

Utilities Section Newsletter

League of Nebraska Municipalities

December 2011

Excavation permits and One-Call

*By Lash Chaffin,
Utilities Section Director, LNM*

Over the last few years, our office has taken an increasing number of phone calls (complaints) relating to the One-Call system. Unfortunately, most of these complaints really had nothing to do with the One-Call system. Instead, many of the issues could have been resolved through an active municipal excavation regulation program. This article will hopefully give you some hints on how you can gain control over excavations in your municipality. Included are outstanding regulations adopted by the city of Wayne. Wayne has made excavation management a priority, which has made life more understandable and ultimately easier for city employees and private excavators.

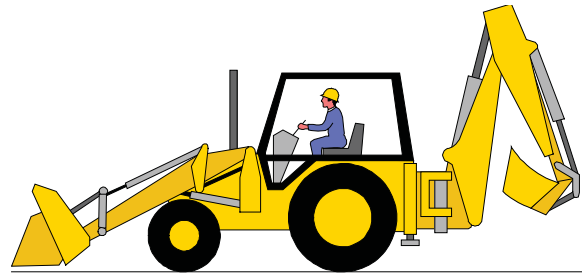
What is One-Call? One-Call is not nearly as complex as some would like to believe. One-Call is a law adopted in 1994 that allows the state of Nebraska, through a committee, to hire a contractor with the purpose of “the state-wide receipt and dissemination to participating operators of information on a fair and uniform basis concerning intended excavation in an area where the operators have underground facilities.”

There are only a few actual requirements and their provisions

that specifically retain municipal authority over municipal right-of-way. It is important to remember that the One-Call law is not the exclusive law dealing with underground facilities.

The legal requirements are as follows:

- Every operator (owner of underground facility) shall furnish the vendor, selected by the board of directors, with information concerning the location of its underground facilities.
- A person shall not commence any excavation without first giving notice to every operator. An excavator’s notice to the center shall be deemed notice to all operators. An excavator’s notice to operators shall be ineffective for purposes of this subsection unless given to the center.
- Notice to the center shall be given at least two full business days, but no more than 10 business days, before commencing the excavation, except notice may be given more than 10 business days in advance when the excavation is a road con-



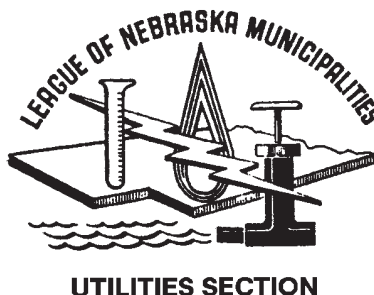
struction, widening, repair, or grading project provided for in Sections 70-311 to 70-313 and 86-708 to 86-710.

- An excavator may commence work before the elapse of two full business days when (a) notice to the center has been given as provided by this subsection and (b) all the affected operators have notified the excavator that the location of all the affected operator’s underground facilities have been marked or that the operators have no under-

Continued on page 2

If you would like to receive your *Utilities Section Newsletter* by email rather than regular mail, please contact Brenda at brendae@lonm.org.
Thank you!

1335 L Street, Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 476-2829
Fax (402) 476-7052



Lash Chaffin
Utilities Section Director
Rob Pierce
Utilities Field Representative

Excavation permits and One-Call

Continued from page 1

ground facilities in the location of the proposed excavation.

- The notice shall include (a) the name and telephone number of the person making the notification, (b) the name, address, and telephone number of the excavator, (c) the location of the area of the proposed excavation, including the range, township, section, and quarter section, unless the area is within the corporate limits of a city or village, in which case, the location may be by street address, (d) the date and time excavation is scheduled to commence, (e) the depth of excavation, (f) the type and extent of excavation being planned, including whether the excavation involves tunneling

or horizontal boring, and (g) whether the use of explosives is anticipated.

- Upon receipt of the information contained in the notice, an operator shall advise the excavator of the approximate location of underground facilities in the area of the proposed excavation by marking or identifying the location of the underground facilities with stakes, flags, paint, or any other clearly identifiable marking or reference point. The location of the underground facility given by the operator shall be within a strip of land 18 inches on either side of the marking or identification plus one-half of the width of the underground facility. If, in the opinion of the operator, the pre-

cise location of a facility cannot be determined and marked as required, the operator shall provide all pertinent information and field locating assistance to the excavator at a mutually agreed time. The location shall be marked or identified using color standards prescribed by the center. The operator shall respond no later than two business days after receipt of the information in the notice or at a time mutually agreed to by the parties.

