

Issue 2/2013

Nebraska Rural Water Association



NEBRASKA GOOD WATER NEWS

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Nebraska Good Water News

Issue 2/2013

“Keeping Our Water Safe”

Board of Directors

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“Nebraska Good Water News” is a quarterly publication of the NEBRASKA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION, 3390 Ponderosa, Wahoo, Nebraska 68066. Phone 1-800-842-8039 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.

Website: www.nerwa.org

On the cover:

Lancaster County RWD 1
Both ground storage tanks hold 500,000 gallons.
The rounded was built in 1982 and the other one
was built in 2011.

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How'd We Do and Letters From...

Village of Adams

January 18, 2013

To: EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson

The Village of Adams, population 532, supports the training and source water protection assistance provided by the Nebraska Rural Water Association through EPA funding to National Rural Water Association.

They have provided continuing education for our operators, locate services, and water rate studies.

Sincerely,

Lisa Scott
Village Clerk

CITY OF LOUP CITY
134 SOUTH 8th STREET
PO BOX 250
LOUP CITY, NE 68853-0250
PHONE (308) 745-0222
FAX (308) 745-0734
loupcity@kdsi.net



EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY

February 12, 2013

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Drive
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear NeRWA,

The City of Loup City would like to say "Thank You" for all the help you have provided to us over the years.

We would especially like to give special "Thanks" to Randy for all of his advice, efforts, and expertise.

Please accept the enclosed donation on behalf of the City of Loup City for your time and talents.

Yours truly,

CITY OF LOUP CITY

Kevin Holcomb
Roberta Kowalski

Kevin Holcomb, Utility Works Commissioner
Roberta Kowalski, City Clerk/Treasurer

Thomas J. Luettel
Chairperson

Village of Gresham
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FAX (402) 735-7385
villageofgresham310@windstream.net
Office Hours
Monday - Wednesday
8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Linda L. Eschenweck
Village Clerk



February 6, 2013

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Street
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear NE Rural Water Association:

Enclosed please find a donation to your equipment fund from the Village of Gresham. The support and assistance that you provide to small communities such as ours is truly appreciated.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we just want to say "Thank you"!

Sincerely,

Linda Eschenweck
Linda L. Eschenweck
Village Clerk

March 20, 2013

To Everyone at Nebraska Rural Water,

I cannot express how stunned I was this week to be honored at the Spring Conference. You are all truly an outstanding group of people, who I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the last 22 years. I will still be doing the Fall conference this year and the Spring conference next year.....so you can count on me for any help I can give you. Once again I am honored to receive this award. I already have it hung on the wall in my office and will treasure it as it will hold many memories for me.

With best regards,

Bob Jedlicka
Bob Jedlicka

City of Wayne

306 Pearl • P.O. Box 8
Wayne, Nebraska 68787

(402) 375-1733
Fax (402) 375-1619

Incorporated - February 2, 1884



March 6, 2013

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Drive
Wahoo, NE 68066

To Whom It May Concern:

NeRWA recently came to Wayne to undertake a leak detection service on our water distribution system. The information that this service provided our community was extremely valuable. The efficiency of our water system is a priority in Wayne, and accurately pinpointing any leaks so they could be repaired was very important. We are aware that what seems like a small leak can account for a great deal of water loss, and in today's conditions, water conservation is crucial. I'd also like to recognize and thank Russ Topp and Mike Stanzel for their expertise and attention to detail while providing us with this service.

Enclosed with this letter is a \$1,500.00 donation to the NeRWA from the City of Wayne to support this and the other valuable services your association provides to Nebraska communities.

Thank you,

Garry Poutre
Supt. of Public Works and Utilities
City of Wayne, NE



Keep
Fremont
Beautiful

April 19, 2013

1005 N. Clarkson St. • Fremont, NE 68025 • (402) 941-6122 • keepfremontbeautiful@gmail.com

Barney Whatley
2514 Winston Circle
Fremont, NE 68025

Dear Barney

Wow - another successful Eco-Fair! On behalf of the Keep Fremont Beautiful Board of Directors, thank you for your assistance at our 18th annual Eco-Fair.

KFB, as a non-profit organization, is dedicated to providing a continuous and consistent education program. Proper waste disposal, recycling, litter reduction and beautification are major themes of our educational efforts. The Eco-Fair is a platform to highlight the KFB mission, provide information and create greater awareness concerning individual responsibility for improving the environment.

The Eco-Fair is our single largest educational event and involves over 450 4th grade students from Fremont and the surrounding area. KFB simply could not continue to offer this event without the continuous and consistent support of volunteers, such as yourself, who donate many hours to the preparation and implementation of the days' activities.

Please know that we are very grateful for your help and hope that you will be available next year! The date for the 2014 Eco-Fair is April 23rd.

Thank you!

Sue Really do appreciate your help!
Sue Reyzlike
KFB Executive Director

Thank You

NE Rural Water:

Thank you for the KINDLE. It was a great way to start out the work week! Thank you to everyone that donated the prizes and to all those who sponsored /contributed to the events during the Rural Water Conference.



City of Burwell

Thanks again

Don Christen
Sewer Foreman
Water Operator

TRAINING

Water Operator Training

January 8	West Point
January 10	Firth
April 17	Mitchell
April 18	Chappell
May 7	Newman Grove
May 8	Broken Bow
June 7	Sutton
June 20	Pawnee City
July 16	Chadron
July 17	Valentine
August 14	Spencer
August 15	Bancroft
August 21	Wahoo
October 8	McCook
October 9	Minden
November 20	Mullen
December 17	Central City

Annual Conference

March 18-20

Heartland Event Center
Grand Island, Nebraska

Fall Conference

Sept. 17-19

Gering Civic Center
Gering, Nebraska

Wastewater Training

January 8	Wahoo
February 13	Syracuse
March 13	Central City
March 21	Omaha
April 17	Sidney
May 15	Holdrege
May 16	Ord
June 19	Auburn
July 10	Hebron
August 13	Ogallala
September 11	Dakota City
October 15	Gering
October 16	Broken Bow
November 13	Valentine
December 10	Wahoo

