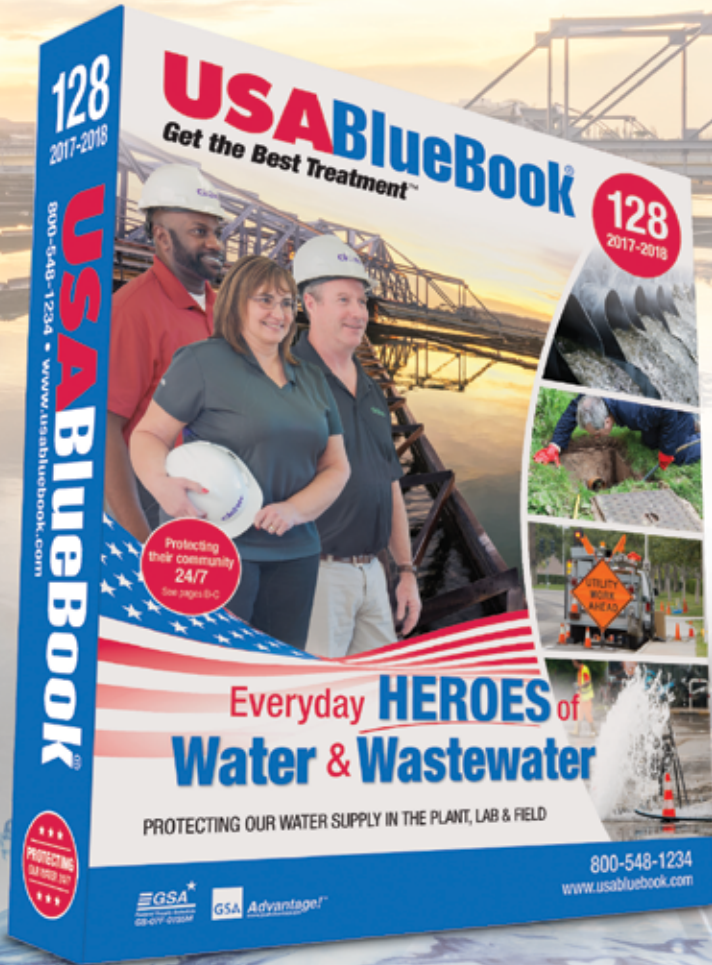


Issue 2/2017

# Nebraska Rural Water Association



**NEBRASKA GOOD WATER NEWS**



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# Nebraska Good Water News

# Issue 1/2017

*“Keeping Our Water Safe”*

*Board of Directors*

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### **President:**

Tom Goulette, National Director  
444 S. Main St.  
West Point, Nebraska 68788  
(402) 372-2466

### **Vice-President:**

Greg Bouc  
Box 353  
Valparaiso, Nebraska 68065  
(402) 784-2313

### **Secretary/Treasurer:**

Larry Wennekamp  
124 E. 11th Street  
Schuyler, Nebraska 68661  
(402) 352-5444

Dennis Hoback  
317 Hoback Road  
Union, NE 68455  
(402) 235-3077

George Wagner  
PO Box 226  
Hooper, NE 68031  
(402) 654-3649

Tom Grovijohn  
226 N. Elm  
Dodge, NE 68633  
(402) 693-2239

Jordan Bang  
PO Box 98  
Bennet, NE 68317  
(402) 782-3495

### **Staff:**

Amy Kemerling, Office Assistant  
Salli Kemerling, Office Manager  
Carol Jasa, Secretary  
Randy Hellbusch, Circuit Rider  
Mike Stanzel, Circuit Rider  
Barney Whatley, GPS Specialist  
Mike Lucas, Wastewater Technician  
Pat Petersen, Training Specialist  
Ken Halvorsen, Source Water Specialist

Website: [www.nerwa.org](http://www.nerwa.org)

### **On the cover:**

Stratton Water Tower.

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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.*

# How'd We Do and Letters From...

## Village of Diller

Box 157  
Diller, Nebraska 68342

February 14, 2017

Nebraska Rural Water Assoc  
3390 Ponderosa  
Wahoo NE 68066

Dear Sirs,

Please find enclosed a check in the amount of \$100 for your help to camera the sewer line for the Village of Diller. It helped us determine that there was a build-up in one of the lines, and we were able to clean out the line before any back-up could occur.

You have always been helpful in providing information and/or assistance, and the Diller Village Board appreciates the support.

Sincerely,

*Leatha Christ*  
Leatha Christ  
Village Clerk

## Village of Allen

100 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street - PO Box 99  
Allen, NE 68710

Phone 402-635-2444 - Fax # 402-635-2523

March 20, 2017

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Drive  
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear NeRWA:

Please except this donation for all you do and have done for the Village of Allen. We really appreciate all of your help and good service. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Village of Allen, NE

Dear Staff and Board of NeRWA -  
Thank you for the beautiful bouquet for my retirement from the Water District. Thank you to the staff who has helped me in my 32 years with the Water District; whether it be answering my questions, assisting the district with problems in the field, the presenting classes for renewing my Water operators Certificate, organizing the Annual NeRWA Conference with important updates of the Health & Human System and State Lab updates, new technology from maintaining the wells to billing programs -

Thank you to the board who gives their time and talents in governing the Nebraska Rural Water Association.