- The marking or identification shall be done in a manner that will last for a minimum of five business days on any nonpermanent surface and a minimum of 10 business days on any

Continued on page 3

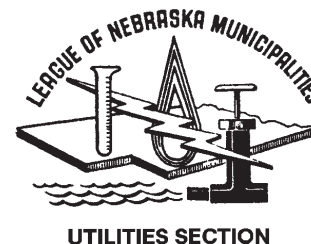
2011-2012 Executive Board

President

Joe Soucie
Public Works Director
La Vista

Past President

Leroy Frana
General Manager
Nebraska City Utilities



1st Vice President

Denise Peterson
Admin./Clerk/Treasurer
Ponca

Board Member

Kyle Potthoff
Public Works Director
McCook

Board Member

Dennis Smith
Public Works Director
Norfolk

2nd Vice President

Randy Woldt
Utility Superintendent
Wisner

Board Member

Jim McGowen
Utility Superintendent
Schuyler

Ex Officio

Pat Davison
Utility Superintendent
Imperial

Excavation permits and One-Call

Continued from page 2
 permanent surface. If the excavation will continue for longer than five business days, the operator shall remark or re-identify the location of the underground facility upon request of the excavator. The request for remarking or reidentification shall be made through the center.

- An operator who determines that it does not have any underground facility located in the area of the proposed excavation shall notify the excavator of the determination prior to the date of commencement of the excavation.

The provision that makes the whole thing work outlines how liability will be distributed when making an excavation:

An excavator who fails to give notice of an excavation . . . and who damages an underground facility by such excavation shall be strictly liable to the operator of the underground facility for the cost of all repairs to the underground facility. An excavator who gives notice and who damages an underground facility shall be liable to the operator for the cost of all repairs to

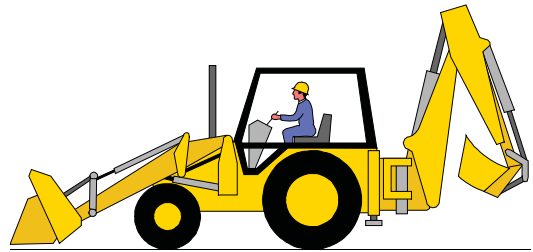
the underground facility unless the damage to the underground facility was due to the operator's failure to . . . An excavator who fails to give notice of an excavation pursuant to Section 76-2321 and who damages an underground facility that is operated by the excavator shall not be in violation of the One-Call Notification System Act.

In addition to any liability provided in this section, an operator of a damaged underground facility shall be entitled to any other remedies available at law or in equity provided by statute or otherwise.

Based on this section, it is imperative that a city or village always call before digging. There is tremendous liability protection from this section of the law.

How Can You Control Excavations? The One-Call law also has a very valuable provision that is not being used to its fullest extent:

The One-Call Notification System Act shall not affect or impair any local ordinances or other provisions of law requiring permits to be obtained before an excavation. A permit issued by a governing body shall not relieve an excavator from complying with the requirements of the



act. No claim shall be maintained under the One-Call Notification System Act against a political subdivision or its officers, agents, or employees except to the extent, and only to the extent, provided by the Political Subdivisions Tort Claims Act.

This law clearly authorizes a municipality to have requirements in addition to the One-Call. So, if your municipality would like an excavator to give information more detailed than "out by the fairgrounds," you can adopt a regulatory permit program that requires additional information.

Some ideas for a regulatory permit program might include:

- Come to the municipality and get a permit before you dig;
- Location;
- Nature of the Excavation – This will help your municipality know which facilities will be most vulnerable;
- Date of Proposed Commencement – This will help with that

multiple call issue. A municipality could put in penalties for persons who do not meet its deadlines;

- Inspection;
- Signage;
- Surety Bonds;
- Proposed Traffic Control;
- Restoration;
- Excavation Permits;
- Cleanup; and
- Backfilling.

AND NOW ---- THE BIGGIES

- Fees: At least try to recoup your One-Call cost;
- Length of Permit: Make sure that they get the project done ASAP so they don't come back for another One-Call;
- Exact Location: Make the permit holder accountable.

A Model Permit Management Program.

The city of Wayne has taken a pro-active approach to right-of-way excavations. Below you will find their regulations. These regulations would work well for any size city or village.

Continued on page 4

Excavation permits and One-Call

Continued from page 3

EXCAVATIONS

Definitions. The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

- Alley means a dedicated public right-of-way other than a street, which provides only a secondary means of access to abutting property, the right-of-way of which is 20 feet or less in width.
- Street right-of-way means the area measured between property lines, dedicated to and accepted for public use and providing access to abutting properties.

Compliance required. It shall be unlawful for any person to excavate in any public street, alley or right-of-way; to cut through or into any pavement; to cut, break or remove any curbing or combined curb and gutter; or to in any manner willfully damage or deface any pavement, curbing or gutter on any public street, right-of-way or alley within the city except in accordance with the provisions of this article.

Permit required. (a) Should it

become necessary for any purpose to excavate in any right-of-way, street or alley; to cut through or into any street pavement; or to break, cut or remove any curbing or gutter on any public street or alley in the city for whatever purpose, the person by whom such excavation, cutting or breaking is desired shall secure a permit for such work from the building inspector.

(b) The building inspector shall require that applicants for such permits shall furnish the following information:

- Name of street or avenue on which work is to be commenced.
- The street address of the property for which such work is required.
- The name of the owner of such property.
- The purpose for which such work is required.
- A statement of the size or area of pavement to be torn out or the linear feet of curb or gutter to be torn out, the dimensions to be given in feet as nearly correct as is possible to estimate the size or area.
- The names and addresses of any

agents, employees or contractors of the applicant.

