

THE SEED SOWER

OU Facilities Management Quarterly Newsletter



Message from the AVP

As we close out another successful quarter, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you. Your dedication and hard work throughout the summer have been nothing short of outstanding. From managing seasonal transitions to ensuring our campus remained safe, welcoming, and efficient—you've helped create an atmosphere that truly supports our university community.

A special shoutout to everyone involved in preparing for and supporting ESPN College GameDay. Hosting such a high-profile event was a tremendous success, and the feedback we received was overwhelmingly positive. The College Gameday team was incredibly complimentary of the campus environment, and that's a direct reflection of your efforts.

Looking ahead, I encourage each of you to participate in the second OU Employee Engagement Survey, available from September 29 through October 10. This follow-up survey is an important opportunity to measure our progress, understand what has improved, and identify areas where we can continue to grow and support staff engagement. Each benefits-eligible team member will receive a personalized invitation via their OU email account.

Thank you for your continued commitment to excellence. I'm proud to work alongside such a talented and driven team. I look forward to seeing you at the Fall Festival in October.

*Matthew C. Rom
Associate Vice President for Facilities Management*

UPCOMING DATES

FALL FESTIVAL

October 10

BENEFITS FAIR

October 14-15

OPEN ENROLLMENT

October 20-November 7

HOMECOMING WEEK

October 20-25

GEARING UP FOR HOLIDAY BUDGETING

October 30

THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 27-28

FINALS WEEK

December 15-19

Have an idea for the next quarterly newsletter? Email Facilities@ou.edu with your idea!

FEATURED TEAM MEMBERS

TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Tucker Craig, Landscaping/Grounds



Tucker from OU Landscape Services has been a steady hand behind the vibrant mums that define the university's cherished annual tradition. Known for his meticulous care, Tucker ensures each plant thrives through consistent watering, strategic pruning, and careful monitoring of sunlight and soil conditions, he ensures maintaining healthy, blooming chrysanthemums. His leadership team praised his dedication noting that he truly "takes pride in his operations." Thanks to Tucker's hard work, the mums continue to brighten campus as a stunning season highlight year after year.

Thank you for your hard work, Tucker!

NEW HIRES

FACILITY SERVICES

Tiffany Cook | July 28
Ana Caralampio | July 28
Christopher Anderson | July 31
Amanda Blevin | Aug. 11
Danny West | Aug. 25
Charles Chapman | Aug. 25
Hailey O'Neal | Sep. 7
Joseph Wireman | Sep. 7
Erin Houck | Sep. 22
Courtney Green | Sep. 22
Theresa Becker | Sep. 22
Lexi Veenstra | Sep. 22
Geethika Kollu | Sep. 22

MAINTENANCE

Thomas McMurray | July 7
Jeff Tate | July 14
Trent Jones | July 14
Angel Santos | July 28
Ryan Steinmeyer | Aug. 11
Kevin Wood | Aug. 11
Cameron Lewis | Aug. 11
Michael Hayes | Aug. 11
Keith Swinton | Sep. 8

LANDSCAPING/GROUNDS

David LaShomb | July 28
Xander Emanuel | Aug. 11
Zachary Conner | Aug. 11
Erwin Jackson | Aug. 25
Loni'e Austin | Aug. 25
Keden Moseley | Aug. 25
Cliff Perez Rivera | Aug. 25
Camryon DeCarlo | Aug. 25
Adrian Miller | Sep. 22
Christopher Harris | Sep. 22

UTILITY SERVICES

Ethan Trejo | Aug. 11
Tayten Nelson | Aug. 11
Steven Palczynsky | Aug. 11
Kameron Madron | Aug. 19
Wyatt Graves | Sep. 8
Jordynn Debaets | Sep. 20
Jeff Jones | Sep. 22
Isaiah Sanders | Sep. 22
Jason Johnson | Sep. 22



