

Nebraska Good Water News

ISSUE 2/2023



Nebraska Rural Water Association

2023 Scholarship Winners

This year we are pleased to offer two, \$2000 scholarships. We would like to thank Hawkins Inc. for their donation to increase our scholarship amounts this year!

The scholarship winners for the 2023-2024 school year are:

(1) Tyler Stoddard – Axtell Community School

Tyler is the son of Jason Stoddard, Utility Superintendent from the Village of Axtell.

(2) Trevor Ortmeier – North Bend Central School

Trevor is the son of Andrew Ortmeier, Utility Superintendent from the Village of Snyder.

Alternates:

(A) Garrett Tachovsky – Dorchester Public School

Garrett is the son of Dawn Zoubek, Deputy Clerk from the Village of Dorchester.

(B) Haley Johnson – North Bend Central School

Haley is the daughter of Thomas Johnson, Utility Superintendent from the Village of Prague.



Congratulations!

FORD METER BOX

FORD

Celebrating 125 Years

SIMPLY SEALS!

Rated to 305 psi



No field trimming required!

- Tapping Sleeves
- Couplings
- Bell Joint Encapsulators

Fully encapsulated for the most challenging applications.

260-563-3171
fordmeterbox.com



"Buddies on the Job" Adam German (left) and Mike Stanzel (right).

Nebraska Good Water News

Issue 2/2023

“Keeping Our Water Safe”

Board of Directors

Table of Contents

2023 Scholarship Winners.....Inside front cover

2023 NeRWA Training 2

Notices: Fall Conference Time..... 3

Energized! 2023 Annual Conference4-5

2023 Annual Conference Photos6-7

Potential Threats..... 8

Thank You's 9

Annual Russ Topp Award 10

Relating With Your Board 11

Summary of Evaluations12-13

Spring Is In The Air14-15

Painting/Cleaning Storage Tanks 16

We Need Your Water Tower 18

Guidelines for Continuing Education Hours 19

NeRWA Contact Information20

Fall Conference Hotel Information 21

Tom Goulette
President and National Director
City of West Point

Greg Bouc
Vice-President
Village of Valparaiso

Larry Wennekamp
Secretary-Treasurer
City of Schuyler

Tom Grovijohn
Village of Dodge

George Wagner
Village of Hooper

Jordan Bang
Lancaster County RWD#1

Office Staff:

Amy Kemerling, Office Manager
Samantha Rodgers, Accounting

Field Staff:

Randy Hellbusch, Circuit Rider
Mike Stanzel, Circuit Rider
Scott Finke, Circuit Rider
Charles Buckley, Wastewater Tech
David Schroeter,
Source Water Protection Specialist
Adam German,
Source Water Protection Specialist
Pat Petersen, Training Specialist

Phone Numbers:

402-443-5216 or 800-842-8039
Fax: 402-443-5274
Website: www.nerwa.org
Email: office@nerwa.org

“Nebraska Good Water News” is a quarterly publication of the NEBRASKA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION, 3390 Ponderosa, Wahoo, Nebraska 68066. Phone 1-800-849-8039 or (402) 443-5216 or FAX (402) 443-5274. Copies are mailed to all member rural and municipal water operators, Federal and State Legislators, associates and individual members.

The NEBRASKA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION is dedicated to the improvement and assistance of all public water systems in the State of Nebraska.

NOTICE: Nebraska Rural Water Association does not endorse any particular product or company in this publication. Membership and advertising should not be taken as an endorsement.

On the cover:

Kearney, Nebraska, water tower.

"This Institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer."

2023 TRAINING

Water Operator Training

May 10	Macy
June 14	Sutton
July 11	Chadron
August 16	O'Neill
October 10	Ogallala
November 15	Ord
December 14	Wahoo



Wastewater Training

May 24	Chadron
July 26	Kearney
August 23	Bridgeport
October 25	Aurora
November 15	Duncan
December 13	Wahoo

Backflow Operator Training

We are hoping to have some backflow classes in 2023! Please bookmark our website nerwa.org and check on there periodically for classes.

SIGN UP FOR CLASSES VIA OUR WEBSITE:

www.nerwa.org

FALL CONFERENCE

September 12-14, 2023
**Gering Conference Center,
Gering, NE**

Nebraska Rural Water Association - 3390 Ponderosa Drive - Wahoo, NE 68066
Home | Office | Membership Info | Training | Annual Conference | Fall Conference

ENGINEERING • PLANNING • ENVIRONMENTAL • FUNDING • SURVEYING



M&A

Miller & Associates CONSULTING ENGINEERS, P.C.

WWW.MILLER-ENGINEERS.COM

308.234.6456

NOTICES

FALL CONFERENCE TIME

It is time to be thinking about heading west to Gering for the NeRWA's Fall Conference! The conference will be held September 12-14, 2023 at the Gering Civic Center. It will once again be a mix of fun and relaxation with a chance to learn new things and gather much needed CEUs to renew your operator licenses.

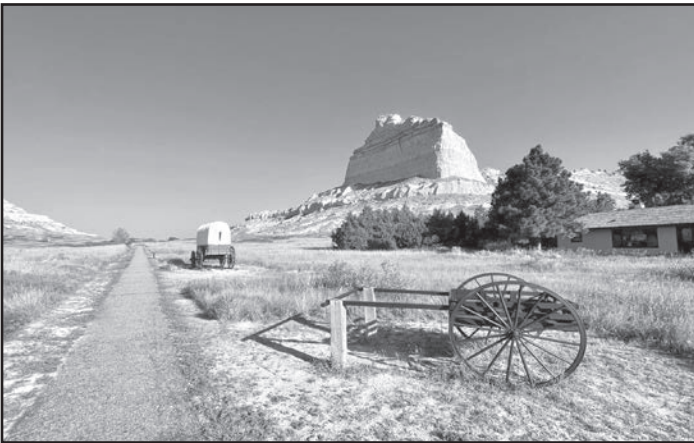
There will be a preconference on Tuesday. Following the preconference is a golf tournament at the Riverview Golf and Country Club. This is set to begin at 2:30 and conclude

around 6:00. This year the regular sessions will start on Wednesday morning. A social hour, banquet and operator award presentation will complete Wednesday's events.

Thursday will consist of morning sessions and conclude at noon.

More detailed information will be in the next issue of the magazine and also in a special conference emailing. Please get your email addresses to us by emailing amy@nerwa.org, if you have not been receiving our emails.