Thank you again for your thoughtfulness!

Sincerely,  
*Sharon*

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Assistant Manager: Troy Callaway

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Cellular 402/430-9686  
Cellular 402/430-9680  
Fax 402/994-2550

**Administrative Assistant: Tina Bergmann**

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**Ted Retzlaff** - (430-1546 or 430-5903)  
Tipton Township  
**Dean Douglas** - (994-4805)  
Stove Creek Township

February 9, 2017

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Drive  
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear NeRWA Board of Directors and Employees,

We can't put into words how grateful we are for all of the help during our E-Coli crisis.

Mike Stanzel came to our aid and was very professional. We would have been in a world of hurt had it not been for Mike and NeRWA.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

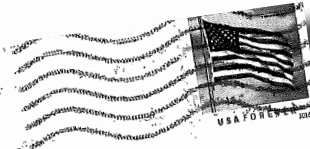
We hope that you can put a \$500 donation to good use as you see fit.

Sincerely,

Cass County Rural Water District 2



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Dear Ken + Barney  
Thank you for joining us at  
the 22nd annual EcoFair, we  
appreciate your efforts to help  
educate our local 4th grade  
students on various environmental  
topics. We hope to see you  
again next year!

*Barney Simpson*

# Village of Kenesaw

109 N Smith Avenue - PO Box 350  
Kenesaw, NE 68956  
(402) 752-3222

March 24, 2017

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Street  
Wahoo NE 68066

Dear Randy and the NeRWA Team,

We would just like to take a moment and extend our appreciation for the support provided by NeRWA to our community here in Kenesaw.

Randy, thank you for your assistance with the water rate study completed last month. Your insight and knowledge have been so helpful as we navigate through this new water meter process. We appreciate the time you took to help us sift through what our needs were, and helping us prepare and plan for a successful future.

We also want to thank the rest of the NeRWA team for their overall support and assistance. You are all a great resource and we appreciate your willingness to provide help.

Sincerely,

  
Village of Kenesaw, Board of Trustee's

## CITY OF GENOA

107 N. Walnut PO Box 279  
Genoa, Nebraska 68640 (402) 993-2330

Randy Rood-Mayor  
Jaysen Melcher-Council President  
Julie Connelly-Council Member  
Carol Engel-Council Member  
Jane Swanson-Council Member

Gerri Swanson-City Administrator/Clerk  
Jolene Andreasen-City Treasurer  
Andy Ditter-Water/Street Superintendent  
Bill Swanson-Park/Sewer Superintendent  
James Roebuck-City Employee

April 19, 2017

NERWA  
3390 Ponderosa Drive  
Wahoo NE 68066

Dear Randy,

On behalf of the Mayor, City Council, and the Employees of the City of Genoa, we would like to thank you for all the hours you have spent for the Water Department in Genoa. Without the services you have provided for the city, we would not be able to provide our citizens with the quality water that they deserve. Once again thank you,

Sincerely,



Gerri Swanson  
Administrator/Clerk  
City of Genoa

# City of Cambridge

Life is good!

March 29, 2017

Leak Detection Nebraska Rural Water Association

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa  
Wahoo, NE. 68066

Dear Pat and Mike,

The City of Cambridge wishes to express our appreciation for both Mike and Pat for their help in finding several water leaks in our system. Your assistance was invaluable.

Enclosed is a donation to show our gratitude. Thanks so much!

Sincerely,



David Houghtelling  
Utility Supervisor  
City of Cambridge

Dear Neewa,

I would like to express my sincere thank you to Barney Whatley & Mike Stangel for helping me with our water tower issues back in October 2016. With the knowledge of your crew Mike was able to help me solve the issue with our water tower.

It is comforting to know that I as a water operator can always depend on you for advice and wisdom when ever there are issues that I need a second opinion on. You guys are awesome!!

Thank you so much! It was such a relief to know that I was right in my course of actions & the problem with our water tower was the fault + neglect of our contractor. Thank you again  
Village of Veston  
Water Operator James S. Beck



# 2017 TRAINING

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

October 16-20                      Wahoo

## Wastewater Certification Course

August 15-18                      Wahoo - Mechanical  
 October 10-13                      Wahoo - Mechanical  
 November 28-29                      Wahoo- Lagoon

## Wastewater Training

May 3                      Chadron  
 May 23                      Wahoo  
  
 June 1                      Imperial  
  
 July 6                      Wakefield  
  
 August 3                      Hastings  
 August 24                      Albion (SUMW)  
  
 September 7                      Wahoo  
  
 October 5                      Atkinson  
  
 November 2                      Omaha  
  
 December 7                      Burwell

## Water Operator Training

May 17                      Wayne  
  
 June 14                      Sutton  
  
 July 12                      Chadron  
  
 August 8                      Atkinson  
 August 10                      Loup City  
  
 October 17                      McCook  
 October 18                      Axtell  
  
 November 15                      Mullen  
  
 December 5                      Auburn  
 December 20                      Wahoo

## Backflow Continuing Education Training

May 10                      Valentine  
  
 September 26                      Giltner  
 September 27                      Ord  
  
 October 24                      South Sioux City  
 October 25                      O'Neill  
  
