

Utilities Section Newsletter

League of Nebraska Municipalities

May 2022

Look out below

*Article/Photos
By Monte Dakan,
Sales Manager,
Johnson Service
Company*

Let me start by saying I am privileged to work in such a great industry. Nebraska municipalities are filled with talented, dedicated people from their communities and I am fortunate to know a many of you. When we discuss maintenance plans, that umbrella covers a lot of topics so in this article, I'd like to discuss manholes.

Let's start with Manhole Inspections. We are looking to familiarize ourselves with daily flows, look for structural issues and identify signs of infiltration.

The issue with sanitary sewer systems is that we are working blind when unexpected issues arise and manholes are typically our only source of information. By starting or maintaining a routine check of manholes, lift stations, etc., we become familiar with the day-to-day operation of the system and familiarize ourselves with typical flows

throughout segments of our community.

The best practice is to inspect these structures during wet and dry conditions. For example, I was in a community the other day while it was raining. Once the rain stopped, we went through town to look at manholes that may need to be rehabilitated. One manhole we observed had rainwater running in between the riser and top cone section. (Picture #1). Two feet up the street from this manhole, water was running into an unsealed gap in the street surface and had made its way under the concrete and into the manhole. If we would not have looked at this structure during a rain event, this infiltration would not have been discovered. Even if there is not active infiltration at the time of inspection, there is normally visible staining on the manhole walls and around pipe penetrations. Picture #2 shows the result of rainwater running

through cracks in the surface over a long period of time. Rainwater made its way through these surface cracks and into manhole structures. This is typical in brick manholes, because of a breakdown in the mortar due to micro biological corrosion, which exposes gaps between the bricks. Ground water and rainwater runoff enter this structure virtually undetected unless you are looking for signs of this deterioration.

Familiarizing ourselves with flow is important to help understand our system, but we also need to be looking for structural issues. Loose or missing bricks are the result of the micro biological corrosion and water infiltration that we discussed earlier. How the mortar looks between the bricks is critical to the overall integrity of this structure. As you can see in Picture #3, this manhole has little to no mortar and more than likely

has had water flowing in from under



Picture #1



Picture #2



Picture #3

the concrete surface. This structure can still be rehabilitated, but the
Continued on page 2

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UTILITIES SECTION

Lash Chaffin
Utilities Section Director
Rob Pierce
Utilities Field Representative

Look out below

Continued from page 1
rehab has become more costly and more critical. Check the mortar in these structures with a manhole pick or shovel. Does the mortar easily break away when you scrape it? If it does, then that also is a sign of micro biological corrosion. Once the mortar is no longer present, water, sand and dirt can begin to seep in. This creates the issue of a void in the surface area around the manhole, which results in sink holes or sags in the street surface. Inspections don't stop with brick manholes. Concrete precast man-

holes structures, lift stations and wet wells also should be inspected. Concrete is constantly under attack in a sanitary sewer system and even if the surface looks ok, it may begin deteriorating and become soft. A simple pick test (scraping the sides with a manhole pick) can help identify the level of deterioration.

The manholes pictured in this article are the result of not having a manhole inspection plan. Knowing the condition of your manholes puts you in control and can save your community money in the long

run.

For more information on preventive maintenance program

or trenchless rehabilitation options, feel free to contact me at Johnson Service Company.

Milestone celebration recognition

Is your municipality or utility celebrating a historic milestone? We are encouraging members to provide any information on major milestones being celebrated, such as 75 years of operating the electric system.

About 1942, the

private electric systems were being phased out in Nebraska and several municipalities took over their systems in the early 1940s. OPPD took over the electric system in 1946 (74 years ago) from Nebraska Power Company.

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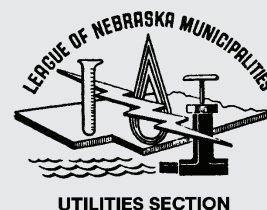
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Nebraska utilities history – Prague

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, LNM Field Rep./
Training Coordinator*

Prague, located in Saunders County, had settlers in the area by 1867 and the Plasi Catholic Church was organized in 1877. A Presbyterian Church was organized in 1877 and the Bohemian Presbyterian Church was incorporated by 1879. The First National Bank was established in 1882 and the railroad was extended to this point in 1887. A townsite was surveyed and platted on 160 acres (cost \$5,500). Lots were sold and the first building was a saloon, followed shortly by a general store. The Omaha & North Platte Railroad (later Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad) built a station (1887) and the Fisher and Simanek Lumberyard was established.

On Dec. 10, 1887, a post office was established and the name Prague was selected after the capital of Bohemia (now the Czech Republic). By September 1888, the railroad had a windmill and an elevated water tower on the side

of the hill. Some of the businesses in the community included a grain elevator, a blacksmith shop and the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Prague was established. The Prague Hotel was built and by Oct. 6, 1888, Prague was incorporated as a village with a population of about 200. One source noted a municipal electric department was formed or established in 1887 (not sure what this might have entailed). In 1889, another general store was in operation and a two-story, four-room, frame school was built for \$3,000.

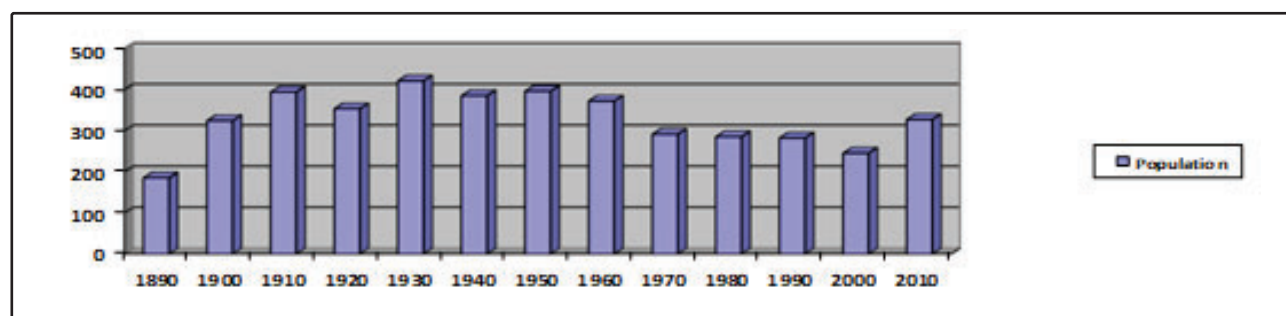
By 1890, the population was 185 and some of the businesses operating included a cigar factory, a flour mill and the two-story C.S.P.K building, which was built for \$1,300. The C.S.P.K. building was destroyed by fire in 1891, but other new businesses that year included a saloon, a hardware store, a general store, the Prague Hotel, a blacksmith shop, a drug-gist, a furniture store, a bank, a meat market, a harness shop and livery. The Prague Farmers Stock & Grain Company in 1893



Prague water tower. 2007 photo.