Backflow Continuing Education Training

January 8	Alliance
January 9	Atkinson
February 19	Nebraska City
February 21	Norfolk-Nucor Steel
April 23	Hastings
April 25	Wymore
May 22	Valentine
May 23	O'Neill
September 3	York
September 5	Falls City
September 26	Ord
October 10	South Sioux City
November 19	Wahoo
December 10	Mitchell
December 11	Imperial
December 12	Cambridge
December 18	Wahoo

Grade 6 Backflow Prevention Cross-Connection Control Course - 5 Day

January 14-18	Wahoo
May 6-10	Wahoo
October 21-25	Wahoo

Wastewater Certification Course

January 22-25	Wahoo
April 9-12	Wahoo
June 11-14	Wahoo
August 27-30	Wahoo
October 29-Nov. 1	Wahoo

September 25 Trenching & Shoring Wahoo

September 26 Confined Space Entry Wahoo



Backflow Training Update

By Barney Whatley, Capacity Development Specialist

I have been asked numerous times why there is no hands-on testing in backflow classes. There are several reasons for this. First, it is very hard to haul the testing benches, tables, tester and spare parts around the state, especially during the winter months. In order to keep things from freezing and breaking, the test benches must be thoroughly drained, and the test kits must be hauled inside at night. When doing hands-on, I usually like to see no more than two or three people on a test bench so they all have a chance to do some testing. I can only connect seven test benches to water using the manifold I have, and if I bring all seven of them to a class, that limits the attendance to twenty-one people. There are a lot of classes that regularly exceed this number. It is also true that I no longer have a van, as it was only being used about five times a year and that was not worth keeping it licensed and insured.

Another reason for not having hands-on testing is the expense. The test benches get taken apart and put together several times at each class, and the parts have a tendency to wear out when that happens. About three years ago I spent around \$2,000 on repair parts for the benches, and most of those have already been used. During a licensing class, it is necessary to have at least three test benches that will pass in order to complete the hands-on portion of the testing. It is getting harder and harder to get three test benches in a condition where they will pass. At one time we would bring the test benches completely disassembled and give attendees a test bench and a box of parts to put together. This was extremely hard on the equipment as there were some bolts forced into the wrong holes, and the threads on the bolts or in the holes, or both were stripped.

Several years ago I produced some fake blueprints to use in class, where the attendees would draw in the plumbing and determine what type of backflow prevention would be needed for the equipment that each facility had. These were generally well accepted, but they are now getting old, and many of the attendees at the classes have seen them a number of times. If anyone out there can think of anything we could do to

make backflow classes more interesting, I am willing to try it. I will even do my very best to convince the appropriate authorities that continuing education hours should be awarded.

Everything a grade 6 technician needs to know about backflow could be presented in three or four hours, and there are not many changes in the industry. This makes it difficult to keep the classes interesting and alter the agendas for the classes. Any suggestions will be happily received and every effort will be made to try to get them accepted as a valid part of a cross connection control continuing education training seminar.

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Who Needs Training?

By Pat Petersen, Training Specialist

As we wrap up our 35th successful annual conference the need to focus on training for the upcoming year lingers in my head. What is it they need to know? When is the best time to hold these classes? Where should we hold the classes? Why do we need to address these issues? How do we want to get the point across? I think you can all see where I'm going with this. What, when, where, why, how, and now introducing the next important question; who?

Over the years the Nebraska Rural Water Association has provided training classes for water operators throughout the state. I am specifically saying water operators because the majority of the attendees are just that. The training classes we provide are more than just a day to gather 5 of the 10 CEU's needed for the renewal of a water operator's license. The conference and one-day training classes provide information about regulation updates, safety issues, drought mitigation, sampling methods and many more issues the water operator may face, as well as, a place to network. Hint: These educational opportunities are also very helpful to village boards, city councils, city administrators, and clerks.

I have been the training specialist now for 7 months and if one thing is constant when it comes to training ideas, it is how to reach the mayor, council members, board members and others involved with day-to-day operations of a water system. At our conference, board members are given a free pass for the general session. This session usually will last the entire afternoon of the first day of the conference, and focus on state and

federal regulation, issues such as the drought, and funding options for the small water systems. Along with the free pass they will also receive a wonderful meal at the conclusion of the session.

As an operator we know the most important person that needs the same training as ourselves is our assistant or back-up. He/she will learn from you just by being in the well house, treatment plant, or even in the office doing paperwork. On the flip side of that a board member will not see the reason you have an air bubble at the well house, (drawdown testing) or know the definition of ERP (Emergency Response Plan) or CCR (Consumer Confidence Report) because they are not that person standing next to you. These are not just props of a water operator, these are the "tools" or the "glue" that keep a water system operating in an efficient manner daily, weekly and, of course, yearly. For water operators and especially those operators out there that are a "one man show" it is the conference or the one-day training sessions that give you the opportunity to show your mayor, board members, council members, etc. what it really takes to be a proficient operator. So the next training session you attend, ask a council member, mayor, administrator or clerk to ride along and sit in, it just might be the most beneficial training you and everyone will have.

Once again I want to thank everyone who attended the annual conference this year! It was a tremendous success and I look forward to seeing a lot of you in the fall.



Chris Johnson
Jeff Hubby
Greg Wymore

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Collection System Backups: Reporting Requirements & Management Options

By Mike Lucas, Wastewater Technician

“Your sewer main just backed up into my finished basement! I lost irreplaceable, priceless family heirlooms! The City is going to pay for this! If this happens again you will personally be cleaning it up!”

If you haven’t received a call similar to this then chances are you will. These calls seem to come most often at night, on weekends and on holidays. As operators we know that we cannot prevent all collection system backups but that customer with the flooded basement generally doesn’t understand that fact and is extremely unhappy to say the least. These are very uncomfortable and emotion-filled events that cost everyone in both dollars and respect.

In this article we are going to discuss the backup reporting requirements for your system to be in compliance with the NDEQ and some management options that we have.

Following is the latest information that I have regarding notification requirements:

A. Immediate Reporting

The permittee shall report to the Director any overflow that may endanger health or the environment from a sanitary sewer or any unauthorized overflow from a combined sewer over which the permittee has ownership or operational control. Any information shall be provided orally within 24 hours from the time the permittee becomes aware of the circumstances.