 November 7                      Wahoo  
  
 December 5                      Mitchell  
 December 6                      Ogallala  
 December 7                      Cambridge  
 December 13                      Wahoo

**August 23**                      Trenching & Shoring      Wahoo

**August 24**                      Confined Space Entry      Wahoo

## **Fall Western Conference**

**Sept. 12-14**

Gering Civic Center  
 Gering, Nebraska

## **CLASS REGISTRATION**

**Call to register or register online for classes. However, a REGISTRATION FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED for all backflow classes, the confined space class, and the trenching class. If we do not receive the form by 5 days before the class, you will not be registered. All fee-based classes held in Wahoo must be prepaid. If you have registered for one of the Wahoo classes and cannot attend, please notify us because we always have a waiting list. Remember this is renewal year for water and backflow licenses. Register early to guarantee a spot in these classes.**





## **NPDES**

*By Mike Lucas, Wastewater Technician*

One of the issues that I notice across the state is wastewater operators that don't have a copy of their system's NPDES Permit. Operators should have access to a current copy of their permit and be very familiar with it.

Permits are frequently changed when they are renewed. NDEQ has started notifying the system of permit changes and that certainly helps as long as the operator also receives them. Don't just assume that there are no changes. Also, don't think that your permit is the same as all other towns because it probably isn't. I have seen differences in discharge limits between neighboring towns discharging into the same receiving waters. Over the years, I have seen many changes in loading limits (kg/day), concentration

limits (mg/l), sampling, different seasonal limits, report only parameters, etc.

One very astute operator that I recently visited with knew his permit inside and out. He had taken the certification test to upgrade his license to a higher grade. He challenged the answer to one of the test questions that dealt with sampling because it differed from his permit. NDEQ deserves a lot of credit for researching other permits and finding several others like his. Ultimately, they threw out the question which made the difference between him passing or not passing. I've known that to happen on a couple of instances. Years ago, I was advised, "Try to know more about your permit than the regulator does."

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The Nebraska Rural Water Association would like to congratulate Miss Ellie Petersen for being named the recipient of the Joe and Jean Palmer Endowment Fund Scholarship. The scholarship is sponsored by the National Rural Water Association.

Ellie will graduate from Yutan High School on May 13, 2017 and will continue her education at Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln and study pediatric medicine. Ellie is the daughter of Patrick (NeRWA Training Specialist) and Nicole Petersen. She also has a little brother Sam.

Congratulations, Ellie!



## Severe Weather Awareness

*By Mike Stanzel, Circuit Rider*

Well, spring is finally here and no doubt it is the busiest time of year for water operators. Trying to keep up on the mowing and weeds alone can be a full-time job for most of you.

Along with spring and warmer temperatures also comes the threat of severe weather. With thunderstorms the past two mornings and the forecast calling for possible severe weather later today, it seems only fitting to write this quarter's article on weather.

For whatever reason, it seems like when these storms pop up, they seem to be more intense than years past. I mean, we had tornados, thunderstorms and hail on Christmas. I don't know what the reason is. Some say it's global warming and some say it's the Russians??? But none the less, these storms can wreak havoc on a water system. I have personally experienced how a severe storm can devastate a town by losing power for three days. I thought I would share a few things that might help you out should this happen in your town.

Let's start with your emergency plan and critical incident contact list. Make sure these are updated and copies are readily available in different locations. These contain phone numbers of the emergency manager, Red Cross, local utilities and city officials. You do not want to be scrambling around after a disaster to find a phone number. One problem I had was the cell phone towers were jammed for quite some time and calls could not be completed, so an alternative means of communication, such as, portable or two-way radios may be a good idea.

Another thing to think about is if your power goes out, what are you going to do? Does your well have backup power? Does the generator start automatically? Is the battery charged? Has the generator been serviced and tested regularly? Has it been tested under load? If you have a right-angle drive, is the shaft and tractor ready to go?

That's just a few things to think about on the water side. Now think about the sewer. If people have water they are going to continue to flush, so does your lift station have backup power? These will not take long to fill up.

Another problem we faced were tree limbs down everywhere to the point that most every street was impassible. This is where you need to take a look at your equipment. Do you have a skid loader or pay loader tractor, because this is what you're going to need to clear debris. If you don't, you need to make plans ahead of time with local contractors. In our case, we had two local gravel pits right outside of town with huge pay loaders that showed up minutes after the storm to help open streets. Also, you're going to need a designated area to dispose of such debris.

Be sure to go through and check and service your small equipment, too. Are your chainsaw and pole pruner sharp and ready to go? Is your portable trash pump ready? Do you have plenty of fuel on hand? Remember if the power goes out, your local gas station or mini mart will be out too. Lastly, you may want to check your inventory on small items as well, such as, batteries, flashlights, marking paint, chlorine, sample bottles, caution tape, barricades, gloves and other personal protective gear, supplies needed for water line repairs and repair kits for fire hydrants if they get knocked over.

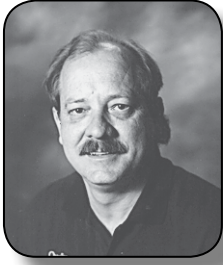
Please let me know if you would like me to stop by and assist you in doing a survey/inspection of your system and putting together an action plan. And remember if your town does get hit unexpectedly PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO CALL. My phone number is 402-672-9084.