built a grain elevator, which was destroyed by fire two years later and then was rebuilt in 1897. By 1896, some of the businesses included a drug store, a bank, hotel, a livery barn, a machine shop, a blacksmith shop, a steam flour mill, two furniture stores, two butcher shops, two hardware stores, four saloons, two shoe-

Continued on page 4



Nebraska utilities history – Prague

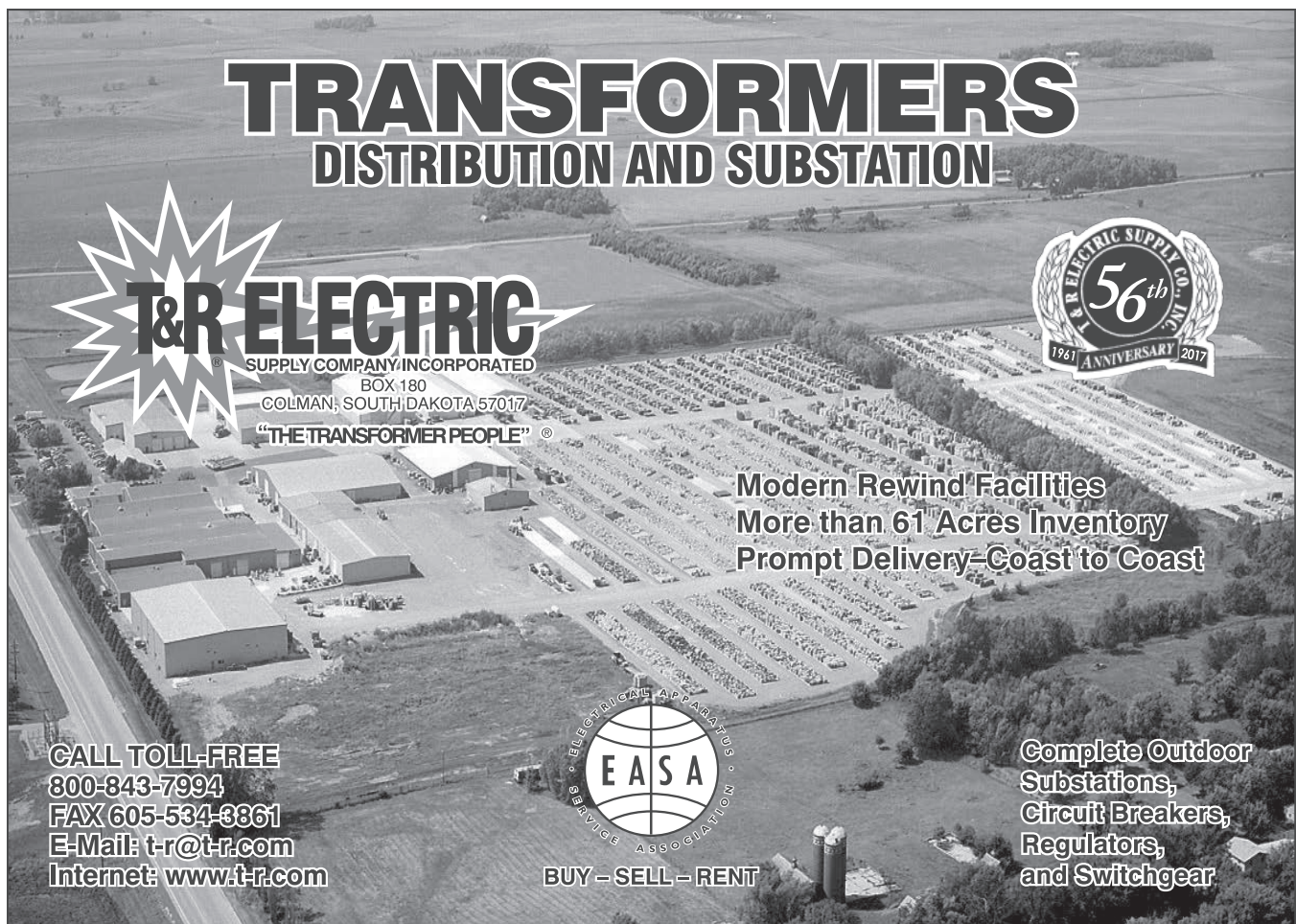
Continued from page 3
makers, two carpenter shops, four general stores and a grain elevator. On July 4, 1897, the Z. C. B. J. Lodge (Vladislay I No. 29) Western Bohemian Fraternal Association was organized. The first fire-fighting group was formed in 1897 and a fire engine built for \$650 was equipped with two hoses for two streams of water and could be operated by manpower, horses or both. A large well was dug on Main Street and two cisterns were installed for fire protection. The

railroad water tank also was used when needed as the well was not a good water source. The volunteer fire department was reorganized following a fire in 1898.

The population by 1900 was 390 and a telephone exchange was established by the Lincoln Telephone Company. The Bohemian National Cemetery was incorporated Feb. 10, 1900, and a cemetery association was formed. In 1901, the St. John's Catholic Church was organized and from 1901-1919, the St. Johns Cem-


etry sold burial rights for \$2.50 per grave because one acre of land had been purchased in 1902 for \$125. A hospital was in operation by 1904 and in 1906, the Bank of Prague was organized. By 1905, a discussion to provide electricity and build a municipal water works system. A municipal light plant was built in 1906 with a dynamo and a gasoline engine installed to furnish power. Initially, only night service was available, but as storage batteries were later added,

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Nebraska utilities history – Prague

Continued from page 4

the operation times were extended (day service was limited to two days a week). Bonds were issued for a municipal water works (\$7,500) and a system was installed in 1906, consisting initially of a 24-inch well, 65-feet deep which was soon found inadequate. An eight-inch tubular bored well was then sunk to either 110 or 112-feet, which furnished an inexhaustible supply of water. A stand-pipe was erected and eight blocks of water mains were installed. By February 1907, the waterworks system had been completed by C. A. Kilian of Morse Bluffs, which included a well and an 85-foot water storage standpipe.

The population by 1910 increased to 394 and the school had 173 students in grades K-12 by 1911 (district #104 had secondary education in place by 1894). The school building was enlarged in 1913 and a hospital was erected that same year. The municipal water system, which cost \$8,000 to install, had water rates of \$0.20 per 1,000 gallons in 1915. The private power plant housed a 21 horsepower (HP) gas engine with

a generator rating of 12 kilovolt amperes (kVA) along with rates for lighting at \$0.15 per kilovolt hour (kVh) and power rates at \$0.15 per kVh. The municipal electric plant (install cost \$2,000) had rates of \$0.12 per kWh with a gross income of \$861 (net \$100).

The population decreased to 353 by 1920 and due to expensive power and inadequate service, an agreement for furnishing electric current was entered into with Blue Valley Power Company of Milford, Neb. Transmission power lines were built from Brainard to Bruno to Abie and then to Prague. The village had to pay for the line from Bruno to Prague, which cost \$10,000. The current supplied to the village boundary was 22,000 volts with a cost at \$0.06 per kWh for lighting and \$0.04 for power. The electric lines within the village were rebuilt for \$1,996.11. The water system in 1925 had rates of \$0.25 per 1,000 gallons and electric rates were \$0.10-\$0.16 per kilowatt (kW). The Opera Hall building was purchased for use as a recreation hall in 1928 and the village was a member of the League of Nebras-

ka Municipalities. In 1929, the fire hall was revamped as a Packard chassis fire truck with chemical tank, ladder, hose-rack and 450 feet (ft) of hose was purchased.

