

Utilities Section Newsletter

League of Nebraska Municipalities

June 2022

June is National Safety Month

By Rob Pierce, LNM Field Rep./
Training Coordinator

The National Safety Council celebrates June as National Safety Month. The Safety & Health Magazine highlighted a different safety topic for each week in June: Week 1 – Musculoskeletal disorders, Week 2 – Workplace impairment, Week 3 – Injury Prevention and Week 4 – Slips, trips, and Falls. Any one of these topics could be a designated safety topic at one of your meetings. Three more topics for safety meetings may include office/shop safety, driving safety and lockout tagout.

Office/Shop Safety Tips: 1) never take shortcuts on procedures; 2) obey all safety signs/stickers/tags; 3) be aware of changes to processes; 4) understand and practice good hazard communications; 5) properly use tools and equipment; and 6) always wear adequate personal protective equipment (PPE). If you come across a hazardous condition, report it to your manager/supervisor and be sure to take adequate measures to ensure your safety and others in the area. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) found that office workers are two to two-and-a-half times more likely to suffer a debilitating injury after a fall than non-office workers. Poor ergonomics at the office may cause musculoskeletal disorders, which accounted for

about 33 percent of all worker injuries in the past few years. Office and shop safety may seem simple and fairly straightforward, but steps still need to be taken to make the work environment safer such as: 1) clean up work spaces if you make a mess; 2) keep the area organized; 3) emergency exit routes need to be clear; 4) use good posture when sitting or standing and take short stretch breaks; 5) if using the phone a lot, use a headset; and 6) keep computer, charger and other equipment cords well managed to avoid trip hazards.

Many of us use a vehicle and some past data notes there are roughly 16,438 vehicle crashes per day and in 2020, more than 42,000 fatalities in those crashes. Driving fatalities have been listed as the number one cause of fatalities in the United States every year since I can remember. Some “**Driving Safety Tips**” include: 1) wear the seat belt; 2) obey speed limits and road signs; 3) avoid distractions like texting or phone calls; 4) account for the weather conditions; 5) plan the route in advance and allow for time delays; and 6) avoid driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs (prescription).

Another safety topic is **Lockout**

Tagout. Five common causes of injury can be due to not stopping equipment, failing to dissipate residual energy, not disconnecting the power source(s), accidentally restarting equipment and failure to clear the area and notify those who may be affected. Common energy sources include kinetic, potential, electrical, hydraulic, pneumatic, pressurized liquids/gases and basic gravity. Be sure to review your lockout/tagout policies and if you do not have one, be sure to put a standard operating procedure (SOP) for each where hazardous energy can be present. The six-step procedure commonly used consists of preparing for shutdown, shutting down the energy source to the equipment, isolating, applying lockout/tagout devices, controlling all stored energy and verifying the isolation.

Utilities Section members

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

Contact Brenda Henning at the League office at 402-476-2829, or send your ad by fax to 402-476-7052 or email it to brendah@lonm.org.

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UTILITIES SECTION

Lash Chaffin
Utilities Section Director
Rob Pierce
Utilities Field Representative

Milestone celebration recognition

Is your municipality or utility celebrating a historic milestone? We are encouraging members to provide any information on milestones being celebrated such as 75 years of operating the electric system. About 1942, private electric systems were phased out in Nebraska and several municipalities took over the systems in

the 1940s.

When was your water, wastewater, electric, power generation system established? When were facilities built, improvements made, etc. If your utility is celebrating a 25, 50, 75, 100-year milestone, let the Utilities Section help you celebrate by recognizing it in the newsletter.

Conferences of possible interest

The dates for future "**Snowball**" **Wastewater Conferences and Meter Conferences** have been scheduled and contracts signed with the Kearney Holiday Inn:

- **Jan. 25-26, 2023** "Snowball" Wastewater Conference
- **Feb. 11-12, 2023** Meter Conference
- **Jan. 24-25, 2024** "Snowball" Wastewater Conference
- **Feb. 6-7, 2024** Meter Conference
- **Jan. 22-23, 2025** "Snowball" Wastewater Conference

Power & Equipment Show scheduled

The Power & Equipment Show is scheduled for July 27-28 at the Community College Pohlman Ag Complex in Norfolk. To register, go to northeast.edu/events/power-show. For more information or if you have questions, 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 League of Nebraska Municipalities-Utilities Section.

Checkout the League's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/leaguene. Be sure to "Like" us.

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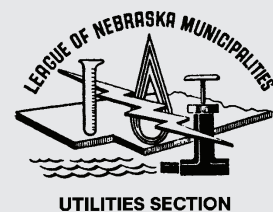
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Nebraska utilities history – Ceresco

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*

Ceresco, located in Richland Precinct of Saunders County, had homesteaders in the area by 1868 and a post office established Aug. 10, 1869. Mail was delivered by horseback or by the daily stage line from Lincoln. By 1870, a store was established in the community and a mail route opened between Fremont and Ceresco. In 1886, the Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Railroad tracks were laid one mile to the east and the town site moved to them in June. By October, an official survey was made and by Oct. 12, lots were sold with the first selling for \$300.

By 1887, the population was recorded at 250 and the community had three general stores, two restaurants, two meat markets and two hardware stores. On May 10, 1887, the community was incorporated as a village with 30 businesses recorded. In fall 1892, the Farmers and Merchants Bank started construction and in May

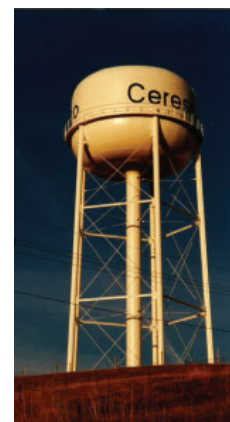
1895, a large fire destroyed 30 buildings in the business district.

