

# Utilities Section Newsletter

League of Nebraska Municipalities

October 2019

## Mark your calendars – 2020 Utilities/Public Works Section Annual Conference

The 2020 League of Nebraska Municipalities Utilities/Public Works Annual Conference is scheduled for Jan. 15-17 at the Embassy Suites in Lincoln.

In addition to the wonderful opportunities to share time and information with colleagues, there are some important educational offerings. The last several years, this conference was approved for an average of up to 17.5 wastewater operator hours and 15 water operator hours! We expect similar approval this year.

On Jan. 15, the conference will kick off with an optional Preconference Seminar titled “Inspecting Our Infrastructure 101: Learn the basics of knowing what to look

for in order to maximize the life and efficiency of water, electric, wastewater, public transportation and natural gas infrastructure.” This seminar is designed for 5 credit hours of water and 5 credit hours of wastewater. This is a “stand alone” session. Preconference Seminar attendees do not have to register for the entire conference

On Jan. 16-17, share time with your colleagues and learn how to better manage your utility and public works departments:

- What’s the Story With Possible Manganese Regulation?
- 2019 Floods and Natural Disasters! WOW!!
- Flint, Michigan – 5 Years Later
- Drones: Workhorses or Just Fun Toys? (Or BOTH?)
- Uranium Removal
- What to Ask When Someone Wants to Put Something in the Municipal Right of Way
- Employee Evaluations
- Stress Management in a Municipal Environment
- Are Wastewater Limits Going To Be Dialed Up Again?
- The Basics of Preventing Cyber Attacks
- Vehicle Safety for the Unique

*Also mark your calendars for the **Snowball Wastewater Conference** on Jan. 22-23, 2020, at the **Kearney Holiday Inn**. The room block will be released Dec. 25, so be sure to get your room reserved before then to get the conference rate.*



### UTILITIES SECTION

Needs of Municipal Government

- Cooperate, Communicate, and Collaborate to Become a 21st Century Utility
- Department of Transportation Funding 101
- NDEQ Update
- Safe Drinking Water Update
- Municipal Utility and Public Works Legislative and Regulatory Update. Whether you have a water, wastewater, electric, natural gas, street, recreation or other department, the Nebraska Legislature has a tremendous effect on how you do business. Do not miss the latest information on legislative and regulatory activities.

- And much, much more!

There will be water, wastewater and engineering credits available for many of these sessions. Do not miss this great opportunity!

A program and registration form are included with this newsletter.



### UTILITIES SECTION

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Lash Chaffin  
Utilities Section Director  
Rob Pierce  
Utilities Field Representative

## **League Annual Conference held**

The League Annual Conference was held Sept. 18-20, 2019, at the Cornhusker Marriott Hotel in Lincoln. The conference began with a Preconference Seminar covering “Community and Economic Development Laws, Strategies, Funding Options and Success Stories.”

Topics at the conference included: Risk Management – Preventing Internal Controls Necessary to Safeguard Municipal Assets; a Senators' Panel Discussing Municipal Concerns; a League Legislative Report; Risk Management – Municipal Catastrophic Flooding; Aviation Impact Study on Economic Development; Top 10 Questions Asked of League Staff; Political Subdivisions Construction

Alternatives Activities; Protecting Your City/Village from Cyber Attacks; Labor Relations; Affordable Housing Issues; Transportation Issues; NEMA/FEMA Update; Update on Significant Court Cases of Municipal Concern; Land Bank Legislature (LB 424); State Mandate Requiring Use of Licensed Architects and/or Professional Engineers; Agenda Preparation (Open Meetings Act); Community Development Block (CDBG) Update; and a Small Cell Ordinance Update to Comply with the “Small Cell Wireless Facilities Deployment Act.” The Thursday afternoon sessions were followed by the City Managers/Administrators, Clerks, Larger Cities, Mayors/ Board Chairs; Smaller Cities and



Utilities Section meetings.

The conference was well attended with about 166 municipal officials from 80 municipalities from across the state. Also, a special thanks to the many associate members, exhibitors and sponsors in attendance this year. The 2020 League Annual Conference is scheduled for Sept. 16-18 at the Cornhusker Marriott Hotel in Lincoln.

## **2019-2020 Executive Board**

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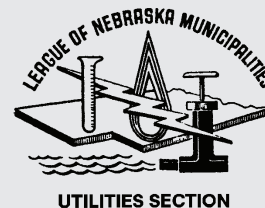
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## Nebraska Breaktime Trivia “Just For Fun”

**Q-1.** What unincorporated community is located in both Gage County, Nebraska and Washington County, Kansas?

**Q-2.** What Utilities Section member village is surrounded by the communities of Graf, Glenrock and Rohrs?

**Q-3.** There are 54 incorporated villages/cities in Nebraska

that start with the letter B; how many start with the letters Bu?

**Q-4.** In what city in Nebraska is this Community Center located?

**Answers on page 9.**



## New AWWA Manual released

The American Water Works Association (AWWA) announced the release of its new M77 “Condition Assessment of Water Mains” manual. The list price is \$175, but for AWWA members, the price is \$122.