In 1930, the population was 421 and in 1931, 16 blocks were paved (6-inch thick). The Henningsen Engineering Company drew the plans and Central Bridge & Construction Company of Wahoo laid the pavement for \$43,091.79. That year, the fire department purchased 400 ft of hose and the *Prague Herald* newspaper was established. The fire department in 1932 had 25 volunteer firefighters and in 1933, it purchased a Dodge truck with a 500-gallon pump along with 500 ft of hose. On Jan. 1, 1935, the electric distribution system was operated by the Prague Municipal Electric Light & Water Department. An iron removal filtering plant was installed in 1936 along with 8,360 ft of mains laid. The project cost was \$18,201.48 with the Public Works Administration (PWA) furnishing \$7,772 and the village paying \$10,429.48. In 1938, an application was approved to build 135

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Nebraska utilities history – Prague

Continued from page 5

miles of rural electric lines with work to begin July 26, 1939. This line was first energized March 6, 1940.

In 1940, the population was 385 and in 1941, the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad discontinued service from Schuyler to Prague. In 1941, Prague had a public-owned electric distribution system. The Blue Valley Power Company of Milford, Neb. later sold the system to Iowa-Nebraska Power Company, which furnished power until 1941. In the spring of 1941, Consumers Public Power District purchased the Iowa-Ne-

braska Light & Power Company electric properties in Nebraska. A meeting was held in 1947 by the Prague Community Club to discuss constructing a baseball field. Eight acres of land were purchased on the southwest edge of town for \$2,400. A grandstand was constructed to seat 400 people and a wooden fence was built for \$1,700.

The population in 1950 was 396 and the baseball field was turned over to the village in 1950. The hospital, built in 1913, closed in 1953 and the electrical system was owned by the village and supplied by Consumers Public

Power District. In 1955, the rural fire department was organized and a new addition to city/fire hall was added to accommodate the new fire truck. By 1956, the fire department had 25 volunteer firefighters. The public water plant in 1956 had 125 meters in service and rates of a minimum \$1.50 for 6,000 gallons. An approval was made for water improvements in 1957 (cost \$28,500) for a new filtering plant, wells and a chlorinator. The water system had 66 meters in service in 1958, the new well project was in progress and rates were a minimum of \$3 for

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Nebraska Breaktime Trivia “Just For Fun”

- Q-1.** How many incorporated cities/villages start with the letter “I” which are Utilities Section members?
- Q-2.** How many incorporated cities/villages are located in Hayes County?
- Q-3.** Where in Nebraska can you find Nebraska’s only “chalk” mine?
- Q-4.** Do you know where in Nebraska this light plant is located?

Answers on page 18.



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Nebraska utilities history – Prague

Continued from page 6

6,000 gals. and \$0.25 per 1,000 gals. over the minimum used. The cost of electric current for pumping water was \$471.05 per year. The electrical system had 180 meters in 1956 and the cost of street lighting was \$692.70 per year. New mercury vapor streetlights on 30 ft poles were installed in 1957 and later, new intersection lighting with transformers were installed for about \$10,000. In the late 1950s, lights were installed at the ballpark for \$12,000.

In 1960, the population decreased to 372 and the electrical system had 180 meters in service with a \$3 meter deposit. The cost of street lighting was \$597.96, and the cost of pumping water was \$319.08 per year. The fire department in 1962 had 30 volunteer firefighters and a rescue squad was formed. The water plant had 141 meters in service, a meter deposit of \$3 and in 1962, a new water well project was underway. On Oct. 17, 1960, a resolution was adopted to construct a sewer system, lift stations and a lagoon sewage treatment site for an estimated cost of \$99,852. Seventeen acres of land were purchased for the lagoon system and city disposal site as work on the facility began in 1961. The sewer system in 1962 was maintained from a tax levy and sewer charge.

The population decreased to 291 in 1970 and in 1971, a street project included \$90,000 for concrete paving, curbing and gutter of 20 blocks. In 1982, the Burlington Railroad discontinued service to Prague and in 1988, the

Czechland Lake was constructed one mile northwest of Prague. The \$1.8 million dollar project was part of the Cottonwood Creek Flood Control Project. By 1990, the population was 282 and the village operated a facultative (three cell) retention lagoon system designed for 0.03 million gallons per day (mgd). In 1995, a (14 ft x 98 ft) water storage tank was built, which had a capacity of 110,800 gallons.

The population increased to 346 in 2000 and in 2005, the village was awarded a \$8,181 grant for its operations and firefighter safety program from the Department of Homeland Security's office of Domestic Preparedness.

An ordinance was passed in 2006 to watch, warn and provide for water (drought) emergencies. In July, 70,000 gallons per day was used with an average consumption normally about 55,000 gallons per day. The Prague School closed in 2009 and consolidated with East Butler Schools.

In 2010, the population was 327 and the water system had two municipal water wells, a treatment plant, booster pump station and a water tower with 20 commercial and 160 residential service connections, all metered.

The electrical distribution system is owned by the village and supplied by the Nebraska Public Power District.

Gas service consists of individual propane tanks. Prague has a population of 291, has been incorporated for 134 years and is a League of Nebraska Municipalities and Utilities Section member.

References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1956, 1958, 1960, 1962, 1964, 1966-81, 1985-2021; Nebraska Municipal Review Magazine, 1925, 1928, 1971; Perkey's Nebraska Place Names, 1995; Nebraska Place Names, 1925, 1960; Pages of History Nebraska High Schools, Present and Past-Public and Private, 1854-1994; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Public Power Magazine, Vol. 51, Number 1, January-February 1993; Aquastore, Permaglas, and Wastewater Treatment Tank Handout, 2004; The History of Prague, Saunders County Nebraska, 1887-1937; Diamond Jubilee, Prague NE, 1887-1962; Maps Tell Nebraska's History, 1991; Souvenir of Diamond Jubilee Prague, Nebraska 1887-1962; Lincoln Journal Star Newspaper, 2005, 2006; NEDED Website, 2005; Wikipedia website, 2018-2019; Village of Prague website, 2019-2021; Past and Present of Saunders County Nebraska, A Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement, Vol. 1, 1915; Nebraska State Gazetteer, 1890-91; Electric Power Development in the United States, Dept. of Agriculture, January 1916; Nebraska Fast Facts-Community Profile, Prague, Nebraska, May 2011; Nebraska Blue Book, 1928, 1942, 1946, 1978; Directory of Electric Utilities in the United States, Federal Power Commission, 1941; and the Federal Power Consumers Electric Rate Survey, Domestic and Residential Electric Rates in Effect January 1, 1935 in the State of Nebraska, 1935.