By 1900, the population decreased to 226, a rural mail route was established (1902), a Swedish Mission Church formed (1906) and a car dealership opened in 1909. In 1911, the village supported a hospital and bonds were issued for a new brick school, which was built in 1912 (District #31). On Dec. 8, 1914, a light and water bond of \$15,000 was voted on and approved for a plant to be put into operation by Aug. 15, 1915. This plant was later remodeled and changed to alternating current. Also in 1915, a new 40,000-gallon water storage tank was erected on the hill. In 1920, the population was 398 and the dirt streets were graveled from 1920-1924. In 1929, five acres of land were purchased for use as a park. In 1930, the population was 391 and the village had a municipal power generation plant with a 90 kilowatt (Kw) internal combustion engine.

The population in 1940 was 340 and the Consumers Public Power

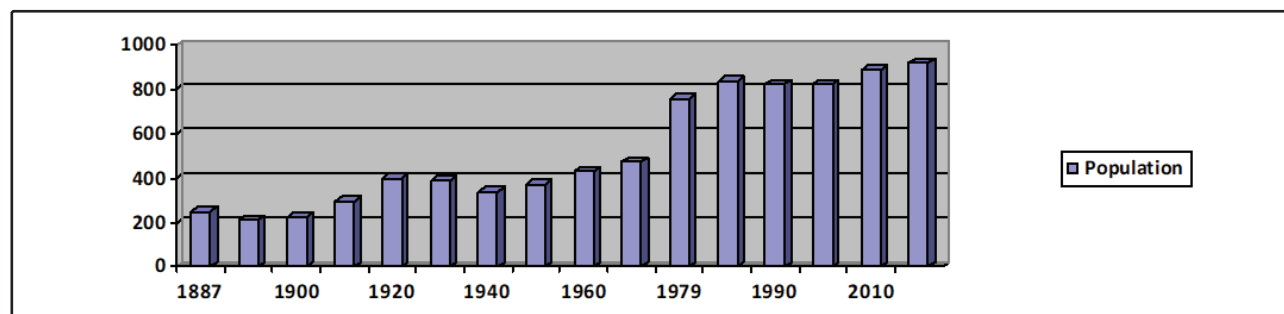
District purchased the Nebraska properties of the Iowa-Nebraska Light & Power Company in 1941.

The Legion Post #244 building was erected in 1948 and in 1949, Ceresco High School fielded its first eight-man football team (orange/black Eagles). Ernie's in Ceresco started as an IGA grocery and in the 1950s, changed to a furniture store. Garbage (haul-type) collection was introduced in 1951 and water wells were drilled in 1952 and 1955. A sewage lagoon was constructed (cost \$51,000) in 1954 and the sewer system and lagoon treatment were maintained by tax levy. In 1956, a street oiling project



*Ceresco water tower.
2001 photo.*

Continued on page 4



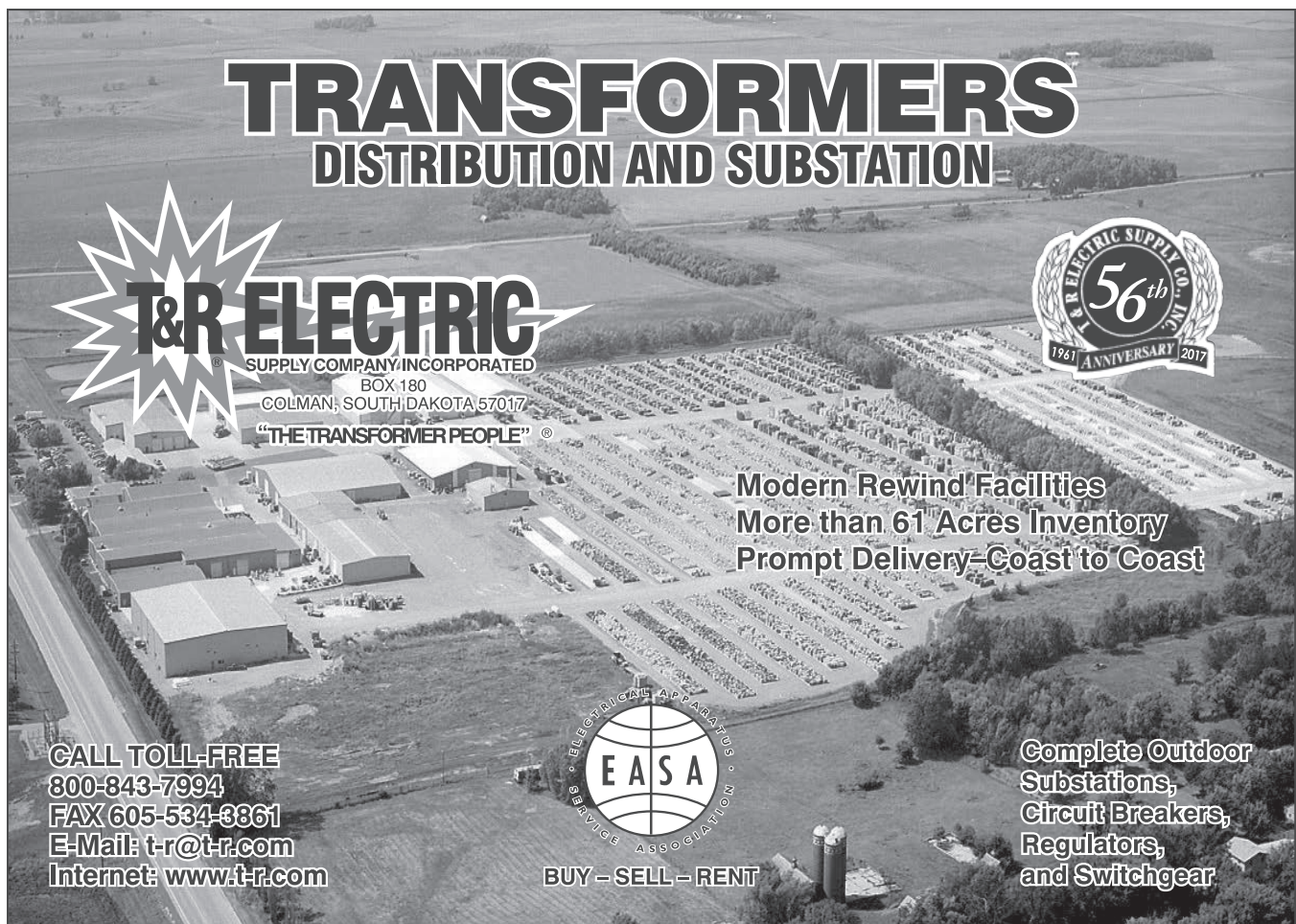
Nebraska utilities history – Ceresco

Continued from page 3
was underway and Mercury-vapor streetlights were added on Main Street. The water system had 135 meters with a meter deposit of \$5. The population increased from 374 in 1950 to 430 in 1960. In 1961, bonds were approved for a new gymnasium (west of the school) and the old gym was remodeled into classrooms. By 1962, the water plant had 140 meters and garbage collection was provided by the village. Electricity was purchased from Eastern