WELCOME

MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES

1 YEAR

Jeremy Smith | July 1
Richard Dickerson | July 14
Gregory Pabst | July 15
Kent Bishop | July 15
Brian Clark | July 29
James Lane | July 29
Tah Lisa Cornett | Aug. 11
Justin Ocegueda | Aug. 11
Michael Lampe | Aug. 11
Barry Harbison | Aug. 11
Garion Murdoch | Aug. 12
Maximilian Murdoch | Aug. 12
Garrett Jones | Aug. 24
Marshall Radtke | Aug. 26
Kristin Fulton | Sep. 7
Tesonda Johnson | Sep. 8
Chris Ebert | Sep. 9
Dusty Ross | Sep. 9
Hannah Baird | Sep. 22
Helen Tsotigh | Sep. 22
Timothy Kreun | Sep. 22
Makenzie Eikenbary | Sep. 22

5 YEARS

Steven Wilkins | July 6
Jose Rodriguez | July 6
Toby Graves | July 6
David Christian | July 20
Joshua Yadon | July 27
Harold McCarthy | Aug. 17
Angela Maddux-Tannehill | Sep. 1
Shawna Pritchard | Sep. 8
John Bettencourt | Sep. 28

10 YEARS

Marissa Pierson | Aug. 17
Christopher Jones | Aug. 17

15 YEARS

Ronny Senn | July 17
Terry Wilson | Aug. 9
Christopher Black | Sep. 14



QUARTER 3 AWARD WINNERS

Q3

LEAD/SUPERVISOR GLEN RIDDLE



GLEN IS A SUPERVISOR IN THE ELEVATOR SHOP. HE HAS WORKED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA FOR 22 YEARS.

“

Glen jumps in feet first to take on responsibilities. His hands-on approach and willingness to tackle challenges have ensured successful projects completion and demonstrated his ability to handle complex tasks under pressure.

”

Q3

CUSTODIAL AIDEN ZASSO



AIDAN IS A CUSTODIAN FOR CUSTODIAL SERVICES. AIDAN HAS WORKED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA FOR 2 YEARS.

“

Aidan is self-motivated and willing to help in any way possible. He is a valuable asset to the university demonstrating hard work, helpfulness, and strong commitment to everyone's safety.

”

Q3

UTILITIES JASON ALVARADO



JASON IS A UTILITY MAINTENANCE MECHANIC FOR UTILITIES. HE HAS WORKED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA FOR 2 YEARS.

“

Jason has doubled his efforts in continuing to maintain and strive for excellence in all areas of his scope. He always steps up to volunteer, works in a safe manner, and serves as a role model for others.

”

Q3

MAINTENANCE DOMINICK POTTER



DOMINICK IS AN ACCESS CONTROL SPECIALIST FOR MAINTENANCE SERVICES. HE HAS WORKED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA FOR 1 YEAR.

“

Dominick is an asset to the university. He continuously explores new materials and technology to help OU operate at its best, while also training new employees and being involved in the shop.

”

Team Member of the Quarter

Q3

LANDSCAPE RYAN FULTON



RYAN IS A SENIOR LANDSCAPE AND GROUNDS SPECIALIST FOR LANDSCAPE AND GROUNDS. HE HAS WORKED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA FOR 2 YEARS.

“

Ryan consistently goes above and beyond in his daily routine by stepping up to help maintain other areas of campus. He is a valued member of the team whose efforts are essential to keeping the campus clean and beautiful.

”



**Nominate a Team Member for
Employee of the Quarter**

Scan the QR code for the nomination form
or email Jessica Shinabery at jshinabery@ou.edu



ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Landscape & Grounds:

Refuse & Recycling - Patrick Higdon
Tree Services - Stephen Osburn
Auxiliary Campus - Justin Jones
Pest & Weed Control - Tristan King
Academic Campus - Chester Warner
South Campus - Gunnar Delaplain
North Campus - Kevin Connywerdy

Maintenance Skilled Trades:

Access Control – Dominick Potter
Carpentry – Damien McBride
Paint – Toby Roberts
General Services – Manny Calcado
Streets & Sidewalks – Tig Barton
MRTP – Chris Jones

Utilities Services:

Operations – Gavin Campbell
Non-potable – Mike Ray
Distribution- Joe Northcutt
Maintenance- Shelby Rubrecht
UT Admin- Lenora Tatah



FEATURED TEAM MEMBERS

UTILITIES MID-AMERICA TECHNOLOGY CENTER INTERNS



Isaiah Sanders (left) and Jason Johnson (right) are students from Mid-America Technology Center. They are excited for the opportunity to intern with Utilities, as well as learning and gaining hands-on experience.