Nebraska utilities history – Unadilla

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*By Rob Pierce, LNM Field Rep./
Training Coordinator*

Unadilla is located in Otoe County, which was formed in 1854 and named for the Otoe Indian tribe. In the 1860s, the area was visited by Strite Axtell from Unadilla, NY. Axtell was looking into several sites for a town depending on the railroad outcome. The population in the county grew from 4,211 in 1860 to 12,345 by 1870. Although the first settler arrived in 1864, it was not until 1871 that the Missouri Pacific Railroad was extended to the area. The townsite was platted and recorded in May 1871 when the Missouri Pacific Railroad was extended. The new townsite, located on the railroad line between Syracuse and Palmyra, was named Unadilla after the former hometown of S. Axtell. Unadilla is an Iroquois Indian name for “a place of meeting.” Building began and by 1871, School District #20 was organized with classes held in a building a short distance from the townsite. On May 6, 1871, Unadilla was incorporated as a

village with a Main Street, which followed parallel to the railroad tracks. The village existed as a station on the Burlington Railroad situated near the north county line. By 1872, some businesses included two general stores, a grain business and a blacksmith shop. On April 4, 1872, a post office was established and by June, the first Sabbath School was organized (located two miles south of town). The 1872 depression slowed progress of the townsite, but by 1873, a Methodist Church was organized and the United Brethren held services in the Abbott General Store. The depot (\$500) and stockyard were built by the residents in 1874 and donated to the railroad. The Unadilla Flour Mill and dam (\$12,000) was built in 1875 on Little Nemaha River just south of town. By 1876, the population was estimated to be 150 and businesses included several stores, a Saunders House Hotel, two large warehouses, a blacksmith shop, a Templar Lodge and churches.

A newspaper was started in 1877, the first drug store in 1878

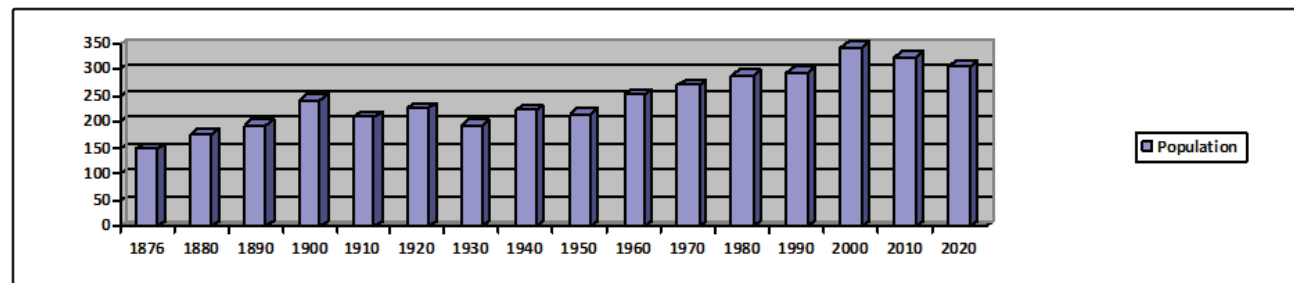


Unadilla water tower. 2008 photo.

was opened and by 1879, the school building served as a church and courthouse.

The population in 1880 was 178, the McAleer Grain Elevator and the United Brethren Church were built. On July 29, 1881, the first issue of the *Otoe County Graphic* newspaper was published and the Library Association was established (1882). By 1882, business-

Continued on page 9



Nebraska utilities history – Unadilla

Continued from page 8
es included two grain elevators, two hotels (Union & Revere), a furniture store, two hardware stores, two blacksmith shops, a millinery, a jewelry store and a new school was built. In 1888, the Unadilla Bank was formed with a brick building erected in 1901. The population was estimated to be about 300 in the 1880s, but the census in 1890 listed 195 (one source noted 400).

By 1900, the population was 243, telephones were introduced (1901), a water system (1905), flooding (1908) and by 1910, the population was 209. A disastrous fire destroyed all businesses except the grocery and bank in 1911 at a cost of \$150,000. A new school was built in 1915-16 for \$11,000. In 1917, the construction of a waterworks system, including a well (42 ft by eight-inch diameter), one centrifugal pump, one 10 horsepower (HP) oil engine, one 25,000-gallon elevated water tank, 14 fire hydrants, 6,666 ft of four-inch cast iron mains, 670 ft of six-inch cast iron mains for \$10,000 by the Grant & Fulton Engineering of Lincoln. A volunteer fire department was established in 1922. On Sept. 14, 1922, the Water Light & Power Company of Nebraska City filed an application for authorization to construct transmission lines from Nebraska City to Syracuse, Unadilla, Palmyra and Douglas. The municipal electric system was absorbed by a private corporate company in 1929. The water tower was erected and mains laid in 1929 and the population decreased slightly from 227 in 1920 to 194 in 1930. The electric

system was owned and operated by Central Power Company in 1930 and during the 1930s, sidewalk renovation projects were underway.

By 1940, the population was 223 and in the early 1940s, the electric system was operated and supplied by Consumers Public Power District. On Aug. 1, 1945, Nebraska City purchased the electrical system from Consumers Public Power District. A gymnasium was built at the school in the 1950s, the population was 216 (1950) and in 1956, the fire department had 25 volunteer firefighters. The water plant with 96 meters in service was owned by the village with rates of \$4.50 minimum for 6,000 gallons (gals.), next 4,000 gals. at \$0.50 per 1,000 gals., next 10,000 gals. at \$0.30 per 1,000 gals., all additional at \$0.25 per 1,000 gallons. The cost of electricity for street lighting in 1956 was \$35 per month and the cost of electricity to pump water was \$15 per month. By 1958, the population was estimated to be 230 and the village water plant had rates of \$4.50 min. for 6,000 gals., \$2 for next 4,000 gals., next 1,000 at \$3, with \$0.25 for each 1,000 gals. over (rates charged quarterly).

In the late 1950s early 1960s, the natural gas system was installed to the community and cemeteries in the area included Hopewell Cemetery, Peasant Hill Cemetery and the Unadilla Cemetery. The 1960 census noted a population of 254 and the village operated a sewer lagoon disposal system with a charge of \$1.50 per month.

In 1962, the electric system and the natural gas system were operated by Nebraska City Utilities.

The cost of electricity for street lighting was \$48 per month and the cost of electricity to pump water was \$30 per month (1962). In the 1960s, dial phone service was installed; the population was 271 (1970) and by the 1970s, streets had been paved and two bridges built across the Nemaha River.

In 1983, a sewer system project was completed and the population from 1980-1990 held steady at about 290-295. In January 1988, the Lt. Governor proclaimed Unadilla as the “Groundhog Capital of Nebraska.” A K-8 school building was built in 1991 and most of the streets were paved and curbed. The wastewater treatment facility consisted of a facultative three-cell controlled discharge lagoon system designed for 0.028 million gallons per day (mgd). By 2000, the population was 342, solid waste was collected by a private company and a downtown improvement project was in progress in 2009, consisting of sidewalk repairs, landscaping and parking. Effective Jan. 1, 2009, water rates were a monthly charge of \$15 for basic water service and a \$1 per month charge for testing fees for each hookup, payable in advance, then a charge of \$3 per 1,000 gallons for all water used.

