

Utilities Section Newsletter

League of Nebraska Municipalities

November 2011

Water systems need to look at plans review options

By Lash Chaffin,
Utilities Section Director, LNM

In 2010, Nebraska Health and Human Services Regulation and Licensure (HHS) adopted new rules on when a public water system needs to submit engineering plans to HHS when doing main replacement or construction. In general, HHS requires plan submittal in many more situations than required before the adoption of the 2010 rules, BUT in lieu of plan submittal on every project, systems will have a chance to submit a three-year plan that outlines the general standard specifications that will be used by the water system. Seventeen systems currently use this system, and it is well worth the time for many more systems to determine whether it would be advantageous to use the three-year plan system.

THREE-YEAR REVIEW PROGRAM. Public water systems have the opportunity to avoid plan submittal by submitting a three-year review program. Basic requirements of the program include:

- The system must submit two sets of standard specifications and standard drawings

sealed, signed and dated by an engineer for approval by the director. Changes of sanitary significance to the approved standard specifications and standard drawings must be submitted to the director for review and written approval before implementation.

- The sizing of the mains and appurtenances must not cause any part of the system pressure to go below 20 psi under normal operating conditions. All distribution main projects must be designed by an engineer and must be in substantial conformance to the "Recommended Standards for Water Works," 2007 Edition, which is hereby incorporated into these regulations by reference. It is available for viewing at the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE 68509. It is available from Health Research Inc., Health Education Services Division, PO Box 7126, Albany, NY 12224, (518) 439-7286, www.hes.org. Any

distribution main project with estimated or actual costs that do not exceed \$86,000 does not need to be designed by an engineer, but must follow the standard specifications and standard drawings approved by the department.

- The department may at any time request a system to provide a set of plans and specifications for a recently constructed water distribution main project to allow Department staff to conduct a field inspection.
- The system must provide the department with an annual list of all water distribution main projects that were placed in service during the previous calendar year by March 31 of each year. Those projects that

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!

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UTILITIES SECTION

Lash Chaffin
Utilities Section Director
Rob Pierce
Utilities Field Representative

Water systems need to look at plans review options

Continued from page 1

- deviated from the contamination separation standards in 179 NAC 7-007 must be noted.
- In addition, the system must maintain the following records for each project and make them available to the department on request:
 - A set of plans and specifications for each project, until replaced by record drawings which must be kept as long as the project is in service;
 - A project description indicating the purpose of the project, the proposed piping material design,

operating pressure and design flows where applicable;

- Copies of certification of project completion for each water distribution main project (by the engineer or owner, as applicable);
- Copies of satisfactory bacteriological testing results and pressure/leakage tests; and
- Documentation and justification for any deviation, for each project where applicable, from the contamination separation standards for water mains and fire hydrants listed in

179 NAC 7-007.

FEES. For the review and approval of standard specifications and standard drawings, annual audit and field inspection for the three-year review program, the following fees apply:

- Systems with a population greater than or equal to 100,000 – \$1,800/year;
- Systems with a population greater than or equal to 10,000 but less than 100,000 – \$900/year;
- Systems with population greater than or equal to 3,300 but less than 10,000 – \$600/year; and
- Systems with a population less than 3,300 – \$300/year.

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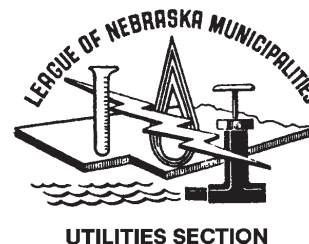
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Repeat winner in “Best Drinking Water” contest

Reprinted with permission and written by Mary Poe, Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services

“Doesn’t all water taste the same?” This question was asked by one of the judges prior to the third annual Best Drinking Water in Nebraska taste test, held at the annual conference in Kearney. After evaluating and rating the six water samples for scent, appearance, flavor, and aftertaste, the judge had his answer.

The water sample from the City of Fremont was rated the best-tasting for the second consecutive year.

Fremont is now invited to submit a sample for the “Best of the Best” taste-test competition at the

AWWA Annual Conference and Exposition (ACE) in Dallas next June. Other submissions came from the municipal water supplies in Beatrice, Lincoln, Omaha (MUD), Norfolk, and Seward -- and the final scores captured a very close competition. We all know that water tastes best when it is chilled; however, this year, all the water samples were required to be at room temperature for the tast-

ing contest, giving the judges the best opportunity to distinguish each water’s flavor and quality from the others.