Nebraska Public Power District at the kilowatt hour (kWh) for wholesale cost of an average of 1.5 cents. In September 1965, the entire electric system was sold to the Omaha Public Power District (OPPD). In 1967, the Ceresco School District #31 merged with Valparaiso (District #101) and Raymond (District #19) to form Raymond Central Public School (District #161). In 1969, a new school was built at the former Nike Missile site in rural Raymond.


The population in 1970 was 474, a new brick post office building was erected in 1971 and in 1973, playground equipment was installed along with a new backstop at the baseball field. In 1978, a larger water tower was installed on the hill, replacing the 40,000-gallon storage tank. A new sewage disposal plant was erected near the old lagoon site in 1978 and about 1979, a new community building was built to house the fire department, library, senior

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Nebraska utilities history – Ceresco

Continued from page 4

citizens room and city offices. A new Farmers & Merchant Bank was constructed in 1982 and the population decreased from 836 in 1980 to 825 in 1990.

A water main project about 2002 consisted of replacing 1,700 linear feet of water main (six-inch to 10-inch) by use of directional boring and vacuum excavation. In the

spring of 2005, plans were made to overhaul the wastewater plant as many of the inner mechanical parts showed rust and excessive wear. In 2008, the fire department had an insurance (ISO) rating of class 6 and the population by 2010 was at 889. Today, Ceresco has a population of 919, has been incorporated for 135 years and a League of Nebraska Municipali-

ties and Utilities Section member.

References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1956-2006, 2010-2012; Perkey's Nebraska Place Names, 1995; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Nebraska Our Towns... Central Northeast, 1990; General Excavating Data Flyer, 2004; Lincoln Journal Star Newspaper, June 1887, 2005, 2007; Maps Tell A Story, 1991; NEDED Website, 2005; Saunders County History Website, 2009; Past and Present of Saunders County Nebraska, 1915; Saunders County History, 1983; NPPD Website, 2011; Andreas History of the State of Nebraska, 1882 and the Nebraska State Gazetteer & Business Directory, 1890.

Electric Underground Workshop scheduled

An Electric Underground Workshop is scheduled for Sept. 5-6, at the Wheatbelt Training Field in Sidney. Be sure to register early as the class size is limited.

Nebraska Breaktime Trivia “Just For Fun”

- Q-1. What village in Nebraska was originally called Halifax?
- Q-2. What city in Nebraska was named for a mill near a ford across the Blue River?
- Q-3. How many miles is it from Dodge, Neb. to Dodge City, Kan.?
- Q-4. Where in Nebraska is the Heartland Museum of Military Vehicles located?
- Q-5. Where in Nebraska is this mural located?

Answers on page 17.





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Electric 'Rubber Gloving' Workshop held

The eastern Nebraska Rubber Gloving School was held May 17-19, 2022 at the Northeast Community College training center. A total of 49 linemen were in attendance with 20 from municipalities and 29 from the rural electric systems. Ten municipal systems participated with linemen from Burwell, Cozad, Grand Island, Hastings, Holdrege, Nebraska City, Pierce, Superior, Wahoo and Wayne.

The workshop started with vendor introductions, which included brief discussions on the various equipment, vehicles and other

related electrical material, which was provided for use and display by the various companies.

The participants then were divided into hands-on work groups or stations. The basic sessions had 21 people, the intermediate had 13 people and the advanced had 16 people. The intermediate outside stations included: 1) changeout of broken crossarm and center phase floater on the arm; 2) cut in/cut out a double dead-end pole; and 3) retire three-phase switch and replace with cutouts. Adam Nelson and Jay Wilt of ESI had an indoor session on regulators and reclosures.

Fourteen bucket and digger trucks were scheduled for use at this school. A special thanks to the instructors and their respective companies for their time and expertise. Also, thanks to the City of Pierce for use of a bucket truck and the City of Hastings for use of a bucket truck and providing an instructor (Damien Carda). Thanks also to Altec for providing a truck for use at the school.



Hands on station.



Advanced station.

On behalf of the Utilities Section and the Rural Electric Association, a special thanks to the companies that provided trucks, demo trailers, material and their input of knowledge when performing rubber gloving techniques.

The next Rubber Gloving Workshop is scheduled for Aug. 30-Sept. 1, 2022, at the Don Winkelmann Training Field in Sidney.

15 best small towns to visit in Nebraska

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

I ran across an interesting website on the internet that listed the 15 best towns (cities/villages) in Nebraska.

At the website www.thecrazytourist.com, they listed the following as the "The Fifteen Best Small Towns to Visit in Nebraska": Brownville, McCook, Minden, Aurora, Ashland, Chadron, Ogallala, Red Cloud, Valentine,

Dodge, Verdigré, Nebraska City, Harrison, Rushville and Holdrege. A good selection, but I am somewhat biased as I think there are a lot of good places to visit in Nebraska. Some are well advertised and some not so much, but there is a lot to see and do.

The next few months, there will be a lot of community events, which include local specialized festivals, county and local fairs along with a lot of food. Kudos to the organizers,

economic development groups and the municipal utility workers who put a lot of time, effort and ingenuity into making these events a success.