(c) When such permit is issued by the building inspector to the applicant, the applicant shall, in no event, permit the permit to be used by any person for the purpose of having the work, repair, replacement or improvement made unless such person to whom such permit is given shall previously have filed with the city clerk an approved surety bond as required in this article.

Obstructions and excavations in streets. It shall be unlawful for any person within the city to obstruct any street or alley or public right-of-way by placing or permitting to remain any substance or thing interfering with the public use of such locations; or to dig or to make any ditch or excavation in any street, alley or right-of-way except for public purposes and temporary uses; or permit any such excavation to remain open for a longer time than is actually necessary; and all such excavations shall be carefully guarded while being made or used.

Digging in street. (a) It shall be unlawful for any person to dig up,

Continued on page 5

HAROLD K SCHOLZ CO.

**ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS
SWITCHGEAR ASSEMBLERS**

Switchgear Controls Relaying	Generation Automation Metering	Substations Service Breakers
---	---	---

7800 Serum Ave. - Ralston, Nebraska 68127
PH: (402)339-7600 FAX: (402)339-1821
E-MAIL: power@hkscholz.com
www.hkscholz.com



JEO CONSULTING GROUP INC

- ENGINEERING
- ARCHITECTURE
- SURVEYING
- PLANNING

jeo.com | 800.723.8567

Excavation permits and One-Call

Continued from page 4

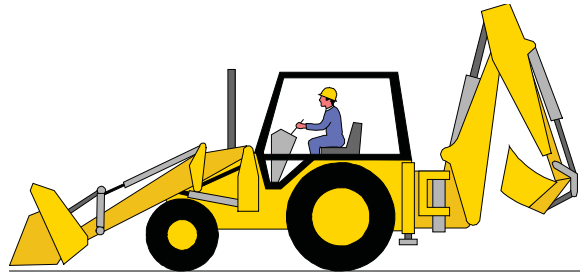
excavate or remove any dirt in any street, alley or other public right-of-way within the city or in any part of such street, alley or public right-of-way or in any manner to obstruct or injure any such street, alley or public right-of-way without first having obtained a permit. It shall further be unlawful for any officer or employee of the city, or for any other person, either to give away or to receive any dirt given away for any street, alley or right-of-way within the city; and it shall be unlawful for any officer or employee of the city, or for any other person, to sell or purchase any dirt from any street, alley or public right-of-way within the city except by direction and authorization of the council.

(b) It shall be deemed a violation of this article if more pavement or curbing shall be torn out or more excavation is made than the amount stated in the permit for such work.

Exceptions. This article shall not affect the right of the water or sewer department to excavate

under any pavement for the purpose of installing, repairing, extending or changing any public sewer, water main, pipe or other underground construction of either department; however, any and all cutting of pavement or tearing out of curbing or gutter shall be done in the same manner by the city as would have been done had a permit been issued to a private individual.

Surety bond. The applicant for each permit required by the article shall file with the city clerk a performance bond, with sureties to be approved by the city administrator in the sum of the currently required amount, to be in the form as required by the city administrator. The bond shall be conditioned upon the proper indemnifying and holding the city harmless from any suits, damage, claims, liens or other actions that may arise from, grow out of, or in any way be connected with the work covered



by such permit with any corporate surety, to be in the currently required amount.

Backfill and inspection. All backfilling in streets, alleys or rights-of-way shall be done in accordance with the minimum standard of specifications for backfill as adopted by the city; and a copy of such specifications shall be on file for inspection. All inspection shall occur in accordance with the standard specifications and regulations, a copy of which shall be on file for inspection.

Rules for proper performance of work. The following rules regarding the proper performance of work covered by this article are set forth and shall be observed by all persons performing any such work:

- No tunneling or undercutting of banks in any trenches or openings in pavement will be permitted. All banks shall be cut straight down vertically from the surface of pavement so that the hole or trench may be properly backfilled and tamped.
- Small tunnels will be permitted for the installation of service pipes or other construction passing under the curbing or under curb and gutter, but the natural earth shall not be removed nor disturbed for a depth of not less

Continued on page 6

Mark your calendars!

- **Feb. 27-28, 2012**
Midwinter Conference
Cornhusker, Lincoln
- **Feb. 29-Mar. 1, 2012**
Meter Conference
Holiday Inn, Kearney

For more information, contact the League office at 402-476-2829.

Excavation permits and One-Call

Continued from page 5

than three feet immediately below the lower edge of such curb or gutter; and the person to whom such permit is issued shall be held responsible for any subsequent settlement or damage to the curb or gutter when caused by his work.

- No excavation shall be permitted at any time for any purpose within one foot of the back of any curbing or of any combined curb and gutter.
- After a permit is issued, the contractor or plumber must proceed with his work as rap-

idly as possible, in order that traffic may not be unnecessarily inconvenienced. If, in the opinion of the public works superintendent, the contractor is unnecessarily delaying his work, the city clerk shall be notified and he or she will give the contractor notice to proceed within 24 hours. If he or she fails to do so, the street department may then backfill the hole and charge for a new permit, and collect all incident costs and expenses from the applicant, contractor or owner.