If you have never attended the fall conference and you have the resources to do, please try to make it to Gering. It is a mix of laid-back fun and learning. We hope to see you out west!



NOTE:

The office and field staff will be at In-Service Training, out-of-state from Monday, June 19th - Friday, June 23rd

Downey Drilling, Inc.

Municipal & Industrial



Complete Well Construction – Chemical Rehabilitation – Efficiency Testing

Pump Service Work – Sonar Jet – Video Survey – Discharge Piping – Test Well Drilling

Geophysical Logging – Dewatering Wells – Design & Engineering

Lexington (Corporate Office)
75471 Road 435
PO Box 278
Lexington, NE 68850
308-324-2303

877-WELL-H2O

www.downeydrilling.com

Adam Messenger
Municipal/Industrial Manager
308-730-1267

Dan Freese
Salesman
308-325-6755



ENERGIZED!

By Pat Petersen, Training and Technical Assistance Specialist

The dust has settled and the 45th Annual Conference was a complete success. This year's conference seemed a little different, different in a good way. As I look back at the conference one word keeps popping into my little brain.... ENERGY! The exhibit hall was hopping every break; even walking in the hallways between sessions, everyone seemed to have a spring in their step. It really was a great conference.

As operators filtered into the Diamond Ballroom for the general session you could just tell it was going to be a good week! For the first time since I have been Training Specialist, we kicked off the conference by honoring America with the Star Spangled Banner, sung by Kylie Wagner of Hooper, Nebraska. She is the daughter of Hooper Utilities Superintendent and NeRWA Board Member George Wagner. *Kylie, you did a wonderful job and we thank you very much!*

NDEE Drinking Water Administrator kicked off the conference with a quick regulation update. Dave Fulton also gave an update on what has been going on at USDA/RD. Rich Koenig then gave a very good presentation on drinking water wells, it was a good start to a great week. This year, the finale of the general session was 1.5 hours of an operator forum. NDEE and NeRWA staff made up a panel that fielded questions from many of the operators. Much of the discussion focused on Lead and Copper and the new and upcoming PFAS rules. Both topics are still a little bit "murky" but will get better as we learn more. The most important point that I felt was really stressed was the Lead and Copper Inventory. Focus on the inventory that needs to be completed October of 2024. This discussion concluded our general session. The operator forum may be used in future conferences as well.

Monday night the energy moved to the Big Apple Entertainment center for a night of fun. Miller and Assoc, Sargent Drilling, JEO, HOA, and Nebraska Rural Water. Once again, very fun, relaxing, and very appreciated!

Tuesday was the big day for learning. Several new

presenters were in attendance for the operators. That is one thing we see on the evaluations is the need for new faces. I thought this year was a good mix of the "old pro's" and new faces. Some focus points of the day were of course Lead and Copper, Cybersecurity, Backflow, Metering, Tank Maintenance, and SRF Funding.

Following the long day of learning a quick social hour sponsored by Core and Main was held and then it was time for the banquet. Three awards were given at the banquet this year. Bret Gieselman was awarded the NDEE Operator of the Year. Bret works for the City of Bloomfield and truly deserved this award. John Mueller with the Village of Exeter was awarded the Russ Topp Award. Congratulations John! Alan Krupicka then created his own award for his buddy Dwight "Butch" Nickel. Butch is and always will be Alan's "Right hand Man!" The City of Albion was awarded the "Best Tasting Drinking Water in Nebraska," congratulations to all of the winners! Following the awards the Chad Lee Band entertained the crowd. Chad and Keith love to rock the Younes Center. Chad is for hire if anyone would be interested. You can find his information at chadleeband.com.

This was the day I saw the most energy. Yes, it's a long day of learning but everyone seemed to enjoy the day. Samantha and Amy were so darn busy selling raffle tickets that they almost had to print off more! Thanks for the support!

Wednesday kicked off with the annual operator's breakfast and board meeting. Classes then began soon after at 8:30AM. Some of the highlights of Wednesday were a Nebraska 811 update, Source Water Planning, Field Rep Round Table, and PFAS. Lunch on Wednesday was highlighted by a visit and address to the attendees from the Honorable Jim Pillen, Nebraska's newest Governor. Several operators had the chance to meet the Governor and have a quick visit. I hope Governor Pillen and his State Trooper staff enjoyed their burgers and brats on their trek back to Lincoln. After lunch, the final hour of the conference was finally upon us. Before we knew it, we were packing up the computers, hooking the trailer to Mike's Tahoe and we were ready to head east.

Conference week was behind us. Over 500 operators, vendors, and presenters showed their support for our association. THANK YOU! If it wasn't for the volunteers who present, the vendors that fill the booths, and the operators that support us year in and year out, who knows where we would be.

this association just by the never-ending support you all offer to each and every one of us employees.

Amy and Samantha, thank you for all of your administrative duties you handle during the conference. You two do a great job. We couldn't do it without you!

Congratulations to our office manager Salli Kemerling on her retirement. She has been the face in the office for several years and her knowledge of the programs that make the Association go will be missed. The best part is she has trained two very capable ladies. Amy and Samantha continue to learn from Salli on a daily basis and will eventually be in complete control. As you ride off into the sunset Salli, don't ride too far, we may need an answer or support. Congratulations!!

Randy, Scott, Buck, Adam, Dave, and Mike: I'd like to thank you once again for all that you do. Whether it be scanning into classes, helping load and unload the several boxes it takes to get everything to Kearney, the pulling of the trailer and even setting up the Best Tasting Water Contest, these things are not overlooked but are very appreciated. Thank You All!

Thank you again to our Nebraska Rural Water Board for all of your help and support, not only at the conference but throughout the year! It's obvious how much you care for

Hopefully in the future our conference can create the amount energy that it did in 2023. It really was the best conference that I have had the honor of being a part of. Not only is it time to start planning for the fall conference in Gering, but I am also looking forward to planning the 2024 Annual Conference, Let's just say I'm ENERGIZED!!!

2023 Annual Conference Award Winners



The Russ Topp "Doing it Right" award winner was John Mueller!



Alan Krupicka's "Right Hand Man" award was his buddy, Dwight "Butch" Nickel!



The NDEE "Operator of the Year" was Bret Gieselman!



