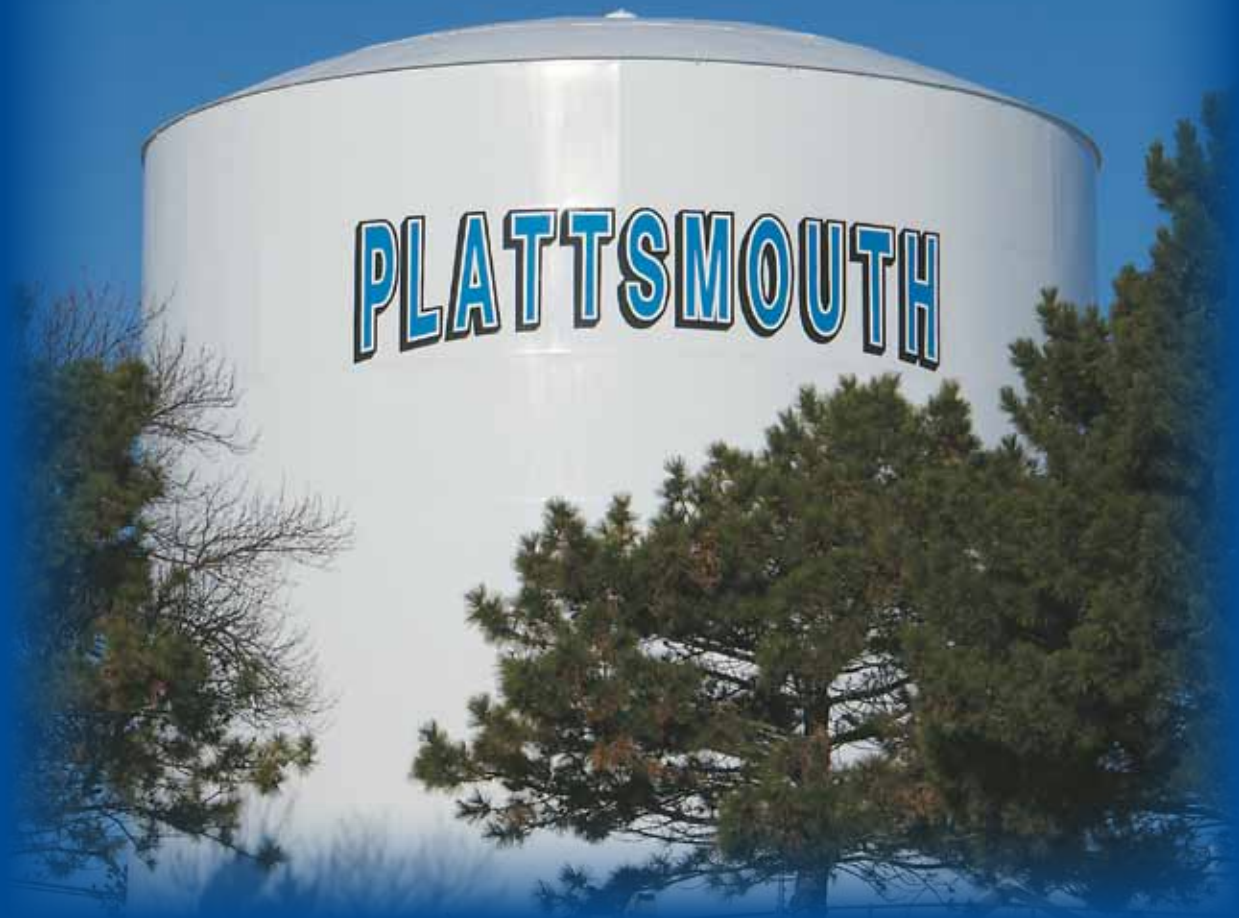


Issue 4/2012

# Nebraska Rural Water Association



## NEBRASKA GOOD WATER NEWS

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(402) 352-5444

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Russell Topp, Circuit Rider  
Mike Stanzel, Deputy Circuit Rider  
Barney Whatley, Capacity Development Specialist  
Mike Lucas, Wastewater Technician  
Pat Petersen, Training Specialist

*“Nebraska Good Water News” is a quarterly publication of the NEBRASKA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION, 3390 Ponderosa, Wahoo, Nebraska 68066. Phone 1-800-842-8039 or (402) 443-5216 or FAX (402) 443-5274. Copies are mailed to all member rural and municipal water operators, Federal and State Legislators, associates and individual members.*

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

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

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

### **On the cover:**

The Plattsmouth tank is a one million gallon standpipe that was erected in 1956 by Pittsburgh Steel at a cost of \$41,560.00. The tank exterior was blasted and repainted in 2009 by W. S. Bunch at a cost of \$52,500.00. The engineer for the repainting project was Steve Perry of Olmsted & Perry.