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# Earth Day

*By Randy Hellbusch, Circuit Rider*

I had the pleasure of attending and participating in an Earth Day Celebration sponsored by USDA Rural Development on Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>. The event was held in Fairmont, Nebraska at the Fillmore Central Middle School. We handed out some water facts and water trivia sheets to the students to assist with awareness and education of our most precious natural resource. I thought I would pass this same information along to all of our member systems to use for public education. They can be used in a periodical, newsletter or just leave copies on the counter for customers to pick up as they pay their utility bills. It is always a good idea to keep the public informed about water use.

## NeRWA Water Trivia Facts

1. Water is the only substance found on earth naturally in three forms.  
True (Solid, liquid and gas)
2. At what temperature does water freeze?  
32 degrees F, 0 degrees C
3. At what temperature does water vaporize?  
212 degrees F, 100 degrees C
4. How long can a person live without food?  
More than a month  
How long can a person live without water?  
Approximately one week, depending upon conditions
5. How much of the human body is water?  
66%
6. How much of the earth's surface is water?  
80%
7. Of all the earth's water, how much is ocean or seas?  
97%
8. How much of the world's water is frozen and therefore unusable?  
2%
9. How much of the earth's water is suitable for drinking water?  
1%
10. Is it possible for me to drink water that was part of the dinosaur era?  
Yes - water is constantly recycled
11. How much water does the average residence use during a year?  
Over 100,000 gallons (indoors and outside)
12. How much water does an individual use daily?  
Over 100 gallons (all uses)
13. What were the first water pipes made from in the US?  
Fire charred bored logs
14. How much does one gallon of water weigh?  
8.34 pounds
15. What is the weight of water in one cubic foot?  
62.4 pounds
16. How much water drops with an inch of rain on one acre of ground?  
27,154 gallons, which weighs 113 tons
17. How much water does it take to process a quarter pound of hamburger?  
Approximately one gallon
18. How much water does it take to produce one ton of steel?  
62,600 gallons
19. How much water is used to produce a single day's supply of U.S. newsprint?  
300 million gallons
20. What is the total amount of water used to manufacture a new car, including new tires?  
39,090 gallons per car
21. How much water must a dairy cow drink to produce one gallon of milk?  
Four gallons
22. How much water is used during the growing/production of a chicken?  
400 gallons
23. How much water is used during the growing/production of french fries?  
6 gallons
24. How much water is used during the growing/production of a single orange?  
13.8 gallons
25. How much water is used during the growing/production of a loaf of bread?  
150 gallons
26. How much water us used during the production of an egg?  
120 gallons



# Introduction to Source Water Protection

By Ken Halvorsen, Source Water Specialist

I have been at this job for four months so now I guess I am a specialist. Now that my quick introduction to Source Water is over I'm realizing how much there is to learn.

Source Water Protection is comprised of a lot of parts put together to make a plan work. We start with a well or wells' delineation area. Water supplies from surface water go through that same process.

The delineation area is the area the DEQ has decided needs to be protected. In this area all possible contaminant sources are identified. Managing the possible contaminant sources is a very important part of the plan.

A contingency plan is developed to help maintain water supplies during an emergency. Public education and involvement during the formation and then implementation of the plan is very important.

### Why mess with Source Water Protection?

In my short four months I have met with systems that have no contamination issues and never have had to systems that have lost one or more wells. Contaminant sources include nitrates, atrazine, by-products from factories, feedlot runoff, fuel storage tanks, cemeteries, grain storage, junkyards, chemical supplies, etc. The most common contaminant in Nebraska is nitrate. Nitrate can occur naturally in the soil up to 3 ppm. Over 3 ppm indicates possible human activity. Above 5 ppm indicates human involvement. The EPA has set a limit of 10 ppm. Above this level water sources can't be used for potable water.

### Where do nitrates come from?

Excessive fertilizer applied to lawns is a major source of nitrates in the groundwater. Higher than necessary rates of fertilizer on farm fields contribute to runoff during heavy rains which percolates through the soil. Leaching runoff from feedlots is another source of contamination.

Since my pen is running dry you will have to wait 'til the next issue for more exciting information about Source Water Protection. Also, if you want help with a source water protection plan, give me a call at 402-607-9750.

## WESTERN CONFERENCE TIME

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

There will be a pre-conference on Tuesday. Following the pre-conference is the golf tournament at the Riverview Golf and Country Club. This is set to begin at 2:30 and conclude around 6 pm. Wednesday morning will start with the bang of the annual trap shoot held at the Mitchell Valley Trap Club. This is scheduled to begin between 8 and 8:30 am and conclude around noon. After that sessions will start. A social hour, banquet and operator award presentation will complete Wednesday. There will be a complimentary breakfast served at 6:30 am Thursday followed by a full day of training sessions.

More detailed information will be in the next issue of the magazine and also in a special conference mailing. If you have never attended the fall conference and you have the resources to do so, please try to make it to Gering. It is a mix of fun and learning. See you out west!