Interference with other regu-

lations. (a) Nothing in this article shall interfere or conflict with any city regulations pertaining to the responsibility of plumbers and their liability for property damage, worker's compensation, and public liability. Each person to whom is issued a permit shall be responsible for all work connected with such permit from the time the permit is issued until the final replacement of paving, curbing or gutter and the removal of all obstructions or obstacles to uninterrupted traffic. All openings in public streets, alleys or rights-of-way shall be barricaded and protected by amber lights throughout the entire period; except when the hole or opening has been refilled or tamped, the barricades and amber lights may be removed.

(b) Nothing in this article shall interfere with any city regulation pertaining to the time of year in which cuts may be made in streets or pavements. Cuts in brick, concrete or asphalt pavements shall not be permitted, except in emergencies, from Nov. 1 to April 1.

Enforcement. The proper execution and enforcement of the provisions of this article are made the duty of the public works superintendent, and city administrator, who shall be made responsible to the council for the proper carrying out of such duties.

Penalty. Any person violating any of the provisions of this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall, upon conviction, be punished in accordance with this code. Further, nothing contained in this section shall prevent the city from taking such other action as is necessary to prevent or remedy any violation.

SAFETY/HEALTH CORNER

Lockout-Tagout safety reminder

Basic steps of Lockout-Tagout procedures should include: knowledge of the equipment, notification of others, shutting off power, disconnect, lock out all energy sources, label or tag, control or dissipate secondary energies, verification of lockout, keep locked out until the job is completed and finish safely.

The control of hazardous energy is a must when working around primary energy such as electric, hydraulic and pneumatic, not to mention secondary energies, which can include gravity, residual pressure, stored mechanical or residual electrical energies, thermal, gas, water, steam, chemicals and don't forget mechanical motion energy. Be sure to implement an annual review of your procedures, and incorporate

new equipment or modification changes into the plan.

Be sure to train and annually retrain employees and affected individuals working the area of the dangers, the method of operation and the inspection of lockout devices and tags.

Remember, safety first!



Advantage Library 'Tape of the Month'

The featured video from the Advantage Library for April is AD-027 "Basic Telephone Techniques." This 33-minute video produced by the Training Network discusses some basic phone techniques when working with customers via the phone.

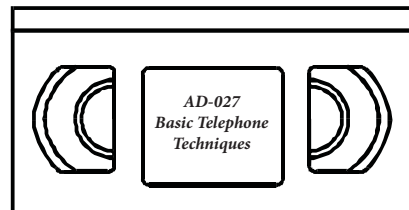
This video is one of many videos available through your Utilities Section Advantage Library.

There are more than 300 videos and DVDs with many differ-

ent titles within the Advantage Library ranging from five minutes to more than an hour.

A variety of reference books are also on hand that can be used to help new employees learn more about their job functions and/or prepare for certification exams in the water and wastewater operator field.

Utilities Section members who need an updated library catalog and/or wish to check out a refer-



ence manual, a DVD, or an audio/videotape from the library should contact the League office.

The Power *to Get You Flowing!*

- Municipal Pipe Cleaning
- CCTV Pipe Inspection
- Root Sawing & Removal
- Foam Chemical Root Treatment
- Manhole Rehabilitation
- Pipe Bursting Sewer Replacement
- Trenchless Sewer Liners
- Sectional Point Repair



PO Box 1065
Kearney, NE 68848
Tel: 308-237-6651
www.johnsonservicecompany.com

Nebraska utilities history

The Utilities Section Newsletter will continue to feature histories of both utilities and associate members. Any historical data and/or photos of your utilities, a specific facility, or articles already written are welcome, along with permission to print. If you have questions, contact Rob at 402-476-2829 or robp@lonm.org.

*By Rob Pierce,
Utilities Field Representative,
LNM*

Mitchell is located in Scotts Bluff County to the west of what was called Mitchell Pass in the 1860s. In the late summer of 1863, a fort was built about three miles west of what is now Scottsbluff. It had three-foot walls of sod and adobe (100 x 180 feet) around a central parade ground (66 x 164 feet) with a sentinel tower and adjoining horse corrals. It was known as Camp Shuman until September or October of 1864 when it was renamed Camp Mitchell for about a month, then was changed to Fort Mitchell. Approximately 50-60 men were stationed here until the fort was abandoned about 1868. It wasn't until the 1880s that settlers began coming to the area. A store was built in 1887 and a post office was established on May 13, 1887. In

the fall of 1899 through 1900, the Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad spur arrived in Sunflower, then later across the river to the community called Mitchell. About 1901, a school was built, replacing the earlier sod schools in the area. That year, the *Mitchell Index* newspaper was published and a two-story hotel called "Lavish" was built. In 1902, irrigation came to the area pushing ranches northward while Mitchell became the headquarters for the U.S. Reclamation Service for the North Platte Valley. On Feb. 7, 1902, Mitchell was incorporated as a village and the first board was elected.