The population in 2010 was 326, the former school was now a community center, solid waste collection service was provided by Seneca Sanitation of Seneca, Kan. and the water system was supplied by Otoe Rural Water District (2016).

Today, Unadilla’s population
Continued on page 10

Nebraska utilities history – Unadilla

Continued from page 9
is 311 and the village has been incorporated since 1871 (151 years). Unadilla has been a Utilities Section Member for over 45 years (records only to 1977).

References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1956, 1958, 1960, 1962, 1964-75, 1977-87, 1990-2022; Nebraska Place-Names, 1925, 1960; Perkey's Nebraska Place Names, 1995; Lincoln Journal Star Newspaper, 2008, 2021; Nebraska City news-

paper, 1876; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Nebraska Our Towns...East Southeast, 1992; Maps Tell Nebraska's History, 1991; NEDED Website, 2005; Unadilla website, 2018-2021; Wikipedia website, 2018-2019; Oto County History, 1983; Andrea's History of the State of Nebraska, 1882; U.S. Gazetteer Otoe County, 1890; Engineering & Contracting, Technology and Engineering, Habert Powers Gillette, 1917; Public Power in

Nebraska, 1962; History of Hamilton & Clay Counties, Nebraska, 1921; Nebraska Blue Book, 1928, 1942, 1946, 1978; 15th Annual Report of Nebraska State Railway Commission to the Governor, Issue 15, 1922; Utilities Section solid waste survey, 2015; Utility Corporations: Letter from The Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, No. 25, July 16, 1930; and the Department of Interior, General Land Office State of Nebraska Map, 1879.

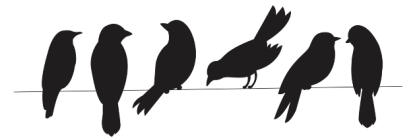
Crow Line: A line of positive communication that all can share

Congratulations! Incorporation Anniversary Recognition:

100 years – Hamlet (May 18, 1922-village), 105 years – Gurley (May 1, 1917-village) and **Big Springs** (May 17, 1917-village),

135 years – **Ceresco** (May 10, 1887) and Beaver City (May 3, 1887-village) and 150 years – **Hebron** (May 6, 1872-village).

Congratulations to **Tanner McCall**, Utility Superintendent of



Hazardous Waste Identification/Random Load Inspection Webinar

The Utilities Section has a taped webinar that is still available for those needing initial training in the solid waste collection, handling or landfill departments. To register for the one hour “Hazardous Waste Identification/Random Load Inspection” webinar, contact the League at www.lonm.org or call the League office to register at 402-476-2829. Once registered, you will receive an email with access to the webinar and a validation sheet.

Power & Equipment Show scheduled

The Power & Equipment Show is scheduled for July 27-28 at the Northeast Community College Chuck M. Pohlman Ag Complex in Norfolk. To register, visit the website at <https://northeast.edu/events/power-show>. For more information, call 402-844-7216.

The Power & Equipment Show is presented by Northeast Community College in Cooperation with Nebraska Rural Electric Association Suppliers Group, Nebraska Rural Electric Association and the League of Nebraska Municipalities-Utilities Section.

Curtis, who received the Rudy Hultgren Dedicated Service Award at the 2022 NMPP Energy Annual Conference.

The City of **Osceola** is planning a 150-year celebration to take place in July. More information can be found on the city website or by contacting a Q150 committee member. Congratulations on 150 years!

Utilities Section members and associate members are bolded.

Do you, your department or facility have something to crow about – new hires, promotions, awards, certifications, anniversaries/milestones, accomplishments or grants/funding and projects?

Let us help you celebrate the events and accomplishments! Please send information to any of the League/Utilities staff.

Do you know the difference between Memorial Day and Veterans Day?

*By Rob Pierce, LNM Field Rep./
Training Coordinator*

Memorial Day was originally called Decoration Day because citizens would place flowers to decorate the graves of those who had been killed during the American Civil War. After World War I, it came to be observed in honor of those who died in all U.S. wars and the name was changed to Memorial Day. Later, Memorial Day became a national floating holiday. Congress permanently moved three Federal holidays in the United States (Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day and Labor Day) permanently to Monday with The Uniform Monday Holiday Act. The Act also made Columbus Day a federal holiday. This created three-day weekends ending with the holidays, such as Memorial Day Weekend and Labor Day Weekend.

Public Playground Safety Handbook (2015 version)

A copy of the "Public Playground Safety Handbook" put out by the U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION 4330 EAST WEST HIGHWAY BETHESDA, MD 20814 can be downloaded from the following website: www.cpsc-d8-media-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/325.pdf or go to www.cpsc.gov.



Bridgeport Veterans Memorial.

Veterans Day commemorates those currently serving and veterans of all wars. Veterans Day is Nov. 11 in the United States in honor of the "eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month" of 1918 that signaled the end of World War I, known as Armistice Day. President Dwight D. Eisenhower officially changed the name from Armistice Day to Veterans Day in 1954. In 1968, the Uniform Holidays Bill was passed by Congress, which moved the celebration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in



Oregon Trail Veterans Memorial.

October. The law went into effect in 1971, but was changed back to Nov. 11, by President Gerald Ford in about 1975 or 1978 due to the important historical significance of the date.

Note: Great Britain, France, Australia and Canada also commemorate the veterans of World Wars I and II on or near November 11. In Canada, its Remembrance Day and in Britain, its Remembrance Sunday – the second Sunday in November.

Many of our municipal employees are veterans and I would like to personally take this time to say thank you and also to remember those who have passed for their committed efforts for the country and its people.

Memorial Day deadline!

It seems Memorial Day is the deadline for most municipalities to have their swimming pools opened and all summer help hired. Be sure to review the labor requirements for any minors hired. If you have questions on permits,

certifications, pool design, construction or safety issues such as lighting safety procedures, information can be found at the following website: http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/puh_enh_san_swimming_swimindex.aspx.

Nebraska utilities history – Wynot

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 rob@lonm.org.

*By Rob Pierce, LNM Field Rep./
Training Coordinator*

Wynot, located in Cedar County, had early ties to the settlement of St. James. The community of St. James is a tale of three separate settlement locations, initially (1856) located on the Missouri riverbank at the mouth of Bow Creek. A dugout occupied the landing site and apparently was first called “Arcade” then later “St. James” landing.