The manual provides technical information to help utility managers and engineers in making informed decisions, along with practical information that can be deployed. As our infrastructure ages, identifying and assessing the water system conditions are becoming a challenge to both

system owners and operators. The manual helps to provide technical information to aid in making informed decisions. It covers the benefits of condition assessment, how to plan for and build a condition assessment program, methods of condition assessment, strategies for economical assessments, and how information gathered during condition assessment can be best used by utilities in managing their systems. More information can be found at the AWWA website at [www.awwa.org](http://www.awwa.org).

### **Activated Sludge and Nutrient Removal, Manual of Practice No. OM-9 (Third edition)**

The revised edition of the Activated Sludge and Nutrient Removal, Manual of Practice No. OM-9 (2018) is available. This 450-page book is published by the Water Environment Federation (WEF). If more information is needed or if you are ordering, contact WEF at 601 Wythe Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-1994. Their webpage is [www.wef.org](http://www.wef.org).

## Electrical reminder

Soon we will be in the winter months and a reliable electric system is a must. Our electric systems are needed to keep wells running, lights on, security systems operational, not to mention keeping the furnaces operating.

Common failures in electrical systems may include loose

connections, improperly installed component, inadequate insulation, short circuiting, capacity overloading, accumulation of dirt and oil along with aging and environmental damages.

A good preventive maintenance program can eliminate or help minimize failures and improve operation of the overall sys-

tem, not to mention the potential financial savings. Keeping in compliance with regulatory safe work practices and implementing best practices set by NFPA, IEEE, NESC and NEC codes, can help ensure a safe and efficient electrical system.

The safety of employees and the public should be number one!

## SAFETY/HEALTH CORNER

### ***October was national fire prevention month***

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

Be sure to review and practice safe evacuation procedures (fire drills) and inspect all municipal buildings (facilities) for fire safety concerns and make any needed precautions to eliminate fire hazards. Make sure electrical connections are not overloaded or loose and are properly grounded. In the early years, many of our municipalities across the state lost businesses, courthouses, city halls and schools due to fire. Be sure to inspect the working order of all smoke alarms (batteries), and check electrical wiring, breakroom kitchens and flamma-

ble storage areas. Fire extinguishers should be checked monthly and serviced annually.

There are five general classes of fire extinguishers which include:

**Class A** – for ordinary combustibles (paper, wood, cloth); **Class B** – for flammable liquids (gasoline, grease, oil); **Class C** – for electrical equipment (appliances, tools); **Class D** – for combustible metals (most often found in factories); and **Class K** – for cooking combustibles (vegetable and animal oils and fats, which are found in most commercial kitchens).

Employees should be trained to use the P.A.S.S. method to extinguish a fire.

#### **Pass Method**

**P**ull the pin

**A**im the nozzle

**S**queeze the lever

**S**weep the nozzle

A fire extinguisher should be provided within 100-feet of employees for each 3,000 square feet of building. Someone needs to be assigned to make sure the fire extinguishers are available, in working order and updated if

needed. If no one is assigned the task, then it often gets neglected.

Make fire prevention month (October) and fire prevention week (October 6-12, 2019) special and meaningful as you celebrate fire prevention all year. In 1922, the National Fire Protection Association named the second week in October as Fire Protection Week in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire in 1871.

Some home fire prevention safety statistics posted on the website noted: 3 of every 5 home fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with no working smoke alarms; just 43 percent of homeowners have an escape plan; carbon monoxide (CO) is the number one cause of accidental death; only 47 percent of people report having CO alarms in their home; and 60 percent of consumers do not test their smoke and CO alarms monthly. Hopefully, these same numbers don't ring true in our offices and shops. If so, let's make the change today for a safer shop, office and home.

## ***Public Power Week***

Did your municipality celebrate or highlight any special events during "National Public Power" week (Oct. 6-12, 2019), which was honored nationwide?

Nebraska is unique as it is the only public power state in the United States. There are over 100 municipalities in Nebraska that own their electric system. The tradition of providing safe and reliable electric service along with some of the lowest rates in the nation have been a value to the residents of Nebraska.

### **Years of Service Awards**

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 a certificate by emailing [brendah@lonm.org](mailto:brendah@lonm.org) at the League office.



## Nebraska utilities history – Big Springs

*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](mailto:robp@lonm.org).*

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

**B**ig Springs, located in Deuel County, had settlers in the area about 1857, but it wasn't until 1867 that the Union Pacific Railroad built through the area establishing a station (siding). A wooden pipe ran from the springs to the tracks when the first depot was built on the south side of the tracks. In 1861, a post office was established, the transcontinental telegraph was installed and in 1876, another post office was established in the area. The name first used of the settlement was "Lone Tree," after a lone cottonwood tree on the prairie near the site of the future town. The railroad named this stop "Big Springs" in 1867. Spring water from near the track was used by steam locomotives until 1950. On Sept. 18, 1877, the Sam Bass gang "Collins Gang" robbed a Union Pacific passenger-mail train of \$60,000 in gold pieces (all of 1877 mintage). They also robbed

passengers of another \$1,300 in cash, gold watches and a ticket to Chicago. On Oct. 31, 1881, the post office was discontinued and on Nov. 9, was reorganized again. When a permanent settlement began in 1883, it consisted of an adobe house and a railroad section house. Later in 1883, a school building (District #2) was constructed in the area. In November 1884, a townsite was platted by the Union Pacific Railroad named Bigspring. The site was in Cheyenne County at the junction of the Denver and Cheyenne cattle trails. A school was built (District #80) in 1884 with homesteaders arriving on the table land in the spring of 1885. On April 4, 1885, the Thompson addition was plotted and a bridge across the Platte River was built. When the school was built in Big Springs, the District #2 School closed. A general store opened and about 1885-86, the two-story frame Phelps Hotel was built to house railroad workers. The first recorded newspaper was established in 1886, called the