The contest, organized by the Nebraska Section’s Public Information Committee, also had an entertaining flavor to it. The organizers guessed that watching a water tasting contest may not be quite as exciting as watching a football game in Memorial Stadium, so they put together a slide presentation entitled “Waters of the Big Ten” to help liven up the program. Those in

attendance (and paying attention) learned that the Big Ten Conference has been around longer than chlorinated water systems in this country have been around. They also learned other interesting and important facts, like how much water is needed to make beer and cheese in Wisconsin; that the University of Iowa is located along the Iowa River in Iowa City, but it is not in Iowa County; that Minnesota has a lot more than 10,000 lakes; and that in Columbus, Ohio (home to Ohio

State University), water towers can often be found in pairs all across the city.

Several lucky audience members took home door prizes and the tasters were each thanked with a stainless steel water bottle emblazoned with the phrase “Official Taster of Nebraska’s Best Water.” The judge who had earlier wondered if all drinking water tasted the same, may have filled up his new water bottle with the leftover water from Fremont...Nebraska’s Best Tasting Drinking Water in 2011.



The 2011 “Distinguished taste-taster” judges from left to right: Dr. Jay Dostal (Principal, Kearney High School), Dr. Bruce Dvorak (Interim Director, UNL Water Center), David Houghtelling (Utility Superintendent, City of Cambridge), Teresa Konda (Chair, Nebraska Section AWWA), Dennis Kelleher (National Vice President, AWWA), Jack Daniel (Administrator, Office of Drinking Water & Environmental Health) and Jake Fisher (Graduate Student, UNL Civil Engineering). Photo by Brian Gongol.

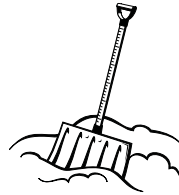
SAFETY/HEALTH CORNER

Shoveling Smarts

Shoveling snow is a pain in the neck. And, it can cause very real pain and damage to your back and heart. Here's the smart way to clear the snow from the driveway:

1. Warm up. As with any form of strenuous exercise, you need to warm your body up before tackling snow shoveling. Do a few minutes of jumping jacks to stretch your muscles.

2. Use the right shovel. Ergonomics doesn't apply just to your desk and chairs. There are plenty of shovels that are ergonomically designed. Buy one. They are constructed to reduce your need to bend over.



3. Bend the right body part.

Always, always bend at the knees, not at the waist.

4. Take breaks. If you're in good shape, take a break every 15 minutes. If you're not, take one every five minutes. And if you feel any chest pressure or shortness of breath, stop.

5. Pay someone. It doesn't cost much to hire the kid next door. And it will save you the strain and the time.

Writing an article for the Utilities Section Newsletter

Are you interested in writing an article for the *Utilities Section Newsletter*? We are interested in articles on the past, present, and future of your municipal utilities.

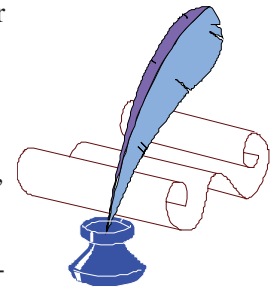
Articles can be written on a specific department or an overview of the history of the entire utilities department. Items of interest may be information on the first well in your community, number of ser-

vices, service fees, the equipment used, and also the employees that worked in the various utilities departments. Photos would enhance the articles and will be returned unless otherwise instructed.

If you don't feel comfortable writing an article, just provide some data and we will assist you in writing an article on your department or system.

Send your articles, photos or information to:

Rob Pierce,
League of Nebraska Municipalities, 1335 L Street, Lincoln, NE 68508.



League puts classified ads on website

Besides the classified column offered in the *Utilities Section Newsletter* and the *Nebraska Municipal Review*, the League of Nebraska Municipalities is posting classified ads on its website. This service, which is part of the League's redesign of its website, is provided free of charge to member cities and villages while others will pay 55 cents per word. Ads are removed 30 days after the posting date unless otherwise specified. For more information, contact Brenda Emmett at brendae@lonm.org.

Be sure to check out the League's website at www.lonm.org.



Wastewater departments receive Safety Awards

The following systems received safety awards at the Annual Nebraska Water Environment Association banquet held Nov. 3, 2011.