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## Springtime Fun

By Pat Petersen, Training Specialist

For those of you who have had the opportunity to meet me as the Nebraska Rural Water Association's Training Specialist, you have seen how I have become more relaxed when it comes to conference time. This year was no different. The doors to the Younes Center were opened on Monday, March 13th for our annual conference and the fun did not stop until we had the trailer loaded and headed east on Interstate 80 on Wednesday, March 15th.

This year's conference was once again a complete success. This success rides on the shoulders of the operators, vendors and the professional presenters that take the time out of their busy schedules to have a little "fun" for a couple of days. I say "fun" because, it really has become a fun time for me. I think I speak for all of us at the Nebraska Rural Water Association when I use the word "fun".

Monday began with a warm welcome from Board President Tom Goulette followed by the annual regulation update. This year we welcomed some new faces to the conference, Mr. Don VanVeldhuizen from the USA Blue Book was one of them. He gave an entertaining presentation about "When Robert's Rules of Order Become Disorderly." NDHHS Area Field Representative Rich Koenig closed out Wednesday by being the mediator of an "Operator Forum" for all operators, board members and anyone in attendance to voice concerns or ask questions about what may be troubling their systems. This was a fantastic Monday! Although I say it was fantastic, it was far from over.


Monday evening "fun night" was held again at the Big Apple Bowling Center. JEO spearheaded the event with the help of HOA, Sargent Drilling, Miller and Associates and NeRWA. Everyone who attended this event was treated to free pool, bowling, mini golf and a drink of their choice. Since JEO Consulting Engineers has taken the reins of this event, it seems that attendance has increased and the fun meter is moving up.

Training sessions began at 9 AM Tuesday morning and concluded at 5:45 PM that evening. Wow, that is a long day of learning! So what goes good with a long day of learning - how about some delicious banquet food, award presentations, a complimentary drink and some live music.

Following the banquet meal the NDHHS gave out two operator of the year awards. They were given to Lonnie Petrzilka from Denton and Jeff Sweetser from Fairbury. Both are very deserving of this award and congratulations to you both. The Chad Lee Band then took the stage and entertained everyone until after ten. Once again the music was great and the evening was a very enjoyable time.

Wednesday morning started with the traditional business meeting and operator breakfast. The delicious breakfast was well attended and the meeting carried on as usual. One big decision that was made was the installation of a new board member. Jordan Bang with the Lancaster County Rural Water District #1 was chosen as our newest board member. Welcome aboard Jordan and we look forward to working with you.

*continued on page 12*



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continued from page 11

Following the morning festivities, training sessions began at 8:30 AM and concluded at 2:00 PM. The final day of training can be a challenge to keep operators around but this final day was a little different...it was full! Maybe it was all of the fantastic raffle prizes that were to be won, but I really think it is just the amazing support these men and women show the Nebraska Rural Water Association. Speaking of raffle prizes, here is a rundown of some of the winners. Jeff Gress with the Village of Clarks was a two time winner. He won a 255 piece tool set and a very large LED TV. Some of the other major raffle winners included: Lyle Haneline, Dan Tanksley III, Tim Cleays, Mike Stieren, Brent Rahe, Wade Turner, Terry Thompson, and Tony Corbin. Another big winner was Dwight "Butch" Nickel. Butch works for the Village of Western. Butch had pestered his water tower contractor, Richard "Dick" Frankforter, for several years about a MaGuire Iron Jacket. Well, the jacket arrived, covered with 25 years of water tower paint. It's the fun shenanigans like this that can put the frosting on another fantastic conference.

With that being said, operators, vendors, entertainers and Younes Center staff, you've shown us your support again by making this conference great for all! Nebraska Rural Water Association board members, President Tom Goulette, Larry Wennekamp, Dennis Hoback, George Wagner, Tom

Grovijohn and Greg Bouc, thank you for always asking where you can help and offering your moral support as our leaders. Finally, I am the lucky one that gets to write the articles about the conferences but the work that Salli, Carol and Amy do at the office is amazing. My team of workhorses, Randy Hellbusch, Mike Lucas, Mike Stanzel, Barney Whatley, and Ken Halvorsen, is a team that I will never trade for anyone!

I have had several requests to wear a pedometer while supervising the conference...next year I will do it and see just how many steps it really does take to run a three day conference. Maybe we'll see who guesses the closest amount of steps it takes and the winner gets lunch. I don't know, just a thought. See you next year!

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## Thank You Fred

*By Barney Whatley, Capacity Development Specialist*

State Health Department Field Area 1 representative Fred Baumert is retiring this year and will be leaving his position sometime in June. In my position as the Capacity Development Specialist for the Nebraska Rural Water Association, I have had many opportunities to work with Fred and to assist systems in his area. Fred has always been very helpful to operators in his field area, and all of the operators I have worked with speak very highly of him. Fred has always been willing to give good advice and help operators solve problems without immediately writing them up. Since the operators in his field area know this, they are willing to ask for guidance without being afraid of getting in trouble. Fred would write a system up for deficiencies, and could be very regulatory towards systems that did not correct those deficiencies in a timely manner, but if an operator was willing to work with Fred, he was willing to work with them.