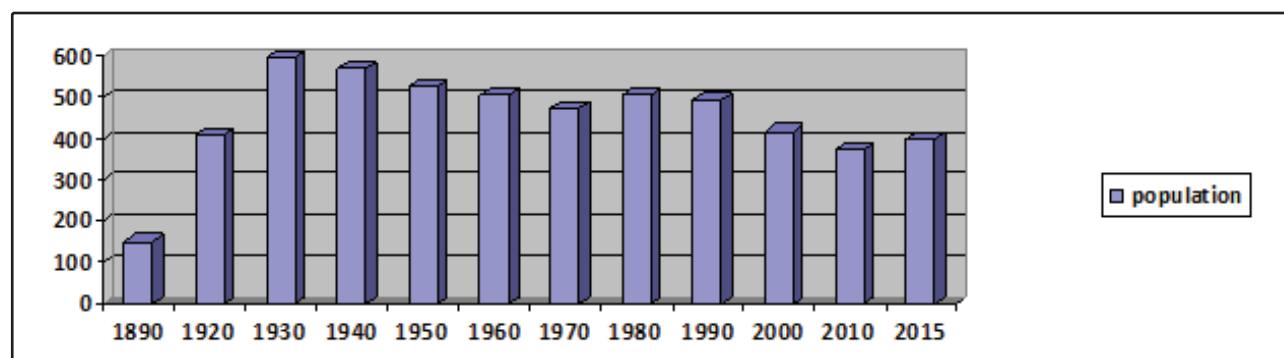


*Big Springs' water storage standpipe. 2007 Photo.*

*Big Springs Sentinel, which was being printed in another town.*

On April 30, 1886, a second addition was added, known as the Union Pacific first addition. A "soddy" church was built in 1887 and the newspaper was sold and published until 1891 when it was

*Continued on page 6*



## Nebraska utilities history – Big Springs

*Continued from page 5*  
moved to Elmwood, Neb.

In 1888, the State Bank was established and by December, the *Big Springs Journal* newspaper was established. In 1888-89, Cheyenne County was divided with Big Springs now located in Deuel County. Big Springs vied for the county seat with Froid and Chappell. On Jan. 15, 1889, Big Springs was voted in as the county seat, but only held the records for one day.

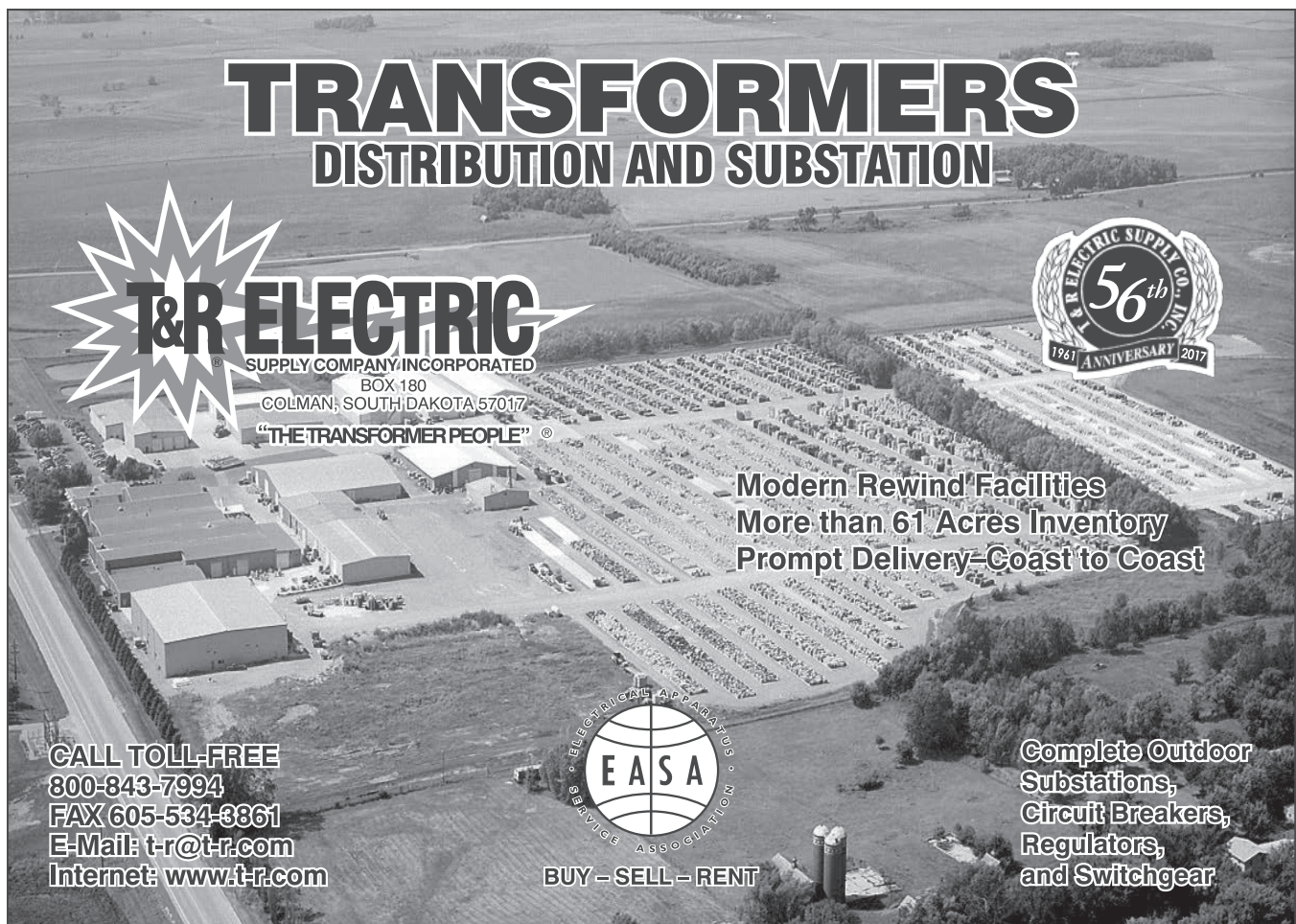
By 1890, the population was 125 and the post office name officially