PROMOTIONS

Congrats to the following team members on recent promotions!

Greg Moser

Custodial supervisor

Tucker Craig

Landscape and Grounds Specialist

David Clouse

Landscape and Grounds Specialist

Kameron Madron

Operating Engineer



KUDOS KORNER

Jim Salsman & Aaron Brown

“A big thank you to the The hauling team! They were wonderful and very professional. They made this job so much easier for completion of the project. Keep up the good work!”

Aiden Zasso & Raquel Chavez Resendiz

“I wanted to take a moment to brag on Aiden and Raquel. They have been incredibly helpful in managing the minor discomfort caused by a leak. Their attention and support have made a huge difference. Their care and dedication, not just for one space but across the affected areas, truly make them invaluable members of the team.”

Ausencia Chavez de Jurado & Mejia de Ramirez

“Ausencia and Mejia from the custodial staff jumped immediately to help with a critical issue in the library. Their dedication and quick action made a huge difference, turning a stressful situation into one that was handled smoothly and efficiently. “They were absolutely invaluable to our library staff during this time.”

Jim Payne

“It is impossible to find the words to thank Jim for our new family bench. Jim’s decision was monumental, and this new bench is the best thing to happen to our family in years.”

FEATURED TEAM MEMBERS

Congratulations, Retirees! 🎉

- Kenny Black, Senior Painter, 22 Years of Service.
- Tommie Stapp, Senior Landscape and Grounds Specialist, 22 Years of Service.
- Israel Schumpert, Custodian, 15 Years of Service.
- Randell France, Carpenter, 19 Years of Service.
- Patricia Rettig, Custodian, 10 Years of Service.
- Dennis Ingraham, Concrete Finisher, 22 Years of Service.
- Floyd Lehman, Roads and Hauling Supervisor, 22 Years of Service.
- Terrance Wade, Custodian, 15 Years of Service.
- Melanie Daniel, Senior Landscape and Grounds Specialist, 22 Years of Service.



Pictured Left:
Patricia Rettig



Pictured Right:
Kenny Black



Safety Champion

Stephanie Cunningham from Customer Service completed the FM Safety Recognition Program this month. Congratulations, Stephanie!

In Memoriam



Maria Schlachtun

Custodian, 10 Years of Service.

Maria was a valued member of our team. Her dedication and kindness will be deeply missed.

FEATURED ARTICLES

End of Summer Leads to Start of Football Season

Football season kicked off in full force and OU Facilities Management played a vital role in supporting game day operations and national broadcasts, including ESPN's College GameDay and the university's first-ever hosting of ESPN's SEC Nation. With College GameDay returning to campus for the second consecutive year, Facilities Management ensured everything ran seamlessly behind the scenes.

From coordinating campus access to managing electricity needs to trimming trees for camera sightlines, ramping up cleaning crews, and handling refuse collection, the team delivered top-tier support to match the excitement on the field. Their efforts helped showcase OU at its best—because in the SEC, *It Just Means More*.



Asp Avenue Sidewalk Project

A major project milestone was achieved thanks to strong collaboration between the Project Office and several Facilities Management shops. Their combined expertise and teamwork brought the initiative to a successful close, showcasing the power of cross-departmental coordination.

UT_Maintenance

- Tom Hughes
- Jeff Blair
- Rick Steely
- Joy Meyer
- Mike Lee
- Josh Grigg
- Mike Coffman
- Stephen Blakley

Streets/Sidewalks

- Chris Thompson
- Charles Phillips
- Randy Kinsey
- Kenneth Barton

All team members from Landscape Services.

Well done everyone!

