Nebraska Legislature changes one-call requirements

By Lash Chaffin, Utilities Section Director

As a result of **LB 462**, there will be a couple of changes to the Nebraska one-call system that will affect municipalities. Municipalities are somewhat unique in the world of one-call in that municipalities are both owners of underground facilities and excavators.

The final version of LB 462 was heavily amended and only has two effects on municipal government:

- Any locator acting as a contractor for a municipality or other underground facility owner to perform location services needs to be trained in locator standards and practices applicable to the industry. Thus, if you hire people other than your own staff to do locates, then they need to be trained.

- Any plastic or nonmetallic underground facilities installed underground on or after Jan. 1, 2021, need to be installed in such a manner as to be locatable, either by mapping or by use of tracer wire.

The original version of LB 462 would require that utility locators, including municipal staff, who locate their own facilities to be licensed. This original version of LB 462 was opposed by the League of Nebraska Municipalities, Black Hills Energy, Nebraska Power Association, Nebraska Rural Electric Association, Nebraska Telephone Association, American Petroleum Institute, NorthWestern Energy, the private locating company U.S. Infrastructure Co., Stanton County Rural Electric District, Nebraska Public Power District, Metropolitan Utilities District and others. LB 462 was supported by two national trade associations representing excavators.

As a reminder, the one-call system is not nearly as complex as some would like to believe. One-call is a law adopted in 1994 that allows the State of Nebraska, through a Committee, to hire a contractor with the purpose of “the statewide receipt and dissemination to participating operators of information on a fair and uniform basis concerning intended excavation in an area where the operators have underground facilities.”

The basics are pretty simple. Every operator (owner of underground facility) needs to furnish selected information concerning the location of its underground. What makes the actual law work is how the law defines liability for damaged facilities:

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

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

Also, the law protects a municipality’s ability to have other requirements for excavations within the municipality. The law states that “The One-Call Notification System Act shall not affect or impair any local ordinances or other provisions of law requiring permits to be obtained before an excavation. A permit issued by a governing body shall not relieve an excavator from complying with the requirements of the act. No claim shall be maintained under the One-Call Notification System Act against a political subdivision or its officers, agents, or employees except to the extent, and only to the extent, provided by the Political Subdivisions Tort Claims Act.”
Crow Line: A line of positive communication that all can share

Municipal Electric System Celebrates “50 Years”! On Feb. 1, 1969, the City of Neligh acquired the electric system. This February marked 50 years of operating the electric distribution system.

The City of Blair was honored as Nebraska's 40th Economic Development Certified Community (EDCC) by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED). The program was established in 2005 to recognize communities for preparedness to attract new industries and grow existing businesses. A community's utilities play an important role in expanding existing business and enticing new business/industry to the area. More information on the EDCC program can be found by contacting Ashley Rice-Gerlach at (308) 655-0919 or Ashely.gerlach@nebraska.gov or visit https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/program/economic-development-certified-community-edcc/. Congratulations, Blair!

The League’s Nebraska Municipal Review reaches milestone! The magazine has been published for over 100 years (102 years actually) with the first on record published in April 1917, Vol. 1 No. 1, edited by C.A. Sorensen. The publication was printed quarterly with a subscription rate of $0.50 per year. A copy of this publication is preserved at the Nebraska State Historical Society archives collection.

Using an internet inflation calculator, $0.50 in 1917 would be equal to $10.83 in 2019 with an annual inflation over this period of 3.06 percent. (The League cur-
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Nebraska Breaktime Trivia
“Just For Fun”

Q-1. How many incorporated cities or villages, which are Utilities Section Members, start with the letter “I”?

Q-2. How many incorporated cities or villages are located in Hayes County?

Q-3. Where in Nebraska can you find Nebraska’s only “chalk” mine?

Q-4. Do you know where this landfill facility is located?

Answers on page 8.

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

Continued from page 2 Recently charges $5 for a hard copy of the Review.) Congratulations to all those individuals who worked to write, edit, publish and distribute this League publication.

Is the Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials celebrating its 75th year? Assuming the Directory was published annually and the volume numbers are correct (1956 Directory was volume 17), the 2019 issue is the 75th issue published. Possibly a collector’s item? The League has not seen a 1944 Directory, but there may be one out there. After the fire at the League office back in the 1970s, much of the League’s history was lost. Many of the older Directories and Reviews the League has now were donated from members. The Nebraska Historical Society has many of the Reviews (including the first volume), but we are not sure if they have the Directory, too.