An inland location about one-and-one-half miles to the south was laid out and named St. James by Col. C. C. Van and Moses H. Deming, who came from Des Moines, Iowa (1856). Some 20 families arrived from Iowa by 1857 and in the spring, Gates P. Thurston of Ohio plotted the town site of St. James. A post office was established July 13, 1858, with Moses H. Deming becoming postmaster by 1859. The post office later was housed in the store of O.D. Smith. In 1857, the Legislature made St. James the Cedar County seat as a sawmill was established (1858) and a two-story (35 ft x 45 ft) courthouse was erected. About 1868, St. James

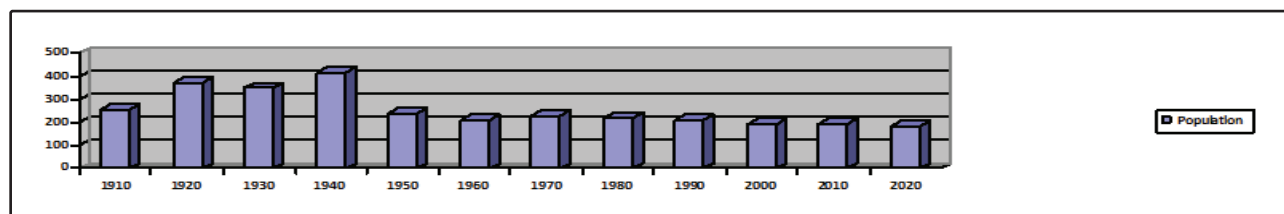
transitioned to its second location, near the mill on Bow Creek (intersection of 569 Avenue and 891 Road in Cedar County) and was referred to as Old St. James. After 11 years as the county seat, St. James lost in an election for county seat to St. Helena in 1869.

A townsite came into being as a direct result of railroad expansion across Cedar County. People from St. James were unable to persuade the officials of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha Railroad Company to build its line to their town because it would have required them to cross Bow Creek twice. The company chose instead to establish a townsite about one mile west of the current settlement of St. James in 1907. Land was purchased by the St. Paul Townsite Company formed by T.N. Jones and J. S. Emerson, and purchased land from a German settler across the creek and one mile west. Many businesses rushed to get in on the ground floor by working out of St. James until the rails were in place. The early banks established themselves at the new site until they could move into their new quarters across the creek. A drug store

was moved from St. Helena and soon more businesses relocated to the new community called Wynot. In selecting a name, it is said that when one struck the fancy of the elderly gentleman from whom the land was purchased, he responded “Ja,vy not? Wahrumnicht?”

The brogue apparently sounded strange to a listener in the crowd who remarked “why not, Wynot?” As the story goes, that name was chosen as a plat was filed under “Wynot.” That fall, the first child born in Wynot was given a lot by the town site company. On either May 4, 1907 or May 4, 1908, Wynot was incorporated as a village (depending which source is correct). The first train arrived in October 1907 and train service soon included two trains daily from Sioux City, Iowa. A new Cable Hotel and a railroad depot was built and three more additions were platted. In December 1907, the first issue of the *Wynot Tribune* newspaper was published. On Dec. 16, 1907 (or January 1908), a post office was established. One source listed it as established in Wynot Dec. 27, 1907. Railway mail service started in April 1908.

Continued on page 13



Nebraska utilities history – Wynot

Continued from page 12

Previously, it had come from Hartington via Star Route. In the early days, the electricity was provided by Bow Valley Mills by a transmission line.

The population by 1910 was 258 and a new school was being built. It was noted that Wynot was the youngest town in the state to have electric lights with power first furnished by the Bow Valley Mills. In 1913, a bond election was passed 49-2 to erect a municipal light and power plant. Bow Valley

may have provided service until 1915 when a power plant became operational.

In 1920, a bridge was built across the Missouri River at Yankton and Wynot's population was 368. Plans were made to erect an electric transmission line from Wynot to Niobrara. An addition at the school in 1924 included a gym, assembly room and two classrooms for \$26,000. The municipal powerplant in 1925 had electric rates of \$0.15 per kilowatt hour (kWh). The public-owned

water system had a minimum rate of \$1. In 1926, a granite statue in remembrance of the Wiseman children was dedicated in the park and the population by 1930 had decreased slightly to 348. The municipal light and power plant built in 1913 was sold to Interstate Power Company in 1930 with the change-over made in 1932. The depression and drought caused the railroad to abandon the branch in 1933 after 26 years of service. On Oct. 25, 1936, the Lutheran

Continued on page 14



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Nebraska utilities history – Wynot

Continued from page 13

Church was destroyed by fire. By 1940, the population increased to 416 and Nebraska properties of the Interstate Power Company were purchased by Consumers Public Power District in December. School enrollment in 1946-47 was 27 in high school and 13 in grade school.

The population decreased to 233 in 1950 and then to 209 by 1960. In 1961, a shop and kitchen was added to the school along with a hot lunch program. The electrical system was owned and operated by Consumers Public Power District. The village provided solid waste collection service in 1962 charging \$0.50 per month. Water rates were \$1.50 per month and the fire department had 21 volunteer firefighters. About 1965-66, the school added five elementary classrooms and a new post office was built in 1966. The population was 226 in 1970 and the electric distribution system was owned by the village and supplied by Nebraska Public Power District. The village received an \$8,700 grant in 1970 toward a \$32,200 lift station force main and waste stabilization lagoon, which was constructed in 1972. A larger gymnasium was constructed at the school in 1974 and by 1980, the population was 222. The baseball lights were replaced and two tennis courts were completed.

In 1990, the population was 213 and the village in 1999 operated a facultative controlled discharge lagoon system designed for 0.0204 mgd discharged to surface water. The electrical system, operated by NPPD since 1970, now was oper-

ated by Cedar Knox Public Power District by 2001. The population was 191 in 2000 and the village provided garbage collection service in 2005. The village had some hard-surfaced streets with no curbing and some were gravel. The village maintained a park with picnic areas, playground equipment, a ball field and restrooms. Gas service consisted of individual propane tanks and the water system had two wells. The Bow Valley Cemetery laid out in the spring of 1874 was believed to be the oldest Protestant Cemetery in the county. There were 38 soldiers buried in this cemetery, 31 were noted as Civil War veterans. This cemetery, located on the south edge of Wynot, was once called the Bow Valley Cemetery, but also has been called the Wynot City Cemetery.

In August 2010, the fire department, which had 29 volunteer firefighters, received a new fire truck. In 2011, the village received a \$105,000 loan to replace the lining on the two wells and build a new well house for one. Two new fire halls were to be built in 2016 for just less than \$1 million, one in Wynot and one in St. Helena. The new six-bay fire hall in Wynot (180 ft x 120 ft) was built on property on the south end of town. The second new fire hall was built in St. Helena in the northern rural district. The bond for the two fire halls and a new ambulance (priced at \$140,000) came in just under \$1 million. The village in 2019 was maintaining a facultative controlled discharge lagoon system designed for 0.0204 million gallons per day (mgd).

The village had two active municipal wells with 104 residential, two industrial and 23 commercial customers, all metered.

Today, Wynot has a population of 216 and has been a League of Nebraska Municipalities and Utilities Section member for over 40 years. The village operates a water system, wastewater collection system and lagoon treatment facility along with village streets and park. The electric distribution system is operated by Cedar Knox Public Power District.