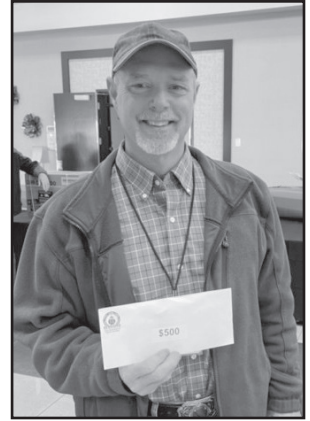
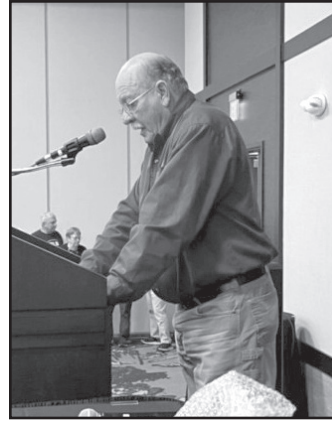
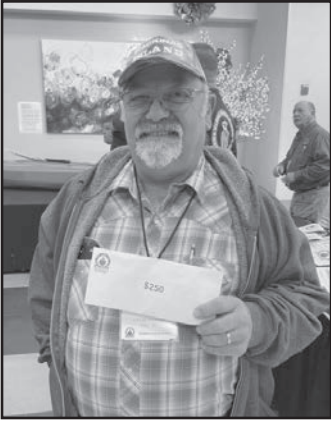
The City of Albion was awarded the "Best Tasting Drinking Water in Nebraska" award!

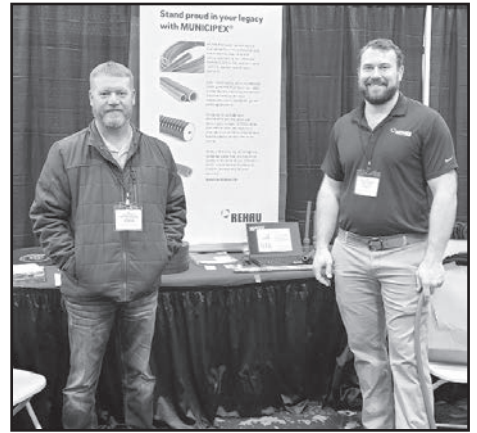


NDEE award winner, Bret Gieselman and guests.

MORE PHOTOS ON FOLLOWING PAGES

2023 Annual Conference





"...walking in the hallways between sessions, everyone seemed to have a spring in their step, it really was a great conference!"

– Pat Petersen





POTENTIAL THREATS

By David Schroeter, Source Water Specialist

During our recent annual conference in Kearney, a couple different sessions dealt with cyber-security. This is a relatively new area of concern but never less the threat is very real for our utilities. It is one more thing our local utilities have to deal with.

Along that line there are potential threats that may affect the quality of our groundwater. Water suppliers can perform a search of potential contaminants located inside their WhPA known as a contaminant source inventory (CSI). The following table contains a list of many of these threats found in out-state Nebraska.

- Livestock facilities**
- Manure storage piles**
- Waste lagoons**
- Underground storage tanks**
- Above ground storage tanks**
- Landfills**
- Cropland**
- Nurseries**
- Underground injection/disposal wells**
- Cemeteries**
- Sludge disposal areas**
- Grain storage**

Other locations of threats may not cause contamination but may be a direct pathway to the groundwater.

- Wells (abandoned)**
- Quarries (sand, gravel, limestone)**

Point source contamination includes but is not limited to any pipe, channel, tunnel, conduit, well, container, or other structure that if not managed properly, can directly discharge and contribute to contamination of groundwater or surface waters.

Non point source contamination is often more widespread (you can't pinpoint where it is coming from). Examples of this are over application of fertilizers and manure spreading on areas of cropland. Contaminants that may affect public

water supplies are pesticides, (fungicides, herbicides, and insecticides), nutrients, (nitrogen), and fecal bacteria. Many areas of Nebraska may be vulnerable to non- point source contamination due to factors such as land-use, permeability of soils, and depth to groundwater.

Public education and awareness are the cornerstone for protecting sources of drinking water because everyone uses water and everyday activities can pose a risk to groundwater. Most homeowners, business owners, and landowners will work to protect their local groundwater if they know how to minimize contamination risks. There are numerous agencies across the state committed to helping water suppliers with education and outreach programs. Examples of these include UNL Extension, local NRD's, NeRWA, NDEE, local schools and others.

We as water operators have to keep the water at the curbside 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. It is a constant battle to keep the water safe to drink and the potential threats to the water are constant, so thank you operators for all you do. You take care of your towns usually behind the scenes and don't get the credit you deserve.

Lastly, I would like to thank Pat Peterson and the rest of the NeRWA staff for putting together another great annual conference in Kearney. I would also like to thank Governor Pillen for coming to speak to our group. Hopefully you got an opportunity to interact with other operators, learn a bit, get your credit hours, and have a chance to take a break from the day to day duties of being the operator of "your town".

The Power to Get You Flowing!

- Municipal Pipe Cleaning
- CCTV Pipe Inspection
- Root Sawing & Removal
- Foam Chemical Root Treatment
- Manhole Rehabilitation
- Pipe Bursting Sewer Replacement
- Trenchless Sewer Liners
- Sectional Point Repair Liners

JOHNSON

SERVICE COMPANY

Let's Connect!

- monte@midlandscontracting.com
- johnsonservicecompany.com
- facebook.com/johnsonserviceco
- 308-293-7909

Thank You's

NewRA Bunch
I want to Thank you for the generator. Thanks to all of you I was able to Trade and buy a bigger one, HOT TUB, house or camper.
Thanks
R. Scott Fix


Growing Community. Harvesting Success.

March 9, 2023

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Drive
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear Nebraska Rural Water Association,

The City of Syracuse would like to take the time to thank your organization for the services it provides to Nebraska communities. The knowledge and expertise that your technicians provide is always appreciated.

Syracuse would like to thank Rural Water for helping the City Sewer, smoke our sewer system and run cameras in our sewer to detect any leaks.

Please accept the enclosed \$250.00 donation for your equipment fund. The work of the Rural Water Association and resources you offer are invaluable to so many. Thank you again for your time and efforts.