Fred worked as the Training Specialist for Nebraska Rural Water for a while, and I always appreciated working with him and gaining knowledge, especially in the area of rural water systems and how they operated. Fred gained a lot of this knowledge while working for the Kansas Rural Water Association and was willing to share it. During the sessions Fred taught, he was always “visiting” with those present as opposed to lecturing them. This was always very intriguing to me, but I just don’t have the “gift of gab” that Fred has.

While assisting systems in Fred’s field area, I could always contact Fred with any questions on what the system really needed, and he was always willing to stop what he was doing and look in the file to determine exactly what was needed. This was very helpful to me in my job, as the deficiencies for a system were not always real clear on the list I was working off of. If I did not have a copy of the sanitary survey deficiency notice in question, Fred would send me one or list the deficiencies for me over the phone. This allowed me to assist the system, knowing that I was actually helping them solve the issues they had.

Fred almost always attended the Grade 6 classes I held in his area, and when he was unable to be there he would let me know. I never schedule the state field representatives to speak at the classes, but I always try to offer them time if they have something they want to discuss with those

present. Fred would usually visit with those present making that part of the class feel much less formal and much more comfortable. The evaluations from the classes never had any bad comments concerning Fred. I wish I could say the same about the comments concerning me.

Good bye and good luck, Fred. I wish you the very best in your retirement, even though I know the operators of the systems in your area are going to miss your assistance. Have a great retirement and keep in touch with all of those you have impressed during your many years of service to the drinking water industry. You will be missed!!

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# Summary of Evaluations

## NeRWA Kearney Conference

March 13-15, 2017

### TOTAL EVALUATIONS RECEIVED – 140

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

a. Operator/Manager	126
b. Administrative	3
c. Board Member	2
d. Plumber	0
e. Lawn Service	1
f. State/Federal Rep.	2
g. Clerk	3
h. Other: (no explanation)	0
Boiler Operator	0
Engineer	1
Utilities Supervisor	0
Wife	0
Chemist	0
Double positions:	
Water/sewer equipment operator	1

- Nice atmosphere
- Nicer here than G.I.
- Plenty of good sessions, good food, well organized
- Classes and classrooms
- The presenters knew their subjects well and were approachable to ask questions
- This is a conference all operators should attend
- Great success. Thank you to the staff and Pat Petersen
- Training sessions
- Accommodations, vendors, venue, speakers, meals
- Classes and operators
- The variety of classes
- Vendors
- The speakers do a great job on informing you on their subjects.
- Meals, water and waste water hours
- Enjoyed my first water conference
- The variety of classes offered. The vendors and fun night were a great way to meet many people.
- Good training
- Venue is amazing
- Food, vendors
- Meals were good, speakers kept our attention
- Rooms are large, meals are good, classes are good
- Close to everything
- Hotels are close to the conference center
- Training and CEUs
- Local meeting location, chance to learn more about my job
- I like the training sessions
- Good
- The entire conference was run very well
- Location, food
- Nice that it is all inclusive and you don't have to worry about meals

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

a. The training classes	41
b. The prizes/entertainment	1
c. The vendors	10
d. Chance to meet with operators	23
e. All of the above	99

QUESTION #3 – Things you liked and why?

- Regulatory updates, venue, location, USA Bluebook speaker
- Food, interaction with vendors and speakers, operators
- Good topics
- Good training, meals
- Great venue, hotels, good food, class options, and knowledgeable speakers
- Good information in classes
- Conference center and presenters
- Everything was great
- Classes are great
- Speakers, meals, and venue
- Variety of classes
- Some very good topics

*continued on next page*

- Great conference
- The venue is nice, the speakers were good and well informed. Meals were great as always
- The venue is great and the training was very good
- NeRWA did a great job
- Don Van Veldhuizen
- Meeting other operators
- Venue and meals
- Very well organized, great food, and entertainment
- Loved it all
- Everything top notch
- Plenty of room, hotels close by
- Location, food, scheduling
- Some things are interesting and you get to meet new people
- NeRWA staff and board members did another excellent job
- Don Van Veldhuizen is a great presenter. Best conference yet.
- Good sessions, venue and meals.
- Overall the conference was good
- Relevant subjects, excellent spaces, good time of year to attend
- All good. Great meals
- Good session topics, food and facilities
- Facility-plenty of room
- Younes Center is a great center for the conference. The facility is spacious and comfortable. The food is excellent. Service and staff are top notch.
- Motels, food, venue! Great conference!
- Close to hotels, shuttle to Big Apple, food was good.
- Everything was very informational
- Good classes, new stuff every year
- All the different topics, products from the vendors
- Classes, content, vendors, meals
- Facility, good venue
- Location and center
- All of the classes I attended were very informative
- Small systems roundtable, regulatory update, USA Bluebook speaker.
- Like talking with vendors
- Training was informative, motel was great, meals were very good
- Love the location, food is excellent

- Location, topics, meals
- Great classes and speakers. Great meals and good vendor participation
- Great facility
- Classes were helpful and vendors were friendly and helpful
- Great venue, food is outstanding, sessions are very informative.
- Wide variety of topics and available hours. Facility is great and noon meal is excellent
- Speakers that don't put you to sleep.
- Food and facility are excellent. Nice to see the board members getting involved with the members attending. Free drinks are always good
- Classes interesting-food always good