References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1956, 1958, 1960, 1962, 1964-75, 1977-87, 1990-95, 1997-2012, 2014-2022; Nebraska Municipal Review Magazine, 1925; Lincoln Journal Star Newspaper, 2003; Sargent Leader newspaper, 1920; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Wynot Internet Website, 2003; Perkey's Nebraska Place Names, 1995; Nebraska Place Names, 1925, 1960; Nebraska Our Towns...North Northeast, 1990; Nebraska Health & Human Services Website, 2004; NEDED Website, 2005; Wynot Website, 2005, 2017; Wikipedia website, 2016-2018; Electric Power Development in the United States, Dept. of Agriculture, January 1916; Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey Reconnaissance Survey Final Report of Cedar County, Nebraska, June 1, 1988; Nebraska Blue Book, 1928, 1930, 1946, 1978; History of Wynot; History of Cedar County, 1882; Early History of Cedar County and the Northeast and the History of the Beginning of Cedar County Nebraska.

Classifieds

Water/Wastewater Apprentice/Operator. The City of Broken Bow Water/Wastewater Department is accepting applications for full-time employment. This position involves, but not limited to, construction of new water and sewer mains, tapping services, maintain city infrastructure, clean-up of job sites, and assisting other departments as needed. Multiple skill levels are needed. Department of Health and Human Services certification and NDEE certification preferred, but not required. CDL not required, but must be able to obtain CDL within 6 months. Willing to train the right person. Wage dependent on qualifications and a better than average benefit package. Applications and job description are available at the City of Broken Bow located on the main floor at 314 S 10th Avenue or www.cityofbrokenbow.org. Submit application and related information to the City of Broken Bow, 314 S 10th Avenue, PO Box 504, Broken Bow, NE 68822, or via email at ccranwell@cityofbrokenbow.org. Broken Bow is an EOE. For more information, please contact Water/Wastewater Superintendent Craig Cranwell at (308) 870-1203.

Journey Lineman/Electric Foreman. The Bridgeport Municipal Utility System has an immediate opening for a Journey Lineman/Electric Foreman. Applicants must have a strong journeyman rating and must be able to perform all duties with regard to overhead and underground electric line construction and maintenance. Must be willing and capable to work on water, wastewater, and street operations. Must be or able

to become a Grade 3 water operator and Class L wastewater operator if so required. Must live or be willing to live within 15 minutes of Bridgeport, comply with on-call requirements and possess and comply with Nebraska CDL regulations. Paid vacation, sick days, holidays, 401K and employer-paid health insurance are included with the benefits package. To obtain the position description and an application, contact City Hall at 809 Main Street (308.262.1623) or visit www.cityofbport.com. Salary negotiable depending on qualifications. Resumes and applications will be accepted until position is filled and may be emailed to lheinrich@cityofbport.com. The City of Bridgeport is EOE and Veteran Preference. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Send a resume and completed application to City of Bridgeport, NE; 809 Main Street, PO Box 280; Bridgeport, NE 69336 or to lheinrich@cityofbport.com. NO phone calls, please.

Parks Foreman/Facility Maintenance. The City of Bridgeport has an immediate opening for a Park Foreman/Facility Maintenance person. Applicants must have a strong background in building maintenance and park department operations and maintenance and must be able to perform all duties with regard to operation and maintenance of park system. Will also be responsible for maintenance items at the Prairie Winds Community Center that Center staff is unable to perform. Must be willing and capable to assist the electric, water, wastewater, and street operations. Must be or able



to be become a Grade 3 water operator and Class L wastewater operator if so required. Must live or be willing to live within 30 minutes of Bridgeport, comply with on-call requirements as required and possess and comply with Nebraska CDL regulations. Paid vacation, sick days, holidays, 401K and employer-paid health insurance are included with the benefits package. To obtain the position description and an application, contact City Hall at 809 Main Street (308.262.1623) or visit www.cityofbport.com. Salary negotiable depending on qualifications. Resumes and applications will be accepted until position is filled and may be emailed to lheinrich@cityofbport.com. The City of Bridgeport is EOE and Veteran Preference. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Send resume and completed application to City of Bridgeport, NE; 809 Main Street, PO Box 280; Bridgeport, NE 69336 or to lheinrich@cityofbport.com. NO phone calls, please.

Public Works & Utilities Director. Gretna, Nebraska is a booming city of the first class located in Sarpy County and the Omaha Metro. With the expansion of the city's corporate limits including additional streets, sewer lines, and sewer lift stations, the city is seeking a highly skilled person to oversee all aspects of

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Classifieds

Continued from page 15
the Gretna Public Works Departments on a day to day basis. The Public Works & Utilities Director is directly responsible for supervision of staff, functionality of all aspects of the department and performance of senior-level professional work. This person is also accountable for various administrative and managerial duties including evaluating projects to maintain budgetary restrictions, ensuring compliance with all city policies, procedures and codes, and reviewing plans and specifications for infrastructure construction. The following education and experience is preferred:

1. Must possess a valid driver's license.
2. Bachelor degree in Civil Engineering, Project Management, Construction Engineering, or related field.
3. Minimum 7 years' experience in local government, specifically public works, of which 3 years must be in a supervisory role.
4. Class 3 Water Certification.
5. Class 2 Street Superintendent License.
6. State of Nebraska On-Site Wastewater Treatment Certification, not currently required.
7. Must be willing to

obtain further education, training, and certifications as deemed appropriate and within time-frame as established by the employer.

Candidates should have working knowledge of all municipal public works and utilities activities including streets, storm sewer, traffic control, water, and wastewater operations, building and asset management systems, and engineering principles. Please see the full job description for information about this position. This is an exciting time to join the City of Gretna team to aid in the future of Gretna. The Public Works & Utilities Director position range is \$71,281-\$95,097 with initial starting salary at \$71,281 DOQ, with excellent benefits. Application and Job Description is available from the Gretna City Clerk, 204 N McKenna Avenue, PO Box 69, Gretna, NE 68028-0069 or at www.gretnane.org. This position remains open until filled. Initial review of applications begins May 2, 2022.

Utility Employee. The City of Cambridge, EOE, is now accepting applications for a full-time utility employee. Successful candidate must possess or be able

to obtain, within one year, a grade IV water operator license through the State of Nebraska. General maintenance duties in water, wastewater, parks, streets, and equipment. Will train the right person. Must have a valid driver's license. Drug test required. Wage negotiable based on experience. Applications can be picked up at the Cambridge City Office between the hours of 7:30-4 M-F. For more information, contact David Houghteling, Utility Supervisor, 308-340-3213. Benefits include health insurance, vacation, sick leave, holidays and retirement investment.

Apprentice Lineman. City of Benkelman is accepting applications for the position of Apprentice Lineman in the Electric Department. This position's

responsibilities include, but aren't limited to: Construction and maintenance of overhead and underground electric distribution systems; Sets poles, lays cable, and installs wire, installs and repairs transformers and installs primary and secondary conductors; Troubleshoots faulty circuits and transformers; trims trees as required; ability to use electrical test equipment; Operates a high lift bucket truck, digger derrick, and other equipment; assists other City operations and perform other duties as required; available for 24-hour emergency calls. Requirements include high school graduation, experience working with secondary and high voltage electric circuits and/or post-secondary electric training preferred, but not required.