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 acknowledgement 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.

Backflow Workshops scheduled

Four Backflow Workshops are scheduled for 2019 to be held in Ogallala (Aug. 20), Grand Island (Aug. 21), Beatrice (Aug. 27), and Wayne (Aug. 29).

Watch for workshop brochures in the mail or check on the League or AWWA websites for registration information and agenda.

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.
SAFETY/HEALTH CORNER

Safety tips for work zones

By Rob Pierce, LNM Field Rep./Training Coordinator

• Notify drivers so they can plan ahead for delays, allowing them enough time so they won't be rushed.
• Help drivers obey the signage and directions routing them through your work areas.
• Make sure the work zone cones, barricades and other routing devices are properly set up. Inspect daily before work starts to make sure your work zone set devices are where they should be.
• Control the speeds at which all drivers (including construction vehicles) are traveling and help them to be aware of workers and other vehicles.
• Avoid having blind spots where a driver's vision can be impaired.
• Drive and walk defensively in the work zone sites. Never assume the other driver or individual saw you.
• Control communication device use if possible (radios and cell phones) as they are a common cause of distracted driving now days.
• Patrol officers may be needed to control the speed of vehicles if drivers ignore the signs.
• Sudden stops are often a common occurrence in a work zone, so make allowances to help all those in the area be aware of these changes.
• During road construction, notices of alternate routes are recommended.

One source noted that between 2013-2017, fatal work zone crashes involving large trucks increased by 43 percent. Most work zone crashes are rear-end collisions with 25 percent in 2017. Many municipal workers have stated that they have experienced or witnessed a near miss or got clipped by a vehicle while working in these street/highway work zones.

Be aware, help others be aware and remember safety is number one!

On March 29, 2019, the National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA) passed a resolution recognizing April 8-12, 2019, as National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW). The NLGA is a professional association for the elected officials first in line of succession to governors in all 50 states and five U.S. territories. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and its partners have sponsored NWZAW since 2000. Work zones play a vital role in maintaining and upgrading our roadways and often changes in daily routines, traffic and other construction related activities lead to incidents, accident and fatalities. Safety awareness by the workers, drivers and the public are needed to ensure safety for everyone. The NWZAW is one means to focus attention on these changes and get all those involved on thinking and acting safely. To get more information on the NWZAW can be found at http://www.atssa.com/Events/NationalWorkZoneAwarenessWeek.aspx

How does your municipality recognize this safety week? The Utilities Section is scheduling “work zone” workshops this year. If your municipality is interested in hosting one of these workshops, please contact Rob at 402-476-2829 or email robp@lonm.org.

2019 National Work Zone Safety Awareness week

Tips for writing a job safety description

The main goal of a job safety description is to provide workers information about potential hazards of a specific job. Each task that must be done to accomplish the job must be determined and then the potential risks (physical, chemical or energy) to the worker or those in the area must be considered. When you are ready to write down the description, follow these four steps.

1) Write down the information from the job evaluation that has determined the sequential steps and task that must be accom-...
Nebraska utilities history

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

By Rob Pierce, LNM Field Rep./Training Coordinator

Bartley, located in Red Willow County, had settlers in the area by 1883 and the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad was extended to that point in 1886. By June, the railroad completed the depot grounds with a siding. On July 3, 1886, the site was platted by the Lincoln Land Company on a 180-acre site, consisting of 80 blocks with 20-feet parks in the center. With a population of 200 in 1886, the name Bartley was selected in honor of Rev. Allen Bartley, the original owner of the town site. A post office was established July 29, 1886. Lots were sold and three plats were added to the original plat before the end of the year. An area within the plat was set aside for a 52-acre university campus. By Summer 1886, 27 buildings were constructed for Mallalieu University, which opened in the fall with 11 teachers. In October, the Chapel Hall, the first brick school building erected on the campus, was completed. This building was to serve as a temporary college until Haddock Hall was completed and then Chapel Hall would be converted to business property. By August, approximately 40 structures were constructed with about 20-23 businesses, which included the Bartley Inter-Ocean newspaper. By 1887, the population was 400 and businesses included three general stores, two hardware stores, two lumberyards, two hotels, two restaurants, two drug stores, two blacksmith shops, a bank, a furniture store, a millinery and a brickyard. On June 7, 1887, Bartley was incorporated as a village. The population by 1888 was approximately 400, but due to economic conditions, the Mallalieu University was forced to close in 1888, and the board of trustees voted to direct funds to Wesleyan University in Lincoln. The Methodist's had schools in Lincoln, Bartley, Central City and York at the time of the vote. By 1890, the population was 220 (one source noted about 300) and the Bartley Enterprise, a weekly newspaper, was established. Other businesses included a flour mill, blacksmith shop, hardware/implement store, two millineries, three...
general stores, a drug store and railroad station. The flour mill improved water-power to the milling process. The population increased to 307 by 1900 and in 1907, a two-story brick Opera House was built. By October, a two-story frame railroad depot building and a milling company were in operation.