1. At a minimum, the report shall identify:

- a. The location of the overflow;**
- b. The receiving water (if there is one);**
- c. The duration of the overflow; and**
- d. The estimated volume of the overflow**

2. An overflow is any spill, release or diversion of municipal sewage, including:

- a. An overflow that results in a discharge to waters of State (other than a combined sewer overflow that is authorized by a permit); and**
- b. An overflow of wastewater, including a waste water backup into a building (other than a backup caused solely by a blockage or other malfunction in a privately owned sewer or building lateral), even if that overflow does not reach waters of the State.**

B. Written Reports

The permittee shall also provide a written report to the Director for any overflow identified under paragraph (A) within 5 days of the time the permittee becomes aware of the circumstances. The written report shall

contain a description of:

- 1. The location of the overflow;**
- 2. The receiving water (if there is one);**
- 3. An estimate of the volume of the overflow;**
- 4. A description of the sewer system component from which the release occurred (e.g., manhole, constructed overflow pipe, crack in pipe);**
- 5. The estimated date and time when the overflow began and stopped or will be stopped;**
- 6. The cause or suspected cause of the overflow;**
- 7. Steps taken or planned to reduce, eliminate, and prevent recurrence of the overflow and a schedule of major milestones for those steps;**
- 8. If reasonably made, an estimate of the number of persons who came into contact with wastewater from the overflow; and**
- 9. Steps taken or planned to mitigate the impact(s) of the overflow.**

C. Sampling

The overflow should be sampled for Carbonaceous Biochemical Oxygen Demand, Total Suspended Solids, pH, Ammonia and e-coli. Sample results should be submitted to the Department upon receipt of the analytical results.

I would suggest that you may find this as part of future permits. A violation then would be of your NPDES permit. Times have certainly changed.

Operators know that often times in the real world “cause” is not that easily determined. Was it a lack of main maintenance, was it unacceptable items introduced into the main, was it a service line obstruction or did the customer have their service line rodded and the roots were pushed into the main causing a system backup? Often times root infiltration happens at the service line tap into the main. What is your City/Village policy? Is the customer responsible for the tap and if so, is the customer aware of that policy?

Document! Document! Document! I would suggest that you have a formal written maintenance program which details a regular collection system schedule to completely clean your mains within a specified number of years (suggest 3 years). Evaluate problem areas utilizing video inspection. Regularly replace old or damaged mains. Document everything including your routine maintenance and repairs in your O & M file. Take photographs and then take some more photographs. If you have a backup that you determine not to be from your main that should also be documented. Be

continued on next page

sure to always document names, dates, time, addresses and any other relevant information.

Communicate! Communicate! Communicate! Regularly publish contact numbers for your emergency responders. Develop a public information program to inform your customers how they can help to prevent collection system backups into their homes and those of their neighbors. I have examples of bill stuffers that might help you in these areas. Don't forget to communicate with your elected officials and/or appointed supervisors also.

It is our public responsibility to reduce the frequency of these problems to the best of our ability and certainly within the limitations within which we serve that same public. As an operator our survival may depend on it.

As I complete this article I can't help but think of the victims of the Boston bombing. It sort of puts things in perspective, doesn't it?



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You Won't Believe This!

By Russ Topp, Circuit Rider

OK, maybe you will. At least now I have your attention! You may have heard of this trick, but for those of you who haven't, I will try to explain it in this article.

This is for anyone who suspects they may have a leak on a water main that crosses a stream, river or swampy area. This will tell you if the water main is leaking and even how much the main is leaking! I have been to several water systems that have water lines crossing low lying areas that have cattails growing in them and I have asked "Have there always been cattails growing here?" Usually the reply is, "I don't really know." There are a lot of water systems that have water mains crossing rivers or streams, especially rural water districts. This always makes me wonder, "Is there a leak on this pipe?" This trick will work on long lengths of pipe, as long as there are no services on it and even if it is plastic pipe. Here is how it works.

You will need to install two valves in the pipe that you know shut off 100%, one on either side of the stream or length of pipe in question. On the "upstream" side of the pipe in question you will need to tap the water main on both sides of the valve. This can be a permanent installation check point by installing a meter pit and a meter yolk for checks in the future. From each tap run a 3/4 inch pipe to the meter pit and install a curb stop on each side. From the curb stop run the pipes to the meter yolk. You can use a 3/4 inch residential meter in this pit.

To check if there is a leak on the pipe in question simply shut both main valves, open the curb stops at the meter pit and see if the meter is turning. If the meter is turning you will know if the pipe is leaking and you can time the leak to determine how much it is leaking.

This will cost a little money, but will be a sure way to rule out a leak under a river, stream or a swamp. If installed with a meter pit this can be used five or ten years down the road or more.

If this is something that may work for your system give me a call and I will come out and visit with you about it.

Municipal Automation & Control

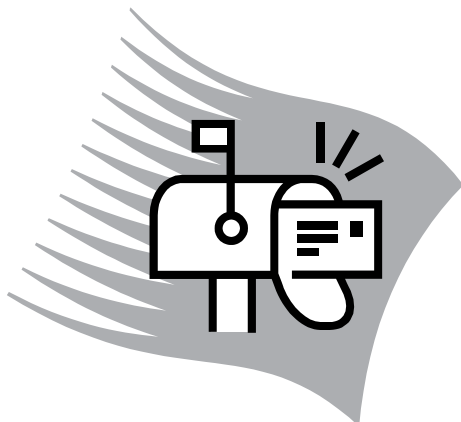
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bill.s@municipalautomation.com



MAILING ADDRESSES FOR MEMBER SYSTEM OPERATORS

If you want your mail sent to a specific address, PLEASE inform your clerk of that address. Then when your clerk completes the system's membership renewal form, the address you prefer will be included. That will help us when we update our database and will help you get your mail delivered where you would like it.

Thank you.



Preparing For Your Sanitary Survey

By Mike Stanzel, Deputy Circuit Rider

If you currently operate a community water system or a non-transient, non-community water system you can expect to get a sanitary survey inspection every three years. Those who operate a non-community water system will get one every five years. Some operators may dread these visits, but most welcome the opportunity to sit down and get some questions answered or tips on improving their day-to-day operations.

