

## **I CAN'T BE USING THAT MUCH WATER**

According to the weather man on TV last night, the high for today is supposed to be around 35 degrees and 25 mile per hour wind. Its early spring as I write this article for Good Water News, that means that, here in Nebraska, it won't be long before you will be able to fry your breakfast on the side walk.

As always hot weather brings on more water use. More water use brings out the hand full of customers that claim "I can't be using that much water," you know the type. Inevitably, they want you to change out the meter because it can't be accurate, or at least pull it out and take it somewhere to check it to see if it is accurate. This requires you to meet them, usually at their convenience to change out the meter, run it to the test bench, which may be 75 miles down the road, and reinstall it. This costs you valuable time and the water system a great deal of money. When the word gets around that the water operator is "willing" to do this at no cost to the customer, it can almost become a full time job.

There have been several water systems throughout the state that have adopted ordinances to help curtail these complaints. More or less the ordinance says the water system will change out the meter, have it checked for accuracy, and see if it is within industry standards. If the meter is within industry standards, then the customer will pay a specified charge, any where from 50 to 150 dollars or more. If the meter is not accurate then they will receive the new meter at no charge to them.

As we all know 99.9% of meters that are not accurate are because they have slowed down over the years, which means the customer will probably end up paying more down the road for the water that they really use. This is almost a "win win" situation for the water system.

This is not to say that some customers do not have a legitimate complaint. Most water meters have a little red leak detector on the face of the meter. Before changing out any meter always check to see if the leak detector is turning. It doesn't have to be moving much to add up to a lot of water over a month's time. If it is turning, there may be a leak on the service line or more likely a faucet or toilet in the home is leaking. A good trick to check a toilet is to drop a couple of drops of food coloring into the tank and see if it flows through into the bowl.

If there appears to be a leak you are unable to find, please don't hesitate to give me a call. I'll be happy to come out to your system to see if we can figure out the problem.