So, if you need a break or just want to mark off a bucket list item, take some time and enjoy one of these community events. One of my retirement bucket lists may be to attend every county fair in Nebraska. If anyone has done that, let me know at robp@lonm.org.

Nebraska utilities history – Elm Creek

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

Elm Creek, located in Buffalo County, had settlers in the area in the late 1860s with the Union Pacific Railroad building through the area in 1866-67. A siding was established by the Union Pacific Railroad, one of the earliest on this line. A post office was established June 9, 1872. Soon a church, a saloon/restaurant and a store were established and school sessions were being held by 1873. Early water supply was likely the Platte River and/or Turkey Creek, located about one to two miles from the siding. Irish settlers moved into the area by 1877 and in 1880, the settlement population was about 100. A depot was built by the railroad tracks, one mile east of the settlement, and soon the town moved to the tracks. Grain warehouses and general stores soon went up. On June 2, 1886, the first issue of the *Elm Creek Sun* newspaper was printed. In January (11 or 12) 1887, Elm Creek was incorporated as a village with a population of 300. The

village boasted three hotels and numerous businesses along with the Farmers and Merchants Bank organized in 1889. District #9 was providing secondary education and a new school was built in 1890. The population was 357 and some of the businesses included general stores, a furniture store, a grange store, the Pacific House, a grocery, a restaurant, the Elm Creek Hotel, a hardware store, an ag implement and millinery. In 1892, the *Elm Creek Pilot* newspaper was started and by 1897, the Elm Creek Flouring Mill was established.

The population by 1900 was 301 and the Gibbon Buffalo County Beacon was moved to Elm Creek and became the *Elm Creek Beacon* newspaper. The Elm Creek Hydraulic Stone Company was manufacturing bricks and on Feb. 20, 1904, the Fairview Telephone Company was organized with lines completed from Kearney.

On July 1, 1906, a fire destroyed 14 buildings, prompting a volunteer fire department to be organized in the fall of 1907. On Aug. 20, 1906, a special election

was held to approve a \$10,000 bond issue for a water works system. A water system was installed in 1907, which included

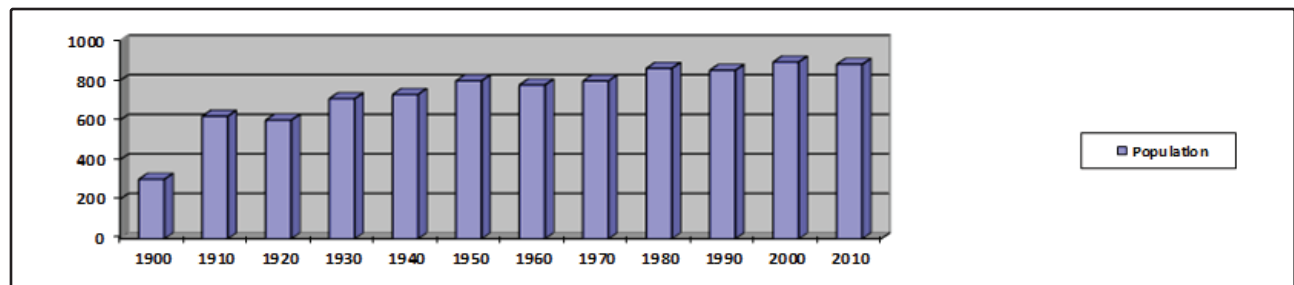
a 120-foot, 40,000-gallon steel elevated storage tower supplied by five wells about 35 feet deep. Water was pumped by a 20 horsepower (HP) gas engine throughout the 22-block distribution system, which had 16 fire hydrants and about 65 private taps. The Village Marshal was in charge of the system. On May 9, 1907, the City Bank of Elm Creek was established and telephone service was installed in 1908.

By 1910, the population increased to 620 and a Christian

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*Elm Creek water tower.
2001 photo.*



Nebraska utilities history – Elm Creek

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Church was organized. A private electric light plant was built by John A. Nitchie (Nitchey) with a 50 HP oil engine housed in a concrete building. Light was furnished for streets and for private homes and business. The system had 15 tungsten lights of 100 candle power each. There were no meters at this time, so consumers paid a flat fee for service from sundown to midnight. Monday morning service was later added, commonly referred to as “Wash Day” in many communities. By 1911, a 40-watt generator provided service to the village. In 1916, John Nitchie sold his electric lighting system to the Lexington Mill and Elevator Company and they took possession in October. In September, the city added more streetlights with one at every intersection, totaling 31. In 1912, the water system installed three public water fountains. Corrugated metal culverts were installed at street crossings replacing the old wooden boxes and street crossings were sanded. When it rained, an Indiana steel road drag was used to groom the streets.

By 1920, the population was 600 and a highline was completed from Lexington providing electric service. On July 7, 1921, a natural gas line was laid south of the railroad tracks. Bids were out for a sanitary sewer for District #1. In August 1922, a library was started by the Elm Creek Women's Club. By 1930, the population was 300 and in December, a public ice-skating rink was built. During the 1930s, a track and football field was built by a PWA project. In 1932, fire damaged the Farmers

and Merchants Bank along with the Farmer's Hay/Grain Company on July 28, 1933. In 1936, natural gas came to the area with the first natural gas compressor station in Nebraska. The fire department purchased a 1927 model T truck to pull the hose cart in 1937. On Feb. 21, 1938, the cemetery association deeded the cemetery to the village of Elm Creek. The K.P. and G. Company in 1941 purchased the Nebraska Natural Gas Company (KN Nat. Gas Co.). In 1942, the Consumers Public Power District purchased the private electric systems.

From 1940-1950, the population increased slightly from 730 to 799. The fire department purchased a GMC truck in 1950 and by 1956, had 36 volunteer fire-fighters. The rural fire department was organized in 1957.

In the 1950s, the streets were black topped with an asphalt base, tennis courts were built and the sewer system was extended with laterals installed. The water system replaced eight-inch water mains, which had been in service about 40 years. The water works in 1960 had 225 meters in service with rates of first 2,000 gallons (gals.) at \$1 per month minimum and all over at \$0.10 per 1,000 gals. The cost of electric current for pumping water amounted to \$960 per year. The natural gas system was privately owned and operated.