Sincerely,

Jeff Vogt
Superintendent of Public Works
City of Syracuse

402-269-2173
cityclerk@syracuse-ne.com
495 Midland Street, P.O. Box F | Syracuse, NE 68446
Discover more about the City of Syracuse at: www.SyracuseNE.com

VILLAGE OF MURDOCK
PO BOX 308
MURDOCK, NE 68407
402-867-2133
villageofmurdock@hotmail.com

February 9, 2023

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa St.
Wahoo, NE 68066

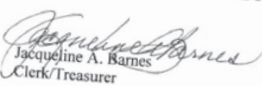
Dear NeRWA,

The Village of Murdock Board of Trustees would like to thank you for the assistance you have given to us over the years. A special thanks to Mike Stanzel for his recent multiple trips to Murdock to help locate curb stops, lines, and exercising our oscillation valves.

Please accept our donation for your equipment fund to help supply your staff with quality equipment and the services needed for assisting us and all communities in Nebraska when we need help.

Sincerely,

THE VILLAGE OF MURDOCK BOARD OF TRUSTEES


Jacqueline A. Barnes
Clerk/Treasurer

City of Osceola
350 N. State Street • P.O. Box 701 Osceola, NE 68651
Phone: (402)747-3411 • Fax: (402)747-8191

February 14, 2023


Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Dr.
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear NRWA:

The City Council and employees thank you for your assistance and consulting on our water and sewer systems during 2022, especially the help received on water locates. Please accept the enclosed \$350 donation in appreciation of the help provided to the City of Osceola.

Your support, knowledge, and advise are invaluable to us!

Sincerely,


Jay Colson
Utility/Street Superintendent



Annual Russ Topp (Doing it Right) Award

By Randy Hellbusch, Circuit Rider

John Mueller, Utility Superintendent from Exeter is the recipient of this year's Russ Topp (Doing it Right Award). This award is presented annually to a water system professional that exhibits a great work ethic and unselfishness. Traits that Russ Topp will always be remembered for.

John started working for the Village on October 1, 1990.

He is now in his 33rd year of service to his community. He is the Maintenance Supervisor for the Village, is certified in Waste Water – Class 1, Water – Class 3, Backflow – Class 6, Pool Operator and Pesticide Applicator.

Along with the day-to-day operations that it takes to keep a Village running smoothly, John has been instrumental in assisting with various projects throughout his 33 years



Prestressed Concrete Water & Wastewater Storage Tanks

Brendan Shea
Regional Manager
571.531.4265
brendan.shea@dntanks.com
www.dntanks.com



of service to the Village of Exeter. Some of these projects include upgrading the wells, a new swimming pool, paving and downtown sidewalk projects, nuisance housing and commercial building removal, and park and ballfield improvements.

John takes great pride in his work. He is always willing to help others in any way that he can and is always looking for ways to improve his hometown however he can.

John has held many roles within the Exeter Volunteer Fire Department. He is the past fire chief. He has been an EMT since 1997 and is the current Assistant Fire Chief and is the treasurer for Rescue Billing. He has helped to write many grants for fire and rescue equipment.



When John is not working, he enjoys camping, traveling, trap shooting, gardening, and fishing. Lately, he has been building a retirement apartment.

John is a past council member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Cordova and is currently on the Board of Directors for Greg's Market in Exeter. He is also a school bus driver for A&M Incorporated who drives for the Exeter-Milligan Schools.

Russ's wife Karen, Son Ben, his wife Karly, and Russ's Grandson Axel and Granddaughter Anistyn were present to assist with the presentation Tonight, also in attendance was John's wife Anita, son Broc, daughter Tara, as well as Board Chairman Alan Michl and his wife Shari, and John's brother Bob and wife Sharon. Bob is also a member of the Exeter Village Board.

CONGRATULATIONS JOHN!



Relating With Your Board

By Charles Buckley, Wastewater Technician

I like to write my articles on the problems I hear most. In the past three months I have heard from a lot of operators having issues with some of their board members. Maybe it is due to recent elections. I, along with the input of others, have compiled a list of issues some operators have faced and ideas of ways to work through them.

1. Be honest with your board and expect the same from your board members. If trust is lost by either party, it's very hard to get it back.

2. Communication is one of the biggest things. I had a big falling out with one of my board members because he had no understanding of why I did something a certain way. We had a chat about the situation and came to an understanding.

3. Bring ideas and knowledge to the meetings. Show them that you are proactive and you have an understanding for the needs of the community.

4. Make a monthly report for your board. Reports show structure, show what you have been doing, the issues you have faced, changes you made, and why it was needed.

5. Meet your new board members and require a tour of the facilities. This gives them more of an idea of what you are talking about when there are problems and a better understanding of the utilities.

6. Invite them to be part of your projects so they can see what's being done and what all is involved to complete the project. This may include something as simple as when you camera your sewer mains.

7. Do tasks they can take notice in like painting fire hydrants, painting playground equipment, picking up litter, or removing down limbs. Perception is key to keeping everyone happy.

8. Have a couple of social events with the board and include the clerk. This may be a Christmas party with a gift exchange, meet for lunch, go bowling, or golf outing.

9. Invite your board members to training classes. This could be a single day class or a conference. Doing this will show them what is required to do the job you do. I had a mayor show up to one of our classes once. He stated that anyone could do what the operator does. By the end of the

day, he said I didn't know that the operator had to know all of this.

10. Review your inventory with them. Explain what is needed in an emergency. Give them an understanding of the supply chain shortage and how long you may have to wait for much-needed parts or replacement.

11. Show them the equipment and develop a replacement plan. Find out about rental and replacement plans that companies offer. Be proactive with yearly budgeting. Make a needs list and rate priorities.

12. If you are getting close to retirement, have a plan in place to bring a replacement in early. This will give you some time to go through the ropes and prevent them from having to hire over and over again because the new employee feels like the job is too overwhelming and quits.

13. Always be prepared to defend yourself with a list of what you have done and the responsibilities you have to your job and community. As the old saying goes, if it isn't written down it didn't happen. I am referring to logs, maintenance, paperwork, and issues you have had to deal with.

14. Make a list of your duties such as water operator, wastewater operator, electrical, snow removal, street-maintainer, greens-keeper, animal control, maintenance tech, mechanic, public relations, custodian, teacher, safety director, backflow tech, plumber, carpenter, roofer, and everything else.

15. If you feel under paid and unappreciated—then have your ducks in a row. Show them your duties list and do some research on what other communities are paying their employees and comparable benefits. Show them what you have brought to the table, your abilities, accomplishments, training and importance.

All right then I hope this may be of assistance to most of you. I hope I used my proper pronouns and as always, we appreciate your feedback on the articles. If you have an article idea you would like us to write about, reach out to any of us. Hope to see a bunch of you with the warmer temperatures. Reach out to us if you need any assistance. Thanks for all you do!