UTIL_NPDistribution

- Jason Reeves
- Alex Loftus
- Mike Ray
- Mason Smith



FEATURED ARTICLES

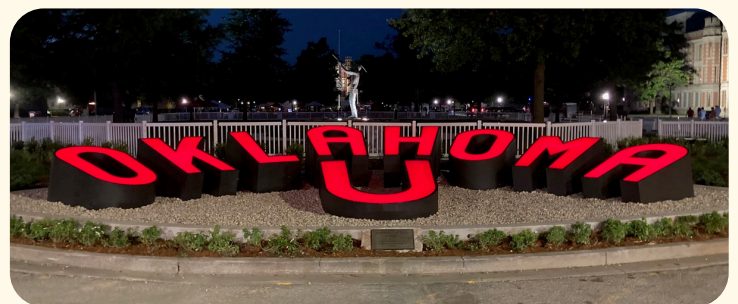
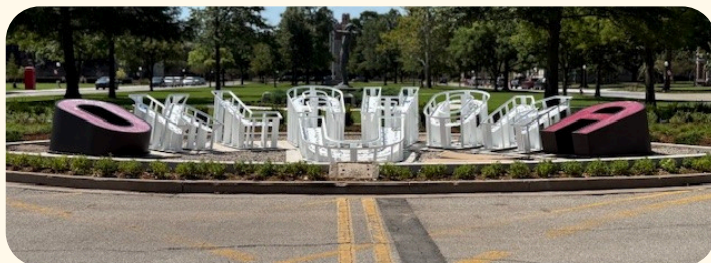


A New Look for an Old Tradition

Facilities Management played a vital role in transforming the North Oval into a vibrant and welcoming tailgating destination for the OU community. To prepare for the enhanced game day experience, FM Utilities and Landscape Services partnered with an external vendor to completely overhaul the irrigation system and turf—creating grounds that are both visually stunning and resilient under heavy foot traffic. This foundational work laid the groundwork for a more sustainable and enjoyable outdoor space.

Beyond turf improvements, several FM teams collaborated to reimagine the North Oval entrance. The Projects team, MRTP, Landscape, Fabrication, and Streets divisions all contributed their expertise, resulting in a striking entrance featuring custom Oklahoma “U” lighting, refreshed landscaping, and a cohesive design that reflects the pride and spirit of the university.

This initiative not only elevates the tailgating experience for fans and visitors but also showcases FM’s commitment to enhancing campus spaces through thoughtful planning, skilled craftsmanship, and cross-team collaboration.



FEATURED ARTICLES



Utilities Shined at CAPP A Conference

OU Facilities Management proudly hosted the annual CAPP A (Central Association of Physical Plant Administrators) conference, bringing together facilities professionals from across the central region for a dynamic week of learning, networking, and innovation. Attendees explored best practices in campus operations, sustainability, and infrastructure through engaging sessions and hands-on experiences.

A special thanks go to OU Utilities for their outstanding support in organizing educational tours and showcasing the university's systems. Their efforts provided attendees with valuable insights into OU's commitment to reliable, efficient, and sustainable utilities. This collaboration helped make the 2025 CAPP A conference both memorable and impactful.

Thank you, volunteers!

- Patrick Downs
- Michael Bergen
- Rex Brown
- Tom Hughes
- Jeff Blair
- Justin Tripp
- Jeremy Debaets
- Cody Rezac
- Korey Wheeler
- Syndy Petross
- Glen Gordon
- Brenna Hibbs
- Brandi Duncan



FEATURED ARTICLES



FM Teams Participate in Fire Extinguisher Training



Several team members from Electric, MRTP, and Utilities shops recently participated in a hands-on fire extinguisher training, reinforcing a commitment to safety and emergency preparedness. The training, coordinated by FM Safety Coordinator Jeff Mlekush, provided team members with practical experience in safely operating extinguishers and preparing them to respond quickly and effectively in the event of a fire. The training will be provided annually and can be coordinated through Jeff Mlekush. A special thank you to OU Campus Safety for conducting the training!



AiM Training Added to Welcome Wagon



This past quarter, the Business Operations team began participating in AiM system training as part of the expanded Welcome Wagon offerings. The sessions provide a foundational overview of work orders, timecards, search functions, queries, and ReADY Request. The training is designed to give an introduction to AiM with new team members.

Material Management Annual Inventory Counts



Material Management successfully completed its first annual inventory count of the expanded warehouse in June 2025, counting 4,497 bins and resolving discrepancies in just 2.5 days. The final results showed 92.42% quantity accuracy and 99.32% financial accuracy—exceeding expectations and reflecting a strong team effort.