The recipient systems are listed in their respective categories:

10+ Operators

- *Gold Award*
City of Omaha, Papillion Creek WWTP

- *Silver Award*
City of Omaha Missouri River WWTP

5-9 Operators

- *Gold Award*
City of Scottsbluff WWTP
- *Silver Award*
City of Norfolk WPC
- *Bronze Award*
Fremont WWTP
- *Bronze Award*
Beatrice WWTP

- *Bronze Award*
City of Lincoln, Theresa Street WWTP

1-4 Operators

- *Gold Award*
North Platte WWTP

Industrial

- *Gold Award*
Tyson Fresh Meats, Dakota City
- *Silver Award*
Tyson Fresh Meats, Lexington

- *Bronze Award*
Dutton-Lainson Company

For more information on how your facility can apply for one of these awards, contact Bill Riley at William.Riley@ci.omaha.ne.us.

Congratulations to all safety award recipients!

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- Manhole Rehabilitation
- Pipe Bursting Sewer Replacement
- Trenchless Sewer Liners
- Sectional Point Repair



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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*

Byrone, located in Thayer County, began as land platted for a town site originally called Harbine in 1880. By the late 1870s and early 1880s, the community consisted of a grain house, hotel, lumberyard, general store along with several residences. A railroad depot was built and one source listed incorporation as a village also in 1880. A post office was established Jan. 29, 1885, and the name was changed from Harbine to Byron in 1889. The population by 1890 was about 100 and the village had a general store, a Bank of Byron, a harness maker, livery, a Miles House hotel, and a *Byron Gleaner* newspaper. The village in 1900 had dirt streets, boardwalks and by 1902, the Bryon Telephone Company was started, consisting

of barbed wire, batteries and crude phones. Public utilities were not available at this time, as residences had individual wells and outhouses. The population in 1910 was 184 and by 1917, had a bank, hotel, two creameries, a restaurant, livery, lumberyard, a general store, grain elevator and the *Byron Messenger* newspaper was being published. In 1920, the population was 137 with District #68 School built in 1922. By 1928, Byron was a member of the League of Nebraska Municipalities, operated a water system with rates at \$2.50/quarter. Also in 1928, a privately owned power plant was providing electricity with rates at \$0.06 to \$0.15 per kilowatt hour. The population rose to 206 in 1930 before decreasing to 171 in 1940. In 1946, the Memorial Community Hall was built. The population decreased again with the 1950 census reporting 159. In 1955, a new fire house and a



Byron water tower, 2000 Photo.

new town hall was built. By 1956, the water plant and 75 meters in service were owned by the village with water rates at first 3,000 gallons per month at a \$1.75 minimum, next 6,000 gallons at \$0.25 per 1,000 gal. and all over 9,000 gallons at \$0.20 per 1,000 gallons with a \$5 meter deposit. Also in 1956, the cost of water pumping was \$314.75 per year and the cost

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Nebraska utilities history

Continued from page 6
of street lighting was \$332.76 per year. The electric distribution system in the 1950s was owned and operated by Consumers Public Power District. The cost of street lighting in 1958 was \$367.94 a year and the pumping of water was \$328.61 per year. In 1955, the water plant and 70 meters were owned by the village, with rates at a minimum of \$1.75 per month for the first 3,000 gallons, the next 6,000 gallons at \$0.25 per


1,000 gallons and all over 9,000 at \$0.20 per 1,000 gallons with a \$5 meter deposit. The population rose slightly (147), the fire department had 30 volunteers and the electric rates were first 24 kilowatt hours (KWH) at \$2, next 76 KWH at \$0.065, next 200 KWH at \$0.033, and all over at \$0.02 with a minimum of \$1 per month. The water plant and 80 meters were owned by the village with a meter deposit at \$5. 1960 also saw a sewer and street project get

underway and a new community hall and public library were built in 1964. In 1970, the population was 171 and the electric system switched from Consumers Public Power District to the Nebraska Public Power District. In 1977, the village was a member of the Utilities Section and by 1980, the population dropped to 154.

In the 1980s, the school system merged with Chester (1982), police protection was provided

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Nebraska utilities history

Continued from page 7 by the Thayer County Sheriff's department and the electric system was operated/supplied by Norris Public Power District (1982).