In 1910, the population was 511 and by 1915, a light plant was built for $4,500 with lighting rates at $0.15 per kilowatt hour (kWh). The plant operated with a 35-horsepower (HP) gas engine with a generator rating of 25 Kilovolt amps (kVA). In 1919, the Pioneer sale barn was built and the population decreased to 251 by 1920. The municipal electric light department considered the erection of 37 miles of transmission line according to manager, J. A. Finnegan. In 1923, the school had a two-story brick building (District #70) and a fire department was formed in 1926. From 1930-1950, the population decreased from 465 to 399.

The population was 399 in 1950 and by 1951, the Twin Valley Public Power District provided power to Cambridge, Wilsonville, Lebanon, Danbury and Bartley (3,500 customers and 2,140 miles of distribution lines).

An oil discovery in 1960 was termed as the "richest field in the state" of Nebraska and by 1968, oil was the biggest business outside agriculture in the county. In 1960, the village-owned water
Nebraska utilities history

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Plant rates for residents were $15 per year and rates for business were $12 per year (service stations and hotels were $24 per year and the high school was $60 per year). The electrical distribution system with 176 meters in service was owned/operated by the village and supplied by Twin Valley Public Power District at the wholesale rate of $0.08 per kilowatt hour (kWh). The meter deposit was $5 with the following residential rates: first 10 kWh at $1, next 40 at $0.07, next 200 at $0.05, all over at $0.03 with a minimum of $1. By 1970, the population was 283 and a wastewater treatment facility project was in progress by 1975. From 1980-1990, the population increased slightly from 325 to 339. The electrical system was operated by the village supplied by Twin Valley Public Power District. The natural gas system was operated/supplied by Kansas-Nebraska Natural Gas Company. The village operated a facultative retention lagoon treatment system designed for 0.028 million gallons per day (mgd). In 1991, the village received a grant for street improvements.

The population by 2000 was 355 and the village maintained a public park consisting of a shelter, rest rooms, tennis courts and play equipment (Frances L. Hoyt Baseball Field). The village operated two municipal wells and in 2004 a $40,000 grant was received for a water and wastewater system planning project involving Maywood, Curtis, Moorefield, Farnam, Eustis, Lebanon, Bartley, Indianola, Palisade, Stratton and Trenton. In 2005, Bartley and Indianola received a CDBG Block grant of $393,000 to build a well field and transmission mains as part of a regional water system providing water for residents in Bartley, Cambridge and Indianola. The USDA awarded an additional loan and grant funding of $231,000 for Bartley and $2.1 million for Indianola. The old water tower was to be torn down and water meters installed. In 2008, the village hooked up the new joint water system (BIC). By 2009, the natural gas system was operated/supplied by Source-Gas. In 2007, the fire department purchased firefighting equipment using USDA Funding of $9,200 with $7,550 from the community (fire class rating 7/9). By 2010, the population was 334 and a new Southwest Public School building was built, located just north of the old school, which is now the elementary school. Since 2015, the natural gas system was operated by Black Hills Energy and a member of ACE. The village operates a two-cell lagoon system located south of town, north of the river.

Today, Bartley has a population of 283, has been an incorporated village for 131 years and a member of the Utilities Section for over 17 years. The electrical distribution system is owned/operated by the village and supplied by Twin Valley Public Power District. Schaben Sanitation, a private collection company, provides trash collection service and the natural gas system is by Black Hills Energy.