SUMMARY OF EVALUATIONS

NeRWA Kearney Conference • March 13-15, 2023

TOTAL EVALUATIONS RECEIVED – 111

QUESTION #1 – Which best describes your position:

a. Operator/Manager	101
b. Administrative	3
c. Board Member	1
d. Plumber	2
e. Lawn Service	0
f. State/Federal Rep.	2
g. Clerk	0
h. Other: (no explanation)	2
-Sales	
-Retired	

Why do you attend the NeRWA conference?

a. The training classes	20
b. The prizes/entertainment	0
c. The vendors	7
d. Chance to meet with operators	11
e. All of the above	90

What was your favorite thing about NeRWA's annual conference?

- Class opportunities, food
- Training options all in one place
- Time to meet and learn
- Education
- Location
- Getting all training hours in one place
- People
- Lunch, vendors, speakers
- The people you only see once a year
- Chance to meet other operators and share ideas
- Variety of courses and the large group of operators to mingle with
- Learning, food, getting away from town
- Info.
- Networking
- Meeting new people/catching up with others
- Good classes, good people
- Great classes
- Getting your hours
- Training, meeting other operators
- Talking with vendors about products and getting advice on issues
- Interactions with operations and NeRWA staff
- Vendors
- Food
- Visiting with other operators

- Training
- The people
- Chance to meet other operators, training, vendors
- Great learning new things
- Talking with other operators and comparing our problems & solutions
- Food and sessions
- Information, Vendors, Talking to other operators
- Meeting people/operators on this side of the state, food was absolutely amazing, people presenting were great, good topics, love the open forums
- Getting up-to-date regulations
- Learning something new each year
- Wide variety of sessions
- Meeting with vendors meeting face to face
- Unwinding
- Round-table talks
- Having everything under one roof
- Always learning something new, food and drinks
- Classes and meeting people
- Hearing about what's new and about problems similar to mine
- Great location/venue/presenters/meals
- Perfect organization-agenda, informative classes, regulatory updates. NeRWA makes everyone feel included and important
- Learning about how new practices, and items coming out
- It was my first time attending and I thought it was all great—learned so much and had a great time
- Vendor one-on-ones/classes specific to certain areas
- Food is amazing
- Classes
- Learning from other operators
- Talking with other operators and learning from each other
- Getting away from work for a few days
- This conference is like a big family gathering—it's a lot of fun!
- Something is different every year—chance to get away from the daily operations
- Variety of classes
- Location
- Quantity and quality of subjects to choose from
- Good chance to relax and see what the latest and greatest is; and be reminded of things in class
- Getting continuing-ed hours
- All of it

- Location/facilities–Great job again!
- Different speakers that involved all the people
- Fellowship
- Ability to speak with those who not only regulate but also write the rules I follow day in and day out
- Staff (girls at registration), training, vendors

If you could change one thing about the conference, what would it be?

- Need actual job training
- Having hours apply to all licenses
- Make it a longer event
- More interactive/hands-on classes and demonstrations
- Start earlier on Tuesday
- Move closer to a casino
- Adding vendors for digging, mowing, etc.
- More snacks in the vendor area so operators will visit more
- Go to Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
- Have more classes with W/WW hours
- Move to the new Younes center
- Add hands-on experience
- More topics
- More backflow classes offered
- The length of down-time, ability to attend virtually
- All sessions would have W/WW hours so we could attend a session that would benefit us, not just to get the required hours
- Bring back gun raffles
- Temps in the conference rooms are too cold
- Add more description to the class overview
- Ability to prep for water or wastewater classes or testing
- Your coordination with hotels to offer government rate
- More round-table discussions
- Have it for a week
- Move conference to a week before or after the time change
- Banquet entertainment
- More training from operators with hands-on, in the field experience
- Vendors should stay until 12pm
- More lagoon classes


Additional Comments:


- Very good meals
- Keep up the good work
- You are all doing a great job!!
- Great job!
- I would like to see a poker night
- Thank you
- All good

- Thank you for going above and beyond for us operators
- Another great conference!
- The front desk clerks are amazing
- The girls at check-in are great
- NeRWA does an outstanding job
- Thank you for allowing board members to attend for free. It really made a difference to have them attend.
- Food was very good/meals/snacks/cookies
- Good turn out!
- You guys do a wonderful job. Thank you.
- Pat and NeRWA do a great job with the conference and every other thing they do
- No more Big Apple
- The facilities, personnel and food are excellent. The conference is well organized and well attended. Thanks for holding the conference
- Great venue
- Great job everyone! Had fun-and learned a lot!

Sargent Drilling Co.

- **Test Well Drilling**
- **Water Well Design and Construction**
- **Complete Pump Machining Facility**
- **Pump Repair**
- **Loaner Motor Service**
- **Pump Test Labs**
- **Video Surveying**
- **Acidizing and Chemical Treatment**
- **Sonar Jetting**





Complete Municipal Water Well and Pump Service in Nebraska, Wyoming, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Colorado, & South Dakota

24 Hour Emergency Service

MUNICIPAL AND INDUSTRIAL DIVISION

<p>Broken Bow Office PO Box 627, 263 South 23rd Broken Bow, NE 68822</p> <p>Gary McCracken, Branch Manager Shad Yarrington, Salesman</p> <p>Office: (308) 872-5125 After Hours: (308) 870-0138</p>	<p>Geneva Office PO Box 367, 846 South 13th Geneva, NE 68361</p> <p>Doug Yantzie, Municipal Manager</p> <p>Office: (888) 496-3902 After Hours: (402) 759-2929</p>
---	---



Spring Is In The Air

By Adam German, Wastewater Technician

Spring is in the air. Somewhere. Town guys up north are probably asking where? The wind has been brutal. Many of you are active on your local volunteer fire departments and have been battling the grass fires once again. It's busy and it's only going to get busier. You have oil changes to do, blades to sharpen, fertilizer and herbicides to purchase and apply. Ball fields have to be prepped, pot holes need filled, trees need trimmed, and the old gal down the road lost her cat again. All of this rests on your shoulders and you still have to continuously monitor and operate your towns water and wastewater systems. If it was easy a board member would do it. But it aint easy...



Spring brings green grass, mosquitos, and weeds. Green grass is great but it adds a little extra stress to your water and wastewater departments as water usage increases greatly. Weed and mosquito control is a constant battle. When the skeeters start biting and the dandelions start popping everyone looks to the town guy for a little help.