In 1960, the population was 778 and the electrical distribution system was supplied by Consumers Public Power District at the wholesale cost of \$0.025 per kWh. The cost of electricity for street lighting was \$105.03 per month.

The public water system had 240 meters in service and the sewer system and disposal plant were maintained by a tax levy of \$350. A sewer user fee in 1962 amounted to \$0.50 per month and a street asphalt project was underway. The gas system was operated and supplied by the Nebraska Natural Gas Company. In 1965, the Elm Creek Fire department merged with the Rural Fire Department. In 1969, a swimming pool was built, lights were installed at the ballpark and the railroad by this time had discontinued passenger service to town. By 1970, the population increased to 798 and the electrical system was supplied by the Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD). A sewer disposal project was underway by 1971. By 1980, the population increased to 862 and in 1985, the natural gas system was operated by KN Energy Inc.

A new 17-acre wastewater treatment lagoon system was constructed in 1998 for \$980,600. From 1990-2000, the population increased from 852 to 882 and most streets were hard surfaced and curbed.

A new city/fire hall was constructed using a \$250,000 grant in 2004-2005. By 2006, the natural gas system was operated by Kinder Morgan. The activated sludge extended aeration wastewater treatment system was designed for 0.06 million gallons per day (mgd). The population in 2010 was 882 and water rates were: residential – \$14 and commercial – \$28 with a \$35 deposit, tapping fee of \$450, a disconnect fee of \$35 and a reconnect fee

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Nebraska utilities history – Elm Creek

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of \$35. About 2015, the natural gas provided by SourceGas was switched to Black Hills Energy. In 2016, the water system had two wells serving 32 commercial and 444 residential connections, all unmetered. The sewer rate for residential was \$14.50 and commercial was \$29 with a tapping fee of \$500.

Today, Elm Creek has a population of 979, has been incorporated for 135 years and is a League of Nebraska Municipalities and Utilities Section member. The village maintains several blocks of streets, most of which are hard surfaced and curbed, a park, a cemetery and

water and wastewater systems. The electrical distribution system is owned by the village and supplied by NPPD and the natural gas system is provided by Black Hills Energy. Police Protection is provided by the Buffalo County Sheriff.

References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1956, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965-1996, 1998-2000, 2002-2018; Lincoln Journal Star Newspaper, 2003; The Ansley Herald, 1930; Kearney Hub Newspaper, 2005; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Nebraska Place Names, 1925, 1960; Pages of History, Nebraska High Schools, 1854-1994;

Nebraska Our Towns...Central North Central, 1989; Maps Tell A Story, 1991; Andrea's History of the State of Nebraska, 1882; Johnson's History of Nebraska, 1880; Elm Creek Nebraska, 1887-1987, 1987; Buffalo County Nebraska and Its People, Vol. I, 1916; Nebraska Blue Book, 1920; Nebraska Historical Survey Reconnaissance Survey, Final Report of Buffalo County for Nebraska Historical Society, August 1993; History of Hamilton & Clay Counties, Nebraska, 1921; Nebraska Blue Book 1928, 1942, 1946, 1978 and Water & Sewer Rate Comparison Study, NeRWA, 2010-2011.

Wastewater Workshops held

Two one-day Wastewater Workshops were held May 25 in Sidney and June 9 in Atkinson. Eight systems attended these workshops, which were sponsored by the Utilities Section-League of Nebraska Municipalities.

The morning topics included operation, maintenance and re-

cordkeeping of collection systems provided by Monte Dakan. The afternoon touched on a confined space refresher and an industry and regulatory update. Special thanks to Monte Dakan of Johnson Services for the basic maintenance and lining/rehab sessions. Operators who attended these

workshops received five credit hours toward their wastewater license, five hours toward grade 1-4 water licenses and one-and-a-half hours toward grade 6 water license. Operators need to be sure to save the certificates from these workshops as a record of attendance.

Backflow Workshops scheduled

The 2022 Backflow Workshops are scheduled for Aug. 16 in Beatrice, Aug. 17 in Wayne, Aug. 23 in Ogallala, Aug. 24 in Grand Island, and a late addition, Aug. 18, in Stuart. These workshops are sponsored by the Utilities Section and the Nebraska Section of the American Water Works Association

(NS-AWWA).

Operators in attendance will receive five hours toward renewal of their grade 6 water license and some water (grade 1-4) and wastewater credit hours. Be sure to register in advance as these classes may be limited in size due to the meeting room availability.

Rubber Gloving Workshop scheduled

A Rubber Gloving Workshop is scheduled for Aug. 30-Sept. 1 at the Wheatbelt Training Field in Sidney. Register early as class size may be limited. Be sure to register as either basic, intermediate or advanced so the work groups can be arranged.

Nebraska utilities history – Long Pine

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

Long Pine is located in Brown County, which was organized in 1883. The Sawyer Trail area was used for cattle drives from Texas about 1865. In the 1870s, the railroad was scouting the area near the stage and freight line. In 1872, the headquarters of the Tower Ranch was located at the mouth of Bone Creek as the Gordon Trail was in use by the 1870s. Settlement began in the area by the 1870s and a sawmill was in operation. By 1876, construction began on a future Fort Niobrara with much of the timber supplied from area Long Pine sawmills. The fort was established April 22, 1880, (mostly adobe structures) and freight was hauled from Neligh to Fort Niobrara through the future Long Pine area. By 1880, a stage line was operating twice a week, running from Nebraska City to Fort Niobrara, carrying government mail from Neligh. The Berry Brothers Stage and Freight Lines (Neligh to Fort Niobrara) operated a stage station out of John Dank's log cabin.