COMMITTEE UPDATES



Events, Engagement & Recognition

Chair: Patrick Downs

The Events, Recognition, and Engagement Committee has been busy behind the scenes, taking a fresh look at the activities we all know and love—from the Safety BBQ, Fall Festival, to the Spring Appreciation Breakfast, the committee is looking at what works well and where we can add some extra fun.

This summer's Safety BBQ rolled out new drinks and prizes, and you can expect fresh surprises at the Fall Festival on October 10. You may have even shared your thoughts with a committee member as they gathered feedback—thank you for helping shape these events!

The committee is also fine-tuning the Team Member of the Quarter program to make it even more meaningful. Stay tuned—there's more good stuff on the way! 🎉



Learning & Development

Chair: Korey Wheeler

The Learning and Development Committee has been exploring the different opportunities available through Facilities Management, OU's Learning and Development department, LinkedIn Learning, and special department sessions—like the upcoming *Budgeting Around the Holidays* workshop with the OU Money Coach on Thursday, October 30 at 9:30 AM at 705 (mark your calendars!). We are excited to grow the committee in 2026 and continue to review and explore learning and development opportunities for all Facilities Management



Safety

Chair: Kyle Brunsmann

The safety committee has brought several concerns to the discussion. These concerns include stowage of unattended boom lifts, permitting of cranes and lifts, dim lighting in some areas of campus, vehicle safety around students, and forklift signage.



Policy

Chair: Stuart Simpson

The OU FM Policy Committee has been hard at work reviewing and refining our standing policies. As a committee, we conducted a comprehensive review of existing FM policies. Through this process, we identified several policies that were outdated, that no longer aligned with the current FM structure, or that were already covered under broader OU General Staff Policies. For the remaining policies, we engaged in thoughtful discussions evaluating their written intent against how they are applied in day-to-day operations. We also took the initiative to reach out to peer institutions, including other in-state universities and fellow SEC counterparts, to compare our policies and practices against.

Our main goal throughout this process is to ensure that FM policies support a safe, effective, and fair workplace environment for all. We are proud of the diligence and collaboration that has gone into this work and hope these efforts will positively contribute to the continued success and well-being of the FM community.

HR UPDATES



SAFETY UPDATES

Accident Reporting

This year there has been an uptick in accidents and property damage in Facilities Management. As a reminder, every accident or property damage needs to be reported – regardless of the extent of the damage.

Examples of accidents or property damage include:

- Wind gust catches truck door and causes door hinges to be bent.
- Lawnmower kicks up debris that injures a bystander, vehicle, or building window
- OU vehicle to OU vehicle accident
- OU vehicle to non-OU vehicle accident
- OU vehicle hits building signage, wall, or other object causing damage to the object or OU vehicle.

For vehicular accidents: OU police must be called at the time of the accident so that an official report can be made.

Report accidents or property-incidents immediately to your supervisor. After, They should report the accident to Enterprise Risk Management and to me.

The accident and property-incidents damage Reporting procedure can be found on OU Facilities Management SharePoint page, under FM Documents-Department Procedures.

I encourage everyone to read this procedure and become familiar with it before an accident occurs so that you know the process.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Jeff Mlekush | Safety and Training Officer

HR UPDATES



SAVE THE DATE for Benefits Open Enrollment beginning October 20 - November 7 for all benefit eligible employees. There will be two benefit fairs for the Norman campus: Tuesday, 10/14, from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM at the Stephenson Research Atrium, and on Wednesday, 10/15, from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM in the OMU Ballroom (3rd floor). Blue Cross Blue Shield will be the medical plan carrier for 2026 and will mail insurance cards to your mailing address listed in PeopleSoft. OU is also continuing their partnership with ZERO Health and Garner Health to help with costs savings and reimbursements.

You can learn more about the 2026 Insurance plans on <https://benefitsenrollment.ou.edu/>


Additionally, Open Enrollment season is a good time to update and review the following:

1. Your mailing address in PeopleSoft Self-service
2. Life Insurance Beneficiaries in PeopleSoft Self-service.
3. Wage Beneficiary – in PeopleSoft Self-service under the Payroll title



LIKE & FOLLOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

 @OUFACILITIES

 @OUFACILITIES

 @OUFACILITIES

Did you know?

OU was established 17
years prior to Oklahoma's
statehood