changed to Bigspring on Nov. 17, 1894. The first Methodist Episcopal Church building was erected and a high school was started. Mail routes were established in 1900, an addition was built on to the school and the three terms were changed to a nine-month term. The Farmers State Bank was established in 1906 and the railroad depot was moved north of the tracks and several blocks east. A well was drilled in 1907 after the demand was higher than the spring could provide. It was used until the village put in a water sys-

tem and connected to the railroad water tank. The Phelps Addition and the Cochran Addition were added to the plat maps on Dec. 29, 1909 and June 9, 1910. In 1912, a new two-story brick school was built and the 10<sup>th</sup> grade class was added.


On May 15, 1917, Big Springs was incorporated as a village and the post office was changed to Third Class. The first Chairman was J. R. Holcombe and in 1918, a motion was made that those ages 21-50 should perform two

*Continued on page 7*




# TRANSFORMERS

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## **Nebraska utilities history – Big Springs**

*Continued from page 6*  
days labor on streets and alleys between April 1- Nov. 1. A \$5 fine was imposed for delinquency. That's one way to get streets built and in good shape! That year, a new bank was built, which later became the Big Springs Library. On July 21, 1919, a special election was held to vote on bonds, not to exceed \$6,900, for a lighting system and a water system. The light vote was 123-10 and the water vote was 119-16. Bids were let and the projects began.

The population by 1920 was 408 and the second Phelps Addition was platted (1920) with the Clear Spring Addition in 1922. Eleven school districts merged in 1921 to organize a rural high school at Big Springs. A vote for a new school was approved and by 1923, a new two-story brick school building was erected for the four-year high school. By 1922, a brick Methodist Church was built, and the *Deuel County Herald* newspaper was being published. The electric provider in 1922 was the Inter-Mountain Railway Light and Power Company, which changed its name to the Western Public Service Company. A library was

started in 1926 with a book box circulated by the Women's Club. Later, the library was housed at the old Farmers State Bank building. The population was 595 in 1930 and by 1932, the volunteer fire department was organized with 12 firefighters and two-wheel hose carts. The Deuel County fair, which had been held in Big Springs since 1889, was moved to Chappell in 1932. Big Springs was a member of the League of Nebraska Municipalities in 1934. In 1935, the post office changed to a second class office and the Community Library Association was formed in 1936.

The population was 569 in 1940 and the library was moved to its present location (1972) with the building acquired from Martin Went. On Jan. 2, 1942, Consumers Public Power District acquired all Nebraska properties of Western Public Service Company. The Big Springs post office, established in 1884, was officially called Bigspring until 1943. In 1946, the Rural Fire Department was organized and in the late 1940s, a brick memorial hall was built. The spring water, which had carried water via wooden pipe to the rail-

road since 1867, ceased operation in 1950. The population decreased to 527 by 1950 and a sewer system was approved with the installation to begin. In 1951, the rural fire department was reorganized to include parts of Deuel, Perkins and Keith Counties. The population decreased from 506 in 1960 to 472 in 1970 and spring water was piped to the park. The village water plant in 1962 had water rates of \$1 per month for winter and \$2 per month for the summer. The sewer collection system and disposal plant were maintained from an eight mill levy with sewer charges of \$1 per month. In 1967, the school was remodeled and the elementary school was moved to the new wing of the high school building. In 1975, the old railroad depot was retired and donated to the Big Springs Historical Society. In July 1975, the building was moved to lots just east of city park for use as a museum. The electrical system, after 32 years being owned by the Consumers Public Power District, was operated and supplied retail by Nebraska Public Power District (1970)

In 1980, the population was at

*Continued on page 8*



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## **Nebraska utilities history – Big Springs**

*Continued from page 7*

505 and a new bank was built in 1982. With a population of 495 in 1990, the village was operating an activated sludge combination aer-clarifier, anaerobic digestion single-stage wastewater treatment facility designed for 0.085 million gallons per day (mgd). In 1995, the school consolidated with Brule with the high school in Big Springs (grades K-1, 9-12) and grades 2-8 in Brule. The former royal blue and gold Trojans of 1947 became the South Platte Knights. In 2000, a 1 percent sales

tax was imposed to be used for water improvements. The old silver teapot-shaped water storage tower was replaced by a new (blue) harvester style water storage standpipe in 2007. The new tower boosted water pressure of about 20 pounds per square inch (psi). A water and sewer project also was completed to the I-80 truck stop. The fire department was housed in the five-door meal fire hall with an ISO insurance rating of 7/9 in Deuel County and a 9/10 in Keith County. The population increased from 371

in 2010 to about 400 by 2015 and the natural gas system was operated and supplied by KN Energy in 2008.