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



## CITY OFFICE

P.O. Box 163 Ph. 402-762-3356  
Clay Center, NE 68933  
Proud Past. ....  
... Promising Future

9-5-12

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Street  
Wahoo, NE 68066

The City of Clay Center along with our utility department would like to thank you for your ongoing assistance and give a special thanks to Russ Topp. You have been very helpful with several of our water issues that have arisen over the last couple of months. Please accept this donation on our behalf as a way to show our gratitude for your continued support and your knowledgeable staff.

Thank You!

*Mitzi Messenger*

Mitzi Messenger  
City Clerk/Treasurer

VILLAGE OF VERDON  
P.O. BOX 114  
VERDON, NE 68457  
402-883-2044  
[verdonvh@sentco.net](mailto:verdonvh@sentco.net)

SEPTEMBER 17, 2012

DEAR NeRWA:

The Village of Verdon would like to express our sincere "Thanks" to all of you for your uncanny ability to always be there in our time of need. Your professionalism and knowledge are a great asset.

Please accept another donation from us for your equipment fund, which is enclosed with this letter.

We would also like to give special thanks to Russ Topp for always being there with answers when problems arise. To Mike Lucas for his help in trying to find some lost manholes and finding a customer sewer problem by accident. Also to Doug Buresh for saving our operator two extra days of work by bringing down your valve exercise machine.

Sincerely,  
The Verdon Village Chairperson and Board of Trustees

And grateful are the receivers!

Thanks so much!

*For your help when our water tower froze over in 2010, and for helping us try and find manholes that were buried. How coming so our able to camera our sewer system. You at Nerwa are a great help to our Village when we call upon your services. Please except our donation for your services.*

*Sincerely,  
The Verdon Village Board Members  
Jammie Bent Operator Brenda Daniel Clerk*

**Village of Phillips**

P. O. Box 203  
Phillips, NE. 68865  
Phone #: 402-886-2926  
Fax #: 402-886-2912

July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Street  
Wahoo, Nebraska 68066

Dear Sir:

Enclosed you will find a check in the amount of \$142.50. This is a donation for exercising our Water Valves. Thank You So Much For All You Do.

Sincerely,  
Village of Phillips Board of Trustees and the Maintenance Department

**VILLAGE OF DAVENPORT**

P O Box 119, 108 N Oak Avenue, Davenport, NE 68335 Phone 402.364.2292 Fax 402.364.2293

August 13, 2012

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Street  
Wahoo, NE 68066

Personnel,

The Davenport Village Board of Trustees and employees thank you for all the assistance you so willingly give to assist water and sewer departments.

Please accept the enclosed donation in appreciation for your expertise and help with recent valve exercising.

Thank you,

*Arlene Vorce*  
Arlene Vorce  
Village Clerk



**City of Clarkson**

*The City of Hospitality*

120 West Second Street - P.O. Box 18  
Clarkson, Nebraska 68629-0018  
Phone: (402) 892-3100 Fax: (402) 892-3141



September 12, 2012

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Drive  
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear NeRWA,

Thank you very much for all the work you do for all the cities and villages in the area. Please accept this donation on behalf of the City of Clarkson for the use of the valve exercise machine, preparing a water and sewer rate study and helping find our water leak at our swimming pool. Finding that water leak saved the city lots of water this year when water usage really needed to be controlled. Thanks again for all the valuable services you provide and keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

*Andra Cech, Clerk Treasurer*

Employees and Councilmembers  
City of Clarkson

The City of Pawnee City appreciated the help from Nebraska Rural Water with working the water valves/hydrants in town. You are such a great resource and help! The City encloses a donation for your assistance!

**CITY OF PAWNEE CITY**

# City of Elgin

P.O. Box 240  
Elgin, Nebraska 68636  
Telephone: 402-843-5822

September 17, 2012

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Street  
Wahoo, NE 68066

RE: Donation

The City of Elgin employees and City Council would like to thank you for the many services you provide for us. We would like to give special thanks to Randy for coming out and doing the water rate study. Please accept the enclosed donation for your equipment fund.

