OUR TRUST MEMBERS:

James D. Couch, *Chairman,
Independent Trustee*
Sharon Voorhees, *Independent Trustee*
Todd Stone, *Council Trustee*
David Holt, *Mayor Trustee*
Mark K. Stonecipher, *Vice Chairman,
Surrogate Trustee*
Craig Freeman, *City Manager Trustee*
Laura A. Johnson, *Surrogate Trustee*
Chris Browning, *General Manager*
Amy K. Simpson, *Secretary*



The City of
OKLAHOMA CITY
Utilities Department



McGee Creek Authority