In February 1908, bids were opened for the construction of a water system. In 1909, ordinance #38 provided for an appointment of a water commissioner and ordinance #39 allowed the establishment of water rates. Meters were to be read quarterly and rates



Mitchell water tower, 2001 Photo.

were \$0.30 per 1000 gallons with a minimum charge of \$1.50 per quarter. Taps were to be made between 8 a.m.-6 p.m. (tapped on top and not in any case nearer than 15 inches on either side of the pipe and not nearer than four feet to another tap). Also in 1909, an Alfalfa Mill was built along the railroad right-of-way. On

Continued on page 9

Collaborative Design Solutions



Arizona • Colorado • Iowa • Kansas • North Dakota • Missouri • Nebraska

- ~ Water/Wastewater
- ~ Water Resources
- ~ Land Development
- ~ Transportation/Traffic
- ~ Airports
- ~ Environmental
- ~ Geotechnical
- ~ Surveying
- ~ Construction Services

- ~ Power Electrical
- ~ Electrical
- ~ Mechanical
- ~ Automation & Technology
- ~ Specialty Lighting
- ~ Public Involvement
- ~ Funding

1111 Lincoln Mall; Lincoln, Nebraska 68508 | 402.474.6311 | www.oaconsulting.com

Nebraska utilities history

Continued from page 8

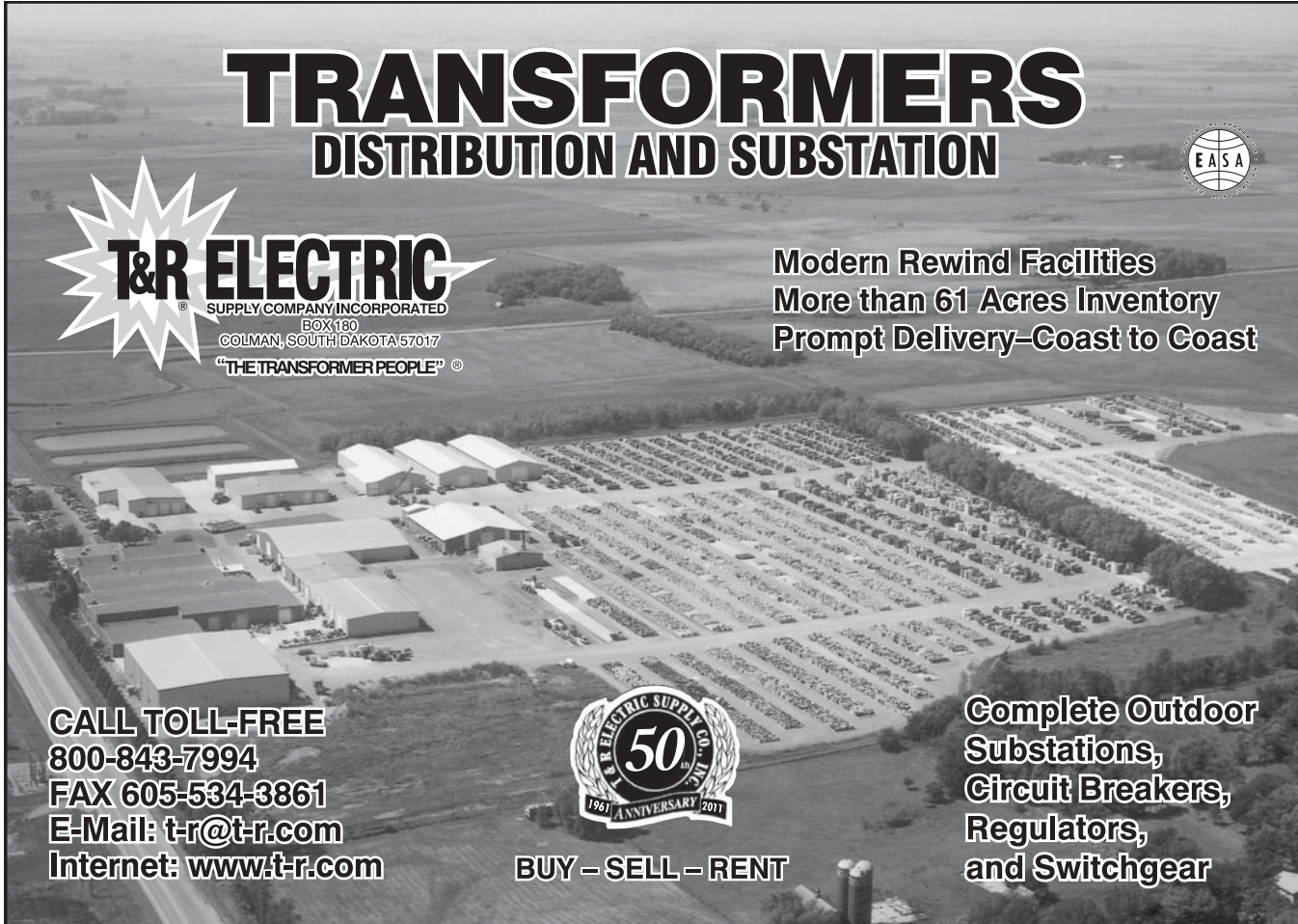
Oct. 19, 1909, ordinance #40 was passed establishing a fire department and ordinance #37 allowed the Mitchell Alfalfa Milling and Light to provide electricity to the village. Poles and lines were installed along alleys and streets and the price was not to exceed \$0.20 per 1,000 watt hours and for commercial not to exceed \$0.18 per 1,000 watt hours, with a minimum of \$0.50 per month. The franchise allowed for the village

to be able to buyout after 10 years at cost of purchase. Shares were issued at \$50 each up to \$32,000. In 1910, the business was lit by the Mitchell Electric Plant, along with the installation of 40 street lights at 60-watt candle power. In 1910, the population was 640, a new brick school was built and the first 12th grade class graduated. On Oct. 10, 1912, bonds of \$8,000 were voted on for a sewer system. On April 10, 1917, the village became a city of the sec-

ond class. In June 1917, a special election was held to pass ordinance #76 for \$11,000 in bonds to extend 9,060 feet of water mains. The ordinance also allowed for the purchase of a new fire truck, 40 gallon chemical with 200 feet of hose at a cost of \$2,600. On July 1, 1919, \$3,500 in water bonds was issued. Also in 1919, bonds of \$16,900 were approved to build a new city hall.


The early 1920s appeared

Continued on page 10



TRANSFORMERS


DISTRIBUTION AND SUBSTATION



T&R ELECTRIC
SUPPLY COMPANY INCORPORATED
BOX 180
COLMAN, SOUTH DAKOTA 57017
"THE TRANSFORMER PEOPLE" ©

Modern Rewind Facilities
More than 61 Acres Inventory
Prompt Delivery—Coast to Coast

Complete Outdoor Substations, Circuit Breakers, Regulators, and Switchgear



CALL TOLL-FREE
800-843-7994
FAX 605-534-3861
E-Mail: t-r@t-r.com
Internet: www.t-r.com

BUY - SELL - RENT

Nebraska utilities history

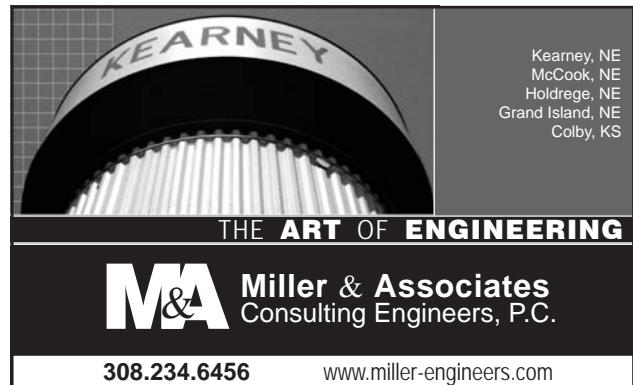
Continued from page 9
progressive and prosperous for Mitchell as the population doubled to 1,298 and a factory was built by the Great Western Sugar Company. On May 1, 1920, water bonds of \$8,000 and \$19,000 were issued for a water tower to be erected beside the Great Western Sugar Factory. Street paving projects were also being considered in 1920. In 1920, the mill and light building was destroyed by fire and power had to be supplied by the government transmission lines and temporary power from the Great Western Sugar Company. On May 1, 1920, a \$10,000 electric transmission line bond issue was proposed to purchase the lighting system from the Mitchell Alfalfa Milling & Light Company and to bring power from transmission lines to a substation to

be built on city property. Bids were let for a city hall with the bid of \$20,000 accepted. The two-story brick building (40 x 60 feet) would be located at the corner of Center Avenue and Ash Street. On May 18 at 3:30 p.m., the cornerstone was to be laid. Music was played by the Mitchell and Gering bands with a time capsule sealed in the foundation. The move for the building originated with the fire department and was sponsored by the Mitchell Community Club. In 1922, city hall was completed with the library initially housed within the building. Also in 1922, the railroad replaced their depot with a new modern depot and a new hotel was in operation. By 1927, a two-story brick school was built and the water tank and the installation of water mains were completed.

In 1929, sewer mains were laid in the west part of town (Elquest addition) and in May, the south side sanitary sewer was laid. Street projects were completed with Western Sugar Factory donating the crushed limestone, and the sand and gravel were obtained from an old gravel pit owned by the city. A proposal to change street names was made at this time. Water mains were laid, replacing old water services with lead services. A.C. Smith of Scottsbluff laid the new mains and subcontractor W.C. Colter replaced the lead service lines. The water tank was painted and the pumping station was experiencing some problems keeping up with demand due to some mechanical issues. In 1929, Mitchell began feeling the Depression as two banks closed and the school and gymnasium

were destroyed by fire. In 1930, the population was 2,058 and in 1931 a \$1,000 in bond issues were approved for a paving district. In 1932, the city voted on purchasing the power system from Western Public Service Company (Mitchell office). It was probably at this time a municipal electric system was established in Mitchell. By September, the city had hooked up to the Lingle, Wyoming power plant for 24-hour electrical service because the sugar factory no longer supplied power to the city. In 1934, a First National building was built. First National was the only Mitchell bank to survive the Depression of 1929. It was reportedly the only bank in the nation built that year. By 1942, a new 200,000-gallon capacity swimming pool had been completed at a
Continued on page 11

MONGAN
PAINTING CO., INC.
Floor Coatings * Sandblasting * Epoxy Coatings
Water Plants * Storage Tanks * Swimming Pools
Sewage Plants * Ethanol Plant
PO Box 515 - Cherokee, Iowa 51012
Phone (712)225-0626 Fax (712)225-0627
Email: monganmd@ncn.net



Kearney, NE
McCook, NE
Holdrege, NE
Grand Island, NE
Colby, KS

THE ART OF ENGINEERING

MA Miller & Associates
Consulting Engineers, P.C.

308.234.6456 www.miller-engineers.com

Nebraska utilities history

Continued from page 10
cost of about \$28,000.

In the 1950s, the population peaked at 3,101 and many municipal improvements were made. The streets were hard surfaced, a grade school complex was built (1952) and the fire department had about 35 volunteers. In 1956, the electric system was owned/operated by the city and supplied by Bureau of Reclamation and the natural gas system was privately owned. Garbage was collected by a private collector with rates of \$3 per residence and \$3.75 per business. The city had a library board and a board of public works. The water plant and the 650 meters in service were publicly owned with 1958 rates of the first 5,000 gallons at \$0.25, next 5,000 gallons at \$0.20, and all over 10,000 gallons at \$0.15 per 1,000 gallons, minimum \$1.25 or \$1 if paid by the 10th of the month. Summer rates at a 40 percent discount and a meter deposit of \$3. In 1958, the electrical distribution system and the 850 meters in service were owned by the city and supplied by the Bureau of Reclamation at the kilowatt hour (KWH) wholesale rate of \$0.066 mills. Meter deposit was \$5 to \$25 with rates of the first 25 KWH @ \$0.0778 per KWH, next 25 @ \$0.0556, next 50 @ \$0.0444, next 150 @ \$0.0333, next 250 @ \$0.0222, and all in excess of 500 KWH @ \$0.0167 less 20 percent discount if paid by the 10th of the month, minimum of \$1.20 less 20 percent discount. The cost of street lighting was \$600 per month and the cost of pumping water was approximately \$100 per month. The sewer system was publicly owned

and maintained by a tax levy with a sewer project underway in 1958-62. In 1958, the natural gas system was owned by the North Central Gas Company with rates of first 3,000 cubic feet (cuft) @ \$0.70 per 1,000, next 2,000 cuft @ \$0.65 per 1,000, next 10,000 @ \$0.56 per 1,000, next 15,000 @ \$0.50 per 1,000, next 50,000 @ \$0.425 per 1,000, next 15,000 @ \$0.40 per 1,000, next 30,000 @ \$0.375 per 1,000, next 90,000 @ \$0.325, next 120,000 @ \$0.28 per 1,000 and a minimum of \$2.25.

In the 1960s, the population was 1,920, garbage rates were \$3 per residence, the cost of street lighting was \$554.80/month and the cost of pumping water was \$102.75 per month. The city had between 820 to 900 electric meters in service and about 580 water meters in service. In 1960, water rates were first 5,000 gallons @ \$0.25, next 5,000 gallons @ \$0.20, all over 10,000 @ \$0.15 per 1,000 gallons and a minimum of \$1.25 per month for 5,000 gallons. In 1962, electric rates were first 25 KWH @ \$0.0778 per KWH, next 25 @ \$0.0556, next 50 @ \$0.0444, next 150 @ \$0.0333, next 250 @ \$0.0222, all in excess of 500 KWH @ \$0.0167, and a minimum of \$1. In 1962, the public sewer collection and disposal system was maintained by a sewer charge of \$0.75 to \$1 residential and \$3 for commercial. Natural gas rates were first 3,000 cuft @ \$0.70 per 1,000, next 2,000 cuft @ \$0.65 per 1,000, next 10,000 @ \$0.56 per 1,000, next 15,000 @ \$0.50 per 1,000, next 50,000 @ \$0.425 per 1,000, next 15,000 @ \$0.40

per 1,000, next 30,000 @ \$0.375 per 1,000 next 90,000 @ \$0.325, next 180,000 @ \$0.28 per 1,000. By 1963, bids were approved for a new water storage tower to be built in the spring by the Pittsburg-Des Moines Steel Company with a bid of \$49,825.

By 1970, the population had decreased to 1,842, the Sunflower School District merged with Mitchell School District (1976) and the Great Western Sugar Company processing plants closed in Scottsbluff, Gering, Bayard and Mitchell. In the 1980s, natural gas was supplied by KN Energy and the population was 1,956. In 1982, the sewer treatment plant (primary and secondary biological treatment) was completed with a maximum capacity of 3,500,000 gallons, an average daily flow of 1,031,000 gallons and a historic peak daily discharge of 2,592,000 gallons. In 1983, there was consolidation with surrounding Scotts Bluff County School Districts as the school graduated 83 students. By 1990, the population was 1,743, the electric system had 1,030 customers (1993), the fire department had 40 volunteers and a fire insurance rating in the city of six. In 1997, garbage was collected by the city at \$9.75 per month or a private collector with rates negotiable. Natural gas was supplied by KN Energy serving 3,700 residential, commercial and industrial customers. The water system had eight wells with a combined pumping capacity of 5,500 gallons per minute (gpm) with an average daily demand of 2,380,000 gallons. The historic

Continued on page 12

Nebraska utilities history

Continued from page 11
peak demand was 9,572,000 gallons and the elevated storage tank had a capacity of 200,000 gallons.