Big Springs has been an incorporated village for 102 years and is a long-time member of the League of Nebraska Municipalities and a member of the Utilities Section. The village maintains water and sewer systems, along with several blocks of streets (blacktop, gravel/rock with some curbed). The village also maintains a library and two public parks,

*Continued on page 9*



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## Nebraska utilities history – Big Springs

Continued from page 8  
one with a swimming pool. The electric distribution system is operated and supplied retail by Nebraska Public Power District. The gas system is operated by a private firm.

References: *Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials*, 1962, 1964-69, 1971, 1973-84, 1986-98, 1998, 2004, 2008-2009, 2011, 2014-2019; *Nebraska Mu-*

*nicipal Review magazine*, 1925, 1989; *Nebraska Life Magazine*, 2001; *Water Resources of Nebraska Report*, December 1936; *Guide to Western Nebraska & Eastern Wyoming*, Star Herald Publishing, 2004; *Nebraska Our Towns...The Panhandle*, 1988; *Pages of History Nebraska High Schools Past & Present*, 1854-1994; *Lincoln Journal Star Newspaper*, 2000, 2007; *Perkey's*

*Nebraska Place Names*, 1995; *Nebraska Place Names*, 1925, 1960; *Chappell Register Newspaper*, 2007; *Maps Tell A Story*, 1991; *NEDED Website*, 2005; *Wikipedia website*, 2017-2018; *Big Springs Website*, 2005; *Duel County History*, 1984; *History of Big Springs*, 1972; *Who's Who in Nebraska, Deuel County*, 1940 and the *Nebraska Blue Book*, 1928, 1942, 1946.

### “Just For Fun” Answers

- A-1. Lanham (located southwest of Wymore/Blue Springs).
- A-2. **Johnson.**
- A-3. Five – **Burchard**, Burton, **Burwell**, Bushnell and **Butte.**
- A-4. **Seward.** The land for the civic center was donated by Jesse T. Langworthy on the site of her childhood home. Her last Will and Testament stated that the property was to be used for a civic center, a home for the Chamber of Commerce and the Seward Woman's Club along with use by a variety of civic, educational and religious clubs or groups. The original construction was completed

in 1955, with the 1977 addition which included an elevator, was totally funded by income from the Langworthy Trust. Since 1964, a seven-member Civic Center Commission has been annually appointed by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Seward. Meetings of the Commission are held for the purpose of administering the development, operation and maintenance of the building per Langworthy's will. Note: the Utilities Section has held water training workshops here for over 25 years.

\*Note: Utilities Section Members are listed in bold.

### 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.

### 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](mailto:brendah@lonm.org).

## Nebraska utilities history – Goehner

*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](mailto:robp@lonm.org).*

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

**G**oehner, located in Seward County, had settlers in the area by 1869. In the early 1870s, the first school was built of sod, known as Prairie Mound School located west of the future town site. William Thompson had a ranch on the “Nebraska City cut-off” at Walnut Creek (K Precinct, Section 32). A school opened in 1873, which was later moved to the townsite. The Methodist Church was established in 1876 and in March 1879, the Mound Prairie Cemetery Association was established. In 1887, the Northwestern Railroad was completed through Bee, Goehner and Cordova with a boxcar used as a railroad station depot. A town site was platted on Sept. 26, 1887, by the Pioneer Townsite Company on Section 17 of “K” Precinct and registered as “Goner.” The site located eight miles southwest from Seward was named for John F. Goehner, a prominent

local Seward businessman and politician (State Senator 1884). Upon completion of the railroad, Goehner soon had two general stores, two grocery stores, a hardware, a drug store and several dwellings. That year, the Lutheran Church was established and a cheese factory was operating. On March 13, 1888, a post office was established and the lots on the north side of the railroad tracks were noted as warehouse lots. Later, a wagon maker, a creamery and a frame railroad depot were in operation.

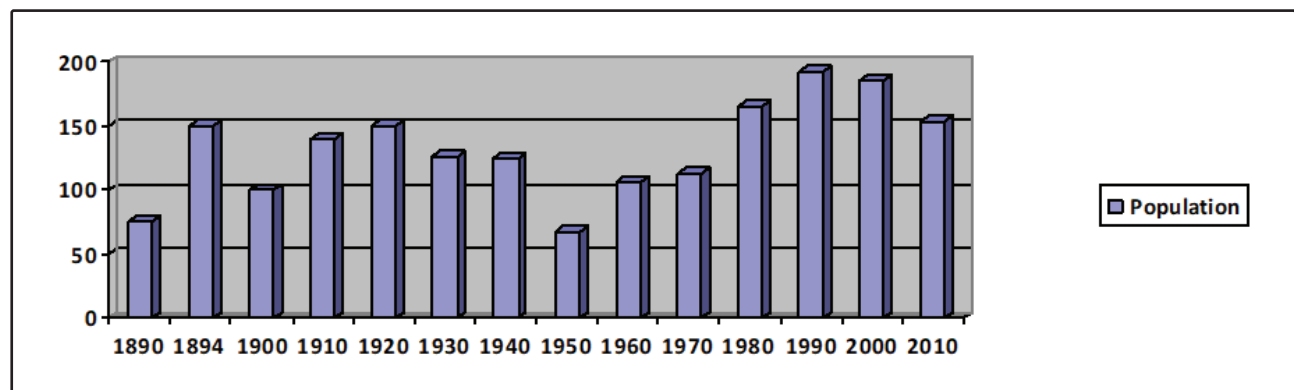
By 1890, the population was 75 and a two-story frame school was built on west side of Besse Street in block 7. The community had two general stores, a harness maker, a hardware and a blacksmith shop and an ag implement shop. There also was a station on the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad. The town was quickly filling with businesses as the population was estimated to be about 150 by 1894. Businesses included the Goehner Hotel, a