A store was established in 1880 and by June 1881, a townsite was surveyed/platted. Long Pine took its name from nearby Long Pine Creek. The Sioux City and Pacific Railroad reached the area in 1880-1881 and established a temporary terminus, a division point and began construction of a turntable, shop facility and crew dormitory. A post office, which had been established (March 1879) as Bone Creek on the Cook & Towar Ranch, was discontinued and moved to Lone Pine. The Long Pine Post Office was established Oct. 3, 1881. Early water probably was hauled from Long Pine Creek or Bone Creek. The first waterworks in 1881 involved a steam pumping station by Pine Creek, which served the railroad. The pumping station was on the creek at the old railroad bridge. The original springs system was open and the water ran by gravity in an open ditch to the pumping station. The first tank and water system built by the railroad had wood water lines made mostly of redwood wire wrapped.

On Oct 27, 1881, rails were completed to Long Pine, stalls for the roundhouse and a boarding

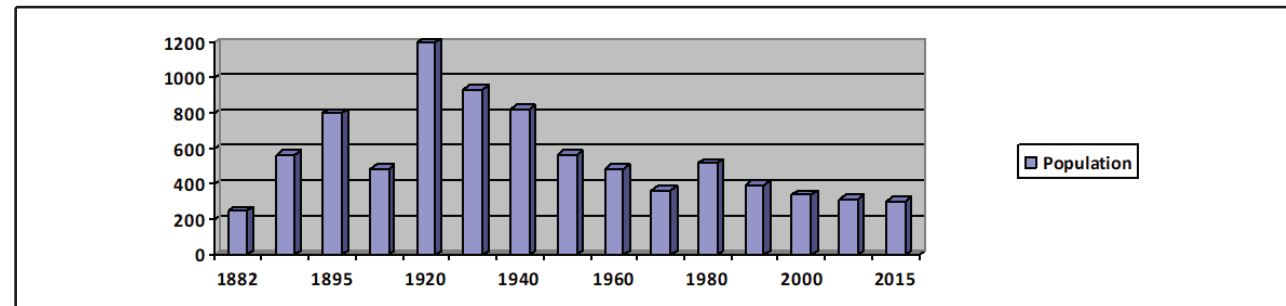
house with a place to eat were completed. Long Pine was a major railroad hub, home to a "roundhouse," or large turntable,

where engines were serviced. Passenger and freight trains came over the rails and become a division point, including a roundhouse (later became the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad). By 1882, the population was about 250 (about 100 permanent settlers) and businesses included a large hotel, three general stores, a hardware, saloons, a lumberyard and four restaurants. The *Long Pine News* newspaper was published. School sessions were taught in a building on the Main Street until a small frame school was built (1882). The railroad was completing the tracks to Fort Niobrara and in



Long Pine water tower. 2001 photo.

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Nebraska utilities history – Long Pine

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July 1882, a hotly contested election was held for the county seat between Long Pine, Bassett and Ainsworth (Ainsworth became the county seat). A Methodist Church was organized in 1883 and the Cornell & King Mill was built on the Fairfield. In 1884, the S.C.&P. Railroad had a depot and a roundhouse with tracks running diagonally along the city's edge and a depot at about Second and Elm Streets. On Jan. 9, 1884, Long Pine was incorporated as a village,

consisting of about 19 blocks. The village and the railroad shared a dug well until the early 1900s and a windmill was located on the east side of town in the middle of Main Street. About 1885-86, a top was installed on the railroad's open top water storage tank since people were found bathing in the drinking water tank. In 1887, a \$1,000 bond was issued to install Long Pine's first water system, which was operating by 1890.

The population in 1890 was 562, the *Long Pine Journal* newspaper

was being published and some of the businesses included a general store, Brown County Bank, a lumberyard, a blacksmith, a hardware store, Chautauqua Roller Mill, barber, the Commercial House, a shoemaker, the Depot Hotel, restaurants, a millinery, a laundry, a cigar manufacturer, the Pine Valley Roller Mill, a drug store, a furniture store, a bakery, a livery, an Opera House and a grocery store.

A hook and ladder and hose

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Nebraska utilities history – Long Pine

Continued from page 11

company was available to fight fires by 1890. By 1895, the population was estimated over 800, the Miller House was constructed (later called the Heritage House) and in the 1890s, the Upstill Hotel, two roller mills, a burr mill and one sawmill were constructed. The Hoeft Sawmill was built in 1892 at the mouth of the Fairfield, later sold in 1893.

The population by 1900 was 486, a telephone Exchange was established in 1901 and in 1905, the original railroad bridge over Pine Creek burned. The bridge soon was rebuilt and in 1908, a two-story block livery building/hotel was built. A boarding house addition was added to the depot and a second depot was built in 1909. The Long Pine Light & Power in the early 1900s had a contract with the railroad to supply water from a well located near the power plant. This well, known as the Kelly well, used two line-shaft driven triplex pumps. Some of the original six-inch water mains were made of wood.

In 1910, the population was 781 and S.H. Kyner built a light plant to operate a flour mill. In the daytime when electricity was not needed, he shut down the plant and used the dam to run the mill.

By 1912, many of the wooden water mains were being replaced. In 1913, a special election was held to vote on bonds for extending the waterworks system. A \$5,000 bond issue was approved in 1914 to install a (24 ft. x 60 ft.) riveted steel standpipe, replacing the late 1800s wooden storage tank. The municipal water works in 1915 had rates of \$0.25 per

1,000 gallons.

The Long Pine Amusement Company was established with "Hidden Paradise Park" opening with five cottages. The amusement park was located in a wooded ravine along Long Pine Creek. The 80-acre site, called Hidden Paradise, was noted as a family resort. Hidden Paradise soon started boasting 65 cottages, a dance pavilion and a swimming pool, which opened in 1912. The plunge was built in 1914 and the "Pines," formerly called the Tourist Park located northwest of town, had 12 cabins. By 1915, electric current rates from the private power plant were \$0.15 per kilowatt hour (kWh). An application was filed Dec. 26, 1917, by the Bassett Distribution Company to construct a transmission line from Bassett to Long Pine, which was granted April 20, 1918. The electric current was supplied from the hydro-electric power plant located on Plum Creek north of Ainsworth. Later, the mill was closed and the power of the dam was used for electricity generation alone. The hydroelectric power plant was sold to Interstate Power Company.