By 1999, Mitchell had 85 percent of the streets paved and the disposal plant was a facultative flow through lagoon system designed for 0.32 million gallons per day (mgd) with the present load at 0.22 mgd. Sewer rates were residential at \$9 per month and commercial \$14 per month with \$0.20 per 1,000 gallons water used.

By 2000, the population was 1,831, the city offices relocated to a former bank building, a new shop was built, and natural gas was supplied by KN Energy and ACE. In 2001, the city had three wells with an average daily use of 556,000 gallons, peak daily

consumption 1,666,000 gallons, a 200,000 gallon elevated storage tank and water rates of 1-6,000 gallons at \$9 and \$0.70 per 1,000 gallons over the minimum. Water tankers filled at \$1.50 per 1,000 gallons with a minimum charge of \$2. On March 9, 2004, a resolution was passed to increase water rates to an \$11 minimum for first 6,000 gallons and \$0.80 per 1,000 gallons thereafter. Wastewater rates were increased to \$13 per month with commercial rates at \$18 per month plus \$0.35 per 1,000 gallons water used.

Today, the city has a population of 1,702, an M.B. Quivey Memorial Library, two parks, a swimming pool, the home of the Scotts Bluff County fairgrounds, a BMX course and a scenic nine-hole Knolls Golf Course located two miles north on Highway 26.

Mitchell has been an incorporated village or city of the second class for 110 years and a continuous Utilities Section Member since at least 1979.

Reference: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1956-1969, 1972-2011; Western Nebraska Tourism Guide, Western Nebraska Tourism Coalition Magazine, 2003, 2006; The Mitchell Index Newspapers, 1901-2010; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Perkey's Nebraska Place Names, 1995; Mitchell Internet Website, 2003; Lincoln Journal Star Newspaper, 2005, 2007; Public Power Magazine, Vol. 51, Number 1, January-February, 1993; Nebraska Our Towns... The Panhandle, 1988; Maps Tell Nebraska's History; and NEDED Website, 2005, 2010.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to the following wastewater facilities that received SAFETY AWARDS at the 2011 Annual NWEA Conference held in Kearney:

Gold Award (10+ Operators) – City of Omaha
Papillion Creek WWTP

Silver Award (10+ Operators) – City of Omaha
Missouri River WWTP

Gold Award (5-9 Operators) – City of Scottsbluff
Silver Award (5-9 Operators) – City of Norfolk
Bronze Award (5-9 Operators) – Fremont WWTP,
Beatrice WWTP

Gold Award (1-4 Operators) – North Platte WWTP
Congratulations to the following wastewater facilities that received the SCOTT WILBER AWARDS for outstanding operation and maintenance of a wastewater treatment facility:

Medium Facility (2-5 MGD): City of Norfolk, City of Fremont, City of Scottsbluff, City of Beatrice and

the City of North Platte.

Small Facility (<2 MGD): City of Wilber
Congratulations to the following individual award-ees:

William D. Hatfield Award – Randy Wilson, City of Lincoln (retired 2011)

Lifetime Memberships – Gary Lund, City of Norfolk and Paul Trout, HDR Engineering (retired)

Quarter Century Club Memberships – Curtis Kizzire, City of O'Neill and Paul Trout, HDR (retired)

More information on these awards and membership can be found at the NWEA Association website www.ne-wea.org.

Again, congratulations to all the systems and individuals for their outstanding performance and dedication in operation maintenance and safety to their systems, customers and employers!

Training calendar for 2012

February

- Feb. 14.....Water Operator Training Workshop Fire Hall, Ogallala
- Feb. 15.....Water Operator Training Workshop Utility Buidling, Hastings
- Feb. 16.....Water Operator Training Workshop BPW Building, Beatrice
- Feb. 27-28Midwinter Conference Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln
- Feb. 28-Mar. 1....Electric Meter Conference Holiday Inn, Kearney

March

- Mar. 6Water Operator Training Workshop Fire Hall, Wayne
- Mar. 7Water Operator Training Workshop Columbus
- Mar. 8Water Operator Training Workshop City Hall, Blair

April

- April 24Water Operator Training Workshop City Hall, Sidney
- April 25Water Operator Training Workshop Water Shop, Grand Island
- April 26Water Operator Training Workshop Civic Center, Seward

May

- May 1Water Operator Training Workshop Mid-Plains Community College,
North Platte
- May 24Water Operator Training Workshop Fire Training Center, Norfolk

Workshops also are listed on our website at www.lonm.org "Calendar of Events."



Life.BETTER.

www.hdrinc.com



Scott Dobry Pictures

Proud to be Nebraska's partner in building great communities.

Engineering | Architecture | Consulting