*continued on next page*

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- Excellent overall experience.
- The food was great. I enjoyed all the speakers and vendors
- Size and availability
- Everything was great
- Social hour, plenty of food, good sessions, fun night
- Vendors were friendly and readily available. Informative topics
- Good classes
- Food, free beer, classes, entertainment
- Liked everything, very informational
- Everything was awesome. Clyde Zelch was good to see
- This is a great conference. Great place and food
- Liked all of it: speakers, motels, food, and fun
- Rooms, food, vendors
- Everything was well done
- Liked the topics, motels, meals. Good vendor turn out
- Better speakers, hands on classes
- The meals were very good, classes were very informative
- Speakers were entertaining
- Meals were great, classes were very good
- Good job!
- Meals great. Nice that the motels are close. Training and speakers were good.
- Pretty much liked everything
- Good variety of classes. Don the Dutch and Rich K. really mixed things up-were great
- Very informative
- This year was the best so far
- Great venue! Good food, good service, right temperature, clean
- Classes, vendors, prizes
- Great speakers: Don Van Veldhuizen, Bill Podraza, Clyde Zelch
- It was all very good
- Facilities, food, convenience of the whole area is just great
- Venue-ease of moving from classroom to classroom
- Great job. Good conference
- Good selection of topics-good facility and motel availability
- I enjoyed everything
- Food is great-like talking to the other operators-like discussing different situations
- Very good conference

- Training classes were informative and enjoyable
- All was good
- I liked the classes that Don Van Veldhuizen spoke in. He kept everyone's attention and was knowledgeable
- I think the conference is always good-meals, speakers, vendors
- Location, motels, free bar, helpful vendors
- All good

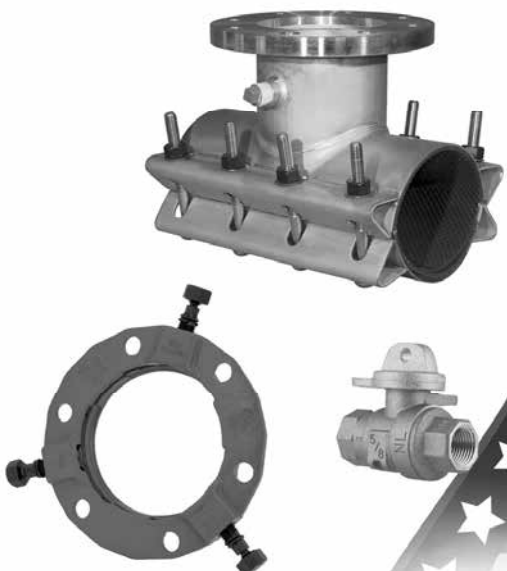
QUESTION #4 – Things you dislike and why?

- Rooms were a little cool and tight at times
- Maybe move the date later in the month-due to weather
- My town doesn't pay for a motel-I drive back and forth an hour each way. Supper should be at 6pm on Tuesday to accommodate those who travel each day.
- Vendors tearing down and leaving too early
- Classes running too late in the afternoon for the people who have to drive
- Group prayer-inappropriate

*continued on next page*

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- New metering technologies class was an advertisement for one company.
- Cold weather-conference should be in April
- Wish it was wednesday/thursday/friday
- Day gets long
- Vegas night was more fun
- The breaks should be shorter
- Price
- Breaks are too long
- Lack of seating in some of the classes
- Need more room at lunch. It was crowded
- Class schedule-spread topics for clerks more evenly
- Pillow
- 3 hour drive
- Temperature-too cold
- Late ending time
- Music was a little too loud
- Date needs to be later due to board meetings or time of the month
- Music too loud
- Breaks are too long
- Not enough presenters using microphones-hard to hear
- Start earlier on Tuesday
- Infrastructures/pipe rehab options class was too much about the company
- Need more backflow hours
- Some classes too long on the first day
- Chlorinated water
- Sessions that did not teach relevant material
- Standing in the hall waiting to eat-like waiting at the tables
- After a few breaks, there isn't much left to see or do in vendor area
- Did not care for the meter technology class
- The cost
- Speakers not using microphones
- Breaks too long on Tuesday-would rather finish the day earlier
- The conference is too early in March
- Need more hands on classes
- Did not like Rich K. as the MC in small systems round table
- Need more than water in the training rooms-juice or tea would be nice
- Some vendors left early
- Rooms got very warm
- Hate driving in shitty weather
- Hands on with fire hydrant class

QUESTION # 5 – Any suggestions for future conferences?

- None (Many had no response)
- Comedian
- Operator hacks: things we have had to “invent” to do our jobs
- More vendors
- Touch on non-community systems
- Lagoon maintenance.
- More round table
- Utility locates do's and don'ts
- Locating and locator classes
- Topics for very small systems
- More topics for board members
- Keep the conference In Kearney
- Classes for new operators
- Knife juggler
- Need a basic training class
- Move some tables for a dance floor
- Hands on workshops
- Comedian
- A class or round table for new operators
- Comedy
- More backflow hours
- Need electrical training
- Total retention sewer lagoons management and land application requirements
- Comedian/magicians
- More backflow sessions
- More real world scenarios
- Comedy magician-would like to see RW get involved in the League conference and talk to board members about operator succession and helping and listening to employees
- Activate sludge
- Keep bringing in speakers that can keep people's attention
- RP Smith out of Broken Bow
- More hands on

QUESTION # 6 – Any additional comments?

- Keep up the great work
- Classes were informative
- The staff of NeRWA does a great job putting this conference on and are always friendly
- NeRWA did an excellent job
- Good conference
- NeRWA staff and event center staff, along with the vendors have been very friendly and helpful. Great job.

*continued on next page*

- Thanks to everyone that made this possible
- Thank you
- Great seminar
- Job well done, NeRWA
- Younes Center provides a great service staff
- Another great conference
- Keep up the good work
- Very good conference. Keep up the good work
- Keep up the good work
- Stay in Kearney
- Great place to hold a conference
- I would like it if Rich Koenig did not speak on any topic-otherwise, everything was good
- Move conference to wednesday/thursday/friday
- Move back to Columbus
- Keep up the good work and thank you for all your help
- Thank you NeRWA for the conference, especially Pat Petersen
- Keep up the great work
- Great conference
- Stingy with backflow hours
- Keep up the good work
- Excellent conference
- Keep up the good work
- Move to Columbus
- Good job ya'll
- Good conference
- Thanks for everything
- Thanks for the hard work you do
- The food was good again, like always
- I have missed supper for the last 2 years because I don't have the ability to wait around for an hour to eat.
- Good job by NeRWA-food very good and hotels around center are great

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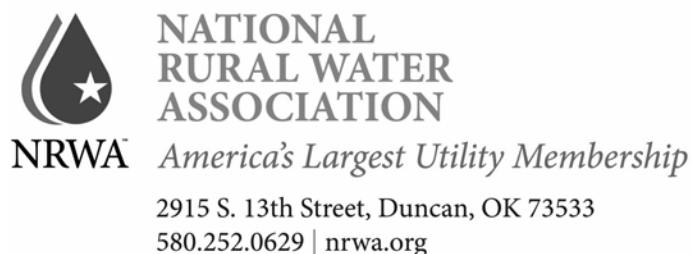
## ***Thank You For Your Support***

In March the President's budget stated the elimination of the USDA water and waste water loan and grant program. We asked our members to help by writing letters to the Senators and Congressmen supporting Nebraska Rural Water Association. We received responses from about 25% of our members. We would like to thank you all for your support.

We are happy to report that the program is good to go for 2017. But be aware that we will probably be asking for your help again in 2018. It's not over yet. Thanks, again.

### **The Staff and Board of Directors of NeRWA**

Following is a statement from National Rural Water Association regarding the budget:



May 10, 2017

### **National Rural Water Association Releases Statement on 2017 Budget Agreement**

DUNCAN, Okla. – The National Rural Water Association, the nation's largest water utility organization with over 31,000 rural and small community members, applauds the federal budget, now that it has been signed by the President, for its support of USDA Water and Waste infrastructure funding.

The budget agreement includes \$570 million for rural and small community water infrastructure funding throughout the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utilities Service rural development water grant and loan initiatives. This funding level will support over \$1 billion in rural and small community water projects next year and demonstrates Congress' strong support for this important national initiative.

The USDA water infrastructure initiative is rated as one of the most cost-effective and beneficial programs in the Federal government. Approximately 70% of the dollars spent are loans which are repaid to the federal government with interest and 30% of the funding is distributed as grants that are needed to make specific projects affordable in neglected and impoverished areas.

*continued on page 20*

That is the key to the value of this initiative: when we refer to water projects, what we are talking about is people's health, rural communities' viability and a clean environment. Drinking water and wastewater projects are the first-line of defense in protection of public health and environmental quality in rural areas. There is currently a funding backlog of over \$2 billion in rural water projects needing funding to improve the lives of rural Americans.

"We are thankful for the strong support of Congress for this vital public health, environmental and economic development initiative that was demonstrated in the final Congressional budget agreement," said NRWA President Steve Fletcher, General Manager of the Washington County Water Company in Nashville, Illinois. Most U.S. water utilities are small; approximately 92 percent of the country's 50,366 community drinking water systems serve communities with fewer than 10,000 people and 80 percent of the country's 16,255 wastewater systems serve fewer than 10,000 people. "Rural and small communities must continue to support their rural water associations that allow us to be heard in Congress on critical issues like funding for USDA rural water infrastructure."



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## 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](http://www.nerwa.org)  
 Email: [office@nerwa.org](mailto:office@nerwa.org)



### Cell #

Ken Halvorsen	402-607-9750
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Mike Lucas	402-443-6157
Pat Petersen	402-277-6699
Mike Stanzel	402-672-9084
Barney Whatley	402-480-4297
Salli Kemerling	402-443-7072
Carol Jasa	
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### Email

[ken@nerwa.org](mailto:ken@nerwa.org)  
[randy@nerwa.org](mailto:randy@nerwa.org)  
[lucas@nerwa.org](mailto:lucas@nerwa.org)  
[pat@nerwa.org](mailto:pat@nerwa.org)  
[mike@nerwa.org](mailto:mike@nerwa.org)  
[barney@nerwa.org](mailto:barney@nerwa.org)  
[Salli@nerwa.org](mailto:Salli@nerwa.org)  
[Carol@nerwa.org](mailto:Carol@nerwa.org)  
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