lumber/ag implement business, three grain elevators, a drug store, a hardware/furniture store, a harness maker, a farm implement store, two blacksmith shops, a barber, four general stores, a saloon, a meat market and a grocery store.

By 1900, the population was approximately 100-175 with the residents having individual water wells in town. A windmill was located in front of a business just south of the hotel. In the early 1900s, fire protection included a two-wheel cart with a hand pump and a bell on a tower to sound the alarm. From a bucket brigade with wetted burlap sacks, a hose cart with a hand-powered pump, the village purchased a chemical tank in 1900. The chemical tank was attached to the two-wheel cart. In January 1903, the Goehner State Bank was established.

The population by 1910 was 140 and an Express American Telegraph & Western Union business operated from the railroad depot. On Oct. 14, 1913 Goehner was

*Continued on page 11*



## **Nebraska utilities history – Goehner**

*Continued from page 10*  
incorporated as a village. On Nov. 1, 1916, the village issued electric bonds for \$1,500 payable by Nov. 1, 1936 to purchase electric current wholesale from the Blue River Power Company. By 1917, the population was estimated to be 150, some of the businesses operating included two general merchandise stores, three grain elevators (Goehner Grain Elevator, Fowler Grain Co., Updike Grain Company), a pump business, a blacksmith, a farm Implement business, a hardware, a pool hall, a garage, Goehner State Bank, a barber shop, and a drug store. A new brick three-story school was built on the east side of Bessie Street in 1919.

In 1920, the population was 150 and the electric system was supplied and operated by Blue River Power Company. In October 1924, the Blue River Power Company sold its holdings to the Nebraska Gas and Electric Company, at which time all bonds were paid in full and a sinking fund for emergencies was established. In 1925, the electric rates were \$0.04-\$0.08 per kilowatt (kW). The population decreased in 1930

to 126 and the electric system operated by the Nebraska Gas and Electric Company later was supplied and operated by the Iowa-Nebraska Power Company. In the 1930s, a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project lowered the gym floor at the school. The brick auditorium, known as the dance hall and opera house, was located on the corner of James and May Streets (Block 4). Outdoor movies were shown during the summer in the park using the town hall as a screen. Telephone service installed a dial system with the exchange office relocated to Tamora and in May 1935, an “alert” siren tower was installed.

Hard times hit in the 1940s as the population was 125 and passenger service on the railroad discontinued in 1942.

The electric system operated by the Iowa-Nebraska Power Company was purchased by Consumers Public Power District. On Dec. 5, 1942, the Goehner State Bank closed and in 1945, the last high school class graduated. In October 1949, the present fire department was organized with an all-volunteer force and was equipped with five trucks and a first-response

rescue unit. The population in 1950 was 67 and the electric distribution system was owned by Consumers Public Power District. A fire truck was purchased (1950), a saloon was operating, and the Grange Hall was built (1952). On Sept. 3, 1955, a fire destroyed the vacant railroad depot building. In 1956, the cost of street lighting was \$1.10 per lamp. The Evangelical and Reformed Church, established in 1902, merged in 1957 with the Congregational Christian Church. In 1957, funds were raised for a fire hall, which was built in 1959. That year, School District #27 consolidated with Seward District #9.

By 1960, the population increased to 106 and in September 1961, an ordinance was created for a sewer commissioner and established fees for sewer hook-up and charges per quarter were adopted. Rates were: residential – single \$10.50; residential – multi-family \$10.50; school \$62.50; and sewer outside village limits \$15.75. The connection fee was \$50 before September 1967 and \$100 after that. On Dec. 11, a resolution for a sewer system was

*Continued on page 12*

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## **Nebraska utilities history – Goehner**

*Continued from page 11*

introduced and passed on Dec. 29, 1961. In 1962, a new sewer lagoon system was completed. Prior to 1962, residents had individual septic or cesspool systems. By September 1964, nobody within 200 feet of the sewer lines could maintain a private sewer.

The electrical system was furnished by Consumers Public Power District with the cost of street lighting at \$1.45 per lamp in 1962. In 1965, lights were installed at the ball field east of the school. In April 1967, the Seward County Historical Society was incorporated and the Seward County Museum facility was soon constructed. On Oct. 17, 1967, a resolution was passed to have a bond election on Nov. 14, to sell bonds for a water system in the amount of \$28,000. In November, the resolution passed (42-7) for bonds to construct a water system for \$28,000. Rates included: hook-ups \$12-\$50. Rates: residential \$25, business \$25, school \$206, churches and grange \$25 and combination business/home \$25. In August 1968, a municipal water well was drilled and residents were charged a flat water fee. Rates: residences, churches, grange and businesses  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch hook-up \$12; schools  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch hook-up \$45; combination business/residence \$18 per hook-up; and all units with a 1-inch hook-up \$18. All schools with 1-inch hook-up \$50. Before 1968, each house had individual wells. A second water well was drilled in August 1969.