The population increased from 935 in 1919 to 1,200 in 1920, trains used the railroad trestle built in 1917 over Pine Creek, a \$6,000 water bond issue for the connection of mains by loops was underway in 1920 and a new school was built. Interstate Power Company owned the power plant at Long Pine (1926) and in 1930, built a new power light plant at the old Kyner mill site. The population in 1930 was 937 and the high school athletic team mascot

was the green and white polar bears (1934). In October 1932, a vote of 229-6 approved the \$5,000 water bonds to finance the project. The project consisted of a spring house, collection basin and 4,800 ft. of eight-inch pipe from the seven springs, which were located one to one-and-a-half miles southwest of town with about 800 gallons per minute (gpm) flow. The seven springs replaced the Kelly well and water was pumped to a storage tank north of town. A \$15,000 bond issue was used in conjunction with the Works Progress Administration (WPA) project in 1933. In 1934, Long Pine was incorporated as a city of the second class. A Highway #20 project included paving (oil) from Ainsworth to Wood Lake in 1935. By 1936, the Interstate Power Company was operating a 112 kilowatt (kW) hydroelectric power generation plant. Hidden Paradise resort in the 1930s consisted of 65 cabins, a water wheel, which pumped water from the creek, a newspaper, a heated swimming pool, a water slide, taxi service, public telephone, electric lights, several restaurants, a golf course, tennis courts, a bowling alley and a large dance pavilion. Interstate Power was controlled by the Utilities Power & Light Corporation in 1939. Retail electricity was provided to Ainsworth, Atkinson, Creighton, Hartington, Neligh, O'Neill, Valentine, Bassett, Brunswick, Butte, Clearwater, Crofton, Elgin, Coleridge, Ewing, Long Pine, Lynch, Orchard, Newport, Osmond, Page, Petersburg, Wausa and Wynot.

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Nebraska utilities history – Long Pine

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The population decreased to 824 in 1940 and Consumers Public Power District purchased the Nebraska properties of Interstate Power Company in December 1940. A Long Pine Hospital was operating in the 1940s and in 1949, a drive-in (theater) was built and opened.

The population decreased to 567 in 1950, the fire department had 20 volunteer firefighters by 1958 and the village operated an auditorium. In the 1950s, the railroad discontinued passenger service and the roundhouse with shops were removed. The municipal sewer system and disposal plant in 1958 were maintained from a 1.5 mill levy.

The cemetery, owned by the village in 1958, was maintained from a 0.3 mill levy and the sale of lots. The cost of streetlighting was \$1,000 per year and electric current for pumping water was about \$1,200 per year. The water plant had 167 meters and rates of \$0.25 per 1,000 gallons. In 1960, the population was 487 and a railroad depot was built in 1965. The electrical system was owned and operated by Consumers Public Power District and the hydroelec-

tric plant dam washed out in the 1960s and was not rebuilt.

The population again dropped to 363 in 1970 and electrical distribution system was owned and operated by the city and supplied by Nebraska Public Power District. A 12-bedroom railroad crew dormitory or bunkhouse was constructed in 1971 and a wastewater project was underway in 1972. In 1975, a \$40,000 water bond was issued for the addition of a water main on the west end of the city. A facultative two-cell lagoon system was built by 1980 and designed for a population of 1,000. By 1980, the population was 521 and the natural gas system was operated and supplied by Kansas-Nebraska Energy Co. Inc. In 1984, the last boarding house (former Miller Hotel), built in 1895, was closed. At one time, five hotels were said to have been operating in town. A new post office building was erected in 1987 and by 1990, the population decreased to 396. In 1992, the railroad line was abandoned as the last train came through. The former right of way has since become a recreational trail, known as the Cowboy Trail.

The population in 2000 was 341 and in 2001, a resurfacing (oil)

project from the highway into the city was in progress. The Pine Lake Drive Inn closed in 2002 and solid waste rates were \$14 per month. A \$250,000 grant was used in 2006 to build a new 5,510 square foot (sq ft) fire hall and adjoining building for community hall use. By 2007, the city maintained 18.27 miles of streets of which 8.84 miles were hard surfaced, 10 percent curbed and 70 percent with sidewalks. The water system, supplied by seven springs, had a combined pumping capacity of 550 gallons per minute (gpm), 211,475 gallons of overhead storage capacity, 47 fire hydrants and a historic peak daily demand of 1,003,475 gallons per day (gpd). The natural gas system was served by a four-inch transmission line (800 psi) operated by Kinder Morgan. By 2009, SourceGas operated the natural gas system and the city maintained two city parks (Long Pine City Park and Keller Memorial Park).

In 2010, the population was 313 and water rates increased from a flat rate of \$10 per month in 2002 to \$12 per month in 2010. By 2015, the natural gas system was operated by Black Hills Energy

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Nebraska utilities history – Long Pine

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and the railroad depot, built in 1965, was slated to become Long Pine's Railroad Museum. The Heritage House Museum was the former 1895 Learn House/Miller Hotel/Upstill Hotel on the southeast corner of Third and Elm Streets. In 2016, many streets were blacktop with some curbed with a few streets of dirt/gravel on the west side.

Today, Long Pine has a population of 305, has been incorporated for 138 and is a member of the League of Nebraska Municipalities and Utilities Section.

References: Nebraska Direc-

tory of Municipal Officials, 1958, 1964, 1966-74, 1977-87, 1990-1992, 1994-2001, 2003-2007, 2009-2022; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Nebraska Place Names, 1925, 1960; Summer Recreation Guide, O'Neill Shopper, 2003; A 100 Year History of Stuart-Stuart Centennial (1884-1984), 1984; Semi-Centennial History of Nebraska, 1904; Community Facts Long Pine Nebraska, NPPD May 2007; Community Facts Long Pine Nebraska, NPPD February 2011; Pages of History, Nebraska High Schools, 1854-1994; The Brown County Democrat News-

paper, 1932-34; Sargent Leader newspaper, 1913, 1915; Lincoln Journal Star newspaper, 2017; History of Brown County, "Tales of Brown County & It's Families, 1997; Nebraska Our Towns... Central & North Central, 1989; Maps Tell a Story, 1991; Long Pine website, 2015-2019; Wikipedia website, 2018-2019; Andrea's History of the State of Nebraska, 1882; Nebraska State Gazetteer & Business Directory, 1890-91; Nebraska Blue Book, 1926, 1928, 1942, 1946, 1978 and Eleventh Annual Report of the Nebraska State Railway Commissioner, 1918.