Dandelions and crabgrass are one thing but noxious weeds are another monster. These weeds have to be controlled. Plumeless Thistles, Musk Thistles, Common Reed (Phragmites), and cattails are some noxious, invasive weeds you may see growing in and around your wastewater lagoons. If you are really having issues with noxious weeds help is available. A Noxious Weed and Invasive Plant Species Assistance Fund can be applied for; 2 million dollars per year is set aside to help remove these unwanted plants and keep our creeks and streams flowing smoothly. You can find more information about this right here https://nda.nebraska.gov/plant/noxious_weeds/assist_fund.html

The use of herbicides can be an effective tool to assist in controlling noxious weeds around your lagoons. A person needs to identify the problem and the appropriate herbicide for the plant as well as the site that the plant is growing. If the noxious weed infestation is severe and scattered across a large area, then a broadcast application may be warranted. However, if the noxious weeds are in patches or a few scattered plants here and there, a person may be able to spot treat individual plants or patches. This approach requires less herbicide and has minimal impact on native plants and the environment. Controlling noxious weeds with herbicides is only one tool and should never be the only control option. We, as rural water guys and gals, are always looking and asking for ideas and helpful information we can share with other operators. If you have stumbled on something that works amazingly, feel free to share it with us, we will happily pass on the information to other operators so they can give it a try. After all, we are all on the same team.

I found a few pointers for cattail removal. None of this sounds easy but if you're looking for some ideas see the following information...

- 1. Mechanically remove the cattails.** Cutting the tops of cattails multiple times in a year can reduce the cattail stand by more than 90% in a single year. Cattails can be cut with long clippers, corn knives, power trimmers with metal cutting wheels or sickle mowers. Cut the cattail below the water level or raise the water level in the lagoon after cutting to submerge the cattail.
- 2. Hand Pull the cattails.** This will result in faster control than cutting because you are removing the crowns, rhizomes and roots but will require that they are pulled multiple times in a year and that plants are not allowed to grow more than 3 feet above the water surface.
- 3. Use a herbicide.** When using a herbicide, always read and follow ALL label instructions. A contact aquatic herbicide, such as Reward (diquat), kills only the green tissue that comes in contact with the herbicide. The cattail will need to be treated multiple times (3 or more) to prevent seed production and see

a reduction in the number of cattails.

- 4. Systemic herbicides can be applied to the foliage of the cattails.** The herbicide will be moved throughout the entire plant, including the root system. Aquatic herbicides such as a 2,4-D ester or aquatic glyphosate are options which work to remove cattail. Aquatic herbicides can be applied using a pressurized hand sprayer. Apply herbicides to the green foliage, not the water in the lagoon. You can purchase these supplies at garden centers, landscape nurseries, or agricultural chemical suppliers such as local coops.

I would like to take a second to congratulate our own Pat Petersen on successfully orchestrating another successful Spring conference in Kearney. Once again everything ran extremely smoothly without even a hiccup. Well, maybe one hiccup. For three years now I've had the board of directors here at the NeRWA convinced that I was a tough-minded, professional, no-nonsense wastewater technician. Always serious. An outstanding employee with a reputation of getting things done, by whatever means necessary. Not just a lagoon man, but a true white-collar executive. I had

respect. Admiration. High regard if you will. All of that came to a screeching halt during the conferences' Tuesday evening dinner. As our NeRWA tables were given the ok to get up and fill our plates with that mind numbing delicious food, I noticed something was different, just not right. As I returned to my table with my fellow co-workers and board of directors I felt as if people were looking at me. My ears got hot. Phones were out, pointing at me. Did I have a booger? Something was up. As I returned to my seat, I noticed that one of the smart aleck utility guys had installed a booster seat right where I was sitting. The laughter is still ringing in my ears today. As my reputation with our board of directors slowly made its way to the wastewater treatment facility in Kearney, I got to thinking...I've made a few good friends in the short time I've been traveling the state with the fine people at the NeRWA. Granted, some may need their sense of humor adjusted, but friends nonetheless. As I cried myself to sleep that night, I realized my 3 year anniversary with NeRWA is in April. The past 3 years have been a lot of fun. I look forward to many more. To the few who may or may not have been involved in Boostergate 2023, I will be in your areas again someday, and I'll be bringing my whoopie cushion. Stay safe out there.



JEO CONSULTING GROUP

**Engineering a
world where
everyone thrives**

jeo.com

Engineering | Architecture | Survey | Planning



Painting/Cleaning Storage Tanks

By Mike Stanzel, Circuit Rider

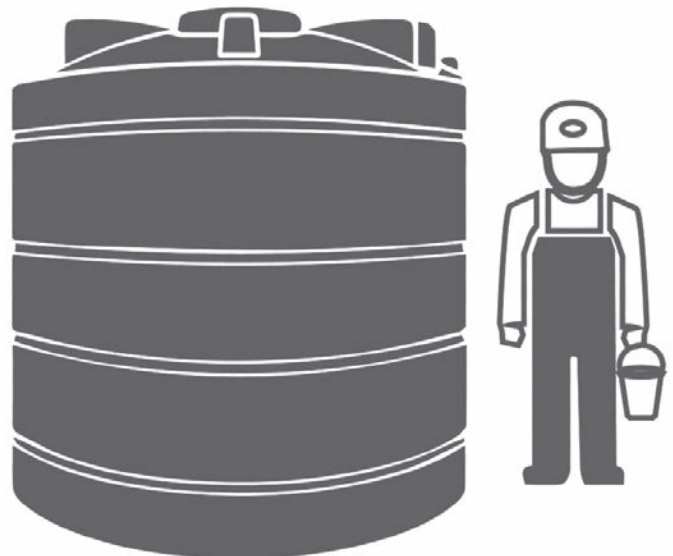
Cleaning of your storage tank, tower or vault is one part of your job that can easily be over looked. The requirements of title 179 state that cleaning and inspection needs to be performed once every 5 years. Generally speaking. Paint on towers will last 15-20 years, depending on conditions. To do a complete paint and reseal, the inside can cost your system several hundred thousand dollars. This can cause financial stress on systems. If it has been a while since your last inspection, now is the time to inform your board that they need to start budgeting for this expense. Here are some tips that will hopefully help your project go smoothly.