There are several things you can do to make your system inspection go smoother. Take some time to walk around and inspect your system prior to the field representative's arrival. Basic cleanliness goes a long ways. That pile of greasy rags that's been laying in the corner of your well house for two and half years has got to go. Also, make sure if something is broken to get it fixed. If you have a pressure gauge that's older than you are and hasn't worked since you have been there, buy a new one and get it installed. It only takes a short time to install and every field rep. will write you up for improper maintenance.

The next item that almost every operator gets written up on is not having a proper screen on the blow off on the well, the overflow pipe on your tower, or standpipe. If your piping in the well house is very rusty, get a good quality metal paint and spruce up the piping and valves. Check through your records and find out the last time your tower/storage facility was inspected. The state requires this to be done every five years. If you are close or it's been longer than five years since your last inspection, start making some phone calls to schedule an inspection.

They are also going to check to see if you have been doing your draw down readings. These readings are required once per month from May 1st through September 30th and once every three months from October 1st through April 30th. If you have not been doing these or do not know how to perform these, call one of us at NeRWA and we will be happy to assist you.

One item that is easily overlooked is the yearly cross connection/backflow public education flyer. These are required to be distributed to each consumer, or smaller systems can post them in a prominent place. Make sure you keep a dated copy and put it in your file for inspection. Along these lines you are also required to do a cross connection control survey every five years. There are several different forms that are approved by the state. This is a rather lengthy process especially for larger systems as the state requires a 100% response on these.

To help your sanitary survey go smoothly try and get all you paperwork and records in one place. This eliminates having to run all over town, i.e., city hall, water plant, well house, tower etc.

If you do get a section A violation you have 30 days to respond in writing how you plan to correct your deficiencies. My primary job is providing assistance with sanitary surveys. If you need assistance call me at 402-672-9084 or Scott Sprague at 402-471-0088 to be put on the state's 2% priority list. This will make you eligible for assistance free of charge.

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2013 Conference



ence Moments





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 and see how long it gets. Either send a photo to our office or email a picture for our website.

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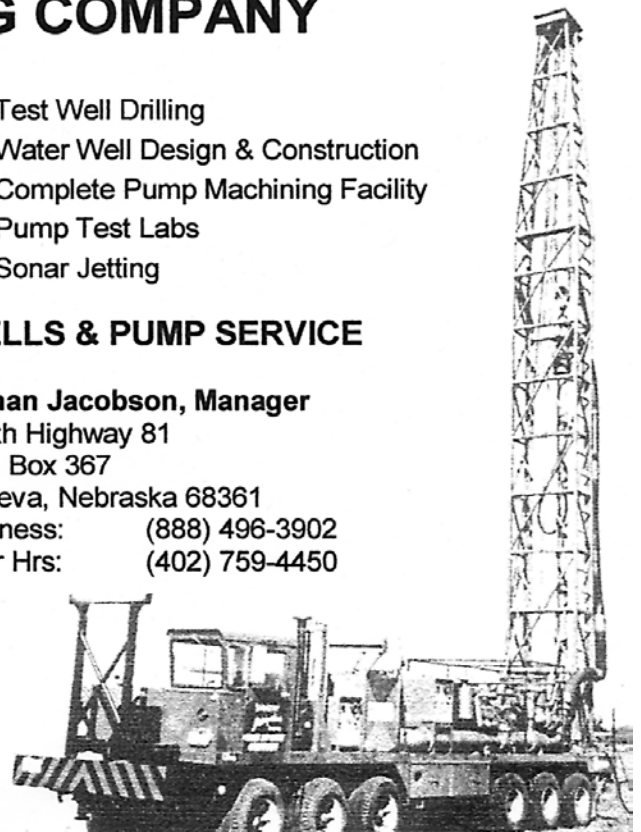
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MUNICIPAL & INDUSTRIAL DIVISION





35th Annual Conference in Review

By Pat Petersen, Training Specialist

The Nebraska Rural Water Association's 35th Annual Conference was held March 18-20, 2013, at the Heartland Events Center in Grand Island, Nebraska. This was the second year for the conference to be held at the larger venue and once again attracted over 500 operators, exhibitors, presenters and guests combined. There were 14 hours for water recertification, 7 hours for backflow recertification and 11 hours for wastewater approved. On-site wastewater and well drillers CEU's were also obtainable at the conference. The conference started at 1 p.m. on Monday the 18th with a welcome from Nebraska Rural Water Association's Board President, Tom Goulette, and concluded on Wednesday the 20th at 2 p.m.

After a social hour and a meal the rural water association hosted "game night" Monday evening back at the Midtown Holiday Inn. The event was very well attended and included several different games to test one's skills. Some of the games included Wii bowling, putt-putt golf, basketball, bean bag golf, and darts. Two of the big winners on game night were Howard Last from Scotia and Bill Zoucha from Monroe.

After a full day of classes on Tuesday the 19th it was time for some food and entertainment. The NeRWA hosted a banquet, awards night and also provided entertainment in the main arena at the events center.

Every year at the annual conference the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services presents the outstanding operator awards. This year's award winners were Terry Schroeder from the City of Tekamah, and Paul Benitz with East Richardson Rural Water District #2. Congratulations to both of these operators for their excellence in the drinking water field and best of luck to them as they continue their outstanding work as water operators.

The recipients for the 2013 NeRWA scholarships were also announced. They were Anna Grovijohn and Nathan Weatherby. Anna is the daughter of Tom Grovijohn, the Utilities Superintendent in Dodge, Nebraska. Nathan is the son of Troy Weatherby, the Managing Director of the Beaver Lake Association.

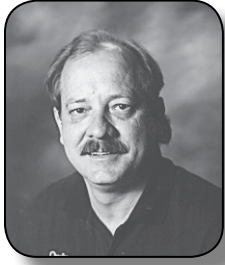
Congratulations to these two outstanding students and their families.

This year the "Best Drinking Water" in Nebraska title goes to the City of Curtis. Curtis will now compete in the National Rural Water Association's Great American Water Taste Test in Washington, D.C. This is an annual event held at the Rural Water Rally. Congratulations and good luck to Grant Jorgensen and the City of Curtis at the national contest.