The population increased from 113 in 1970 to 165 in 1980 and the electrical system was supplied

and operated by Nebraska Public Power District. On Jan. 2, 1974, an explosion and fire destroyed the grain elevator. A new and louder warning siren was installed (1974). In 1975, the railroad discontinued service and the 1887 rails were torn up and sold for scrap metal. Water rates were increased in 1977 and a plectron system was installed in firefighters' homes in 1979 for notifications of alarms. In 1978, upgrading was done on the wastewater system and on March 5, 1979, a Park Commission was formed with the first park to be on the block where the pump house set.

In 1983, a new fire hall was built and the original 1950s fire barn was remodeled for use as a community hall. In 1986, due to high nitrates, the village received a grant for \$119,500 with a village match of \$39,800 as a new well was drilled. Rates in 1987 were: residence \$25, business \$25, schools \$206.25, Churches and grange \$25 and combination business/home \$25. In 1989, Goehner became a member of the League of Nebraska Municipalities.

By 1990, the population was 192 and the electrical system was owned by the village and operated and supplied by Nebraska Public Power District. The former public school was sold in 1999 and the population by 2000 was 186.

By 2002, the electrical system was owned by the village and operated and wholesale supplied by Seward County Public Power District. The water system in 2009 consisted of two active municipal wells, a pressure storage tank, mains and about 15 fire hydrants with 85 residential services and

three commercial connections. Water rates in 2010 were residential \$17.33 and commercial \$26. There was a \$250 tapping fee, a \$5 disconnect fee and a \$10 reconnect fee.

Today, Goehner has a population of 154 and has been an incorporated village for 106 years. The village maintains several gravel streets, a community center, a park, a public water system and a wastewater lagoon treatment facility. The electric system is owned by the village and operated and supplied by Norris Public Power District.

*References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1956-58, 1962, 1967-75, 1977-87, 1990-98, 2000-2008, 2010-2019; Nebraska Municipal Review Magazine, 1925, 1989; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Pages of History Nebraska High School, 1854-1994; Perkey's Nebraska Place Names, 1995; Nebraska Place Names, 1925, 1960; Nebraska Our Towns... Central Southeast, 1991; Nebraska SIDWIS website 2016; Maps Tell a Story, 1991; NEDED Website, 2005; History of Seward County Vol. VII, 1888; History of Seward County, Part 2, 1905; Early days of Seward County, Nebraska, 1937; General History of Seward County, Nebraska, 1927; Seward County Nebraska History Supplement, 1983; Seward County Nebraska, 1982; Seward County Bicentennial 1776-1976 ; Official Souvenir, 1975; Goehner Nebraska Centennial History Book 1887-1987, 1987; NPPD Website, 2011; Wikipedia website, 2017-2018 and Nebraska Blue Book, 1928, 1940, 1942, 1946, 1978.*

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

**130, 145, Year Incorporation Anniversaries** – Congratulations to those Nebraska municipalities celebrating village incorporation anniversaries in 2019: 130 years – **Burwell** (Oct. 2, 1889), 145 years – **Sutton** (Oct. 15, 1889), *the Utilities Section members are listed in bold.*

Congratulations to the **City of South Sioux City** as it received the 2019 Waste Diversion Service of the Year Award at the Nebraska Recycling Council (NRC) Awards Luncheon. South Sioux City was one of six organizations to take home Nebraska Recycling Council Awards. Also at the event, **Heather Creewan** was announced as the new Executive Director of the Nebraska Recycling Council, replacing Julie Diegel, who retired this year. In 2017, WasteCap Nebraska and the Nebraska State Recycling Association merged to form the Nebraska Recycling

Council. Good luck to Heather with her new position and to Julie on her retirement. Again, congratulations to South Sioux City!

**Nebraskaland Days named Outstanding Event** – The Nebraskaland Days, which has been held in North Platte since 1968, was recognized as the “Outstanding Event Award” for cities with populations of 10,000 or more at the annual Nebraska Tourism Conference Banquet. The conference was held at the Sandhills Convention Center. The Nebraskaland Days were founded in Lincoln in 1965 by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. North Platte became the permanent host of the event, edging out Lincoln, Ogallala, Valentine and McCook. Congratulations!

**David City hosted Hallmark Channel Celebration** – The Hallmark Channel announced coming to David City as part of



its annual Hometown Christmas event. The event “Christmas Comes Early to David City, Nebraska,” was held Oct. 30 to honor the Butler County town, birthplace of Joyce C. Hall (1891). Hall was the founder of Hallmark Cards and in 1910, moved to Kansas City, Missouri, and founded the company that would become Hallmark. The Hallmark Channel partnered with the Butler County Chamber of Commerce to decorate the town square as Candy Cane Lane. The Hallmark Channel donated a “substantial amount” of money so David City could purchase all new Christmas decorations, replacing their 25-30 year old decorations. This is not the first time Hallmark helped David City. In 1982, it provided a \$100,000 donation to create a community fund. Note: Christmas decorations are usually one of the jobs utilities/public works employees get the honor of putting up and later taking down. Congratulations for another great job!