- 1. Before you start make sure you use a reputable contractor.** There are several out there, so take some time and research their past work and call other operators and see if they were satisfied with their work. Some companies offer a maintenance agreement that they can come out and inspect on a regular basis for a yearly price.
- 2. Get a signed contract in writing that states what they are responsible for.** For example --who is going to take the required bacti samples?
- 3. Make sure you have the equipment needed prior to the start of the project.** This may include but not limited to, pressure gauges, pressure relief valves, chlorinators, chlorine residual testers, extra sample bottles. If you chlorinate and have VFD's your probably using a pacing pump. Make sure this pump will work at extremely low flows, I recently assisted a system that found out their pacing chlorinator would not pump at low flows.
- 4. Also check the weather forecast.** You may not want to take a tower or tank out of service if adverse weather conditions may delay getting the system back online.
- 5. Check with the contractor first to determine whether they need to install a larger access way.** This will obviously take longer to install and sometimes can be quite costly. But safety regulations require this to be done prior to accessing the tank.
- 6. Determine where you will place your pressure relief valves.** Most systems will be pumping their wells directly into the system and the water not consumed

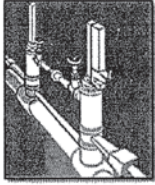
will blow off at the hydrant. Even if you have VFD's on your well, it is still a good idea to install a pressure relief valve, just to be safe. You want to make sure that this excess water has a place to flow and not cause any damage to property. Also you need to take into consideration: is it running across a street and will freezing temperatures cause icy roads?

- 7. Make sure you notify all your residents.** This might encourage conservation during the project and might prevent a phone call in the middle of the night stating water is running down the street.
- 8. Most importantly notify your local and neighboring Fire Departments that there might not be sufficient amounts of water for fire fighting.** This way they can have arrangements prior with other departments to truck in water in case of fire.
- 9. Lastly keep in good contact with the Village Office or City Hall.** They usually get quite a few phone calls from residents and they will be better prepared to answer questions if you keep them informed.

If you need assistance with preparing your system for cleaning or painting, please let me know. Also, we have purchased 2 more pressure relief valves and I also have chlorinating equipment if needed.



MUNICIPAL PIPE SERVICES



- LINE STOPPING 3/4" - 60"
- LINE TAPPING 2" - 60"
- VALVE INSERTION 4' - 16"
- VALVE TURNING
- PIPE REPAIR

**FOR ALL YOUR POTABLE AND
WASTE WATER NEEDS**

Billy Laws
Sales Manager
1615 West J Street
Hastings, NE 68901

1-800-395-7473
Cell: 515-238-4693
Fax: 402-462-4408
Email: billylaws78@gmail.com
BILL@MUNICIPALPIPESERVICES.COM



WWW.MUNICIPALPIPESERVICES.COM



**Water Treatment
Chemicals, Equipment
and Local Service**



Scan this QR code to watch our video.

800.328.5460

www.hawkinsinc.com • wtg@hawkinsinc.com

Hidden River Systems, Inc.

NON-CONVENTIONAL AERATION/CIRCULATION SYSTEMS

- WIND-POWERED-ZERO ENERGY COST
- OVER 25 YEARS PERFORMANCE HISTORY
- BENEFITS BOTH OLD AND NEW LAGOONS FOR REDUCTION/CONTROL OF SLUDGE, AMMONIA LEVELS, ODORS AND ALGAE PROBLEMS
- NEW DESIGN BASE TO HANDLE WEATHER EXTREMES
- LOW HP ELECTRIC OPTION AVAILABLE
- USER FRIENDLY FOR CUSTOMERS TO INSTALL AND MAINTAIN
- EXTENDS LIFE EXPECTANCY OF LAGOONS BY MANY YEARS

*Low initial cost combined with long life,
low maintenance without a long-term
cost burden for the community.*

Contact:

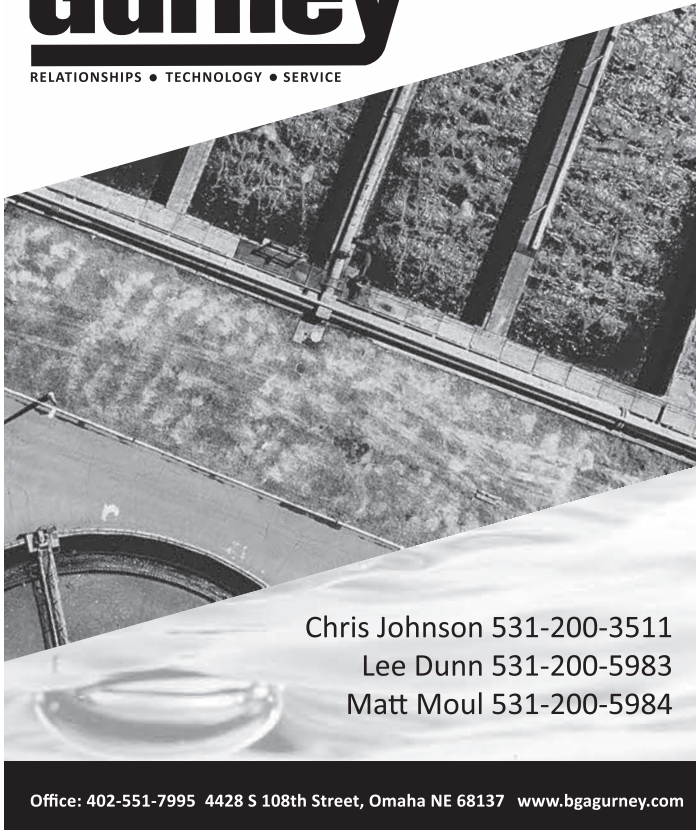
Hidden River Systems, Inc.

Phone: 402-960-0123

Email: hankr6@yahoo.com

Gurney

RELATIONSHIPS • TECHNOLOGY • SERVICE



Chris Johnson 531-200-3511
Lee Dunn 531-200-5983
Matt Moul 531-200-5984

Office: 402-551-7995 4428 S 108th Street, Omaha NE 68137 www.bgagurney.com

WE NEED YOUR WATER TOWER...

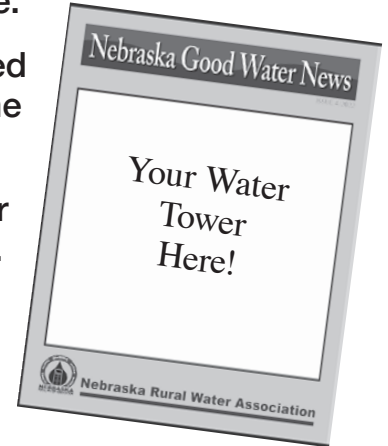
ATTENTION...