The Nebraska Rural Water Association would like to thank everyone who supported the NeRWA and attended the conference. A special thank you goes out to all of our Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze exhibitors. The generosity of these sponsors helps so much in keeping the conference costs within reach. Thank you!

A big thank you goes out to the entire NeRWA board for all of their help and support. Each and every one of you contributed in your own way whether it was with game night, round tables or presentations. A special thank you to board member, Gene Schroeder, who helped fill a void left by a presenter that could not attend. Most of all Gene, thanks for telling "your story" about safety.

Finally, thank you to my co-workers for all the things they did to help with the conference. But I especially want to say: Mike Stanzel - thanks for hauling the "entire" conference in the St. Mark's Lutheran Church trailer to Grand Island and back home again! Barney Whatley - thanks for setting up all of the computers, scanners, and whatever else I may be forgetting that made classroom activities and the conference go smoothly. Mike Lucas - thanks for making the "best tasting drinking water" competition go so well. Russ Topp and Randy Hellbusch - wow, you guys hauled a lot of boxes in and a lot of boxes out. Thanks a ton. Salli Kemerling and Carol Jasa - I will just call you two the "registration wizards." With a team like this how could you not look forward to planning the 2014 annual conference?



Billing for Larger Water Meters

By Randy Hellbusch, Circuit Rider

I have been asked by several systems lately about how to address billing for larger meters, especially systems that are just installing meters for the first time. There are two basic schools of thought when addressing what to charge for larger meters. Some systems charge according to the flow capabilities of a larger meter vs. the flow of a normal residential meter. This is justifiable due to the availability of water to the customer. The reasoning being if the customer has the capability of 10X the flow rate of the average size meter in the system, they should pay 10X the normal minimum.

Another alternative is to charge according to the price of meter replacement. For example if a 2” meter costs 8X more than a ¾” meter then the monthly charge for a 2” meter should be 8X the normal rate.

Then there is always the arbitrary method many systems use and no one can explain how it was derived. “It is just the way it has always been done”. Attached is a chart that explains the ratios of different meter sizes according to meter replacement costs, flow and the average of what systems are currently charging across the state for larger meters. This is a good guide, but I strongly suggest visiting with your meter supplier to get the flow or cost of the meters you are using. The chart assumes that ¾” meters are the norm. The majority of water systems in Nebraska do not currently charge extra for larger meters, but it appears that more systems are considering it according to the requests for information that we are receiving. If NeRWA can help you with this or any other issue please give us a call.

Meter Size	Meter Charge according to price	Meter Charge according to pipe flow	Average of What Systems are Currently Charging
3/4 inch	1	1	1
1 inch	1.35X	1.75X	1.5X
1.5 inch	1.75X	4X	2.5X
2 inch	5X	7.1X	4X
3 inch	8.5X	16X	7X
4 inch	12.15X	28X	12X

SUGGESTIONS!

As I begin the planning process for the 2014 annual conference I would like to reach out to you, the attendees for some entertainment suggestions. What would you like to see after the banquet? Comedian, Magician, Music, Etc. If you have any other ideas please send an e-mail to pat@nerwa.org. Your suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

Pat



Planning is the Key

By Barney Whatley, Capacity Development Specialist

This year we were fortunate enough to have all of our children and grandchildren come to our house to celebrate Easter. This does not happen near as often as my wife would like because the kids are spread around the country. We have a daughter, son-in-law, a grandson and a granddaughter living in Lincoln, a son and one grandson living in Kearney, a son, daughter-in-law and one granddaughter living in Pierre, South Dakota and a son, daughter-in-law and two granddaughters living in Houston, Texas. It is a rare occasion when we can all get together at the same time and place. The Kearney crew and the Houston crew spent the nights with us, while the Pierre crew spent the nights with our daughter-in-laws parents and the Lincoln crew commuted from their home.

The week prior to Easter was spent cleaning the house (although you could not tell it had been cleaned five minutes after the first group arrived), preparing food for our Easter celebration (which was held on Friday due to other family conflicts), and generally preparing for company. A while back, my wife decided to move furniture around (again), and she brought up the coffee table and the end tables from the basement and moved the upstairs ones downstairs. The tables that were brought upstairs have glass tops that are supported by three rings that are sort of looped together. The table top rests on three supports and the table itself sets on the floor on the edges of the three loops. After discovering that leaning on the table tops would cause them to tilt, the coffee table was removed to our closet where it would be safe from the two-year-olds. The two end tables were between and behind furniture and were deemed safe.

On Friday, everyone arrived and we had a wonderful dinner. Afterwards, the kids were playing and running around like children will, and one of the girls became fascinated with something on one of the end tables. While trying to reach it, she leaned on the top and it tilted. She quickly backed away, and nine adults sat in awe watching the table lamp rock back and forth.

Just as the lamp was settling, we all heard a crash and looked to discover that the table decoration had slipped unnoticed off of the table and broke. The decoration was an oblong glass container, similar to a baking pan held in a metal frame. This was filled with small black pebbles and two tea candles and one of those little vases containing oil with wicks sticking out of it. There were rocks everywhere, but the vase landed upright and not a drop of the scented oil was spilled. Lesson learned: two-year-olds can easily get into places you don't think they will get into. Nowhere within their reach is safe!

Later that night, the other two-year-old decided she wanted to spend the night sleeping with grandma and grandpa. Grandma thought this was a wonderful idea and so off we all went to bed. It turns out that two-year-olds do not know how to be quiet, nor do they know how to be still. She talked and talked and talked and talked, and finally she fell asleep. Grandpa really enjoyed those five or ten minutes of sleep until she started dreaming. That little girl never stops running, even when she is asleep. Grandma insists that we were making memories that we will cherish forever, but I keep pointing out that grandma was on the head side of our granddaughter, and that side does not kick. There was not much sleep to be had that night, but fortunately (for me anyway) our granddaughter decided she would sleep in her big girl bed the next night.

What I learned from this experience is that nothing ever goes quite the way you plan it, and even the best and happiest of times can have unexpected and not necessarily pleasant things happen. You need to be prepared for things you just don't foresee, because they are likely to happen when you least expect them. The old saying "Plan for the worst but hope for the best" is indeed very good advice, whether it pertains to your daily work or times of celebration. Planning is the key!

JEFF FOXWORTHY'S COMMENTS ABOUT NEBRASKA

If you buy a TV that doesn't fit in your car, and the man in the van just parking next to you, says, "Just put it in the back of my van, I have to pick up a few things and then I'll drop it off. What is your address?" And about a half hour later, the van pulls into the driveway, the man helps you get the large box in the house, refuses any form of payment, except "Thank You!", drives away and you still don't even know his name ----- then you live in Burwell, Nebraska.

If your local Dairy Queen is closed from September through May, you live in Nebraska.

If someone in a Home Depot store offers you assistance and they don't work there, you live in Nebraska.

If you've worn shorts and a parka at the same time, you live in Nebraska.

If you've had a lengthy telephone conversation with someone who dialed a wrong number, you live in Nebraska.

If "Vacation" means going anywhere south of GRAND ISLAND for the weekend, you live in Nebraska.

If you measure distance in squares of farm land, you live in Nebraska.

If you know several people who have hit a cow more than once, you live in Nebraska.

If you have gone from "heat" to "A/C" in the same day and back again, you live in Nebraska.

If you can drive 75 mph through 2 feet of snow during a raging blizzard without flinching, you live in Nebraska.

If you install security lights on your house and garage, but leave both unlocked, you live in Nebraska.

If you carry jumper cables in your car and your wife knows how to use them, you live in Nebraska.

If you design your kid's Halloween costume to fit over a snowsuit, you live in Nebraska.

If the I-80 speed limit is 75 mph -- you're going 90 and everybody is passing you, you live in Nebraska.

If driving is better in the winter because the potholes are filled with snow, you live in Nebraska.

If you know all 4 seasons: almost winter, winter, still winter and road construction, you live in Nebraska.

If you have more hours on your snow blower than miles on your car, you live in Nebraska.

If you find 10 degrees "a little chilly", you live in Nebraska.

If you understand these jokes, and forward them to all your Nebraska friends & others, you actually have lived in Nebraska.

Summary of Evaluations

NeRWA Grand Island Conference

March 18-20, 2013

TOTAL EVALUATIONS RECEIVED – 148

QUESTION #1 – Please circle which best describes your position:

a. Operator/Manager	128
b. Administrative	4
c. Board Member	3
d. Plumber	3
e. Lawn Service	1
f. State/Federal Rep.	4
g. Clerk	1
h. Other: (no explanation)	2
Backup Operator	1
MAP	1
Utility Engineer	1
Maintenance Tech.	1
Employee	1
WW Operator/Manager	1
Superintendent	1
NRD	2
No Response	1

Double positions: Operator/Manager and Board Member – 1
 Operator/Manager and Administrative – 3
 Operator/Manager and Plumber - 1
 Four positions: Operator/Manager, Administrative, Plumber, & Lawn Service - 1

QUESTION #2 – Why do you attend the NeRWA conference?

a. The training classes	52
b. The prizes/entertainment	1
c. The vendors	10
d. Chance to meet with operators	29
e. All of the above	93

QUESTION #3 – Things you liked and why?

Central location of everything.
 All the talks – learned something new.
 You all put on a good conference and there is enough variety to keep it interesting.
 The classes and different choices – get to go to what I like.
 I really liked the long breaks between sessions. It gave me time to talk to the vendors, get to the bathroom and find a seat for my next session
 Vendors – Training – Speakers – Meals
 Nice big area. Good meals. Nice variety of classes.
 Enjoy meeting other people.
 The classes - they cover a wide range of information. Also, get to talk with other operators from across the state.
 Everything. (3 of this response.)
 Food was good. Great training sessions and speakers. Lots of friendly people.
 One of the best conferences in a lot of years. Very good choices for training sessions. Food was excellent.
 Meals were delicious.
 Heartland Event Center. Very good food.
 The information I gathered.

Everything was good.
 The vendors were very informative.
 Good topics.
 Enjoyed Richard's ideas on round table.
 The classes were very informative. The people were nice and courteous. The food was great.
 Meals were great.
 Great facility, plenty of room, good equipment and accommodations. Nice mix of vendors, appreciated the regulatory updates and other advice. Motels were close by and easy to find.
 Enjoyed the open discussion classes.
 Info. on coliform & hands-on water tapping.
 Great facility. Training sessions were better.
 I enjoyed the round table discussions.
 Backflow challenge – you cover materials that are not covered in most other classes.
 Speakers and the large venue.
 Good sessions. Good meals.
 Meals were very good. Entertainment was good. Motel was good. Vendors were down. Don't know why.
 Hands-on area training.

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Visual on-screen presentations and hands-on.
The conference was very informative on all classes and good to make contact with other operators and all personnel from NeRWA, DHHS, NDEQ and all vendors to see new products and ideas.
Rich Koenig's presentations. They were some of the best ones I've ever seen. He is a very knowledgeable person and not boring.
Nice place. Good classes.
Good classes.
Good conference.
Location, training & updates to regulation. Always like the open forum/round table discussions. (Good way to find out what communities are needing.)
Training sessions, speakers and vendors. I enjoy learning.
Very organized and informative as an operator. Also liked the way meals were distributed.
All was good. (2 of this response.)
Facilities and classes were good.
Good catering – good entertainment.
Visiting with fellow operators & vendors.
Information in some of the classes was great. The operator math refresher was great review not covered often.
Information, vendors all in one location.
Backflow round table, also troubleshooting & Rich Koenig's backflow challenge.
Variety of classes.
Facility was nice. Plenty of room. Training. Great variety of presenters & informative.
Nice large meeting rooms for the most part.
The classes were very good and I learned a lot and helped refresh a lot of things I had forgot.
Classes & venue.
The training sessions are very educational and vendors are very helpful.
Training was good. Like the new technology.
Informative. They always seem to come up with something to help our job become easier. Food was awesome.
Fairfield motel was great. Friendly receptionist.
Meeting the vendors. Meeting the staff. Putting faces with voices that you talk to over the phone.
Chance to talk with other operators. See how they do things.
Training classes were good. Got hours for water, wastewater and backflow in several classes.
Learning more about policies and rules.
Classes. They were very informative and useful information.
Finding out about new regs & refreshed on old ones. See what the vendors have that is new and better. Classes were very good.
I think that the NeRWA conference is a great place to learn and visit with other operators.
Like the location, the meals, classes are a good length and keep moving along.
Everything was OK. I enjoyed the whole convention.
It was a good conference.
Overall the whole conference – good job.
Training sessions – Round table discussions – Informative – Lots of hours for different licenses: w, ww, wd
Meet different people.
Good flow, nice venue.
Classes. Learned a lot.
Training; Vendors; Location; Food
I liked the BF round table – lots of good discussion about different things that happen in communities.
Vendors – information
Speakers – all very good – Jack Daniels always fantastic

Food – wow
Rich – Round table backflow
Backflow class, Quiz, Locating class
Existing drought conditions, small system round table, and maintaining water quality were all very informative.
Nice facility, good speakers and topics, food was good.
Opportunity to learn new technologies.
Trench incident – makes you think.
Vendors were great. Food was also great.
Food
Plenty of room, well organized and very educational.
Trenching story on Wed.
Trenching stories – real eye opener.
I like the open set up so all the classes & vendors are easy to find. I think the speakers all were very informative.
Great speakers on line stopping & tapping. Knew the technical side well, but the hands-on field application was great.
Change in training session types.
Good topics & speakers. Comfortable chairs & good meals.
Overall meetings were good. Food good.
Enjoyed all of the conference.
Easy to get to Center. Close to motel. Speakers knowledgeable.
Most everything.
Classes – I find new ways and procedures to perform tasks.
More room for class. A lot better on food service & prep this year.
Break.
All of it.
Staff very helpful. Thanks!!!
Classes were excellent. Vendors were spread out which was nice.
Meetings & discussions with vendors, other operators, managers and directors.
Everything. All things are helpful.
Round table discussions.
I liked the training from HHS & Rural Water.
Training, meals and speakers were great.
Good settings.
Meet other operators. Keep up with the changes.
Food. Most all of the speakers were easy to hear.
Food & serving system.
The training sessions were the best because of the valuable experience of these fine people.
Food, friends, learning new things.
Rules updates help to keep us informed on new rules.
I like the round table discussions. Hearing other people's problems and how they fixed it is helpful. Good entertainment this year! The food line went better this year also
My first time here. I found it very interesting! Speakers were very easy to listen to!
The information contained in the sessions was helpful.
Talking to vendors was also helpful to get prices and new products.
Getting to talk with new people.
Good instructors. Topics well covered.
Classes. Good information. Meals. Prizes and entertainment.
Class sizes. Kept on schedule.
Like the open rooms.
The classes were good. Meals good & everything was nice.
Training sessions. Presentation by climatologist. Backflow round table had good discussion.

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The speakers were fabulous (bias there). The meals were very good and the way tables were released proved to work very well.
 Fonner facility – great layout for conference. Good topics & speakers.
 Hands-on sessions – keep these.
 Classes in backflow and ww well and water helps those who have more than one.
 In all it was pretty good.
 Good vendors and good talks, people engaged in questions.
 Learned some things at some classes.
 The meals were good and served in a timely manner.
 Good classes. Learn more at Round table discussions.

QUESTION # 4 – Things you disliked and why?

None. (20 of this response.)
 Exhibition area and dining area were on the cold side.
 Tolerable but not comfortable.
 Hard to understand speech in arena area. Cool in arena area.
 I think everything was pretty good.
 Nothing – very good conference.
 Need to have more motel rooms closer to Fonner Park. Have had to stay at motels/hotels on 281 last 2 years.
 Temperature a little cool.
 Monday’s evening meal. Cold coffee. Poor meat. Conference not at a hotel.
 Need more hands-on demos.
 No dislikes.
 Dining area is cold.
 Hotel separate – very unhandy.
 Facilities are functional, but cold and dreary. The microphone and PA system in the “dining hall” were nearly worthless.
 Shorten classes. Some get too long and boring.
 I think Columbus was a better place. The driving and closeness of the rooms was nice. I don’t think the meals are any better either.
 Not really anything.
 Banquet area was cool/drafty at times.
 Meetings too crowded sometimes.
 Maybe too much time between classes.
 Not having hotels beside the venue.
 If price keeps going up, will not be able to attend next year.
 Wished rooms were closer to classroom.
 Time in between classes too long.
 Too much food – not enough beer.
 Not having tables in all meeting rooms. It’s just nice to have a table in front of you during a session.
 Class selection was down.
 Hotel and conference too far apart.
 Not much hands-on exercises – GPS is example
 A little crowded in some sessions.

Vendors could have been more interactive.
 AMR/AMI Metering @ 3:30-4:30, classroom 3, Tuesday.
 Nothing but a big sales pitch.
 Classrooms – small, overcrowded.
 Not winning backflow challenge.
 Too long of breaks.
 No ketchup or hot sauce for breakfast on Wednesday morning.
 Driving to and from motel. Seemed like an awful long day.
 Meeting area should be located at or closer to motel.
 The noon meals could be a little better.
 The meals were terrible. I actually got sick. Wednesday noon was worst. That one made me sick.
 More hours for wastewater. 1 hour for wastewater for Monday! Really!!! Why start classes at 1:00 on Monday?
 Won’t come ‘til Tuesday next year.
 Classes that run overtime.
 Looked forward to confined space classes.
 Some of the food.
 The cost of conference.
 Tuesday was too long – need one bigger break.
 No hot sauce for breakfast. CAT dealer or rep. was not here.
 I think it will get better at this facility every year.
 Nothing, good meetings.
 Too cold outside!!
 Not enough backflow hours to be had.
 Tuesday noon meal.
 Had a couple of presentations I wanted to see that the time conflicted with another one.
 Breaks are too long.
 A lot of the same classes.
 Maybe the breaks between sessions on Tuesday could go from 30 min. to 15 min. Otherwise I like the way the conference is run.
 Too many class sessions. Not enough hands-on.
 Acoustics in classrooms.
 Comedian wasn’t too funny.
 Audio for entertainment needs to be looked at.
 Hands-on same stuff as always.
 After coming to conferences for many years I still like Columbus. As a center Grand Island to me is just too large and a distance from motel.
 Cold in big room when eating.
 Motel room and classes not in same place.
 Hotels are 6 blocks away.
 Kind of cold. Had to keep coat on the whole time.
 The Heartland Convention Center is great, but having everything in one place (hotel, classrooms & entertainment) like Columbus, seems better.
 Some of the information & organization of conference seemed to come up a little short.
 Hard to hear in eating area.
 No ketchup for breakfast. Speaker system for main floor.
 Announcements/entertainment was a bit “uneven.” I believe that a speaker system more at floor or stage level would be a more “understandable” solution.
 Midtown.
 Building was cold.
 Not much of any.
 Banquet /Tradeshaw area was always cold. Would be nice to have hotels within walking distance like the setup they have in Kearney.
 Some classes very boring!

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QUESTION # 5 – Any suggestions for future conferences?
 Add more round table interaction chances.

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Keep the backflow challenge. It is a good refresher for those that don't test regularly.
 I won a door prize but initially did not even know there was such a thing or where to check. (I was only here on Tuesday and it may have been covered before I was here.)
 More hands-on training.
 Keep up the good work. (6 of this response.)
 Back to Columbus (!?) or Kearney.
 The classes were very informative and I learned a lot this year.
 Recliners.
 Move to Kearney where hotels surround convention center.
 Maybe more round tables even with like breakdown of fire hydrants, valves or whatever.
 You guys try your hardest and you can't please everyone.
 Thanks for a great job.
 More of the challenge or open discussion type classes.
 Bigger rooms.
 Condense agenda.
 I would like to try Kearney. I think there are people who don't like this venue.
 Very well run.
 Get more speakers from DEQ.
 I know you work hard. It isn't easy.
 More GIS applications/mapping and infrastructure.
 Coat racks.
 Was very good.
 Vendors could have more handouts.
 Have conference in a motel so don't have to drive after social hours.
 Q & A session – Repeat Q so all hear.
 A-OK.

All in one area within 300' walking.
 Start classes at 8:00 to 4:30 – 5:00 not 9:00 to 6:00. Dumb.
 Somewhere new.
 Class on writing grants.
 No – was happy.
 I hope you keep getting all the hours you need for WW (10) – W (10) & BF (5) at this conference.
 More topics.
 No – Keep up the good work.
 Keep the convention in the central part of the state.
 More round table discussions.
 New topics.
 I would like to see more sessions based on safety.
 Warmer weather.
 More trench & shore.
 Could not hear some presenters without microphones.
 Keep backflow quiz.
 Keep up the round table discussions. Found these sessions to be the most informative. Mapping with GIS/GPS. More info. & hands-on with GPS equipment.
 More round table.
 Put a training session on VFD's and different pumping.
 All is OK.
 More vendors with construction equipment.
 Some speakers need a wireless mike.
 I think more vendors would be a good idea.
 Recognize the part-time operators, the ones that hold down full-time jobs and do the water operator part after hours.
 The same paperwork, same responsibilities and only make \$800-\$1,000 a year compared to some of the ones (full-time) that make \$14k-\$30k. Those (the part-time ones) are

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the ones that need extra thanks and recognition.
Could be warmer in the building.
Somewhere that has the hotels w/in walking distance.
Possibly go to selling meal tickets so you don't get hit with paying for excess food.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Very good!
Very good conference. Best I have ever been to. I plan to attend next year.
Thank you for all your work. Your time and efforts are appreciated.
Thank all of you.
If you need BF hours, you can't get 10 hours of water and 10 hours of WW. Need to give W and WW hours on all BF courses. (Need to get 10W, 10 WW, and 5 BF at this conference since this is the only school I can go to every year.
Staff does a great job. Still a fun conference and learn lots. It's time to drop the group praying. We're (mostly) public employees. We're not in church. It's 2013. This is America. We don't all share religious beliefs, or any at all. Let people pray for themselves.
Overall good job.
Keep up the good work. NeRWA is a great Association to be a part of.
Great conference.
The hotels should be notified to not charge cities sales tax. New law this year. League of Nebraska Municipalities. Way better than Columbus. NeRWA does a great job!
Overall A+++ conference.
Good conference. Keep up the good work. Classes with double hours.

Round table sessions were really good!
Would be nice to have convention in same hotel like Columbus was. Kearney could do it. Too far to travel from nice hotels to Fonner Park. No break should be longer than 15 minutes. People can talk to vendors during meetings if they need the time.
More refresher classes in WW in Eastern NE.
Good job at rearranging classes & hours for Wed.
It was a good conference.
Food good.
Great job again.
Another great conference. Good job and thank you all!!
Thank you! (2 of this response.)
Village of Brock.
Overall enjoyed it. Thank you.
This was my first time and you did a great job. Looking forward to coming again. Thanks for all your hard work.
Had a good time. Look forward to next year.
Thanks again, good time.
Enjoyed it.
An excellent job by Rural Water and the Event Center. Keep up the great job!! Thanks to everyone involved.
Good job.
As a new operator this was my first NeRWA conference and just wanted to say the conference really helped me as a beginner in the field. Thanks.
All was very good.
Thanks NeRWA for a great conference!
Good food.
Good work by all the staff and Board.
Every few years move to Norfolk or Lincoln then back to Grand Island.

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Congratulations to Don Christen of Burwell! He won the Kindle from the evaluation drawing. 148 people turned in their evaluations and had a chance to win.

NeRWA appreciates getting your feedback. The areas that the majority of the people who responded liked the most were the class sessions, the meals, learning new information, the vendors, the speakers and the opportunity to visit with other people; operators, staff, etc. The two things that were mentioned the most as dislikes were the fact that the Event Center was cold and that the motels were not right by the Event Center. Also, there were a variety of suggestions but the one that was repeated the most was to have more or definitely continue to have the round table discussions where there are open discussions.

All the information that you shared will be considered as plans are made for 2014's annual conference. Thank you for your valuable input. It will help us have an even better conference next year.



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