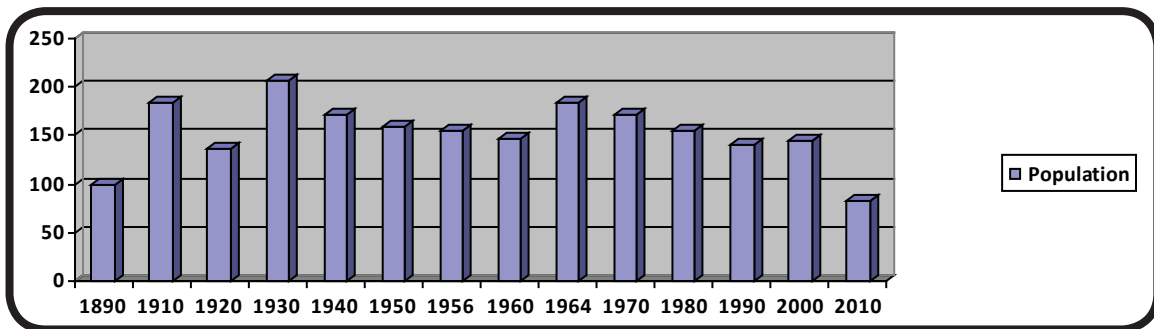
The natural gas system in 1982 was operated by Kansas-Nebraska Natural Gas Company. In 1983, a facultative retention lagoon system project was underway and the village became a Utilities Section member by 1989.

By 2010, the village population was 83, electric was provided by Norris Public Power District, natural gas by SourceGas, and the village operated a facultative retention lagoon system. The fire department had an ISO class rating of 8/9, the former school building houses the village offices/fire department, and the village has been incorporated for about 131 years. Byron has been a continuous

member of the Utilities Section the past 22 years and is probably the smallest populated member at 83.

References: *Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1956-1971, 1973-1989, 1994-95, 2000, 2002-2005, 2007-2009; Nebraska Municipal Review Magazine, 1928; Perkey's Nebraska Place Names, 1995; Pages of History, Nebraska High Schools, 1854-1994;*

Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Nebraska Our Towns... Central Southeast, 1991; Norris Public Power Website, 2004; Maps Tell A Story, 1991; NEDED Website, 2005; Nebraska Merrick County Gazetteer & Business Directory, 1890, 1917; NPPD Website, 2011; Nebraska Historic Building Survey Reconnaissance Survey Final Report of Thayer County, Nebraska, Aug. 1, 1991.



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Power Generation Conference held

On Oct. 25-27, 2011, the Heartland Power Generation Conference (formerly Heartland Diesel Conference) was held at the Lincoln Downtown Holiday Inn. Seventy-five participants, exhibitors and speakers were in attendance.

The conference started with an “Engine Rules Overview Update” by Melissa Ellis of the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality-Air Quality Division (NDEQ) and Eric Sturm of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The next two-and-a-half days covered topics such as governor controls, fuel injectors, electrical theory, retrofitting to meet RICE-NESHAP rules, establishing operations manuals, air quality permitting, SCADA systems, filtration, and cooling tower operation just to name a few.

The conference highlighted operation and maintenance of the major power generation engines by the respective companies representing those engines. Those companies include: Cameron Compression, Exline Inc., and Fairbanks-Morse Engine Division.

Other highlights included a session by long time operator Ed Solarski of Minnekota Power on “Working with History: Experience and Lessons from Operating Old Generation Equipment.” Another highlight was a hands-on session at the Farabee Mechanical Inc., shop with their staff. They had an engine partially torn down allowing operators to see the inner workings of an engine being rebuilt.

The conference concluded with sessions covering an update on interstate power by Lash Chaffin, League of Nebraska Municipalities, and market changes affecting power plant operations by Robert Pick, Municipal Energy Association of Nebraska.

Participants who did not pick up their certificates of attendance on the last day of the conference can contact the League office and a certificate can be faxed or emailed.

A special thanks to the individuals and their companies for exhibiting, sponsoring and providing educational/informational presentations at this year’s conference. Those companies listed alphabetically include:

Cameron Compression
DCL America
Environmental Protection Agency
*Exline Inc.
*Exterran Turbo Group
*Fairbanks-Morse Engine Division
*Farabee Mechanical Inc.
*Harold Scholz Company
Mid-Continent Manufacturing
Mid-Kansas Cylinder
*Midstates Erectors Inc.
Minnekota Power
Miratech Corp.
*Municipal Energy Association of Nebraska
Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality-Air Quality Division
*Nebraska Air Quality Specialties
*NovaTech LLC
*Olsson Associates
Peaker Services
SYS-KOOL LLC
*Vanguard Industrial Service
*WESCO
* – League of Nebraska Municipalities or Utilities Section Members

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.