We are running low on pictures of water towers. Send us your tower!!!

We are putting the water towers of Nebraska on our cover and are featuring a different tower on each issue.

We have only used up a fraction of the towers in the state.

Let us add your name to our list. Either send a photo to our office or email a picture to amy@nerwa.org.



ADVANCED CONSULTING ENGINEERING SERVICES

Civil Engineers • Surveyors

133 W. Washington St. • P.O. Box 218
West Point, NE 68788
Phone: (402) 372-1923



GUIDELINES FOR CONTINUING ED HOURS

This article addresses training for water and wastewater classes and both conferences.

All water and backflow licenses need to be renewed by December 31, 2023. A wastewater license is renewed 2 years after the date your license was issued. NeRWA offers water and wastewater classes at no charge.

The hours required for renewal for each license are listed below:

1. Water – 2-year renewal period requiring 10 continuing ed hours. The end of the renewal period is always December 31 of odd numbered years. An easy tip is to get 5 hours per year. Start early in the year to get your hours. **THE LAST 3 MONTHS OF THE RENEWAL YEAR GET VERY BUSY.** Register early! We have people trying to register for classes in October thru December close to the date of the class. November and December classes are usually full 2 to 3 months before the classes.
2. Wastewater – A 2-year renewal period with 20 continuing ed hours.
3. Backflow (Grade 6) – 2-year renewal period requiring 10 continuing ed hours. The end of the renewal period is always December 31 of odd numbered years. An easy tip is to get 5 hours per year. Backflow hours can be obtained at our annual conference in March and the fall conference in Gering. They both offer at least 5 backflow hours.

When you attend any class, you get a certificate. Keep that certificate in a place where you can easily find it. Sometimes you will have to send a certificate to the state department as proof of attendance. If you lose the first certificate, you can request a second one. After that, each certificate will cost \$20.

Flyers for all training classes (unless they are full way in advance) are either mailed or emailed to all our members. The classes are listed in our quarterly magazine which is also mailed to our members. We publish a training calendar each year that is mailed to all operators we have listed. This calendar is available on our website also. A tip for all operators – bookmark our website or save it in your favorites. This way you can keep updated on class dates, addresses, and the agenda. Agendas are posted about a month before the class. Cancellations, and if a class is full, will also be noted there.

All classes need to be paid before the class. If you send in a registration, include payment. If you register online, pay online. If we do not receive payment at the time of the online registration, an invoice will be sent. If payment is not received before the class, you will not be guaranteed a spot in that class.

INSTRUCTIONS TO PAY ONLINE:

Click the Pay Here link. Then click the Send link. At this screen, enter amount and what the payment is for. Follow instructions for payment.



10707 S. 149th Street
Omaha, Nebraska

“Local Service, Nationwide”

Sensus Meters & AMR Equipment
Smith-Blair Clamps & Couplings
Ford Meter Box Company
Watts/Febcu Backflow Devices
Tyler Fittings & Valve Boxes
US Pipe Ductile Iron Pipe
AY McDonald Curb Boxes
Uni-Flange Adapter Flanges
Megalug Mechanical Joint Restraint
Star Pipe Products
McElroy Equipment Rental

American Flow Control Valves & Hydrants
JM Eagle PVC Pipe
PVC Round Meter Boxes
Hymax Couplings & EZ-Max Repair Clamps
Contech Construction Products
Cherne Testing Equipment
Live Tapping Services
Northern Pipe Products
Waterous Valves & Hydrants
ADS HDPE Corrugated Pipe
GPK Products

Phone (800) 247-6811

FAX (402) 896-6379

Nebraska Good Water News

Nebraska Rural Water Association - 3390 Ponderosa Street - Wahoo, NE 68066

NeRWA Contact Information:

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Street
Wahoo, NE 68066

Office phone numbers: (800) 842-8039
(402) 443-5216
Fax: (402) 443-5274
Website: www.nerwa.org



	<u>Cell #</u>
Charles Buckley	(402) 277-6632
Scott Finke	(402) 607-2249
Adam German	(402) 443-6157
Pat Petersen	(402) 277-6699
Randy Hellbusch	(402) 443-8535
David Shroeter	(402) 607-9082
Mike Stanzel	(402) 672-9084
Amy Kemerling	
Samantha Rodgers	

<u>Email</u>
buckley@nerwa.org
scott@nerwa.org
adam@nerwa.org
pat@nerwa.org
randy@nerwa.org
david@nerwa.org
mike@nerwa.org
amy@nerwa.org
sam@nerwa.org

**NeRWA Fall Conference
GERING
CONFERENCE CENTER
Gering, Nebraska
September 12-14, 2023**

The Fall Conference is closer than you think.
We are in the beginning planning stages.

Below is the hotel we will have room blocks in.

GERING HOTEL:

Ask for NeRWA room blocks



Monument Inn & Suites

1130 M St.,
Gering, NE 69341
1-308-436-1950

Toll Free: 1-866-436-1950

Fax: 308-436-1951

Email: reservations@monumentsuites.com

The Inn is conveniently located next to the Gering Convention and Visitors Bureau and within very short walking distance to casual dining and local taverns.

**Fall Conference
September 12-14, 2023**

**Gering Conference Center
Gering, NE**



RICK PENNER

FIELD REPRESENTATIVE

(316) 651-6164

RICK@VIPTANKS.COM



Nebraska Rural Water Association

3390 Ponderosa
Wahoo, NE 68066

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MAIL U.S.A.

EQUIPMENT • SERVICE • EXPERTISE!



**THE FLOW
CONTROL
SOLUTIONS
PROVIDER**



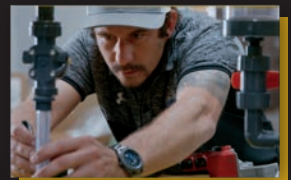
MA
Mellen & Associates Inc.



Scan for Line Card

IA & NE: 712-322-9333
MO & KS: 816-836-0202
MELLENINC.COM

WATER TREATMENT'S TOTAL SOLUTION



- ✓ Best-in-Class Process-Pump-Flow Control Equipment
- ✓ Custom Chemical Feed Skids
- ✓ Local Service and Product Support
- ✓ Proudly Serving Municipal & Industrial Markets



WWW.VESSCO.COM

515-233-8599