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Nebraska utilities history


“Just For Fun” Answers

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

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

A-3. Near Scotia. The “Happy Jack Chalk Mine” is located south of Scotia on the west side of the North Loup River along Highway No. 11. The mine actually doesn't contain chalk, but rather a soft rock called diatomite which contains an abundance of calcium carbonate. According to the website https://www.happyjackchalkmine.org/history, the mine is one of only two underground diatomite mines known to have existed in the United States.


Tips for writing a job safety description


AWWA Revised Standards

AWWA revised a couple of standards effective April 1, 2019. Those standards are: B202-19 Quicklime and Hydrated Lime and C228-19 Stainless-steel pipe flange joints for water service (sizes 2-inch through 72-inch). A full list of AWWA standards can be found at https://store.awwa.org/store/awwa-ansi-standards.aspx. AWWA members may need a password to access the standards.
Nebraska utilities history

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

By Rob Pierce, LNM Field Rep./Training Coordinator

Union had early pioneers in the area about 1855. By 1869, settlements were being made in what later became Cass County. By the 1880s, a cluster of houses called "Springtown" was located on the east side of Weeping Creek. One reference noted in 1882 that the organization of a town was approved by the Cass County Commissioners while another noted surveying and platting in 1887 with lots being sold. In 1887, the Missouri Pacific Railroad began surveying for a rail line and a store was built. Several inland post offices consolidated in 1888, forming a post office called Pleasant Grove. Using an old Civil War press, the Union Ledger Newspaper was established in 1888. The community was being established at the junction of two railways and in 1890, the post office was moved to the rails. By 1890, the settlement had a hotel called the Union House, two grain elevators, a brickyard, a hardware/saw-mill, a billiard hall, blacksmith, shoemaker, meat market, livery, a weekly newspaper (Union Ledger) and various businesses. In January 1892, the community was organized (one source had 1897 as a possible incorporation date). The name of the community was called Union because of the junction or union of the two railroads.

By 1889, a two-story frame school was erected for $2,800 with the population at approximately 400 by 1890. Along the dirt streets, kerosene lamps were lit in the evening as Walker Jones made his rounds. A brickyard was in operation and it was noted that eight trains per day passed through the village.

The population by 1900 was 282 and by 1910, it was 302 with a one-story frame railroad depot and water tank along the rails. The school was destroyed by fire in 1912 and a new brick school was built. In 1915, the first class of four-year seniors graduated. One source noted that “the business section of Union has been rebuilt a half-dozen times because of fires and also severe flooding has plagued the town as nearby Weeping Water Creek overflows its

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banks.” The early Union Electric Plant was acquired in 1919 by the Continental Gas and Electric Corporation (Public Service Company). In 1922, the natural gas was served by Nebraska Gas and Electric Company. In 1925, the electric system was supplied current via transmission lines with rates at $0.15 per kilowatt hour (kWh). The population was 316 by 1930 and a $14,000 PWA paving project was completed in 1934. The population decreased from 364 in 1940 to 277 in 1950. In 1956, the last high school seniors graduated as the high school closed and the school district merged with the Nebraska City school system. The electric system was owned and supplied by Consumers Public Power District.

In 1960, the population was 303 and the fire department had about 20 volunteer firefighters. The water plant in 1960 was owned by the village with 122 meters in service owned by the consumers. Garbage collection was by a private collector from both residential and commercial customers. From 1962-1964, a sewer project was under way constructing a facultative controlled flow lagoon system designed for 0.04 million gallons per day (mgd). The electric system was supplied by Consumers Public Power District with the cost of street lighting amounting to $21.93 and the cost of electricity to pump water at $32.85 per month. In 1962, the electrical system had a wholesale

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The rate of $0.015 per kWh with a $5 meter deposit and the cost of street lighting at $39.50 with the cost of pumping water at about $30.75 per month. By 1970, the population was at 275 and the electric system was supplied by Nebraska Public Power District. The population in 1990 was 299 and by 2000, it decreased to 260. In 2001, many sewer mains in the west part of the village were repaired or replaced. In September 2003, a new lagoon cell was constructed and the two existing were cleaned. A new lift station was installed with the new system to be able to handle a population up to 1,000 people. For the month of April 2005, the village pumped 1,037,000 gallons of water or approximately 34,000 gallons per day. In 2010, the population was 233 and the sewer rates were a flat fee of $31 for residential and commercial customers.