Mileage reimbursement rate to remain the same

Effective Jan. 1, 2012, the mileage rate at which elected and appointed officials, employees, or volunteers may be reimbursed will remain the same – 55.5 cents per mile.

The Local Government Miscellaneous Expenditure Act provides that local units of government may approve mileage at the rate allowed by Section 81-1176. This section requires the state Department of Administrative Services to set the mileage rate. Effective Jan. 1, 2001, the state created a state policy that the state mileage rate will be set at the prevailing standard mileage rate as established by the Internal Revenue Service through its Revenue Procedures. Portions of Act, Section 13-2203, provide as follows: “In addition to other expenditures authorized by law, each government body may approve:

(1)(a) The expenditure of public funds for the payment or reimbursement of actual and necessary expenses incurred by elected and appointed officials, employees, or volunteers at educational workshops, conferences, training programs, official functions,

hearings, or meetings, whether incurred within or outside the boundaries of the local government, if the governing body gave prior approval for participation or attendance at the event and for payment or reimbursement either by the formal adoption of a uniform policy or by a formal vote of the governing body. Authorized expenses may include: (ii) Mileage at the rate allowed by section 81-1176 or actual travel expense if travel is authorized by commercial or charter means.”

Effective Jan. 1, the mileage rates associated with employee moving or relocation expense also will remain the same at 55.5 cents. The first 23.5 cents per mile (compared to 23.5 cents per mile effective July 1, 2011) is considered non-taxable income; any amount over the 23 cents per mile must be treated as a non-qualified moving expense and is considered taxable income. Policies on moving can be found at <http://www.das.state.ne.us/accounting/nis/am005.htm#move>.

Electric Substation Workshop held

The Utilities Section sponsored an Electric Substation Workshop Oct. 26, 2011, at the Lincoln Downtown Holiday Inn.

Instructors and topics at this year’s workshop included: “Substation Evaluation, Troubleshooting and Safety” by Garrett Klein of Olsson Associates; “Substation Grounding” by Lloyd Wolfe of WESCO; and “SCADA Use in Substations” by Jim Siders of NovaTech.

Municipalities in attendance included Arapahoe, North Platte, Seward and Wahoo. These sessions ran concurrent with and were attended by participants of the 2011 Heartland Power Generation Conference.

Participants were given booklets on the “Encyclopedia of Grounding for de-energized construction and maintenance” provided by the AB Chance Company.

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Water Departments receive AWWA Safety Awards

Eight municipal facilities received safety awards at the annual Nebraska Section AWWA conference held in Kearney Nov. 2, 2011. Chadron (class I), Seward (Class II), Beatrice (Class III) and Lincoln (Class IV) received the “Certificate of Achievement” awards for the top system in their respective class. Also, the following systems received “Certificate of Recognition” awards: Scottsbluff, Auburn (Class II), Norfolk (Class II) and the Metropolitan Utilities District (Class IV).

The awards are based on data received by the NS-AWWA safety committee from the survey applications returned from the respective systems which contained data from the past five years on reportable injuries, work hours, and their safety programs. A scoring system tallied from this data determined the top in each class which received a “Certificate of Achievement” award. These systems also had to achieve a minimum of 750 points out of the 1,000 point or they received a “Certificate of Recognition” award. To get the “Certificate of Recognition” award, systems

must accumulate a minimum of 600 points out of the total 1,000 points determined from the survey data. Systems also must be an AWWA member or have at least one individual employed at the system who is a member in order to be eligible to receive a safety award.

This year, of the eight systems receiving awards, their calculated recordable incidence rate averaged about 6.1 with the national average normally at about 10. Two systems, Chadron and Scottsbluff, in the past five years logged no recordable accidents and no lost work days with 113,993 hours worked. It would be interesting to see how far back these two systems go before a reportable accident was recorded. Great Job!

I would encourage all the



AWWA member water departments to send in their safety survey for the calendar year 2011, so they can receive recognition for their safe work environments. I am certain more water departments should have been eligible for awards, but no survey was returned so the section can not recognize their safety efforts. A safe work environment is something to be proud of and should receive recognition.

Again, to those receiving awards for the calendar year 2010, congratulations and keep up the safe work!

If your municipal system or employees receive recognition, promotions, awards, etc., contact the League office so we can recognize them in our publications.

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Training calendar for 2012

February

- Feb. 14.....Water Operator Training Workshop Fire Hall, Ogallala
- Feb. 15.....Water Operator Training Workshop 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

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