Water Operator Training Workshops held

The 2022 spring Water Operator Training Workshops were completed with workshops in South Sioux City, Blair, Kearney, Beatrice, Schuyler, Hastings, Gering, Ogallala, North Platte and Burwell. Topics included corrosion control, tower attachment management, a lockout/tagout refresher, asset management planning and an industry/regulatory

update. Jake Dugger and Sam Gage with Maguire Iron provided the tower maintenance and attachment management sessions.

These workshops were sponsored by the Utilities Section and the Nebraska Section of the American Water Works Association (NS-AWWA). Participants received water and wastewater recertification credits for attending

these workshops and certificates were provided.

The fall Water Workshops will begin in August at McCook, Holdrege and Grand Island. In September, workshops are scheduled for Lexington, Broken Bow and Norfolk. The October and December workshops are scheduled in York, Red Cloud, Lincoln and Hastings.

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

Congratulations! Incorporation Anniversary Recognition:

110 years – **Ralston** (1912 village/city); 130 years – Beaver Crossing (June 1, 1892 village); 135 years – Bartley (June 7, 1887 village), Pilger (June, 1887 village), Davenport (June 7, 1887 village), Meadow Grove (June 14, 1887 village), Verdon (June 10, 1887 village) and Petersburg

(June 1887 village); 140 years – Auburn (June 6, 1882 village) and Wymore; and 145 years – Aurora (June 3, 1877 village).

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.

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

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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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Classifieds

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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 Of-

fice. 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.

"Just For Fun" Answers

A-1. Spalding was founded by a colony of Irish Catholics about 1875. In 1881, the name was changed to Spalding in honor of Bishop John Lancaster Spalding.
Reference: Wikipedia website, 2020

A-2. Milford.

A-3. 397.9 miles.

Reference: Google Maps, 2021

A-4. Lexington.

A-5. Hastings – former Eckhardt Grocery building (one of the murals on Hastings' "Art Tours").

Construction Zones: A Collection of orange cones!

Once again, the summer months have the color of orange everywhere you look. All across the state, there are some major road projects underway such as new (westbound) north lanes of I-80 from Colorado east to Ogallala. The State of Nebraska has a new rest stop west of Ogallala along the south side of I-80. In Ogallala, there is a new concrete paving project on the W. 8th Street corner and new blacktop at the interchange of Highways 61 and 27. A Highway 385 paving project from I-80 to the east entrance of Sidney is underway and some paving west on Highway 30 into town. Work is in progress completing the Highway 385 four lane from south of Alliance to the junction of L62A. Highway #2 through Alliance has new sections of blacktop.

Along Highway #20, there are road projects at Gordon south on Highway #27, and new pavement on Highway #20 through Ainsworth. Valentine has a major landscaping and highway rebuild through the primary business district.



Valentine downtown street renovation.

Atkinson has a sidewalk project on the west side of the street in front of city hall. An O'Neill curbing and sidewalk project south from E. Douglas St to Carney Park is in progress. A segment of east Benjamin Avenue in Norfolk is getting new concrete and Highway #275 (four lane) east for eleven miles is under improvement. A new hotel is being constructed in Norfolk off the intersection of Highways #275 and #81. Dirt work is in progress on a new subdivision project on the west side of Wisner just south of Highway #51. Wisner also has a water project underway that includes erection of a new water tower. The east end of Highway #51 toward Decatur is closed for bridge replacement and highway

reconstruction. In Columbus new pavement is being laid on 15th Street from 24th to 27th Avenues and a new library/museum is being erected on 14th Street just west of the city office building.



Columbus library/museum facility.

Several sections of I-80 are under construction with new paving between Lincoln and Grand Island near the I-80 & I-76 interchange east, new concrete on the north side of I-80. Two overpasses on the west edge of Grand Island are getting facelifts (Highway #30 overpass west of Webb Road) and work on a roundabout at Wilmer and Old Potash in Grand Island. On Highway #2, new blacktop is being laid from Merna to Anselmo.

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2022 Training calendar

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August

Aug. 9.....	Water Operator Training Workshop.....	City Hall, McCook
Aug. 10.....	Water Operator Training Workshop.....	Council Chambers, Holdrege
Aug. 11.....	Water Operator Training Workshop.....	Activities Center, Hebron
Aug. 16.....	Backflow Workshop	Valentinos, Beatrice
Aug. 17.....	Backflow Workshop	Fire Hall, Wayne
Aug. 18.....	Backflow Workshop	Community Center, Stuart
Aug. 23.....	Backflow Workshop	Fire Hall, Ogallala
Aug. 24.....	Backflow Workshop	Boarders Cobblestone Hotel, Grand Island
Aug. 25.....	Water Operator Training Workshop.....	Utilities Customer Service Building, Grand Island
Aug. 30-Sept. 1 ...	Rubber Gloving Workshop	Don Winkelman Training Field, Sidney

September

Sept. 7-8	Electric Underground School	Don Winkelman Training Field, Sidney
Sept. 14-16	League Annual Conference	Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln
Sept. 27	Water Operator Training Workshop.....	Glen Hawks Service Center, Lexington
Sept. 28	Water Operator Training Workshop.....	MidPlains Community College Facility, Broken Bow
Sept. 30	Water Operator Training Workshop.....	DHHS Building, Norfolk

October

Oct. 11	Water Operator Training Workshop.....	Kilgore Memorial Library, York
Oct. 12	Water Operator Training Workshop.....	Scout Lodge, Red Cloud

December

Dec. 7	Water Operator Training Workshop.....	Water Department Facility, Lincoln
Dec. 8	Water Operator Training Workshop.....	Hastings