The Village of Union has been incorporated for about 125 years and has been a League and Utilities Section member for over 27 years. The village maintains the streets, a ball field, and a facultative controlled flow lagoon system retail customer of Nebraska Public Power District.


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.

Remember to recognize your employees' anniversary milestones. The League provides certificates for 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60 and 65.

You can request them by contacting the League office by email brendah@lomn.org, fax 402-476-7052 or call 402-476-2829.

Hello Progress

The greatest accomplishments start with the smallest details. This is where great begins.
Electric Underground School

The Eastern Nebraska Electric Underground School was held on April 23-24, 2019, at the Utility Line facility on the Northeast Community College Campus in Norfolk. A total of 37 linemen were in attendance – eight from municipalities and 29 from rural electric systems. Four municipal systems participated with linemen from Burwell, North Platte, Stuart and Wahoo. This year, the hands-on workstations included:

1) Proper use of tools, cable stripping and cable prep by Scott Howells of Energy Solutions Inc.;
2) 600 AMP elbow installations by Bill Amelsa of Primus Marketing;
3) Terminations and inline splices by Jim Stephens of 3M;
4) Locating secondary and secondary fault finding by Jim Meyer of WESCO; and
5) Locating primary and primary fault locating/thumping by Brent Briley of Subsurface Solutions.

On behalf of the Utilities Section and the Rural Electric Association, a special thanks to the following companies that provided material, demo trailers, and their input of knowledge when performing underground installation, repairs, maintenance and locates (listed alphabetically by company name): John Dynes and Joe Sanford of Border States, Scott Howells of Energy Solutions Inc., Jim Stephens of 3M, Bill Amelsa of Primus Marketing, Rich Weekly of Pro-Tech Power Inc., Brent Briley of Subsurface Solutions and Jim Meyer of WESCO.

The next hands-on Electric Underground School is scheduled in 2020 at the Don Winkelman Training Field, the Wheatbelt Public Power District’s training field north of Sidney.

Drinking Water Proclamation

The “Drinking Water Proclamation” signing ceremony was held on Monday, April 8, 2019 proclaiming May 5-11, drinking water week in Nebraska.

Municipal Parks

The weather has been interesting, to say the least, this year as rain, snow, flooding and drastic swings in temperature have made it a challenge to prepare the parks for the summer. Hopefully, the municipal employees have had time to get them ready.

Many areas need to be inspected, including the restrooms, bandstands, drinking fountains, playgrounds and the shelters. It is good to have an inspection sheet for each area with check offs when the inspection was completed or any repairs/maintenance was performed. One organization that can help with training, inspection forms and inspection kits is the Nebraska Recreation & Park Association (NeRPA) – www.nerpa.us. Another useful site is the National Recreation and Parks Association – www.nrpa.org.

A website that may be helpful is www.playgroundprofessionals.com and a group that may be helpful with grants is the www.thegranthelpers.com. Some material these groups have available may require membership before getting access or the discounted rates.

I hope everyone is gearing up for a summer of outdoor activities as I know I am!
Training calendar

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

July
July 11 ..........Water Operator Training Workshop...................... City Hall, Sutherland

August
Aug. 20.........Backflow Workshop........................................ Fire Hall, Ogallala
Aug. 21.........Backflow Workshop........................................ Boarders Cobblestone Hotels, Grand Island
Aug. 22.........Safety Workshop............................................ Fire Hall, Aurora
Aug. 27.........Backflow Workshop........................................ Valentinos, Beatrice
Aug. 29.........Backflow Workshop........................................ Fire Hall, Wayne

September
Sept. 10-12 ......Rubber Gloving Workshop ................................ Wheatbelt Training Facility, Sidney
Sept. 18-20 ......League Annual Conference............................. Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln

October
Oct. 1 .......... Water Operator Training Workshop..................... Christensen Field, Fremont
Oct. 2 .......... Water Operator Training Workshop..................... Plattsmouth
Oct. 3 .......... Water Operator Training Workshop..................... Community Center, Seward
Oct. 24 ......... Water Operator Training Workshop..................... Fire Hall, Tecumseh

December
Dec. 10 ..........Water Operator Training Workshop.................... Grand Island
Dec. 11 ..........Water Operator Training Workshop.................... Lincoln