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Continued from page 16

Additional consideration may be given to those who have completed a DOL Line Program, ability to obtain a CDL license issued by the State of NE within 1 year of hire, understanding of basic electrical theory including working voltages of 120V to 480V Secondary Y & Delta and 2400V to 12.470V Primaries Y & Delta, math abilities to support reporting, metering and calculations of amps, volts, watts, and other electrical formulas. Excellent benefits package is included. Employment is contingent upon successful completion of a post-offer physical and drug test. The City of Benkelman is an EOE. Return completed application to: City of Benkelman, 126 7th Ave E, PO Box 347, Benkelman, NE 69021; 308-423-2540.

Maintenance Supervisor. Village of Davenport, NE, is accepting applications for a full time maintenance worker. Grade IV water and pesticide certification preferred, but will send right person for training. Responsibilities include, but not limited to, water, sewer and street maintenance, mowing, spraying etc. Electrical system owned by village so electrical knowledge a plus. List of duties available at Village Office. Must have a valid drivers license. Wage negotiable based on experience. Contact Village Clerk at 402-364-2292 or davenportvillage@hotmail.com. Applications accepted until position filled. EOE.

Utilities/Street/Maintenance Operator. The Village of Clearwater is accepting applications for a full-time utilities/street/maintenance

operator. Grade IV Water, Sewer I and pesticide certifications preferred but will send the right individual to training. Base wage of \$21/hr. with substantial increase negotiated with certifications. Benefits included. Responsibilities include water and sewer system operations, maintenance, and testing; water leak repairs and meter installation, street repairs, mowing, snow removal, mosquito spraying, and tree dump maintenance. A comprehensive list of duties is located at the Village office or online. Must have a valid driver's license. Mechanical and large equipment experience a plus. Applications may be found at the Village office, or www.clearwaterne.com, under Village Info, Forms and Applications. For more information, contact the Village Clerk at 402-485-2365 or email clerk@clearwaterne.com. Send applications to 626 Main St., PO Box 116, Clearwater, NE 68726.

Water Utility Supervisor. The City of Kimball is accepting applications for a Water Utility Supervisor. Salary negotiable based on experience. Primarily responsible for the general operations of the Water Department. Requires a high school diploma or GED and three years' experience in water related field. Applicant must have required certification of Grade 3 Water License. Must have valid Nebraska driver's license and be insurable under the City of Kimball's automobile policy. Pre-employment drug test is required. Applications and job description may be obtained at City Hall at 223 South Chestnut, Kimball, NE 69145 or at www.kimballne.org.



Please submit resume and applications to Mayor Prunty, 223 South Chestnut, Kimball, NE 69145. Applications will be accepted until position is filled. EOE.

Utilities Superintendent. The City of Schuyler, Board of Public Works, is accepting applications for full-time Utilities Superintendent. Electrical Line Certification and/or background experience preferred. Successful candidate must possess or be able to obtain within one year a Class B CDL as well as a Grade IV Water Operator License through the State of NE. Responsibilities include overseeing the electric, water and sanitary sewer system operations and other duties as assigned. A complete job description is located at the Schuyler Department of Utilities office. Must have a valid driver's license. Drug test required. Mechanical and large equipment experience a plus. Wage negotiable and based on experience. Benefits included. Applications can be found at Schuyler Department of Utilities office at 204 E 10th Street, Schuyler, NE 68661. For more information, contact the Office Manager at 402.352.5444 or mgr@eaglecom.net or submit resume to PO Box 526, Schuyler, NE 68661. Position open until filled. EOE.

NWEA 2022 Wastewater Training Sessions

The Nebraska Water Environment Association (NWEA) has training sessions for those looking to get licensed as a wastewater operator. These training sessions correlate with testing dates, which are handled by the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy, but are separate.

The following NWEA training

dates are intended for municipal levels 1-3. Material for level 4 is covered, but not comprehensively.

July 21, 2022 – Holiday Inn (with Heartland Conference), Kearney

August 22-24, 2022 – Theresa Street Facility, 2400 Theresa Street, Lincoln

October 10-12, 2022 – NECC

Lifelong Learning Center, 801 E. Benjamin Ave., Norfolk

To register for these training sessions, contact Ryan Hurst (NWEA Training Chairman) at hurst@wahoo.ne.us.

For information on the exam applications along with exam locations and times, contact Mike McBride at mike.mcbride@nebraska.gov.

“Just For Fun” Answers

A-1. Two – Imperial and Indianola. (A total of five villages/cities begin with the letter “I” – Imperial, Indianola, Inglewood, Inman and Ithaca, all are League members.)

A-2. Three – **Hayes Center**, Hamlet and a portion of **Palisade** (Utilities Section members in bold).

A-3. Near Scotia. The “Happy Jack Chalk Mine” is located south of Scotia on the west side of the North Loup River

along Highway No. 11. The mine actually doesn’t contain chalk, but rather a soft rock called diatomite, which contains an abundance of calcium carbonate. The mine is one of only two underground diatomite mines known to have existed in the United States. *Reference: <https://www.happyjackchalkmine.org/history>*

A-4. Callaway.

Utilities Section members only

Do you have equipment to sell or a position to fill? Place your ad in the Classifieds section of the *Utilities Section Newsletter* free. This service is a membership benefit.

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2022 Training calendar

Visit our website at www.lonm.org
for a complete list of workshops and conferences.

August

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Aug. 9..... | Water Operator Training Workshop..... | McCook |
| Aug. 10..... | Water Operator Training Workshop..... | Holdrege |
| Aug. 11..... | Water Operator Training Workshop..... | Hebron |
| Aug. 16..... | Backflow Workshop | Beatrice |
| Aug. 17..... | Backflow Workshop | Wayne |
| Aug. 18..... | Backflow Workshop | Stuart |
| Aug. 23..... | Backflow Workshop | Ogallala |
| Aug. 24..... | Backflow Workshop | Grand Island |
| Aug. 25..... | Water Operator Training Workshop..... | Grand Island |
| Aug. 30-Sept. 1 ... | Rubber Gloving Workshop | Don Winkelman Training Field, Sidney |

September

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Sept. 7-8 | Electric Underground School | Sidney |
| Sept. 14-16 | League Annual Conference | Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln |
| Sept. 27 | Water Operator Training Workshop..... | Lexington |
| Sept. 28 | Water Operator Training Workshop..... | Broken Bow |
| Sept. 30 | Water Operator Training Workshop..... | Norfolk |

October

| | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Oct. 11 | Water Operator Training Workshop..... | York |
| Oct. 12..... | Water Operator Training Workshop..... | Red Cloud |

December

| | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Dec. 7 | Water Operator Training Workshop..... | Lincoln |
| Dec. 8 | Water Operator Training Workshop..... | Hastings |