

Utilities Section Newsletter

League of Nebraska Municipalities

May 2020

Examples of pool rules

*By Lash Chaffin,
Utilities Section Director*

Pursuant to the Governor's announcements last week, some municipalities are considering opening their swimming pools to the extent that this can be done within their applicable Directed Health Measures (DHM).

The City of Lincoln has decided to open five of the nine city owned pools on June 15.

Open swim sessions will be 90 minutes long and scheduled at noon, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. The capacity of each pool will be determined by the city and will be determined in part by physical distancing requirements and the city COVID-19 Risk Dial. Signs will be posted when facilities are full. Pool capacity can change as circumstances change. The City of Lincoln Covid Tracker is a helpful tool and can be accessed at [Lincoln Covid Risk Tracker](#).

- Persons planning to swim will have their temperatures checked.
- Staff will collect names and phone numbers in case contact tracing is needed.
- All swimmers will be required to shower in their swimsuits with soap before entering the pool deck.
- Swimmers also will be expected to wear face coverings while waiting to check in and to stay at least six feet away from oth-

ers.

- High touch surfaces around the pool and in the bathhouse will be disinfected between sessions.

Programming offered at the pools will include weekly evening family swim sessions, evening water fitness classes, and possibly learn to swim classes. Details of these programs will be released later in the season. Private pool rentals will not be offered.

Swim and dive clubs will be able to use Woods Pool for conditioning and practice, and the schedule will be posted each morning at the pool. Parks and Recreation are reviewing USA Swimming and Diving recommendations to incorporate with local and state guidelines for operational procedures. Large events like the regional swim meets will not be held.

The City of Lincoln spray parks will also not open.

Another example is from a private swimming pool in Lincoln that is only open to its membership. The pool recently posted their 2020 rules on Facebook.

- Two 90-minute swimming sessions per family unit each week, but not guaranteed.
- Online reservation system and



Adobe Stock Photo.

reservations will be taken one week at a time.

- Reservations not rescheduled if pool closes for rain or other circumstances.
- Four 90-minute swimming sessions each day at noon, 2 p.m., 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.
- Staff will use the half-hour between sessions for cleaning and disinfecting bathrooms and high-touch areas.
- Reservations online and only those with reservations will be allowed entrance during any given swim session.
- All members will have their temperature taken before entry
- Health screening questionnaire upon entry. Members may complete the health screening in the 30 minutes before the reserved swimming session.
- Members two years and older will be required to wear a mask while waiting in line and on the pool deck or other seating areas when not swimming.

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Examples of pool rules

Continued from page 1

- Pool will not provide masks and will deny entrance to anyone arriving without a mask.
- Any children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult from the same family membership which may include a grandparent or nanny. Adults are responsible for monitoring the activity of the children in their family and ensuring family members follow all pool rules.
- Deck seating will be confined to specific, pre-marked locations arranged to observe proper social distancing.
- Some seating will be in fenced-in areas in the grass surrounding the pool.
- No chairs will be provided for any seating areas. You will need to bring your own chairs.

- Staff will assign your family to a seating area upon arrival. Traffic in and around the pool will be directed by signage and traffic flows must be followed by all members.
- There will be no benches or picnic tables available.
- The snack shack will not be open.
- Bringing in food will be allowed but trash cans will not be available so you will need to carry out your trash. The water fountain will not be operational.

- Water in reusable containers will be permitted.
 - Delivery of food to the pool will not be allowed.
 - The slides and diving board will not be in operation.
 - Swim vests and pool noodles will not be available. You may bring your own pool toys and are responsible for keeping track of them.
 - The pool will not be open to guests.
- The private pools will not offer swim lesson pool rentals.

Workplace distancing tips

As some areas of Nebraska are seeing more community activities, some helpful tips to safe distancing in the workplace can be found

at the Safety Council [website](#). CDC guidelines, including procedures for washing hands, can be found at www.cdc.gov.

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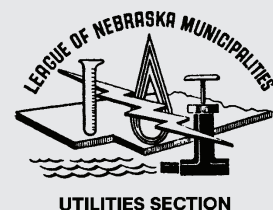
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New Youth Sports Guidelines for June

*By Lash Chaffin,
Utilities Section Director*

The Governor recently issued revised guidelines for youth sports. Many of these guidelines will affect municipal programs. Some guidelines are effective on June 1 and some are effective June 18. **Some of the new relevant guidelines effective on June 1 include:**

- Schools are permitted to open weight rooms for use by all student athletes as long as they follow the same guidelines as fitness centers/clubs, gymnasiums, health clubs, and health spas.
- Team-organized practices for non-contact and limited-contact sports may begin unless circumstances dictate a change in date. (list of non-contact and limited-contact sports provided below.)
- Rodeo events also may begin.
- Players, coaches and staff showing signs/symptoms of COVID-19 (fever over 100.4F, sudden onset of cough or sudden onset of shortness of breath) shall not participate.
- Dugout and bench use will not be allowed. Players and their items when not on the field/court should be lined up against the fence/wall at least six (6) feet apart.
- Parents must remain in their cars or drop off and pick players up afterwards.
- Players should use their own protective equipment including gloves, helmets and bats as much as possible. When protective equipment is needed to be shared, it should be disinfected between players use. Coaches are encouraged to rotate equip-

ment when possible.

- Coaches must disinfect shared equipment before and after each practice.
- Coaches are responsible for ensuring social/physical distancing is maintained between players as much as possible. This means, additional spacing between players while playing catch, during drills or while waiting to participate.
- Players must bring their own water/beverage to consume during and after practice. No shared drinking fountains or coolers.
- Players must bring their own snacks to consume during and after practice. No shared/com-munal snacks. The use of sun-flower seeds, tobacco products, and spitting while practicing or playing is prohibited.
- Team-organized practices for contact sports remain suspended.

Some of the guidelines effective June 18 include:

- Team-organized games for non-contact and limited-contact sports may begin unless circumstances dictate a change in date.
- Same guidelines apply as above for practices.
- Use of dugouts and benches are permitted during games only. For baseball and softball, the bleachers located between the dugout and home plate should also be used to spread out players. Players should have designated spots to place their personal items. Coaches must designate an adult who is responsible for ensuring players are seated on the benches unless they are actively participating in

the game.

- For all other sports, additional benches or bleachers should be used to spread out players.
- Players should have designated spots to place their personal items. Coaches must designate an adult who is responsible for ensuring players are seated on the benches unless they are actively participating in the game.
- Players should use their own equipment including gloves, helmets and bats as much as possible. When protective equipment is needed to be shared, it should be disinfected between players use. Coaches are encouraged to rotate equipment when possible.
- Coaches must disinfect shared equipment before and after each game/match.
- Fan attendance is limited to household members of the players on the team. (Collegiate, semi-professional, and professional games will follow gathering requirements under the Directed Health Measures and must submit plans prior to reopening if facilities meet these requirements.) For outdoor sports, no use of bleachers for fans. Fans must bring their own chairs or stand. Fans should keep six (6) feet of social distancing between different household units. No fan seating or standing is allowed within in six (6) feet of the teams' benches or for baseball and softball within the area from behind home plate to six (6) feet past the far end of each dugout.
- If game/match is held at a facil-

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Nebraska utilities history – Mead

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*

Mead, located in Saunders County, had settlers in the area by 1867 most of whom were of Swedish ancestry. By 1871, a settlement was being established in Todd Valley, between Wahoo and Cedar Creek.

The Omaha & Republican Valley Railroad registered a plat as Alvin, which came in third in the 1873 voting for the county seat. The railroad purchased land from John Williams as tracks were laid to the area in 1876. On Feb. 15, 1877, a post office was established in the newly built railroad depot. On April 23, 1877, 16 blocks were surveyed and platted as the "Village of Alvin" by the railroad. The post office changed the name since there was already an Alvin post office in Hamilton County. Named in honor of Gov. Alvin Saunders, for whom Saunders County (formerly Calhoun) also was named. A general store opened in 1877 along with busi-

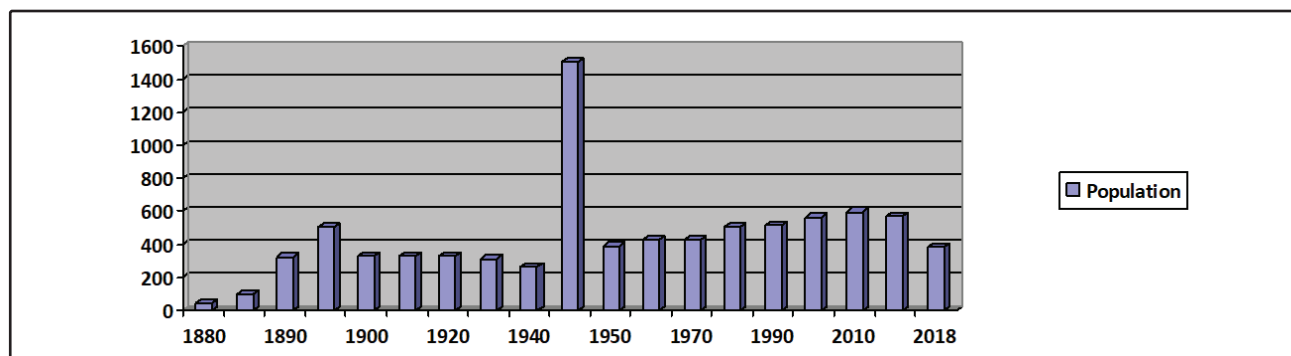
nesses that included a lumberyard, a blacksmith shop, a livestock business, four houses and a town pump. A bank and grocery were opened and construction began on a hotel in 1879. The 1880 census recorded the population of Alvin at 43 and on Aug. 4, the Union Pacific purchased the railroad line and changed the community name to Mead, likely honoring a railroad official. The post office name changed from Saunders to Mead (1880) and by 1882, the community consisted of four businesses, a hotel, a grain business, a lumber business and a general store with a population of about 100. That year, a town hall was built at 4th and Elm Streets. The Bank of Mead was organized in 1885 and incorporated Dec. 31, 1900. Businesses by 1886 included three steam-powered grain elevators, a livery barn, a blacksmith, two lumberyards, a harness shop, a shoe shop, a saloon, two hardware stores, two hotels, three grocers and a drug store. The population increased from 99 (1884) to 162



Mead Water Tower. 2000 Photo.

(1885) then at 200 (1886) when the citizens filed a petition and was granted incorporation as a village. By 1886-87, wooden boardwalks were built (4 feet wide, 1 inch on 3-2" x 4 strips) with street

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Nebraska utilities history – Mead

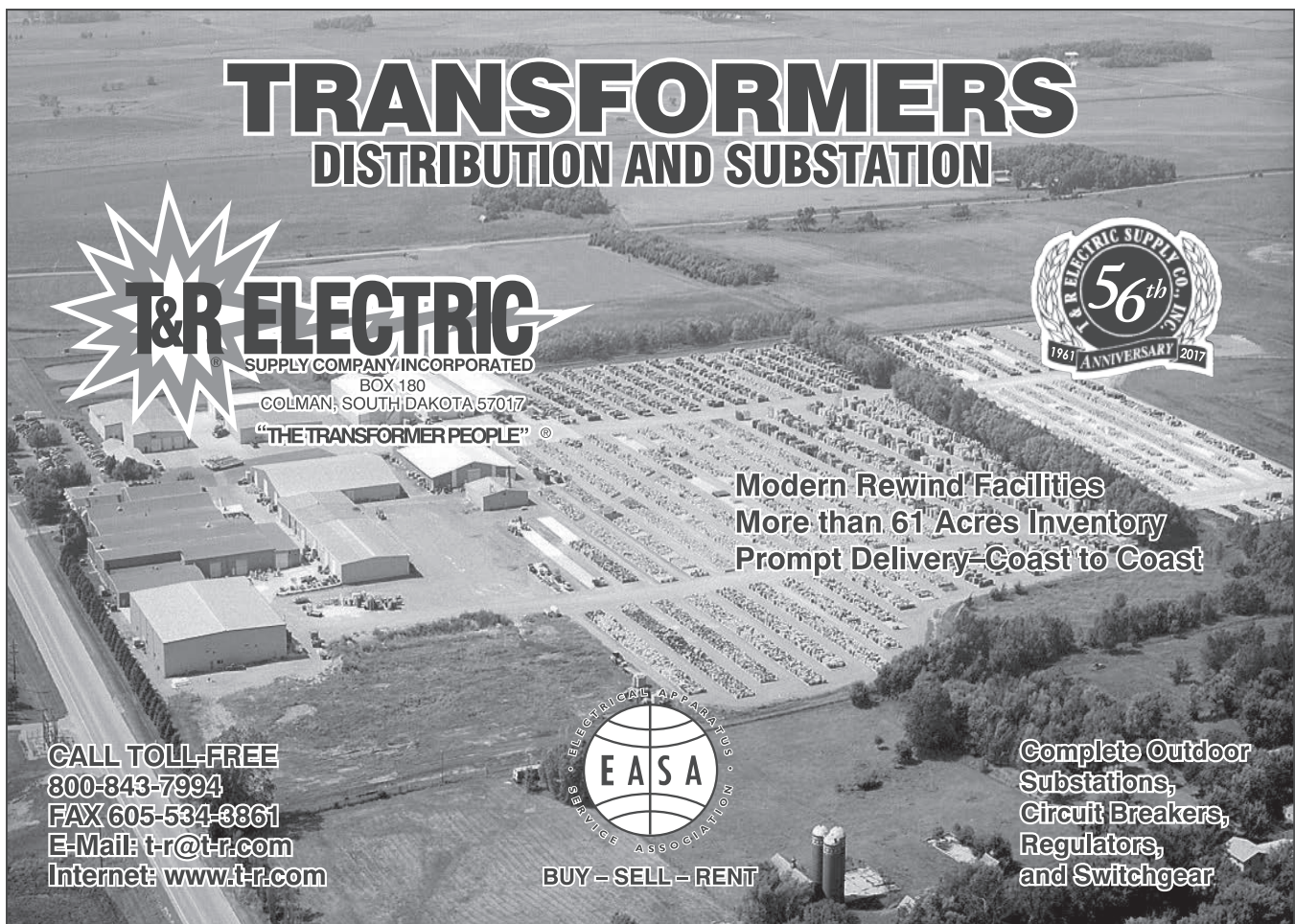
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crossings made of 2" material on 4" x 4" strips). The first sidewalk was built on the north side of 4th Street between Vine and Elm Streets with the Marshal plowing the streets and repairing the sidewalks for \$36 per year. A two-story frame school with a bell tower was built in 1888. In 1890, the population increased to 324, a new post office building was erected and by 1891, businesses included the Mead City Hotel, a restaurant, a blacksmith,

a well borer, a general store, a millinery, a livery, a newspaper, a meat market, a furniture store, the Bank of Mead, two churches, a wagon maker, an ag implement dealer and a shoemaker to name a few. One source noted the population was about 500 in 1891, while another noted 324 by 1895 and a telephone system installed in 1898-99.

The population was 330 (1900), the Brown Palace Hotel opened and the *Mead Advocate* newspaper was published. Cement side-


walks replaced the old boardwalks by 1906 and street lamps were installed by 1909, which were shut off by a timing device. The railroad built a new depot in 1909 and the population held steady at 330 by 1910. In 1913, a November election was held for approval of a light plant and a water system. A light plant was built, which ran from dusk to dawn using a one-cycle engine with a fly wheel providing electricity by 1914. One source had the plant running from

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Nebraska utilities history – Mead

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6 a.m. to midnight. Water mains, a 35,000-gallon storage tower and fire hydrants also were installed in 1914. On Jan. 31, 1918, an application was filed by the Platte Valley Power Company of Omaha to construct a transmission line from Yutan to Mead. A new bank opened, Mead's first concrete elevator was built and several school districts consolidated by 1919.

The population was 329 in 1920 and in 1921, a two-story brick school was built and the new Mead consolidated District #72 opened. A volunteer fire department was organized in 1928 with 15 firefighters. Before, the village only had a two-wheel cart and a box of equipment manned by the citizens to fight fires. A new fire alarm siren was installed in 1929. By 1930, the population was 310 and the power plant by 1936 had a capacity of 80 kW using internal combustion power generation. The Mead Public Library was organized by the Mead Reading Club in 1937 and by 1940, the population decreased to 260. As the United States was planning on five ammunition depots/

ordinance plants in Nebraska, a \$25-million plant south of Mead was announced on 17,350 acres on 21 sections of farmland. As construction began, some 3,000 workers (100 from Barbados and Jamaica) descended on Mead and it was estimated the population jumped to 1,500. By Jan. 1, 1942, the building of the Ordinance Plant began at an estimated cost of \$2.15 million. Due to stress on the outhouses, 80 more were added to Main Street after residents began locking their outhouses due to all the new people in town for the construction project. About 1942, five new restaurants opened as area schools were being overwhelmed and 15 percent of the taxable tax base evaporated due to the Ordinance Plant removing acres of land from the tax rolls. In September 1943, production began at the Ordinance Plant, which was operated by the Firestone Rubber Company for the U.S. government in the production of bombs and ordinance toward World War II. A concrete block fire hall was erected in 1946 and a Dodge Pumper truck was purchased. After 1945, the Ordinance

Plant reopened as a fertilizer production facility by Spencer Chemical Company.

The population by 1950 decreased to 388 and the Ordinance Plant was reactivated for the Korean War, again using 3,162 employees. The University of Nebraska Lincoln (UNL) by 1953 was looking at the Mead and Hastings plants for agricultural use to expand its research (experimental farm campuses). Natural gas arrived in Mead by 1954, which was supplied by Central Electric & Gas Company with 1956 rates at: first 500 cubic feet (cuft) or less at \$1.50, next 1,500 cuft at \$1.20, next 3,000 cuft at \$1, next 5,000 cuft at \$0.85, and the next 40,000 cuft at \$0.75. A municipal sanitary sewer disposal and collection system was installed in 1955 and maintained from a tax levy with a sewer charge of \$2 per month by 1956. The village water plant in 1956 had 145 meters in service with a deposit of \$2.50. Water rates were first 1,000 gallons at \$1.25 minimum with next 4,000 gallons at \$0.25, with excess

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Nebraska utilities history – Mead

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at \$0.15 per 1,000 gallons. The electric distribution system in 1956 consisted of one-and-a-half miles of lines, 140 electric meters owned by the village and supplied by East Nebraska Public Power District at the kilowatt hour (kWh) wholesale rate of \$0.0165. The meter deposit was \$12.50, cost of street lighting was \$400 and the cost of pumping water was \$150 per month. Electric rates were: first 5 kWh at \$0.20, next 25 kWh at \$0.05, next 70 kWh at \$0.025, and excess at \$0.02, with a \$1 minimum. Churches were at a \$0.02 flat rate and the power rates were first 20 kWh at \$0.10, next 180 kWh at \$0.05, next 800 kWh at \$0.03, and excess at \$0.025 and a minimum of \$2. By 1958, the electric distribution system had 130 meters in service and electric rates increased to a kWh wholesale cost of \$0.0175. The cost of street lighting was \$600 and the cost of pumping water at \$0.02 or \$106.20 per month. Electric rates were: first 5 kWh at a \$1 minimum, next 25 kWh at \$0.05, next 170 kWh at \$0.03, with excess at \$0.02, minimum \$1. Commercial rates were: first 20 kWh at \$2, next 180 kWh at \$0.05, next 800 kWh at \$0.03, excess at \$0.025 and a minimum of \$2. Power rates were first 200 kWh at \$0.05, next 800 kWh at @ \$0.03, excess at \$0.025, minimum of \$0.50 kilovolt amps (kVA) or \$1.25 demand, whichever is greatest. The municipal electric distribution system by 1960 had two-and-a-half miles of lines, 155 meters in service and provided current at the wholesale kWh rate \$0.015. The cost of street lighting was \$800 and the

cost of pumping water was \$0.02 per kWh.

The population increased to 380 by 1956 and then to 428 by 1960 as the sewer system was maintained from a tax levy of 5.29 mills along with a sewer charge of \$2 per month. Water rates were at \$1.25 minimum for 1,000 gallons (gals.) and at \$0.25 per 1,000 for next 4,000 gals, and \$0.15 per 1,000 on all over 5,000 gallons. About 5,000 acres of Ordinance Plant land was sold in 1961 for \$195 an acre with 9,000 acres (464 buildings) and transferred to the University for agriculture research in 1962. The fire department had 32 volunteer firefighters in 1962 and the first village road paving project was in progress with the two main entrance roads paved in 1963. The natural gas system was privately owned in 1962 and the municipal electric system was supplied by East Nebraska Public Power District at the kWh wholesale cost of \$0.0152. Electric rates were: first 100 kWh at \$0.04, next 100 kWh at \$0.02. Commercial rates were: first 20 kWh at \$0.10, next 180 kWh at \$0.05, next 800 kWh at \$0.03, next 800 kWh at \$0.025. Power rates were per one horsepower at \$0.50. Voters of the village approved the sale of the electric distribution system in 1965 for \$26,733.46 plus \$1,145.02. By July 20, the electric distribution system was owned by Omaha Public Power District for \$27,878. A three-door metal Centennial Community building was erected in 1965 with the Mead Rural Fire Department No. 8 contributing \$8,000.

The population was estimated at 479 by 1967 and the census

recorded 428 by 1970. An election held in May 1972 resulted in a new junior-senior high school built (1973-74). Paving projects were started, the population was estimated at 488 (1974) and on Nov. 17, 1975, a public library housed in the formed fire hall was dedicated.

The population was 506 by 1980 and work progressed on the wastewater treatment facility. From 1982-83, the natural gas system was operated by Cengas then from 1984-93, operated by Minnegasco. The natural gas system was operated by Peoples Natural Gas in 1994. A new village office building was erected in 1999 (\$130,000), combining the police, utility and village offices. The wastewater treatment facility consisted of an activated sludge extended aeration system designed for 0.068 million gallons per day (mgd) with aerobic digester sludge treatment.

The population increased from 513 in 1990 to 564 in 2000 with ground water concerns addressed in 1989, which resulted in the former ordinance grounds to become a superfund site in 1990 due to RDX explosives and trinitroethylene contamination in the soil. A federal review deemed the area safe on June 2014, but with continued monitoring until 2045. By 2000, the village considered a rate increase of \$2 per user, increasing unit costs from \$1.10 per unit to \$1.25 per unit. The increase was for a new water storage tower and a water treatment facility estimated at \$1.1 million. The natural gas system was operated by Aquila from 2003-2007 when the Aquila

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Nebraska utilities history – Mead

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property was acquired by Black Hills Gas Company. Water and sewer hookup fees amounted to \$50 each and in 2010, the village received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) of \$18,000 for a water system study. In January 2017, a \$3.3 million water project with \$165,000 provided by the village added a water treatment plant (treat arsenic) and enlargement of the water storage tower to meet the daily demands. The village acquired a \$2,425,000 loan at 1.875 percent interest.

By 2019, the village was operating a manganese/iron treatment filtration facility which uses potassium permanganate with the city of Wahoo providing water service as the certified operator.

Today, Mead has a population

of 569, has been an incorporated village for 134 years and a member of the Utilities Section since 1990. The village operates a public library and maintains a village hall, a water distribution system with treatment facility, a wastewater collection and disposal facility, paved streets, along with a park with a shelter and playground equipment. Law enforcement is provided by the Madison County Sheriff, natural gas by Black Hills Energy and the electric service is provided by Omaha Public Power District (OPPD).

Resources: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1956, 1958, 1960, 1962, 1964-75, 1977-87, 1990-2019; Nebraska Municipal Review Magazine, 1925, 1965, 2010; Mead Centennial, Mead Nebraska, 1877-1977; Sargent

Leader newspaper, 1913; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Mead Internet Website, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2017-2019; Lincoln Journal Star Newspaper, 2004, 2007; Nebraska Our Towns...Central Northeast, 1990; Maps Tell Nebraska's History, 1991; NHHS Website, 2000; Past and Present of Saunders County Nebraska, 1915; Nebraska State Gazetteer & Business Directory, 1890-91; Andreas History of the State of Nebraska, 1882; Nebraska Blue Book, 1915, 1928, 1942, 1946, 1978; Wikipedia website, 2017-2019; The "Auburn Granger" newspaper, 1913-15; Eleventh Annual Report of the Nebraska State Railway Commissioner, 1918; and Directory of Electric Utilities in the United States, Federal Power Commission, 1941.

New Youth Sports Guidelines for June

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- If game/match is held at a facility that has a capacity of 500 or more individuals, (1,000 or more in counties over 500,000 population) shall follow reopen-

ing plans submitted, reviewed and approved by the Local Health Department by the facility.

- Teams to play next must be provided designated areas for

player warm-ups that provide for necessary physical/social distancing.

- Post-game handshakes or interaction between teams are prohibited.

Snowball Wastewater Conferences scheduled

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

Jan. 27-28, 2021
Jan. 26-27, 2022
Jan. 25-26, 2023

Digital Utilities Section Newsletter

The March, April and the May 2020 issue of the *Utilities Section Newsletter* was sent in email (digital) form only. A copy was sent to all clerks and municipal officials' emails in our database.

Hopefully, everyone was forwarded the newsletter via email or a printed copy within your

municipality/company. A few years ago, we sent out a survey to see how many members wanted to receive the newsletter in digital form rather than paper copy.

If you are interested in receiving an email copy rather than a printed paper copy, please send your email address to brendah@lonm.org.

Nebraska utilities history – Auburn

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*

Auburn is in Nemaha County, which was formed in 1855. Nemaha and Johnson Counties were initially a part of Forney County. In the late 1850s, some 40 acres were platted (in the northeast part of Auburn today) called St. George. On Aug. 28, 1858, an attempt to move the county seat failed with a vote of 203 for Brownville and 164 for St. George. By 1867, the community of Sheridan was established on the stage line and on Aug. 21, 1867, a post office was established. The community was surveyed as a 160-acre site on Oct. 19, 1868, just west of St. George.

Settlers were moving into the area and that year, all the school land within the county was appraised (\$7-\$10/acre) and offered for sale at auction. By November 1874, school sessions were held and the population was 40 by 1876. The community of Calvert was platted July 1, 1881, when

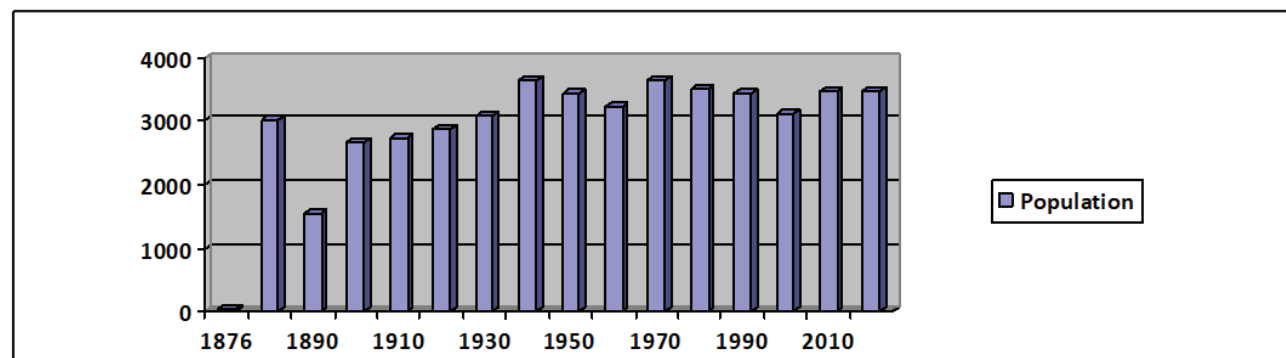
the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad was built along the “Kings Trail” from Nemaha City and a railroad depot site as selected. In October 1881, a post office was established as Calvert. This was located two-and-a-half miles south of Sheridan, which by 1882, expanded the community limits to about 640 acres. Following discussions to merge Sheridan and Calvert to acquire the county seat, the two communities incorporated May 1, 1882, as Auburn. The Sheridan Post Office became North Auburn and the Calvert Post Office became South Auburn on June 8, 1882. On Feb. 27, 1883, Auburn became the Nemaha County seat. On Feb. 1, 1886, a post office was established as Auburn named after Auburn, NY. East of Auburn was known as “Half-Breed Tract,” which was reservation set aside for offspring of Native Americans and traders. By 1886, the first high school building was completed with the first graduating class in 1889. The population was said to



Auburn BPW Building. File photo.

have reached 3,000 by 1887, but this number may have included the entire county. Some of the businesses included four weekly newspapers, a large steam powered roller flour mill, six churches, First National Bank, Carson National Bank, eight general stores, five drug stores, two large hotels (The Talmage and The Holdrege), three butcher shops, a fence factory, two opera houses, five restaurants and three livery stables (no saloons). The tree-shaded land

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Nebraska utilities history – Auburn

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on the north side of the village was sold by Nixon and Howe for \$5,000 to be used as a city park. By 1888, Auburn was incorporated as a city of the second class while the local brickyard was producing 25,000 bricks per day. The 1890 census listed the population as 1,537, but by 1899, the population was estimated to be 3,500. By this time, some of the businesses included three lumberyards, two grain elevators, two flour mills, a creamery, three churches, an Opera House, a railroad depot, nine hotels (Auburn, Central, Kern, Midland, Missouri Pacific, Park, Talmage, Union and City Hotel), and a South Auburn Cypress Tank manufacturing facility. There was a city hall, a courthouse, two public schools (Antioch, Athens) and a high school. The waterworks consisted of a 500-barrel tank at the intersection of First Street and Courthouse Avenue with a two-inch pipeline, four hydrants and supplied by pumps powered by a gasoline engine. A windmill, pump and water tank also were located on the courthouse block just

southwest of the building. Streets were unpaved, lighting was provided by oil, and fire protection included a hook and ladder cart housed at city hall.

The population by 1900 was 2,664 and a decision was made to build a limestone courthouse on "Court House Square" using native rock from Rohrs. The cornerstone was laid for the Nemaha County Courthouse on May 25, 1900, and completed in December. By 1901, moves were made to organize a local company to construct and operate an electric light plant. Stock in the company was sold with the plant to furnish light at practically the cost of service. The waterworks by March 1906 consisted of a 500-gallon barrel tank at the intersection of First Street and Courthouse Avenue supplied by a gasoline engine and windmill. Gravity pressure amounted to 14 pounds per square inch (psi) when the tank was full. The distribution system consisted of 800 feet of two-inch mains and four, two-inch hydrants.

By 1906, the Auburn Mutual Light and Pump Company was

operating at W. 4th (W. 16th) and South P (South 7th) Streets on the southeast corner. The facility had a 115-horsepower (HP) engine (steam-coal), a 75-kilowatt (kW) Dynamo with two Fairbanks-Morse pumps (5¼ x 3½ x 5 each). No public lighting was available. St. Joseph's Catholic school was in session and some businesses included the Auburn Cannery, a creamery/produce business, a brickyard, corn meal mill, four hotels and a hospital. No formal fire department had been formed by 1906, but fire protection consisted of one hook-and-ladder wagon with 32 feet of ladders with the alarm consisting of church bells and a whistle. On March 2, 1909, a public vote approved bonds for the construction of a waterworks and a sewer system. Five to six wells were along 9th Street and four, six, eight and 10-inch water mains and 82 fire hydrants were installed along with a water tower on West 23rd Street.

In 1910, the population was 2,729 and bonds for \$12,000 (or \$17,000) were voted on in a

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Nebraska utilities history – Auburn

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special election in October 1913 for the installation of a municipal power generation plant along with enlarging the present water system. A 200,000-gallon clear well reservoir was built at 9th and G Streets in 1914 along with wells being drilled. The municipal water works project for \$54,000 with water rates on a graduated scale with \$0.50 per 1,000 gallons minimum. The Auburn Mutual Lighting and Power Company power plant (1915) consisted of 250 HP boilers, 240 HP steam engines, 50 HP gas engines with a generator rating of 150 kilovolt Amps (kVA), a light rate of \$0.15 per kWh and a power rate of \$0.05-\$0.08 per kWh. The municipal generation plant had a 250 HP boiler, a 70 HP steam engine with a generator rating of 100 kVA. The population by 1920 was 2,863 and in 1921, concrete footings/foundation were laid for new ornamental gates at Sheridan Cemetery. The water system in 1925 consisted of five wells pumping water to a 200,000-gallon storage tank then to the elevated water tower with a pumping station and 12 miles of

mains. There were two fire departments with 50 volunteer firefighters at north and south sites using a siren and phone/electric activation alarms. The Auburn Machine Works was founded in 1928, the world's largest manufacturer of earth trenching equipment. The public water distribution system in 1928 had rates of \$2.90 every three months.

In 1930, the population was 3,068, a local canning company was in operation and by September, a natural gas distribution system was under construction. A swimming pool was constructed in 1931 for about \$2,500 (WPA project). On Feb. 25, 1935, Ordinance #593 was passed to purchase trees for Legion Memorial Park. A Public Works Association (WPA) paving project was proposed in 1936 with 80 blocks paved in 1937 using an estimated 15,497 cubic yards (cu yd) of stone (quarried, crushed and delivered), 10,868 sacks of cement, 170,469 gallons of tar via bids accepted from Kearns Construction. Two power plants were operating in 1936 with the Auburn municipal power plant having a

capacity of 75 kW capacity by internal combustion. The power generation facility, owned by the Western Power Service Company, had a total capacity of 960 kW with 480 kW of steam and 480 by internal combustion. On Oct. 15, the rates were lowered by Western Public Service Company, which was its third reduction of rates in the last six years. Electric rates were: for the first 40 kilowatt hours (kWh) at \$0.02 per kWh and over at \$0.03 per kWh. On May 6, 1937, condemnation was filed by the city to purchase the power plant from Western Public Service Company. A hearing was held June 28, 1937, along with a vote to purchase the private power plant under law of eminent domain. On Nov. 7, 1938, the citizens voted (3-1) to purchase the electric system. On Jan. 1, 1939, the Auburn City Council passed a resolution establishing the Auburn Board of Public Works. The city acquired the electric system from the Western Public Service Company for \$352,000. This included a power plant housing three engine generators with a capacity

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Future Meter Conferences

The dates for future Meter Conferences have been scheduled and contracts signed with the **Kearney Holiday Inn**. Please mark your calendar with

the Meter Conferences:
Feb. 11-12, 2020
Feb. 9-10, 2021
Feb. 8-9, 2022
Feb. 7-8, 2023

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Nebraska utilities history – Auburn

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of 1,207 kilowatts serving 1,604 customers. Another 0.7-megawatt diesel generation unit was installed in 1939 at the power plant.

The population in 1940 was 3,639 and bonds of \$34,000 were issued for maintaining and extending the water system along with a \$50,600 WPA grant in 1941. A 1940 water study done by E. H. Dunmire, a Consulting Engineer from Lincoln, determined for the city to secure an ample supply of wholesome water a new well field needed to be developed in the Little Nemaha River Valley north of town. Since this new supply's quality had considerable iron and manganese concentration it would need to be filtered. A water treatment plant was built to remove iron and manganese from the wells with a capacity of 600 gallons per minute (gpm). It consisted of a 15,000-gallon detention tank, two 9 feet (ft) by 12 ft gravity sand filters, a 2,000 gpm backwash pump, chemical feeders and miscellaneous associated equipment. Three wells were located along the west side of U.S. Highway 75 north of town (drilled in 1941), along with a pipeline to the filtration plant, which consisted

of two sand filters and chlorination with a capacity of 0.65 million gallons daily or 450 gallons per minute (gpm). In 1944, the city leased 80 acres of land (10-year leases) two-miles east of Auburn for use as an airport. New engines were installed in 1947 and 1949 at the power plant adding 2.0 megawatts of capacity.

By 1950, the population was 3,422 and the city purchased 80 acres of airport land. In 1951, a forced draft aerator was added to the water filtration plant to improve filtration along with a new pump station. In 1953, the Auburn Machine Works Company acquired the Miller-Knuth Manufacturing Company, which manufactured small power hack saws. In 1955, more land was purchased for the airport, which was being operated via contract. One street paving district was under construction by 1956 with another being discussed. The public-owned electric system consisted of a generation facility, a 2,712-kW capacity with another 2,141 kW being installed, 235-miles of distribution lines and 2,325 meters in service. The cost of current for pumping water was: \$0.02 kW with a meter deposit of

\$10. Electric rates were: residential – first 40-kilowatt hour (kWh) at \$0.07, next 110 kWh at \$0.03, next 150 kWh at \$0.025, and the excess at \$0.02 with a \$1 minimum; commercial/light power – first 100 kWh at \$0.07, next 200 kWh at \$0.05, next 200 kWh at \$0.04, next 2,500 at \$0.03, excess at \$0.025 with a \$1 minimum; power – \$0.03 kW plus a minimum charge per HP connected. The electric generation system also furnished power to four other towns. From 1956-58, solid waste collection was provided by a private company saw rates increase from \$1.25-\$1.50 for residential and from \$4.50-\$5 for commercial. The natural gas system is supplied by Peoples Natural Gas with rates of: first 500 cubic feet (cuft) at \$1, next 1,500 cuft at \$1 per 1,000, 3,000 cuft at \$0.85, 45,000 cuft at \$0.65, 50,000 cuft at \$0.60 per 1,000 with excess over 100,000 cuft at \$0.55 per 1,000 and a minimum fee of \$1. In 1958, the public-owned sewer system was maintained by 0.2 tax levy.

By 1960, the population was 3,229, the natural gas system was supplied by Peoples Natural Gas Company and two street paving district projects (totaling eight and-one-half blocks) were underway. A private company provided collector service (1960-62) with rates of \$1.50 per month for residential and for business from \$2.75-\$20 per month. A wastewater treatment plant project was being discussed in 1962 with council approval in 1965. In 1963, plans were underway for a wellfield at the airport with an estimate of

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Nebraska Breaktime Trivia “Just For Fun”

Q-1. How many museums are in Nebraska?

Q-2. What city in Nebraska has a park, which is the city's name spelled backwards?

Q-3. How many incorporated villages/cities start with the letter “F”?

Answers on page 20.

Nebraska utilities history – Auburn

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\$4,746.03. Additional land was purchased for Legion Park in 1965. A project was planned in 1966 to construct a seven-story federally financed low-rent apartment complex (age 60 and older). An activated sludge wastewater treatment plant also was built in 1966 for \$173,000. The city received \$52,170 in federal funds for construction of the new plant with engineering by Kirkham Michael of Lincoln. Three lift stations were built in the late 1960s

for the wastewater collection system. Bids on a new dual-fuel engine generator (2,650 kW) for the power plant was awarded in 1965 to Fairbanks-Morse for \$367,125. In 1967, initial startup was for the new engine with a nameplate capacity of 2.8 megawatts. Also that year, the Crest View Addition was developed on the south edge of town. There were 105 lots available for building houses and an area for a new shopping center. In 1968, the water and wastewater departments were put under the

direction of the Board of Public Works.

The population in 1970 was 3,650 and by 1971, plans were approved for a Utilities “Public Works” Office building for \$55,000, which would include a drive-in window. In October 1972, a 1.5 million gallon ground-level concrete reservoir was built near 25th and U Streets, which connected to the grid system through a 16-inch transmission main. In October, the new res-

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Nebraska utilities history – Auburn

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ervoir was in service and at that time, the distribution system was divided into two pressure zones: the north half by gravity pressure and the south half pressurized by four new Layne high-service booster pumps.

New, larger distribution mains were installed and the old water storage tower was demolished. A Cooper-Bessemer LSV-12 diesel unit was installed in 1972 at the power plant with initial startup in 1973. By 1974, the city was fluoridating the water. An inventory of trees was taken in the community in 1974 with a tree board started by 1975. Auburn is listed as the oldest Tree City in Nebraska (1976-present time). In 1979, a water main project consisted of installing larger mains and looping dead ends. A new wellfield with six new wells and 12-inch transmission lines were completed in 1981. The natural gas system was operated by Peoples Natural Gas and supplied by Northern. A new unit was added at the power plant in 1982. The wastewater treatment plant had a piping modification with the two contact zones in a treatment tank with a peak of 2.2 million gallons per day (mgd) or 1,500 gallons per minute (gpm). In January 1987, the service center and warehouse were completed, allowing for inventory storage, vehicle, and equipment shelter, along with shop work areas and offices. The electric department supplied retail electric service to Brownville, Johnson, Nemaha, Howe and Rohrs. In 1989, upgrades were made at the power plant, an additional well and two filters were added to the water

filtering plant which doubled the capacity from 600 to 1,200 gpm. Old six and eight-inch water mains were replaced with 12-inch from F to N Streets along with new fire hydrants as part of the U.S. 136 rebuild project.

The population increased from 3,482 in 1980 to 3,443 in 1990 and the city began using the "Barry the Bear" logo. The water system consisted of 164 fire hydrants and serving 1,656 water customers with an average water consumption (1999) of 700,000 gpd. The wastewater treatment facility is an activated sludge, contact stabilization, aerobic digester with a capacity of 370,000 gpd with the present load at 235,000 gpd serving 1,570 customers. By 1997, the power plant had six generating units with a capacity of 18,860 kilowatts along with 308 miles of primary distribution lines with about 2,791 customers in Brownville and Johnson along with Richardson and Johnson Counties. A new public library was built in the 1990s and by 1994, began marketing natural gas service with the Board of Public Works providing natural gas to an average of 100 customers. The gas system was operated/supplied by Peoples Natural Gas and solid waste collection was provided by private collector companies. A new swimming pool was built in 1994.

In 2000, 12-inch mains were installed from 9th to 23rd Streets along with new fire hydrants as part of a U.S. Highway 75 rebuild project. The power plant had six engines with a capacity of 15 megawatts and the city maintained 31 miles of streets



New Filtering Plant. Photo provided by Ken Swanson.

with 28 miles hard surfaced with concrete, brick, or asphalt (90 percent paved and curbed). An area at the wastewater treatment facility was constructed in 2001 for flood protection, which raised the site about five feet above the 100-year flood plain. In 2003, two new clear wells were built with a total capacity of 400,000 gallons, replacing a 200,000-gallon clear well that was built in 1914 for \$578,230. By 2004, the water system had 11 wells (avg. depth 45 ft.) with a capacity of 1,728,000 gpd, filtered, disinfected and fluoridated with the average cost in 2003 at \$3.41 per 1,000 gallons. The distribution system had 179 fire hydrants and the consumption was 700,000 gpd with a peak demand at 1,181,700 million gpd and a storage capacity of 1.9 million gallons. The approximate usage in 2005 amounted to 128 gallons per person per day and the system now flushes 182 fire hydrants.

The city was supplied natural gas at 50 pounds per square inch (psi) pressure from the Northern Natural Gas Pipeline Company and operated by Aquila Inc. (2006). In 2008, the Aquila

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Nebraska utilities history – Auburn

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properties were acquired by Black Hills Corp., which has operated the natural gas system since. The electric system was a wholesale customer of Nebraska Public Power District and in 2008, the BPW replaced the "Barry the Bear" with the new water drop/lightning bolt logo.

The Auburn wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) was issued a new discharge permit (2007) from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality with stricter discharge limits and requiring disinfection of treatment plant effluent. Following a plant evaluation, it was decided to design and construct a new facility to handle the changing requirements.

Upgrading and constructing of the new WWTF began in 2009, which was to include two 40 ft. clarifiers, two new 544-million gallon (mg) aeration basins, two new 1,100 gpm pumps, two new 500 gpm pumps, four sludge drying (reed) beds, and a new operations and control building for \$4.9 million. About \$4 million was a loan and \$2 million was provided by a grant for upgrades in the sewer collection system. That year, two new lift stations were installed and replaced about 1,150 ft. of existing eight-inch clay pipe with 10-inch HDPE pipe. In addition, some 250 ft. of 21-inch, 100 ft. of 18-inch and 4,000 ft. of six and 12-inch PVC pipe was installed. A new sewer line was installed from the plant to 6th and N Streets, then south to 14th and Q Streets. This section of the line had been overloaded and was in poor condition, which allowed groundwater to infiltrate

into the sewer line increasing treatment costs. The new line allows for increased sewer flows from the west edge of the community where the town is seeing some growth and development. In the summer of 2009, due to three of the 10 municipal wells testing directly under the influence of surface water, the community was given 18 months to comply with current requirements of a higher level of filtration and disinfection. Due to the plant's design and condition, it was decided to construct a new facility. Planning began in 2009 with construction starting in October.

On April 20, 2011, trial runs at the new water treatment plant started and on May 5, 2011, the old filtering plant was officially taken offline and the new plant was put into service. The new plant located at the corner of 9th and F Streets was a major improvement in operational efficiency. Filter backwash supply was recycled. Before, the filters were washed weekly with rinse water wasted, over 1,248,000 gallons of water a year. With the use of vfd controls on the well pumps, flows can match a preset gpm flow at the plant, which eases control of chemical doses and other operational functions. The new plant had a rated capacity of 2,100 gpm, compared to the former plant capacity of 1,200 gpm, with room for growth to 2,800 gpm. The existing clear wells were used by changing their operation. Flows were split to allow for the new necessary required contact time of the treated water. The new facility was fully automated and saved the city operational costs by not hav-

ing to be manned 24 hours a day. The population increased from 3,125 in 2000 to 3,460 in 2010 and the electric department installed new LED lighting in 2011. In 2016, a new library addition on the east of the library was built, adding 1,090 square feet made possible by Dorothy Blount memorial funding. The water system has a treatment facility, 10 active, two inactive municipal wells, 190 fire hydrants, and 30.5 miles of water lines, supplying water service to approximately 1,600 customers. The sanitary collections system has about 27.7 miles of collection piping with five lift stations. In 2016, approximately one mile of 12-inch distribution main was installed from the reservoir, then around the western perimeter of the city, which now has approximately 32 miles of pipeline in the distribution system and some 200 fire hydrants. The Board of Public Works supplies electricity to 2,930 customers in Auburn, Brownville, Johnson, Nemaha and surrounding rural areas (2017). The power plant contains six engine generators with a capacity of 18,860 kilowatts capable of covering the system's peak load, however the Board purchased power from Western Area Power Administration and Nebraska Public Power District. The electric system has approximately 310 miles of distribution lines with distribution voltages of 4,160 and 12,470, as well as transmission voltage of 69,000. The Board currently employs 26 full-time employees and a board of five local citizens. The water system has 10 active municipal wells, 1,403 residential and 306

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Nebraska utilities history – Auburn

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commercial customers metered and three industrial customers serving a population of about 3,460 (2018).

Auburn has been incorporated for 138 years and a city of the second class since 1888. Auburn, to this day, supports two “downtown” areas, one being the courthouse square (former Calvert) which also now has the Crest View business district, and the other in north Auburn (former Sheridan). In 2019, the BPW celebrated 80 years of operating the power plant and electric distribution system, along with 50 years of operating the water and wastewater system. Auburn has been a long-time member of the League of Nebraska Municipalities and the Utilities Section.

Auburn has received “Best Tasting” water awards three times, two with AWWA-NS for best treated division and the Nebraska Rural Water Association best

overall and placing 5th nationally.

A special thanks to **Dave Hunter** and **Ken Swanson** for providing Sanborn maps, articles and historical data on Auburn’s utilities.

References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1956, 1958, 1960, 1962, 1964-75, 1977-87, 1990-1997, 1998-2019; Municipal Review Magazine, 1928, 1946, 1972; Pages of History Nebraska High Schools, 1884-1994; Water Resources of Nebraska, 1936; Perkey’s Nebraska Place Names, 1995; Nebraska Place Names, 1925, 1960; The Ansley Herald, 1930; Nebraska’s Forest Service Newsletter, April 2002; Public Power Magazine, Vol. 51, Number 1, January-February 1993; Department of Energy Website, 2004; Lincoln Journal Star Newspaper, 2005, 2007; Sargent Leader newspaper, 1913; An Informal History of Nemaha County (1854-1967), 1967; Nemaha County Herald, 1935;

A History of Nemaha County, 1987; The Granger Newspaper, 1913-15; Auburn website, 2004-2010; Nebraska Our Towns... East Southeast, 1992; Maps Tell a Story, 1991; NEDED Website, 2005; Wikipedia website, 2018; Andrea’s History of the State of Nebraska, 1882; Nemaha County Website, 2009; Nemaha County Immigration, 1887; Who’s Who in Nebraska, 1940; Nebraska State Gazetteer & Business Directory, 1890-91; Electric Power Development in the United States, Dept. of Agriculture, January 1916; Department of Labor and Department of Compensation, 1917-18; Municipal weekly Journal, July-December Vol. XXXV, December 1913; Nebraska Blue Book, 1928, 1946, Municipal Journal and Public Works, Vol. XLVII, November 29, 1919, Sanborn Maps, July 1899, March 1906, July 1913, October 1925 and the 2019 80th PBW Celebration handout.

Reminder: Backflow Program update

Did your system remember to send the backflow surveys and have you received them back from the customer? Once you get the surveys returned, make sure to review them and record the items that need to be followed up on, properly filed and reported.

Besides surveys sent and returned, remember to check that all testers have tested all devices in the water system and the required reports are turned

in to the water system. Be sure to provide public education information to your customers, which is required by the State of Nebraska. Some water systems include backflow information in with the billing envelopes or articles/notices in newsletters, the local newspaper or on the radio. Posting also may be made on the village/city websites, Facebook) and the county or chamber of commerce websites. I have seen some posted in the U.S. post

office.

It is recommended to use a variety of avenues for posting the information as not everyone visits the sites or reads newspapers. Another option is having testers give out brochures with backflow information when they make visits to the homes/businesses to test or repair backflow devices. Backflow-related items are the most noted deficiencies listed on the state’s sanitary surveys performed by the field specialists.

Classifieds

POSITIONS.

Utilities Lineman. The City of Chappell is accepting applications for the position of an additional Utilities Lineman. This position works under the Utilities Foreman and in conjunction with current lineman. Assists in the operation and maintenance of the city owned electric distribution and water system. Applicant must be willing to obtain Grade 4 water operator license. Prefer electrical experience, but will train the right person. Wage is based on qualifications. Quality benefits package. Application can be obtained at PO Box 487, 757 2nd Street, Chappell, NE 69129 or by email to chappellcityhall@hotmail.com. Website is www.chappellne.org. Inquiries can be sent to 308-874-2401 or faxed to 308-874-2508. EOE. Position will be open until filled.

Maintenance. The Village of Cody is accepting applications for a full-time maintenance position to oversee the Village's maintenance needs. Duties include oversight of water and wastewater system, streets, snow removal, equipment care, weekly trash pick-up and disposal, up-keep of

village public areas (park, ball field, arena) and some seasonal requirements (Christmas decorating, 4th of July, etc.). The successful applicant must be able to obtain a grade 4 water license (we will provide training to right applicant if not licensed at hiring). A valid Nebraska driver's license is a must and a CDL will be required if hired. Wage is commensurate with experience. North central Nebraska is a great place to live for the outdoor person. We are a small town of about 150 population located in the Sandhills of Cherry County. The high school and middle school are located in Cody and the grade school is located nearby; together they form the Cody Kilgore Unified Schools. We have a grocery, restaurant, banking, post office, fuel, repair and service shops as well as other services available. We are situated about half-way in-between Valentine and Gordon on Highway 20. Applications are available by calling the clerk at 402-823-4118 or writing to Village of Cody, PO Box 118, Cody, NE 69211. Applications will be accepted until position is filled. EOE.



Street Superintendent. The City of Seward is accepting applications for a Street Superintendent. Salary is \$4,664-\$5,893/month. Supervises and provides administrative oversight and direction in planning and coordinating the operation and maintenance of the Street Division, Recycling Center, Burn Site, and Compost Site. Salaried/exempt. Physical requirements. Valid driver's license required. Additional requirements listed in job description. Applications accepted until filled. Must meet minimum requirements. Full job description and application: www.CityofSewardNE.gov. Seward City Hall, 537 Main St.; PO Box 38; Seward, NE 68434 (402-643-2928). Reasonable accommodations available for persons needing assistance in completing

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Classifieds

Continued from page 17
application and should be made at time of application. All positions of employment with the City of Seward are subject to a Veteran's Preference. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Electrical Department Foreman. The City of Sutton, Nebraska (pop. 1502) is accepting applications for a position of full-time Electrical Department Foreman with a pay range between \$28-\$35 per hour DOQ. This is a full-time position which requires knowledge and training of electrical distribution with a preference given for in-field working background of 3-5 years of lineman experience. Preference is also given to applicants with leadership training and/or supervisory experience. The applicant for this position would need to perform skilled line work in

the operation, construction maintenance, and repair of overhead and underground electrical distribution systems. Experience in construction and maintenance of overhead and underground, primary/secondary is desired. Having experience as a certified Journeyman Lineman is a preference for this position. Education may substitute for some experience. The department is made up of one other lineman. The foreman position will oversee the daily activities and long-term planning of the Electric (Light) department and direct planning for upkeep of the system. Full benefits include health insurance, H.S.A., pension contribution, sick and vacation time, comp. time, holiday time, uniforms, etc. Wage rates are negotiable, but compensatory with qualifications, ex-

perience and leadership abilities. Resume, cover letter and application may be sent to: Marla Newman, City Clerk, PO Box 430, Sutton, NE 68979-0430. A complete job description and application can be obtained by calling 402-773-4225 or by e-mailing cityofsutton@gmail.com. Sutton is an equal opportunity employer. Position open until filled.

Electric Distribution Lineman. The City of Sutton, Nebraska is accepting applications for an Electric Distribution Lineman. This is a full-time position which requires knowledge and training of electrical distribution. The individual for the position will perform skilled line work in the operation, construction maintenance, and repair of overhead and underground electrical distribution systems. Experience in construction and maintenance of overhead and underground, primary/secondary is desired, or department foreman will train for the right individual with appropriately completed credentials. Education may substitute for some experience. Full benefits including health insurance, H.S.A., pension contribution, vacation, comp. time, uniforms,

etc. Lineman will work under our electric utility foreman. Wage rates are negotiable, but compensatory with experience. The average wage rate with multiple years of experience is \$26/hour. Resume, cover letter and application may be sent to: Marla Newman, City Clerk, PO Box 430, Sutton, NE 68979-0430. A complete job description and application can be obtained by calling 402-773-4225 or by e-mailing cityofsutton@gmail.com. Sutton is an equal opportunity employer. Position open until filled.

FOR SALE.

The Village of Marquette has the following items for sale:

- Wisconsin Air Cooled motor. VG4D 154 Cubic Inches 37 HP;
 - GM Motor- propane, 3.0 L 2.2 Hours;
 - 125 Gallon Propane tank, 5 feet long 24" diameter; and
 - Mosquito Sprayer for parts use only, sprayer for sale only trailer not included - Clarke Covgar 8HP Briggs & Stratton Engine Purchased 7-23-97.
- [Click here](#) for pictures of the items. Send questions and/or bid(s) to Haley Bamesberger, Marquette Clerk/Treasurer, at villofmarquette@hamilton.net.

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Basic tornado safety

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

The months of April, May and June typically have more tornados than the other nine months of the year, but tornados can occur in any month. A tornado is a rotating funnel of air which extends from the cloud to ground. Tornados can travel for miles at speeds which can exceed 250 mph. The swath of an average tornado travels about nine miles with a 200-yard width. Annually, some 800 tornados are sighted with about 80 fatalities and more than 1,600 injuries. Tornados often also are accompanied by severe thunderstorms. Conditions often include unseasonably humid, warm air mixing with a cold front. The swirl of winds are created when warm air rises as cooler air is sucked in from the sides. A rotation area begins to develop which may be four to five miles wide as a wall cloud appears with a strong rotation

developing into a funnel cloud. Nebraska is in an area often called tornado alley, which runs from the Dakotas down into Texas and east into Ohio.

Safety tips concerning tornados start with tuning into weather media reports via the radio, TV and the internet. A tornado watch means conditions are prime for severe weather and a tornado warning indicates a tornado has been sighted or indicated by Doppler radar.

If in a municipal office, shop, community center, fire hall or other solid building, know where to take cover. The safest place may be a basement if there is one. All municipal buildings should have a safe room or designated shelter. In some buildings, this may be the restrooms. Depending on the number of people in the building, there may not be enough room for everyone at the designated shelter. In that case, select the next safest area, void of windows on the

lower level, such as a hallway, closet or other area with support walls. Get under a heavy table or workbench and cover with a cushioning material such as blankets, coats and cushions or a mattress, if available. Avoid sheltering in a room where the floor above you houses heavy objects like copiers, presses, refrigerators, etc., that may fall through the floor onto you.

If caught outside in a park or ballfield area with no adequate shelter immediately available, take precautions to avoid trees, light/electric poles, vehicles or other items that may be thrown by the storm. Lie flat on the ground in a ditch, gully or swail (low spot) and cover your head. This is a good time to use that hard hat often found behind the seat of the truck. Individuals are often severely injured or killed by objects thrown about by the violent rotating winds of a tornado. Pictures of straw sticking into vehicle tires and wood poles are a sobering site when looking at the power and velocity of the winds in a tornadic environment.

The best tip is be **aware** and **alert** early and avoid putting yourself in an unsafe area where you are unable to take **adequate shelter**.

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 utilities is celebrating a 25, 50, 75, 100-year milestone, let the Utilities Section help you celebrate by recognizing it in the newsletter.

*Checkout the League's
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Be sure to "Like" us.*

Introduction to Nebraska cemeteries and seven common questions

By Rob Pierce, LNM Field Rep./
Training Coordinator

When was the first Nebraska cemetery established? In the Florence, Decatur, Nebraska City or Brownville area? The first non-native American (white men) buried in Nebraska were probably Spaniards killed by Pawnee on Aug. 14, 1720, near present-day Columbus. Is this where the first Nebraska cemetery is located? Or maybe near Manuel Lisa's trading post (1806) or the site of the

first permanent settlement (1820) called Bellevue. Or, was the first cemetery established in the Florence area where the Mormon Winter Quarters were located?

One source listed a cemetery established in Bellevue in 1856, the same year that Decatur had a cemetery board. Maybe we need to define what constitutes a cemetery. The new "Websters Dictionary" defines a cemetery as a graveyard, a burial ground or a Greek koimeterion (a sleeping room). As native Americans and early pioneers crossed or settled Nebraska's prairie landscape, cemeteries or burial grounds were developed as a product of the hardship of their venture.

In the United States, there are basically eight types of cemeteries recognized; **Church, Public, Customary, Private, Lodge, Ethnic, Family and Mass**. Public cemeteries can be further divided into National-Federal/Military, Municipal, Community Township, and County Cemeteries. On July 17, 1862, Congress enacted legislation authorizing the President to purchase "cemetery grounds" to be used as national cemeteries. Some 14 were established in the first year, many near battlefields where Civil War veterans were laid to rest. There are over 141 National Cemeteries across the United States with only one, Ft. McPherson, located in Nebraska until a second was proposed in Sarpy County dependent on the Veterans Administration altering or waiving the threshold limit.

How many cemeteries are in Nebraska? Where are they

located? So, who can answer the first question? My guess, about 1,700-2,000 are located in every municipality, township and county. The number isn't exact, but then neither are most of our records pertaining to their history. One answer for the second question is where people may have settled, lived or passed through and that covers a lot of area. It is somewhat like a story I once heard which goes as follows.

The tale of the cemetery maintenance, the week before Memorial Day involving the foreman, a veteran employee and the new hire. The Utility Superintendent gathered all three together in the shop. He stated that due to issues with public perception, only one person could be working in the cemetery to make preparations for Memorial Day. He then said that they could draw straws or he would ask each a question and whoever got the question wrong would have to work alone at the cemetery. The three employees chose the question option. The foreman was asked, "How many cemeteries are located in our town?", to which he answered "three," which was correct. The veteran employee was asked how many of the residents in the cemetery were dead. He thought for a second then answered "I don't know the exact number, but I think all of them," which was correct. The new hire excitedly awaited his question as he had evaded the trick question or so he thought. The Superintendent then asked, "Okay, continuing with the questions, can you

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"Just For Fun" Answers

A-1. 261 – according to the list on https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_museums_in_Nebraska.

A-2. Annevar Park in **Ravenna**.

A-3. 16 (**Fairbury, Fairfield, Fairmont, Falls City, Farnam, Farwell, Filley, Firth, Fordyce, Fort Calhoun, Foster, Franklin, Fremont, Friend, Fullerton**, and Funk) *Reference: 2020 Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials.*

(Utilities Section members in bold.)

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list the names of all those buried in the three cemeteries?" The new hire stared into space, shook his head and started for the cemetery.

Okay – bad story, but due to lost, missing, damaged, destroyed or just incomplete recordkeeping, it has left many residents and even some burial locations a mystery. Legislative action in 2005 (LB 211) created a Statewide Cemetery Registry to start Jan. 1, 2006. The Nebraska Historical Society was given the task of collecting data on all Nebraska cemeteries. The society likely contacted related families, funeral directors, cemetery boards, associations, monument companies, caretakers, lodges, churches, townships, counties and municipalities across the state to collect records on Nebraska cemeteries. Cemetery records can come in a variety of forms but today they are more commonly kept on computers using software like the "Cemetery Management Program" provided by NMPP Energy. Some information kept may include siting, land purchases, individual lots (layout), directory of residents, financing, insurance, along with operation and maintenance contracts and expenses.

What does it cost to own, operate and maintain a cemetery?

For most public works/utility departments, the operation and maintenance falls under their supervision. Operation usually starts with rules and regulations, which may cover items such as conduct, vehicle use, obstructions, excavations, codes, duties, permits,

handling of funds, sale of lots and maintenance. Maintenance may cover the roadways, trees/shrubs, fence/gates, sod/grass, statues or memorials, flags/poles, memorial and flower cleanup and many more miscellaneous projects. This work often is done by seasonal workers, many of whom are likely volunteers with some contract labor. Costs are mainly labor with some repair costs and utility expense such as lighting, wells, and electricity to pump water for irrigation.

Why are most cemeteries maintained by villages and cities? Some cemeteries were started by settlements which later became villages. Many started as family, church, fraternity or township burial grounds/cemeteries, but due to lack of funding, a shortage of volunteers and neglect, the deeds were passed to the municipalities to fund and maintain.

How are cemeteries funded? Perpetual care funds, by lot sales/rent where a percentage of that amount goes to the fund and in some places, as much as 30 percent. A few places have initialized an "Adopt a Tomb Program," which promotes donations and held fund raisers. Sometimes, organizational groups will adopt a site and may work with other groups rotating the responsibility every few years (or annually). Majority of the cemeteries operate from a mill levy but also utilize lots sales, donations, fund raisers, and volunteers. One cemetery in the Sandhills received a sizable donation (from an area rancher who was later buried there) with

the interest and a fixed percentage to be used annually, only for maintenance. Cemeteries are supposed to have a perpetual care fund set in their operational plan.

Note: (Pauper burials). In 2004, the Lincoln County Board stated that it costs \$1,340 for a burial plot and services to open and close at the city managed cemetery. Some cities charge \$600-\$800 for the same services. The State of Nebraska requires that counties pay the burial expenses of people who cannot afford to pay the costs and in Lincoln County, that is about 20-40 people each year. Their plots are often near fences or trees, which generally are less desirable, thus are sold to the county at a reduced rate for these burials.

Future planning needs to address if a cemetery is to expand once all lots are sold. More nearby land may need to be acquired, hopefully all or partially donated. This may not be an option as the cemetery land may be land-locked by structures, terrain, expensive crop land or roadways. Future improvements may include new roadway construction/repairs, install or replacement of an irrigation system, new well or well rehab, a directory structure, tree removal or replanting, fence installation/repair or replacement and installing/replacing statues and/or flag poles. Today, insurance and liability need to be considered. Structures such as buildings, fencing, walls, statues, directory stations and other infrastructure can be damaged by storms, vandals, em-

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employees mowing, and the visiting public. Security in cemeteries may include fences, locked gates, lighting and even cameras. It seems for whatever reason, about every so many years, someone maliciously vandalizes a cemetery.

Who visits cemeteries? Family members of those buried at the cemetery, maintenance workers, miscellaneous tombstone tourists and the occasional genealogy researcher. Some cemeteries promote tourism if famous or noted people are buried there. Some have walking tours or special events, such as in Chadron during "Fur Trader Days" with reenactment sessions. One of the most visited days is on the last Monday in May with those participating in "Memorial Day" celebrations, which may include gun salutes, flags, fireworks and orations of honor and prayer.

Who takes care of or maintains these park-like memorial cemeteries? Most have been turned over to villages or cities and maintained by the full-time municipal employees. Maintenance is normally performed in the summer months, although some have limited care almost year-round. The brunt of the maintenance is lawn care (irrigation, trimming/mowing), landscaping, structures and maintaining the gridwork of roads. Some of the tasks or responsibilities may include inspections, repairs, replacement and improvement recommendations of fencing, lawn (sod), memorials, buildings, trees/scrubs, lighting, and security-van-

dalism control. Occasional monitoring/patrolling along with securing the cemetery grounds may be needed to address damage and to control visitation hours. Signage and rules need to be accessible as far as memorial placement specification, time table of items left, such as flags, balloons, flowers in glass containers, teddy bears, etc., which are often left after Memorial Day. Instructions need to be clear on how these items left at graves sites are handled after the required set time has elapsed.

Special tree, shrub or flower planting is more often done by volunteer groups, but cared for by contracted, volunteer or full-time municipal workers. Often, the cemeteries fall under the Public Works or Parks/Recreation Department, but occasionally, the water/wastewater department. In many villages, the work is by volunteer or those individuals that cover all public works/utilities departments. All plant life, landscaping and other structures have a life cycle, but good, timely maintenance/care can extend the time before they need to be repaired/replaced. A "Best Practices for Cemetery Maintenance" or standard operating procedure (SOP) manual should be compiled for smooth transitions to new employees and/or volunteers.

Recordkeeping data may be kept by the maintenance personnel and/or the clerk or even sometimes by a volunteer and/or by mortuary personnel. Rules and Regulations should be kept outlining conduct while using cemeteries, vehicle use, obstructions, excavations,

general codes (ex. no firearms discharged without permission), duties of the superintendent, staff, burial permits, handling of funds (auditing) and sale of lot procedures. Onsite directory boards and/or digital website boards would need to be updated (lot listing, catalogs, digital board locations or website address). Some other records kept may include land deeds, registry of occupants, lots sales, map, or layout with distances (GPS may be used), inventories of equipment and a timeline of significant events or infrastructure improvement. This data should be duplicated and kept in two separate places in case one site is destroyed (tornado, fire, flood, etc.).

Cemeteries often include our neighbors, friends and loved ones while holding reflections of the past and the history of our communities. They are often guardians

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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.

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

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

Congratulations! Incorporation Anniversary Recognition: 100 years – Lewellen (1920); 115 years – Norman (1905); and 135 years – Jackson (1865).

Congratulations to Tim Nordstorm of **Wahoo** for being recognized for 40 years of service with the City of Wahoo.

A special thanks to all the utility departments of our municipalities

for their dedication and service to their communities.

Utilities Section members and associate members highlighted in bold.

Do you, your department or facility have something to crow about? Received an award, had an article written highlighting an event or person? Do you have a project worthy of acknowledge-



ment in the *Utilities Section Newsletter*?

If so, please send your information to any of the League/Utilities staff so we can share your excitement with other members.

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looking from atop the hillsides watching over our communities, our agricultural livestock/crops, and the endeavors we encounter in our progress of life. They show off our communities' pride, respect, honor, history and often reflect our culture. Ben Franklin was quoted as saying "Show me your cemetery and I'll know the history of your community."

Tip the hat, salute and bow the head for a moment of silence in honor of those who passed before us, defended our country and constitution and all who supported this great nation.

*References on cemeteries or sites of interest may include: www.daddezio.com, www.rootsweb.com; *Nebraska County Historical Societies*, www.sculptor.org, *Nebraska Municipal Power Pool**

*www.nmpp.org, *Cemetery Preservation Law, Endangered Cemetery Reports, the National Cemetery Association (NCA), Nebraska Cemetery Association, Nebraska Funeral Directors Association, Monument Builders of Nebraska, International Cemetery & Funeral Association (ICFA) www.icfa.org, and the North American Cemetery Regulators Association, Des Moines, IA ncra@att.net.**

Electric Underground Workshop scheduled

An Electric Underground Workshop is scheduled for Sept. 9-10, 2020, at the Wheatbelt Training Facility, located on the north edge of Sidney. More information can be found on the League's website at www.lonm.org.

Wastewater certification study book available

The Water Environment Federation (WEF) has a "Study Guide" to operator certification available. This publication includes over 500 multiple-choice practice questions. For more information on this "Operator Certification Study Guide, Second Edition" can be found at its website www.wef.org.

WEF membership by system or individual may be required for purchase and/or discounts. Currently, all Nebraska tests and classes are on hold, but new hires or those needing an initial license or an upgrade can use this guide book to study until the classes and test dates are rescheduled.

Training calendar

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

**Due to COVID-19 guidelines, future workshops and conferences
may have to be rescheduled or cancelled.**

July

July 14.....Water Operator Training Workshop.....Community Center, Loup City
July 22-23.....Power Equipment ExpoCANCELLED

August

Aug. 12.....Water Operator Training Workshop.....McCook
Aug. 13.....Water Operator Training Workshop.....Lexington
Aug. 18-20Rubber Gloving WorkshopNortheast Community College, Norfolk
Aug. 18.....Backflow Workshop.....Beatrice
Aug. 19.....Backflow Workshop.....Wayne
Aug. 25.....Backflow Workshop.....Ogallala
Aug. 27.....Backflow Workshop.....Grand Island

September

Sept. 9-10Electric Underground WorkshopWheatbelt Training Facility, Sidney
Sept. 16-18Annual ConferenceCornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln

October

Oct. 13.....Water Operator Training Workshop.....O'Neill
Oct. 14.....Water Operator Training Workshop.....Norfolk
Oct. 15.....Water Operator Training Workshop.....York

December

Dec. 2Water Operator Training Workshop.....Fremont
Dec. 3Water Operator Training Workshop.....Crete



NEWARN is pleased to announce that FEMA is making a significant quantity of washable, cloth face masks available for potential distribution to all requesting water and wastewater utilities/purveyors in Nebraska. We have received 50,000 cloth masks for Nebraska water and wastewater utilities. Accordingly, masks will be initially allocated to requesting utilities at the rate of five (5) masks per full time employee. The masks are not limited to only operators; all full-time employees in the utility (associated with water/wastewater) are eligible. As supplies may be limited, requests will be filled on a first-come first-served basis. Masks will be available at the distribution locations starting May 13th.

If you are interested in requesting FEMA masks through this program, we ask that you please fill out the form attached to this letter and bring it to the distribution location.

Please fill this form out completely and accurately so we have all pertinent data and contact information. If you have multiple PWSID or NPDES numbers for service areas within your system, please provide only the number for your primary service area. (Note: Requests will only be accepted by completing the official request form)

To facilitate distribution of masks throughout the State, we have established eight (8) primary points of distribution (PODs) which should allow for reasonable access to the masks for most utilities.

The location of each POD (along with associated contact information) is provided in this letter. Please go to the POD associated with your field service area as indicated on the map.

Nebraska Rural Water has volunteered to pickup and deliver masks to water/wastewater systems that cannot send employees or need help receiving masks. Please Contact Randy Hellbusch at 402-443-8535 or email randy@nerwa.org to coordinate.

We ask that you please follow all recommended social distancing and other protective requirements and guidelines that may exist at the time of your pick-up or delivery.

Please note that there is NO GUARANTEE of mask availability for all utilities in our State through this program. At this time, it is recommended that you not cancel or reduce any previous orders or ongoing supply arrangements that you may have made with other sources.

We are pleased to be able to assist with this effort as a means of supporting all water and wastewater utilities in our State as they adapt to the many challenges at hand, while also continuing to provide reliable and essential services for all. If you have any questions regarding this program or if you have problems in accessing/filling out the mask request form contact me or one of the contacts associated with the points of delivery.

Thank You

Ryan Hurst

NEWARN Chair

Hurst@wahoo.ne.us

402-443-3222

Mask Information/Instructions

As a reminder these masks are not PPE. However, you should use the same protocols for putting on and taking off.

How to put on a face mask

1. Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer before touching the mask.
2. Remove a mask from the package and make sure there are no obvious tears or holes in either side of the mask.
3. Determine which side of the mask is the front. (similar to a shirt stitching)
4. Instructions for the type of mask you are using. *Face Mask with Ear loops*: Hold the mask by the ear loops. Place a loop around each ear. Mold or pinch the stiff edge to the shape of your nose.
5. Pull the bottom of the mask over your mouth and chin.

How to remove a face mask

1. Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer before touching the mask. Avoid touching the front of the mask. The front of the mask is contaminated. Only touch the ear loops/ties/band.
2. *Face Mask with Ear loops*: Hold both ear loops and gently lift and remove the mask.
3. Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
4. After use you can wash the mask up to 15 times. Follow instruction on the packaging for laundering.

Mask Example:





NEWARN Mask Request Form

Please use this form to request face masks for your utility. Please note that there is NO GUARANTEE of mask availability for all utilities in our State through this program.

Date: _____

Number of Masks Requested (Limit 5 per Full time employee): _____

Utility Name: _____

Utility's Full Address: _____

PWS ID or NPDES Number (combined utilities use one or the other): _____

Utility Type (mark one)

☐ Water

☐ Wastewater

☐ Both

Estimated Population Served: _____

Number of Full time Employees: _____

Utility Contact Name (First and Last Name): _____

Utility Contact's Cell Phone: _____

Utility Contact's Email: _____

Mask Pickup Location _____

*******Mask Pickup Instructions*******

Please follow all social distancing guidelines when picking up masks.

- Please contact the Point of Distribution for your field service area for specific instructions on pickup.
- Have the form completed before you come to pickup the masks. You will not be given the masks if you do not turn in a completed form!
- If you are having Rural Water or another utility pickup your masks they must turn in the form on your behalf.

Field Service Area 1

Beatrice Utilities

Address for pickup

1806 S 16th Circle Drive

Beatrice, NE 68310

****Residential address****

Hours available

M-F 8:00 AM-4:00 PM

Contact

Steve Kelley

(402) 228-5217

skelley@beatrice.ne.gov

Field Service Area 2

Wahoo Utilities

Address for Pickup

605 N Broadway

Wahoo, NE 68066

Hours available

M-F 8:00 AM-5:00 PM

Contact

Ryan Hurst

(402) 443-3222

Hurst@wahoo.ne.us

Field Service Area 3

City of Norfolk

Address for Pickup

300 South 49th

Norfolk, NE 68701

Hours available

M-F 8:00 AM-4:30 PM

Contact

Dennis Watts

(402) 844-2210

dwatts@norfolkne.gov

Field Service Area 4

City of York

Address for Pickup

100 E 4th Street

York, NE 68467

Hours available

M-F 8:00 AM-5:00 PM

Contact

Aaron Dressel

(402) 363-2604

adressel@cityofyork.net

Field Service Area 5

City of Kearney

Address for Pickup

Kearney Utilities

1220 E 26th Street

Kearney, NE 68847

Hours Available

M-T 7:00 AM-4:00 PM

Contact

Anton E. Jelinek

(308) 233-3259

ajelinek@kearneygov.org

Field Service Area 6

City of O'Neill

Address for Pickup

O'Neill Utilities

401 E Fremont St

O'Neill, NE 68763

Hours Available

M-F 8:00 AM-5:00 PM

Contact

Curtis Kizzire

(402) 340-7827

ssidak@cityofoneill.com

Field Service Area 7

City of North Platte

Address for Pickup

401 E 7th St

North Platte, NE 69103

Hours Available

M-F 7:30 AM- 4:00 PM

Contact

Leroy Kramer

(308) 530-7758

Kramerel@ci.north-platte.ne.us

Field Service Area 8

City of Alliance

Address for Pickup

1313 W 1st Street

Alliance, NE 69301

Hours Available

M-F 8:00 AM-5:00 PM

Contact

Paige Johnson

(308) 762-1907

pjohnson@cityofalliance.net