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 acknowledgment 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.

## **Updated Open Meetings Act Poster**

The League has updated Open Meetings Act posters for posting during public meetings. One poster was sent to each village clerk and three posters were sent to each city clerk in the larger cities. This updated poster replaces the May 2017 Open Meetings Act and includes changes to the Open Meetings Act made in the 2019 legislative session.

As you know, under law, public bodies must post at least one current copy of the Open

Meetings Act in the meeting room accessible to the public. At the beginning of the meeting, the public is to be informed about the location of the posted information. This requirement applies to city councils, village boards, planning commissions, library boards and other municipal public bodies.

The effective date of the amendment is Sept. 1, 2019.

A limited number of additional posters are available. Please contact the League Office if you need more posters.

## Classifieds

**Public Works Director.** The City of York is accepting applications for a Public Works Director. **Department Overview and Responsibilities:** Responsible for directing and managing the Public Works Department, including the divisions of water, wastewater, streets, landfill, airport, parks and code enforcement. This position also administers building and zoning regulations and flood plain management. Reports to the City Administrator; Experience with GIS, GPS, CAD, etc. and/or related software. Previous work in planning and zoning, flood plain management, building codes, public utility systems is desirable. Effectively represent the City in meetings with governmental agencies, community groups, various businesses, professional, and regulatory organizations, and in meetings with individuals. Be adept at combining a hands-on management style with confident professionalism and an ability to work with a variety of stakeholders. **Requirements:** Job requirements include: minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from an accredited college, and Licenses as

a Professional Engineer (PE) and able to get licensed in Nebraska within one year of hire. Must be a licensed Street Superintendent in the State of Nebraska or have the ability to attain this license within 12 months. Must possess and maintain a valid driver's license. **Essential Functions:** Assists in the development, implementation, and administration of divisional performance objectives, policies, processes, capital projects, and priorities: identifies resource needs and makes recommendations for improvement. The applicant should also have five to seven years of progressively responsible civil service experience. **Ideal Candidate:** The ideal candidate for the Public Works Director position will be an innovative and creative leader with a high level of integrity, will have a proven record of building and leading teams, and shall possess high expectations for customer service. Send cover letter, resume and completed application to: City Administrator, City of York, PO Box 276, York, NE 68467 or email to [jfrei@cityofyork.net](mailto:jfrei@cityofyork.net). Applications are available on the City's website [www.cityofyork.net](http://www.cityofyork.net).



net. Position will remain open until filled. First application review will be Sept. 30, 2019.

**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 linemen. 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Chappell, NE 69129 or by email to [chappellcityhall@hotmail.com](mailto:chappellcityhall@hotmail.com).

*Continued on page 15*



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# Classifieds

*Continued from page 14*  
Website is [www.chappellne.org](http://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 Position.** 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.

## **Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor.**

The City of Aurora is accepting applications within the Public Works Division for the position of Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor. The duties will include but are not limited to; performing technical and supervisory work as head operator; participating in the operation and maintenance of the sewage treatment plant; perform all sampling, laboratory testing and reporting of all necessary wastewater tests, including, daily, weekly, and monthly readings; monitor sludge utilization according to EPA

regulations and work with Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality to comply with all requirements of NPDES permit. Experience preferred in the field of wastewater treatment, including laboratory analysis and education. Must have a valid Nebraska driver's license. Salary is DOQ, with an excellent benefit package. Applications can be obtained at; Aurora City Offices, 905 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Aurora, NE, 68818; website at [www.cityofaurora.org](http://www.cityofaurora.org) or via email at [utlysupt@cityofaurora.org](mailto:utlysupt@cityofaurora.org). Position will remain open until filled. The City of Aurora is an EOE.

## *Writing an article for the Utilities Section Newsletter*

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

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

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

When writing an article, just answer the simple who, what, when, where, why and how questions.

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## Training calendar

Visit our website at [www.lonm.org](http://www.lonm.org)  
for a complete list of workshops and conferences.

### December 2019

Dec. 10 ..... Water Operator Training Workshop..... Engineering Building, Grand Island  
Dec. 11 ..... Water Operator Training Workshop..... ~~Lincoln Water System, Lincoln~~

**PLEASE NOTE LOCATION CHANGE – Theresa Street Wastewater Facility, Lincoln**

### January 2020

Jan. 9 ..... Workzone Workshop..... Water Treatment Facility, Blair  
Jan. 15-17 ..... Utilities/Public Works Section Annual Conference..... Embassy Suites, Lincoln  
Jan. 21 ..... Water Operator Training Workshop..... Holiday Inn, Kearney  
Jan. 22-23 ..... Snowball Conference..... Holiday Inn, Kearney  
Jan. 28 ..... Solid Waste Workshp ..... Hastings  
Jan. 29 ..... Water Operator Training Workshop..... Hastings  
Jan. 30 ..... Water Operator Training Workshop..... Gretna

### February 2020

Feb. 4..... Water Operator Training Workshop..... Beatrice  
Feb. 5..... Water Operator Training Workshop..... Grand Island  
Feb. 6..... Water Operator Training Workshop..... North Platte  
Feb. 11-12 ..... Meter Conference ..... Holiday Inn, Kearney  
Feb. 24-25 ..... Midwinter Conference ..... Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln