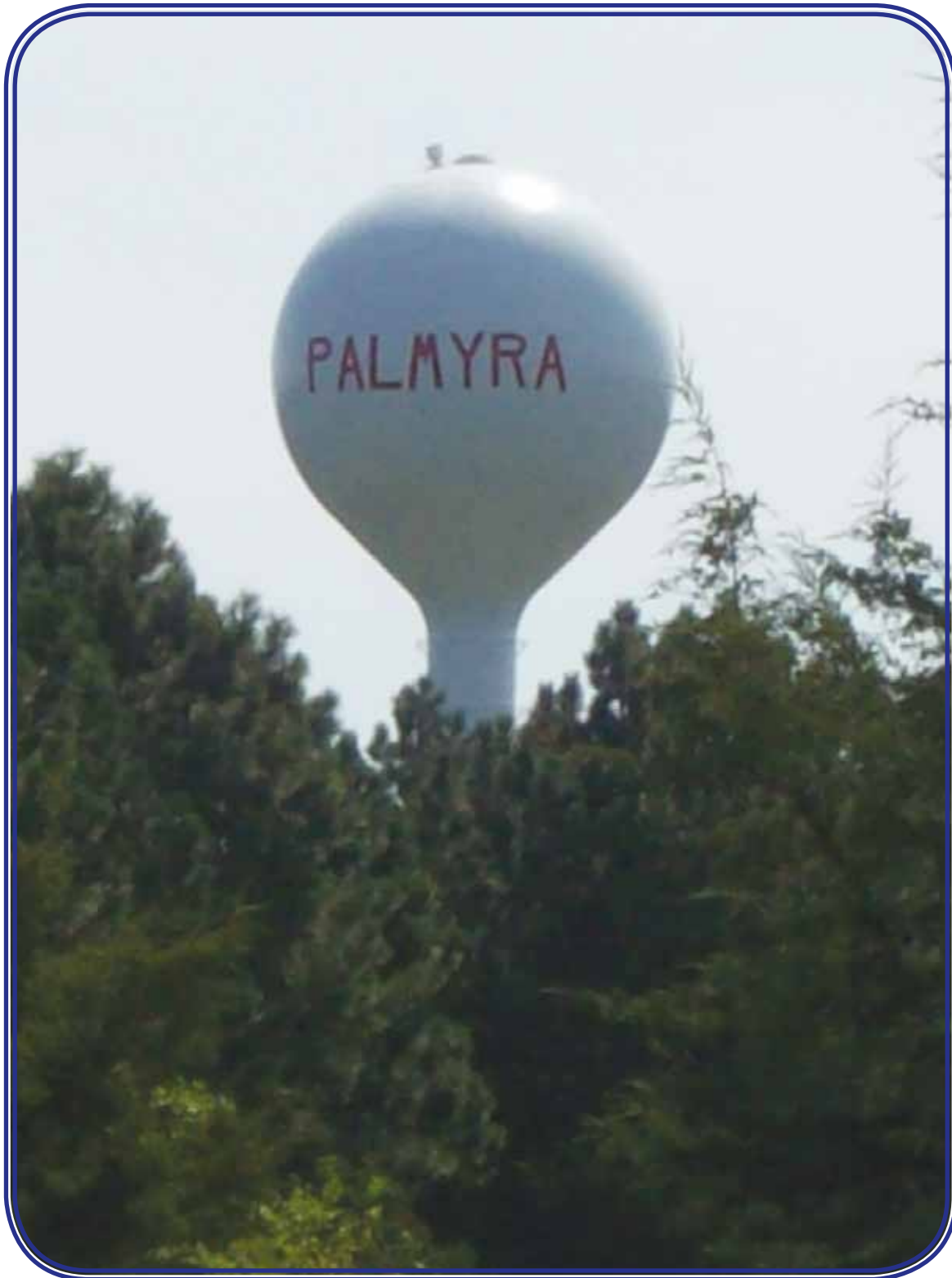
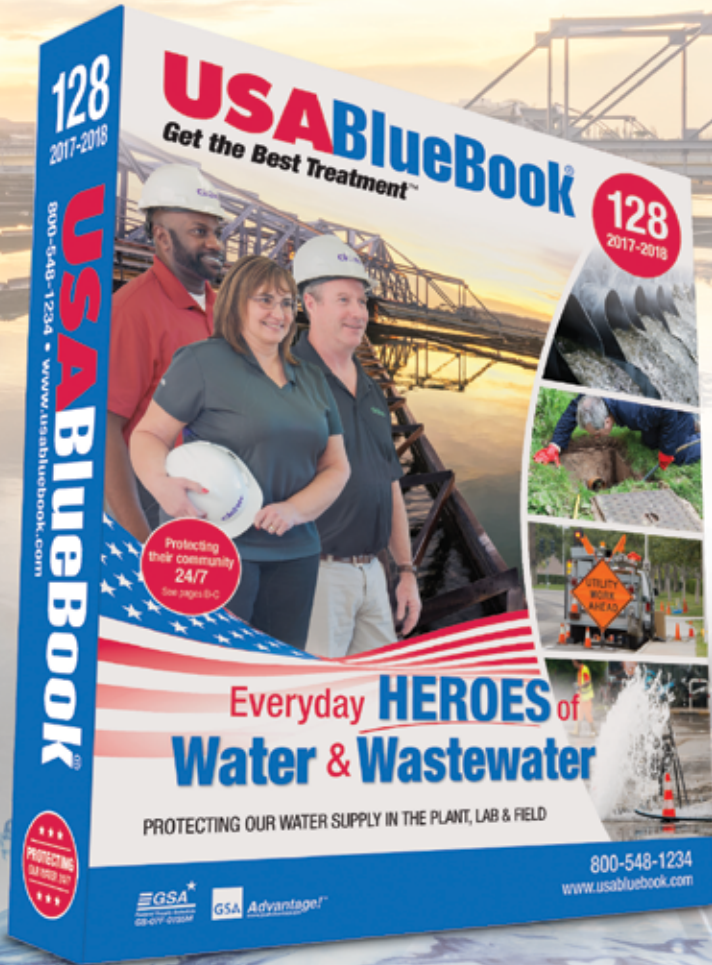


Issue 2/2019

Nebraska Rural Water Association



NEBRASKA GOOD WATER NEWS



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Nebraska Good Water News

Issue 2/2019

“Keeping Our Water Safe”

Board of Directors

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Website: www.nerwa.org

On the cover:

The Palmyra 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...

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Email: villageofha@qwestoffice.net

February 6, 2019

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Drive
Wahoo, NE. 68006

Dear Nebraska Rural Water Association,

The Village Board of Trustees, Utilities Superintendent, and Clerk would like to take this opportunity to thank the NeRWA staff for all the assistance given the Village with various water related issues this past year, and Ken Halvorsen's assistance with the Village's Wellhead Protection Plan is especially appreciated!

Please accept the enclosed donation to your equipment fund in appreciation of all the valuable services your very knowledgeable staff provides.

Sincerely,
Village of Harrison
Board of Trustees & Employees

Wakefield
.....
NEBRASKA

Jon Petersen
Water operator
Paul York
wastewater
operator

I would like to thank Mike Lucas, Pat Petersen, and Barney Whatley for their knowledge and expertise in helping us solve some issues we had in regards to our water and wastewater departments. Please accept this donation from the City of Wakefield.

Mike Mogus
Utility Foreman

City of Osceola

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

February 14, 2019

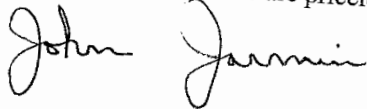
Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Dr.
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear NRWA:

Please accept the enclosed donation in appreciation of all of the help provided to the City of Osceola in the last year. The City Council and employees thank you for your assistance and consulting in leak location, computer system, tapping and reconnection fees, and other services received during 2018.

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

Sincerely,



John Jarmin
Utility Superintendent

City of Bloomfield Nebraska

101 South Broadway * PO Box 157 * Bloomfield, Nebraska 68718
Phone: (402)373-4396 * Fax: (402)373-2820

March 22, 2019

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa St
Wahoo, NE.

To Whom it may concern:

My name is Bret Gieselman from the City of Bloomfield water and waste water department. We have had Randy and Mike come up and help us with things in the past. Last year they came up on April 10, 2018 through April 12, 2018 to exercise our water valves in town, it has made it a lot easier to turn off and back on now if we have a problem. I'm hoping to have it done again in the future. This is a great service that they provide and helps me keep track of valves that might not be working or need some work done to them. They were in town again later in the summer to help us locate a leaking pipe.

The city is very appreciative of their expertise and count on them for so much.

Bret Gieselman
City of Bloomfield

VILLAGE OF HUBBELL
307 INDIANA STREET
P.O. BOX 42
HUBBELL, NE 68375
402 324-4182

Nebraska Rural Water Association

3390 Ponderosa St

Wahoo NE 68066

Dear Committee:

We would like to share our experiences utilizing Randy Hellbusch and the NRWA in the past year. Randy has helped us set new water rates for our new water system. He came to Hubbell and met with our water committee. He provided all the rates from surrounding area and guided our board through this process. Randy also provided all the water usage data for Hubbell, which helped us greatly. He will be helping us locate a water line in the future. The service the NRWA circuit riders provide to our rural Nebraska communities is invaluable to us. We rely on their guidance and knowledge.

Respectfully



Edith C Laue-Clerk

Village of Hubbell



City Of
Syracuse
NEBRASKA

Growing Community. Harvesting Success.

March 18, 2019

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Drive
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear Nebraska Rural Water Association,

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

Syracuse would like to thank both Randy Hellbusch for helping the City determine the proper increase on our water and electrical rates. We would also like to thank Mike Stanzel for his assistance in helping detect a water leak earlier in the year.

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

Sincerely,



Jeff Vogt
Superintendent of Public Works
City of Syracuse

City of Cambridge

Life is good!

Tuesday, March 19, 2019

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Drive
Wahoo, NE 68066-5553

Dear Randy,

We would like to thank you for preparing a wastewater rate study for the City of Cambridge and attending our City Council Meeting to discuss the report. Your help with a plan for future rates is greatly appreciated. Please use this donation where it is most needed.

Sincerely,

Kandra J. Kinne,
City Clerk/Treasurer
City of Cambridge

Britt German
Light Commissioner

Mike Griffith
Chairman
Randy Jacob
Mike Neill
Marcus Young

Alan Clark
Secretary

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Dallas Nichols
Water/Sewer Commissioner

E-MAIL bpworks@cozadtel.net

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(308)784-2090

April 9, 2019

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear Nebraska Rural Water Association:

The City of Cozad would like to thank the association for loaning us a chlorine pump when we were required to do chlorination for 30 days by DHHS. A special thank you goes out to Barney Whatley for his help with setting it all up and getting us started, as this was the first time we have ever had to chlorinate and had no idea where to start.

Please accept this donation, your help is very much appreciated.

Nebraska Rural Water is a valuable asset to all of us.

Respectfully,

Dallas Nichols
Water/Sewer Commissioner



LOWER PLATTE NORTH Natural Resources District

PO Box 126 511 Commercial Park Road Wahoo, NE 68066
402.443.4675 Fax 402.443.5339 Toll-free 888.764.0543
lpnrd@lpnrd.org www.lpnrd.org

Dear Nebraska Rural Water Association,

I am writing you to express my gratitude for the assistance Randy Hellbusch provided our Rural Water District by performing a Rate Study. Our board and staff had been discussing the issues surrounding adjusting our rates for some time, but we didn't know where to begin.

I contacted Randy at NeRWA and within a week of looking over our fiscal reports he had worked up a rate study with several scenarios for our district. He thoroughly explained the process of developing the rate study, as well as, taking the time to discuss the multiple scenarios and how each one should affect the district short term and long term.

With the information obtained from Randy and the NeRWA our Rural Water District was able to develop a multi-year plan for fine-tuning our rates. The knowledge, and wealth of experience available at NeRWA is a tremendous asset to our State's many Rural Water Districts and the fact that the rate study was free of charge was GREATLY appreciated!

I look forward to working with, and learning from, Randy and the great staff at NeRWA in the future!

Sincerely,

Sean C. Elliott
Projects & Rural Water Manager
Lower Platte North Natural Resources District

Village of Douglas

110 Main Street ~ P.O. Box 67 ~ Douglas, NE 68344-0067
Phone 402-799-2029 ~ Fax 402-799-2039

March 25, 2019

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

Dear Salli:

In December 2018, we noticed a spike in our water usage, but not our billed gallons so we suspected a water leak. At the same time we also noticed a big increase in the lift station pump hours. Our maintenance supervisor started pulling manhole covers to look for water. He found water running in the manhole located at 1st and Otoe Street but could not locate the service line it was coming from. We called NeRwa and on December 19, 2018 they sent out Mike Stanzel and he helped locate the water leak using an acoustic leak detector.

On December 20, 2018 Pat Peterson and Randy Helbusch came down and they scoped the sewer line on Otoe Street to check for leaks and used the acoustic leak detector. They also check the sewer line on Main Street to see if it was leaking because the street is sinking.

We had been looking along with Larry Lovell for the leak and dug many test holes without having any luck. We were using our water/sewer maps and found out they were wrong. Without the equipment and manpower provided by NeRwa I don't know how long and how much ground we would have had to dig up to locate the leak.

We really appreciate having these guys a phone call away. We have used them many times in the past.

Sincerely,

Vicki Focken

Vicki Focken
Clerk/Treasurer

NERWA 2019 TRAINING

<u>Water Operator Training</u>	
June 12	Sutton
July 9	Chadron
August 6	Atkinson
October 17	McCook
November 13	Minden
December 3	Pawnee City
December 12	Wahoo

<u>Wastewater Training</u>	
May 2	CANCELLED Omaha
June 19	CANCELLED Chadron
July 17	Lindsay (SUMW)
August 27	Duncan
September 5	Aurora
October 2	Omaha
November 12	Mitchell
December 5	Wahoo

<u>Backflow Continuing Education Training</u>	
August 6	Wymore
August 8	Cairo
August 20	Valentine
August 28	Wahoo
September 4	McCool Junction
September 5	Ord
October 22	South Sioux City
October 24	O'Neill
November 13	Wahoo
December 10	Mitchell
December 11	Ogallala
December 12	Cambridge
December 18	Wahoo

<p>August 21 Trenching & Shoring Wahoo</p> <p>August 22 Confined Space Entry Wahoo</p>
--

<p>Fall Western Conference Sept. 24-26 Gering Civic Center Gering, Nebraska</p>

<u>Wastewater Certification Course</u>	
August 13-16	Wahoo
October 15-16 (<i>Lagoon</i>)	Wahoo
November 5-8	Wahoo

<u>Grade 6 Backflow Prevention Cross-Connection Control Course - 5 Day</u>	
October 7-11	Wahoo



Contaminant Source Inventory

By Barney Whatley, Source Water Specialist

One of the major components of a source water protection plan is the contaminant source inventory, which locates the possible sources of contamination to the water source that are located within the source water protection area. The inventory consists of several different sources, including Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) data bases for spill reports and licensed facilities, the oil and gas commission data base of oil wells and underground injection wells and State Fire Marshal records of above and below ground storage tanks for fuel, as well as, the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) records of registered wells. In addition to these sources, it is necessary for the system to complete a ground inventory of contaminant sources within the protection area. This inventory will generally be completed by someone familiar with the area who knows where "hidden" sources may be.

In assisting a system in completing a source water protection plan, NeRWA can download the data from NDEQ, DNR, the Fire Marshal and the Oil and Gas Commission and plot these possible sources on a map showing their locations, the source water protection area limits and the municipality's limits, where applicable. Along with the positions on the map, lists of the type of contaminant, the owner and other information can be retrieved to be used as part of the plan. These may be on a single map or separate maps for the different sources of information.

NeRWA will also be willing to come to the system and complete an on-site contaminant source inventory with the assistance of system personnel. It is important for system personnel to assist in this survey, as it is often necessary to enter private property to get accurate locations for items such as fuel storage tanks, grain storage, chemical storage, etc. Having someone who is known to the property owners can relieve a lot of the problems that could occur. System personnel will also have a better feeling for those residents who would object to having people on their property, and these sources can then be estimated as distances from the road, driveway, etc.

It is also very helpful to have long-time residents assist in the contaminant source inventory, as they will have

historical knowledge that can be extremely useful. Abandoned windmills and old farmsteads where chemicals were stored or livestock were fed might no longer be visible, but the location and possible contribution of contamination should be considered. Education of those living or owning property within the protection area is also very useful, so they understand the purpose of the inventory is to locate possible sources of contamination so they can be monitored, and not to infringe upon the owners use of their property.

Having completed a contaminant source inventory will allow the system to investigate ways to manage the sources in order to limit the impact on the drinking water supply beneath them while doing so in a manner that is acceptable to the property owners. There are many sources of funding to assist property owners in removing contamination sources they are no longer actively using, and often the water system will assist in the cost share to keep the financial impact on the owners of the land to a minimum.



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When Disaster Hits Home

By Mike Stanzel, Circuit Rider

Well, after what seemed like the longest, snowiest winter in history, the first sign of spring for me is always our annual conference that I have worked at the past 11 years. In years past, most of the time the weather was perfect except for a blizzard or two out west or 50 mph winds to the east. However this year, the common conversation amongst the operators and staff was the threat of the incoming weather.



I arrived home Wednesday evening, we started inspecting the rivers and followed up with a preplan meeting with all the fire and rescue personnel. Well, we didn't have to wait long after the meeting ended to get our first flood related call, which came in shortly after midnight to assist with flood evacuations near Fremont.



March of 2019 in good ole Nebraska will go down as one of the most devastating disasters in history with the double whammy, a blizzard to the west and historic flooding from central Nebraska to the land along the Missouri river.



Thursday was a day full of rescue and evacuation efforts and meetings with the emergency managers, law enforcement personnel, NRD directors, weather service personnel, as well as, city officials from our neighboring town of Waterloo.

By Tuesday evening at the banquet, a lot of guys' phones were blowing up with alarms and panic calls from back home. By Wednesday morning guys were bailing out either to beat the incoming blizzard or to take care of flooding threats in their home town so the decision was made to cancel the last session so everyone could get a head start home.



Like many of you, I wear several hats in my town of Valley, two of which are being on the Fire Department and President of our City Council. When

Friday was when things really started getting bad, the rivers were rising, the dikes were starting to fail and people were starting to panic. The decision to voluntarily evacuate was made and a command center was established at the Waterloo Fire Station. By late morning all businesses were closing and sending employees home. While essential personnel were working on evacuating our nursing home and our assisted living center, rescue calls for assistance began piling up. By Friday night Valley looked like a ghost town. A lot of people had left, water was continuing to rise and every road and highway in every



Continued on next page

direction was closed and impassable. We were literally trapped in our own town.



In the wee hours of Saturday morning, the rivers had crested and nearly every street in town had 2-4 feet of water. The sewer system was completely full. We had evacuees sleeping on the floor of our high school and gym and police officers sleeping in their cars. It was a sight I'd never thought I would see in my lifetime.

Monitoring the fire radio, I heard someone say the city of Valley was going to be turning off their water system in 1 hour. I immediately called our PeopleService operator to verify if he had stated that, which he had not. However, he was stuck in Omaha with no way to get into town. Fortunately we had a public works employee in town with keys that gave me access to the treatment plant wells and lift stations to ensure all were operating. We were lucky that our treatment plant and wells were not affected, but

our lift stations struggled for three days to get caught up.



One thing we all learned from this disaster is you need to have an emergency plan in place. Communication is a must!! We are going to have a special city council meeting for a flood debriefing with all essential personnel to discuss what we did right, what we did wrong, what we can do better and what extra equipment we need such as barricades, cones, cots blankets, etc. While there is no way anyone can be totally prepared for a disaster of this magnitude, some simple preplanning can surely make a difference.

LICENSE RENEWAL YEAR

This is renewal year for all water (grades 1-4) and backflow (grade 6) licenses. You need to have a total of 10 recertification hours for each license. Now is a good time to check your hours to see how many you need before December 31.

If you only need 5 hours you can attend one of the 1-day classes that are held across the state. Water classes always have 5 credit hours; backflow classes have 5 water, 5 wastewater and 5 backflow. There is a fee for backflow classes. Don't wait until the last 2 months of the year because unforeseen circumstances—such as weather, health issues, appointment changes—can change your plans. The November and December Wahoo classes usually fill up before the actual month the class is held so don't wait until the last minute to register for those. The last backflow class is December 18 so plan ahead.

There is a training calendar with the remaining classes for the year in this magazine.

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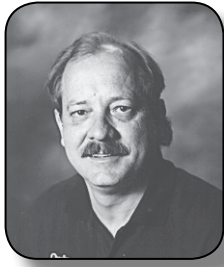
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After Hours: (308) 870-0138

Geneva Office

PO Box 367, 846 South 13th
Geneva, NE 68361

Doug Yantzie, Municipal Manager

Office: (888) 496-3902
After Hours: (402) 759-2929



Avoid Rate Shock!

By Randy Hellbusch, Circuit Rider

The Nebraska Rural Water Association has conducted rate studies for over 350 different public water/wastewater systems across the State of Nebraska. Over the past 5 years we have averaged over 50 per year.

Many systems review their water and wastewater rates every 2 or 3 years which is what is recommended. Unfortunately, some systems just seem to keep kicking the can down the road until they find themselves in a real bind. Then what do they do? I have seen many systems that need to raise rates 30% or more. Of course, you can guess the reaction of the rate payers. The biggest reaction I hear from rate payers is, "Why wasn't someone paying more attention to this? How did they let this happen?"

Many times the decision makers that refuse to raise the rates when needed actually end up being the bad guys. They are the ones that are blamed for not paying attention!

What NeRWA recommends in many cases and what many systems are beginning to implement is a 3 year Rate Ordinance or resolution. The rate is increased in smaller increments on an annual basis over a 3 year period. The board approves the increases once and they automatically are adjusted on an annual basis without the board having to revisit the issue until the 3 year period has expired. Smaller increases more frequently are much more palatable to the public and are easier for customers to budget for.

If this is something your utility would like some assistance with please contact NeRWA and we will be glad to help.

This is a very generic sample of this type of ordinance.

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ORDINANCE NO. 2003-324
AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF _____, NEBRASKA TO ESTABLISH REVISED WATER RATES FOR THE _____ MUNICIPAL WATER SYSTEM; TO PROVIDE FOR THE REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES OR PARTS THEREOF; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; TO PROVIDE THAT THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ORDINANCE SHALL BE MADE A PART OF THE CODE OF THE VILLAGE OF _____, AND THAT THE SECTIONS MAY BE RENUMBERED; TO PROVIDE FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THIS ORDINANCE IN PAMPHLET FORM AND THAT THIS ORDINANCE SHALL TAKE EFFECT ON JULY 1, 2012, AFTER PASSAGE, PUBLICATION, POSTING, AND PROCLAMATION AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED. BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF _____, NEBRASKA:

Section 1. That Chapter 3, Article 1, Section 111, Subparagraph A of the Code of the Village of _____ is hereby amended to read as follows:

3-111. WATER SERVICE RATES; BILLING AND COLLECTING; FUTURE RATE REVISIONS.

A. The rates charged by the Village of _____ for municipal water services on a monthly rate basis shall be as follows:

1. Time period of Jan. 1, 2013 through Dec. 31, 2013:
CLASSIFICATION MONTHLY RATE
Residential and Commercial \$_____ per month service charge plus \$_____ per 1,000 gallons or fraction thereof of usage.

2. Time period of Jan. 1, 2014 through Dec.31, 2014:
CLASSIFICATION MONTHLY RATE
Residential and Commercial \$_____ per month service charge plus \$_____ per 1,000 gallons or fraction thereof of usage.

3. Time period of Jan. 1, 2015 through Dec.31, 2015:
CLASSIFICATION MONTHLY RATE
Residential and Commercial \$_____ per month service charge plus \$_____ per 1,000 gallons or fraction thereof of usage



Ode to the Unknown Public Employee

By Mike Lucas, Wastewater Technician

One of the benefits of this job with the Nebraska Rural water Association is the opportunity to meet and get to know so many dedicated and talented public employees. These are men and women who take ownership and responsibility for each and every issue that the public may have. From the clerk to the lineman to the garbage collector, many are subject to being called 365 days a year and 24 hours a day, often without time and a half compensation or comparability in pay and seldom receiving any credit but frequently receiving more than their share of the blame.

Untold numbers of public employees have worked endless hours dealing with the recent snow, rain and flooding across the state of Nebraska unselfishly sacrificing sleep,


meals and quality family time for the public good. They have done this even at their own personal risk and health. I have nothing but respect for each and every one of them. They are often rewarded with complaints, blame and the very real opportunity for a career change every election year through no fault of their own. And then the communities wonder why they can't keep help or recruit new young employees. Why would they?

These public employees are utilizing the equipment available to them, frequently minimal training and their best judgement to address each and every citizen's personal crisis. We owe them all a "**Heartfelt Thank You!**" Given the opportunity, I personally will go to bat for all of you.

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Conferen



nce 2019



continued on next 2 pages

Conference 2019



Conference 2019





2019 Conference

By Pat Petersen, Training/Technical Assistance Specialist

Once again the Younes Conference Center in Kearney, Nebraska held the spotlight for the Nebraska Rural Water Association's Annual Conference. The conference dates were March 11-13, and throughout the three days over 350 operators made their way through the halls of the beautiful conference center. 57 exhibitors lined the maze of booths in the Crystal Ballroom providing their expertise on several different lines of products in the water and wastewater field. With these kind of numbers, the annual conference continues to be the largest training opportunity for water and wastewater operators in the State of Nebraska!

Tom Goulette, the president of the NeRWA operating board, kicked things off Monday afternoon with the Pledge of Allegiance and a brief update of the association. Sue Dempsey, the new drinking Water Administrator at DHHS, and Andy Kahle, Field Services Manager, provided the annual regulation update and discussed any changes that have taken place in the department in the past year. Rich Koenig, DHHS Field Rep, and Dennis Watts with the City of Norfolk provided an update on NeWARN, and how well we know our water systems. Marty Norton and Denise Meeks provided a USDA/RD update to conclude Monday's session.

A delicious supper was served to everyone before heading over to the Big Apple Fun Center. Monday night has been a time for operators to relax, visit or even take part in the activities of the Annual Fun Night. Miller and Associates took the lead for the fun night this year. Other contributors to the annual event included Sargent Drilling, JEO Consulting Engineers, HOA Solutions and the Nebraska Rural Water Association. The support of this event continues to grow and we all know it couldn't happen without the supporting cast of these five contributors. Thank you, and as always, we look forward to another great "fun night" next year!

Tuesday has traditionally been the big day for learning at the conference. Operators are given the opportunity to attend six hours of classes in a variety of topics. Some of the topics included water tank maintenance, meters, social media crash course, flow measurement, leak detection, safety and backflow items. On the topic of backflow, over the past several years operators have

mentioned that we need "new" topics and why do we put the backflow classes back to back on Tuesday? If any operators have any ideas of what they would like to see in a backflow class, please call me or email me and I will see if it meets the criteria to receive an hour of credit. Secondly, the order of classes, all five in a row, simply allows Grade 6 operators to receive all of their hours in one day. We may try to spread them out next year and see how this goes. This way operators may be able to attend a better variety of classes.

During lunch on Tuesday the annual Best Tasting Drinking Water contest was held. This year there were ten entries. That's a lot of water to taste right after lunch! After all of the dust had settled, the judges determined that the City of Auburn has Nebraska's best tasting drinking water this year. Congratulations to Ken Swanson and his crew in Auburn! Last year's best tasting water went to Clay Center, Nebraska and it claimed the silver medal for the best tasting water in the United States! Congratulations to Kevin and Jordan in Clay Center!

Six hours of learning makes for a very long day so then it was time for a social hour before the banquet. Thanks to Core and Main for providing the refreshments at this year's social hour.

Following the social hour, the annual awards banquet and entertainment took center stage. Each year the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Drinking Water presents a water operator of the year award. This year the department felt two operators were worthy of this award. Congratulations to Milo Rust with the City of Chadron, and Kevin Holcomb with the City of Loup City. These two gentlemen were well deserving of this award and we wish them the best of luck in the future.

After the state presented their awards, the Nebraska Rural Water Association took a moment to honor the memory of one of our own, the annual "Doing it Right Award," in memory of Circuit Rider Russ Topp. This year's recipient was Clint Johnson with the City of Pawnee City. Clint is an outstanding representative for Pawnee City. Clint received his award surrounded by several

continued on page 17

family members that secretly showed up for the banquet. Congratulations, Clint!

When the awards banquet had ended, Chad Lee took the stage and entertained the audience with some great music. All those in attendance enjoyed a free beverage (or two) and snacks while the music played. Thanks, Chad, and all of those who attended!

Wednesday morning started off with the operator breakfast and the annual board meeting. It was a great way to start the final day of a very busy Wednesday. After attending the first morning sessions, operators were asked to gather in the Diamond Ballroom for a special guest. Governor Pete Ricketts made a quick stop at the conference and gave a quick presentation about AG Week and the importance of agriculture in the great state of Nebraska. This was a great late addition to our busy agenda. Thank you, Governor Ricketts!

Wednesday classes then resumed with a few shortened classes and lunch. The raffle prizes were awarded during the lunch break. Thanks to all that enjoy taking a chance to win one of the many great prizes included in the raffle giveaway. This tremendous support is greatly appreciated.

With Mother Nature bearing down on central Nebraska, and already wreaking havoc on the western end of the state, it was time to get the operators on their way safely to their respected communities. Some were able to get home and some had already made reservations to stay in Kearney until the storms were over.

So once again, at the end of the conference I would like to take some time to thank some very special groups. First of all the sponsors; **PLATINUM:** Municipal Supply, **GOLD:** Sargent Drilling and Nebraska 811, **SILVER:** Core and Main, Olsson Associates and Vessco, **BRONZE:** HTM, Iowa Pump Works, Johnson Service, Lincoln WinWater, Maguire Iron, Miller and Associates and Municipal Automation. Game Night sponsors were JEO, HOA, Miller and Associates, Sargent Drilling and the Nebraska Rural Water Association. Your generosity this year, in the past, and hopefully in the future always makes a great conference even greater!

Finally, the board and staff here at the Nebraska Rural Water Association are second to none. Planning a conference can be kind of a daunting task but with the help of so many great co-workers and bosses, it is actually kind of fun! Mike Lucas, Mike Stanzel, Randy Hellbusch, Scott Finke, Ken Halvorsen, Barney Whatley, Salli Kemerling, Amy Kemerling and Carol Jasa, thank you! This would not work without any one of you! Also

a big thank you to our operating board, Jordon Bang, Tom Goulette, Tom Grovijohn, Greg Bouc, George Wagner, Larry Wennekamp, and Dennis Hoback, each one of you provides any kind of assistance I have ever needed and it is greatly appreciated.

Finally, I would like to wish a happy retirement to outgoing board member Mr. Dennis Hoback. I hope you and Donna can enjoy many years of retirement life! Also, please welcome our newest board member, Cope Clark from Cedar Knox Rural Water Project.

By the way, next year's conference will be held March 9-11, 2020 at the Younes Conference Center again. Hopefully Mother Nature is in a better mood.....

Pat Petersen with the trophy from the national water contest held at the Water Rally in Washington DC in February. The City of Clay Center took second in the contest.



Members of our Board of Directors and staff at the Water Rally in Washington DC in February.

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Nebraska Rural Water Association

By Jordon Bang, NeRWA Board of Directors

My name is Jordon Bang and I am the District Manager for Lancaster Rural Water in Bennet, NE. Also being a Board Member for Nebraska Rural Water, I wanted to write an article on the topic of Capacity Issues/Lawn Watering. Now, Lancaster Rural Water was started in the early 1970's by a group of farmers that formed the District. They did this because well water was becoming scarce on their properties and they needed a more reliable source for their homes and livestock. As the demographics of Rural Water customers has changed, we see now what once was rolling acres of farm ground sold out for development purposes. The younger generation now wants to live on a 3-acre lot outside of the city limits. With the popularity of this, the only option for water service is to be supplied by Lancaster Rural Water.

Typically, where we had a 1" or 2" main feeding 3 houses, now needs to be upsized to a 4 or 6" main to feed this development which is typically 20-50, 3-acre lots. Our original customers did not have sprinkler systems, simply relied on the rain to keep the growth of their lawns. As times have changed, the new customers are wanting that sprinkler system and installing sprinkler lines and heads all around the 3-acres. This has now put a burden on the water system.

Lancaster Rural Water consists of 2-500,000-gallon storage units and 7-150,000 water towers. We are now seeing customers who have just put sod down, or in hot months are watering non-stop. On average, when you used to have a single customer use between 4,000-10,000 per month, we are seeing amounts as high as 50,000-150,000 a month. We keep track of the usage at billing time and I can tell you, we had a new consumption record in June of 2018.

It has been an eye-opening experience for not only myself but the District as a whole. We have implemented a Mandatory Water Restriction which was adopted into our by-laws in June of 2018. This Water Restriction is in place from April 1 through October 31. Fines are set if you are caught watering on Monday which is a no-watering day, or don't follow your Odd/Even Schedule. Can we get everyone to start following these rules...NO, but if we can get half of these high usage customers to slow down their consumption, we can get our booster pumps

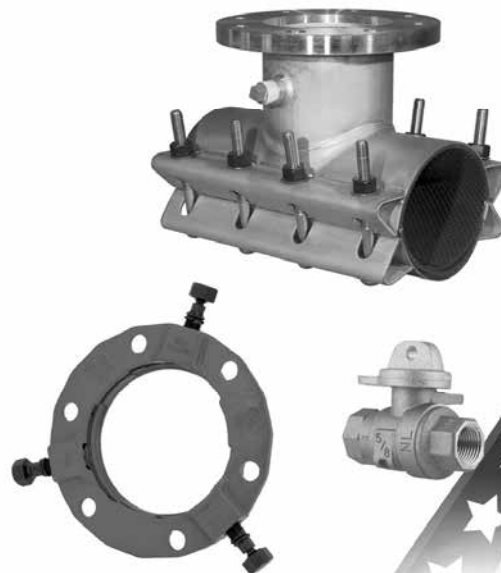
to cycle more often and give the towers a chance to stay full. I truly believe, water systems that still have plenty of pumping/delivering capacity, should look to some kind of mandatory water schedule. It gives your wells a break, your boosters a break and bottom line, helps conserve the water we have below. I understand it is a tough restriction to put in place, especially for the smaller systems that solely rely on water and sewer sales as their income. Still, water is something we take for granted, believing it will always be available tomorrow no matter how much we are pumping today.

I will end this with a quote: **"When the well is dry, we know the worth of water"-Benjamin Franklin**

Jordon Bang
District Manager/Nebraska Rural Water Board Member

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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 24-26 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!

NeRWA Scholarship Winners

We received many scholarship applications this year. As usual there are some very talented students out there. However, we can only pick two winners and two alternates. They are:

(1) Kayla Oakman

Daughter of Steve Oakman, city superintendent from the City of Deshler

(2) David Stara

Son of Kevin Stara, water operator from the City of David City

Alternates:

(3) Clarissa Paltz

Daughter of Victor Paltz, chairman from the Village of St Helena

(4) Megan Christen

Daughter of Robin Christen, clerk from the Village of Anselmo



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An Introduction

By Scott Finke, Circuit Rider

Some of you know me already. My name is Scott Finke and I am the new circuit rider for NeRWA. My family and I reside in Deshler. My wife works as a Para at Deshler High School and I have two sons, one a sophomore in college and the other one a senior in high school. I come to NeRWA with 23 years of experience in the water and wastewater industry after working for the City of Deshler

for the past 23 years. I am looking forward to meeting all of you in the coming months.

Attending the NeRWA Spring Conference was the first conference for me. The conference was exciting with all the vendors in attendance and all the great classes that were held. Pat does a great job of getting everything to run smoothly. We have a great staff at NeRWA and I hope everyone had a good time at the conference. I am looking forward to seeing more of you operators at the fall conference in Gering.

Hope everyone can recover from this spring flooding and the snows in western Nebraska, as soon as possible. The destruction of property is just heartbreaking. We are "Nebraska Strong." I can remember back when a tornado hit Deshler in 2003. The people around the state came to help us in our time of need. We greatly appreciated the help from everyone. Now Nebraskans are stepping up again.

If I can be of help as a circuit rider, please contact me at 402-607-2249.

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We Don't Need That!

By Ken Halvorsen, System Specialist

“We don’t need that!” This is what I commonly hear when contacting water systems about doing board training. Quite frankly, if I were on a town board, that might be my response also. Excuses range from, “It’s hard enough getting members to a regular meeting let alone an extra one!” to “We do everything right any way.”

I have been doing board training presentations across the state this last year and have found that they are very well received. Towns that have recently elected new board members feel it is a very worthwhile thing to do.

If you want some interesting reading there are numerous court cases resulting from meetings not properly conducted. They might be filed by a fired employee who has knowledge of action taken at a previous board meeting that was in violation. They could be filed by a citizen of the town that likes to cause problems. Every town seems to have one. A suit could be filed by someone who applied for a job and wasn’t considered but knew the process wasn’t done properly.

Remember your board minutes are open for public viewing and a suit can be filed within 120 days of a discrepancy. In some cases a suit can be filed up to a year later. Along with the lawsuits challenging board actions, there could be legal consequences for the Board. These could be financial, as well as, involving incarceration.

Where did board training come from and what does it entail?

In 1996 President Clinton signed into law the 1996 Amendment to the Safe Drinking Water Act. Part of the amendment required the states to adopt capacity development strategies for existing and new community, non-community and non-transient public water systems. Capacity development for a water system is enabling the system to function as a business without external support and encompasses three main parts:

- 1) Technical capacity
- 2) Management capacity
- 3) Financial capacity


During the training session we cover these three main points and how the Board, clerk and water operator need to work together for the system to function smoothly.

Sometimes they are not all on the same page and that is when problems arise. Part of the board training covers the Open Meetings Act and how it can help boards to run their meetings properly. The third part of the training covers employee success in planning and steps taken to make the process run smoothly.

If you have any questions or would like to schedule a training session, you can contact me at 402-607-9750.

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Summary of Evaluations

NeRWA Kearney Conference March 11-13, 2019

TOTAL EVALUATIONS RECEIVED – 134

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

a. Operator/Manager	122
b. Administrative	0
c. Board Member	4
d. Plumber	0
e. Lawn Service	0
f. State/Federal Rep.	2
g. Clerk	1
h. Other	5
- Utilities Director	
- Engineer	
- Maintenance	
- Water Well Monitoring Tech.	
- Spouse	

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

a. Training classes	42
b. Prizes/entertainment	0
c. Vendors	9
d. Chance to meet other operators	17
e. All of the above	1

QUESTION #3 – Things you liked and why?

- Plenty of room for classes-meals very filling, very good speakers, meeting/talking with other operators
- Classes always good
- It is all good-learning new things
- Enjoyed all speakers
- Meeting old friends-meals
- Training and vendors-being able to talk one on one with them
- Food is always great-location-training topics
- Training
- Getting all water and wastewater hours at one conference
- Talking with vendors
- Speakers- meals, hotel is 5-star
- Conference center-amazing food-good speakers-great hotels-variety of vendors
- Meeting other operators
- Laid back
- Venue-meals-Bill Podraza
- Good sessions/topics-very good meals-entertainment
- Coming to this conference since 1986: this has been very good on all aspects
- Bill Podraza is a very good speaker-small systems roundtable-conference center & staff
- Everything
- Training sessions were easy to understand-Trainers always willing to answer questions-Free gifts from NeRWA
- Meeting with other operators-entertainment-food-winning prizes-location
- Training sessions-meals
- Very eloquent speakers/experienced in their fields
- Everything was great
- All of it
- Great facility-hotel attached to center
- Vendors-product development-shared experience
- Training-vendors-meals
- All of the training classes-always something new and refreshers
- Training sessions were very informative-meals are excellent
- Great venue-food-accessibility
- League lawyer very informative
- Everything good
- Liked it all-close to home-easy accessibility
- Excellent opening speaker-very interesting
- Good topics for training sessions-great food-entertainment
- Ran smoothly-topics
- Vendors
- The food was great!
- Good speakers-food-music
- All great
- Good
- Meals always good-classes good

- Whole conference is very good
- Training
- Great location-meals were very good-a lot of vendors-new vendors
- Venue is great-everything is put together nicely
- Great speakers on a variety of different subjects-classes helpful & entertaining
- Lots of helpful information and knowledgeable speakers
- Good training sessions
- Really good topics this year
- Meals were awesome again-fun night-prizes-vendors
- All
- Great meals-could hear well in classes-NeRWA was organized
- Vendors-classes-topics-great opportunity to get info
- Topics and social hours to meet others
- Location was amazing-amazing food-classes-instructors were entertaining and informative
- I liked everything-Pat and his crew put on a good conference
- Entertainment-food-vendors-sessions
- Very enlightening conference-session are very informative-the entertainment after each day was fun
- Everything! Great speakers-food-entertainment
- Great place to have a conference-classes were very good-covered good topics
- All of it was good-everything in one place-good food
- The Younes Center is great-sessions were informative
- Everything was excellent
- Fun night-meeting new friends-round table: you learn most in there
- Food & facility great
- Classes educational and fun
- Classes didn't start too early
- Wonderful place to have a conference
- Meals were amazing (as a vegetarian I usually leave these things hungry-not here!)-Training classes were diverse
- Vendors-food-variety of classes
- Very well put together-classes were just right with time
- Whole conference was great
- Training classes for the most part were good-speakers were entertaining
- Can't pick just one thing-it was great
- Very nice venue-good amount of break times
- New vendors-good atmosphere
- Venue location is excellent-good food-good selection of vendors-good variety of topics-speakers very knowledgeable
- Top of the line meals
- Interesting topics that help with the big picture
- Monday night activities-free drinks!-meetings educational
- The time with vendors is great
- It was all great
- Speakers were informative
- New regulations-training for a better system
- Speakers-meals-friends
- The facility is excellent-staff at facility do a good job-food is very good-various training sessions



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- Thank you to the staff of NeRWA for another good job on putting on the conference-Big thank you to Pat Petersen for all he does-also thank you to the women who work the event
- Lash session
- Rooms-food-topics
- Always well organized-good information to all levels of operators
- All classes
- Sessions are not too long-good speakers-vendors are well laid out-meals excellent
- Classes well presented-very good meals-Comfort Inn
- New speakers
- The conference was great and very informative
- Learning that most everyone has the same issue: equipment, customers, governing body etc.

- One hour between last class and meal on Tuesday is not necessary
- Cold weather
- Backflow Knowledge class not informative
- Hate to see Bill P. and Howard I. retire, but good for them
- No dislikes
- No problems here
- I missed the prayer before eating
- Some trainers just read PowerPoint (although not typical)
- A few computer problems, but Pat was on it! -Don't like presenters just reading script (Ad lib!)
- Early start
- Need to change up the classes
- Breaks between classes on day one were 30 minutes, should only be 15 minutes
- Monday meal
- The brisket
- Change fun night from Monday
- My first conference: I liked it but felt uninformed on how things worked
- Crowded backflow room
- Monotone speakers-hard to stay awake
- Need better room rates-meals disorganized
- Crowded training sessions
- Taking the time to get away to be here and learn
- Same classes year after year
- The drive here gets a little long
- Supper served so late

QUESTION #4 – Things you disliked and why?

- When classes are called “What’s New,” with one speaker it is always advertising for them
- None
- I know there are a limited number of topics, but it gets boring, hearing the same thing from the same speaker, year after year.
- No problems
- Gabbing people in the audience during speaker presentations
- None-good conference
- Why would anyone dislike coming?
- Some sessions a little light on material or could have been more relevant
- The water taste
- Some classes boring
- Nothing-liked it all
- Not enough seating during a session-it was corrected part way through
- Repeat sessions from last year
- Did not dislike any aspect of the conference
- Some classes too long
- Nothing I can think of
- What happened to game night?
- Same topics year to year
- Nothing
- Vendors not showing up
- Registration was lost
- Classes are getting repetitive year after year-I will look elsewhere for CEU hours
- Not a lot of vendor variety
- The water was bad-couldn't drink it
- Smaller variety of topics covered this year-breakfast was advertised as 7:30-8:30, they stopped serving at 8:00, that was disappointing
- Can't think of any
- Choosing different rooms when I wanted to take multiple sessions in the same hour
- Sessions same year after year-sessions with new regulations should have handouts so we can have a copy
- A few classes were a little too technical
- Daylight Savings made for early mornings
- Should have Barney say Grace at each meal, not just the banquet
- People's cell phones constantly ringing during class

QUESTION #5 – Any Suggestions of topics or entertainment for future conferences?

- More sessions for clerks
- Keep up the good work
- Hypnotist
- More backflow
- Raising funds and grant writing for projects
- More backflow hours
- Keep it in Kearney
- Vegas night
- Dueling pianos
- More field situations/pics/hands on
- Maybe a session on multitasking due to all the duties of an operator. Maybe a presentation to help people when they present to board members
- Have more talks like Lash Chaffin's-Chris Miller's class was great
- More wastewater/lagoon operation
- Vegas night
- More backflow hours
- Whatever Pat comes up with is good
- Stand-up comedy
- More options for backflow hours
- Topic: handling small town politics
- Keep it up
- More topics on industrial wastewater
- Disconnect fees roundtable
- Dealing with Generation X
- Poker or casino night
- Classes for safety procedures
- Hands on training and interactive sessions
- Session from a well driller would be interesting
- Magician or comedy
- Magician

- “How to get started from scratch” – for new people who are brand new and don’t know how to get started
- Hands on work-vendor demonstrations
- A few more backflow classes
- Soda Machine
- Continue the range of topics
- Have more giveaways during the day
- More backflow hours
- Mechanical plant classes
- More classes for new operators
- Some classes could be presented more than one time for some who want to take 2 classes at the same time

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Additional Comments:


- For those who drive to conference every day, it would be nice if supper were started earlier
- Keep up the good work. Thank you for all you do!
- Keep up the good work
- Great conference! No complaints!
- I like the vendors as trainers- they know their products well. All registration ladies, trainers, vendors, NeRWA, DHHS reps were very cordial and happy. In a world full of turmoil; it is refreshing! Really good conference!
- Pat does an amazing job!
- Your hard work and dedication make the conference such a great experience. Applause to all of you for your hard work.
- All staff in the venue does great!
- Job well done, NeRWA! Tell folks to mute their phones during classes.
- Stay in Kearney
- Good times & good food!
- Excited to see what next year brings
- Good conference, great job!
- Thanks for another great conference
- This was my first trip to a conference-it was well presented and informative
- Thanks for putting on the annual conference. It is one of the best opportunities to get training, meet vendors, and network with other operators.
- One of the best since I've attended the conference
- Thanks to NeRWA staff and board members-A valuable resource!
- Great conference-thank you all!

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