Sincerely,



Vicki S. Miller  
City Clerk/Treasurer



# Village of Juniata

P.O. Box 26  
911 Juniata Ave.  
Juniata, Nebraska 68955  
of: 402-751-2687 fax: 402-751-2699  
E-mail: crystal@juniataclerk.com

October 3, 2012

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Street  
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear NeRWA:

The Village of Juniata Board of Trustees would like me to express how grateful they are for the help you have provided the Village this past year.

Please accept this donation and our appreciation for being there when needed.

Thank-You,



Crystal Petzoldt  
Village of Juniata  
Clerk/Treasurer

**VILLAGE OF HAMPTON**  
P.O. BOX 277  
HAMPTON, NE 68843  
402-725-3186  
FAX 402-725-3255

hampton@hamilton.net  
Clerk hours 8:30 to 11:30 and 1:00 to 3:00  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

August 14, 2012

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Street  
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear NeRWA,

The Village of Hampton would like to thank you for all the things that you do. The equipment and support that you provide the Village is greatly appreciated. Please accept our donation to your equipment fund.

Sincerely,

Hampton Village Board  
Kirk Goertzen, Tony Smith, Dane Schafer, Randy Wochner, Roger Werth

## VILLAGE OF HOWELLS

P. O. BOX 351, 128 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
HOWELLS, NE. 68641  
402-986-1666 402-986-1210 (fax)  
hockl@megavision.com

*"The Village of Howells is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer"*

September 14, 2012

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Drive  
Wahoo, Nebraska 68066

Dear NERWA staff,

We again are very thankful for your staff and all the hard work they do the members of NERWA. Randy Hellbusch is always there when we need to audit our water and sewer rates and then provides us with his expert knowledge to keep us on the plus side of operating those utilities. And with the help of Russell Topp and the Rural Water Associations leak detection equipment we were able to locate a leak in our swimming pool. To be able to pinpoint this problem enabled us to get to the correct location without having to go through a hit and miss process thus saving us a lot of time and MONEY!!!

Thank you again and please accept this donation for all the help you've provided the Village of Howells!!!

Sincerely,



Dawn Gall  
Howells Village Clerk

## VILLAGE OF CONCORD

P.O. BOX 49  
CONCORD, NEBRASKA 68728-0049  
(402) 584-2395

October 8, 2012

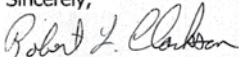
Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Drive  
Wahoo, NE 68066

On behalf of the Concord Village Board of Trustees, I want to thank you for the help given to us over the past few years.

Please find enclosed a \$200.00 donation to help with the expenses in the upkeep of your equipment.

Again, thank you for your willingness to aid us in our efforts.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Clarkson  
Board Chairman

RLC:jh

## Village of Table Rock

P. O. Box 123  
Table Rock, Nebraska 68447

August 14, 2012

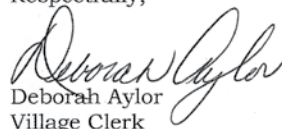
Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Street  
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear NeRWA:

The Village of Table Rock, Mayor, Council Members, and staff would like to thank you for the assistance you gave in exercising our water valves. Your organization is always willing to give our village your expertise and insight.

Please accept the enclosed donation to put towards your equipment fund ~ thank you again for your support.

Respectfully,



Deborah Aylor  
Village Clerk

# VILLAGE OF ARNOLD

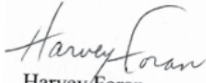
P.O. BOX 70  
ARNOLD, NE 69120  
308-848-2228  
FAX: 308-848-4743  
E-MAIL: arnoldvillage@gpcom.net

August 27, 2012

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Street  
Wahoo, NE 68006

The Village of Arnold would like to thank the Nebraska Rural Water Association for all the services that the Nebraska Rural Water Association has provided for our community over the past several years. Recently, the Village was having problems at the wastewater plant. We called Mike Lucas and he brought the sewer camera to Arnold. Mike Lucas was able to notate that our problem was tree roots. The sewer camera showed where the tree roots were and found a broken pipe. The sewer camera was a tremendous help in locating the problem. Enclosed is a donation to the Nebraska Rural Water Association for the equipment fund.

Sincerely,



Harvey Foran  
Wastewater Plant Operator

## CITY of YUTAN

August 22, 2012

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
3390 Ponderosa Drive  
Wahoo, NE 68066

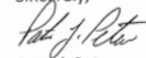
Dear Rural Water Association:

The Mayor, City Council, and all employees at the City of Yutan would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff at the Nebraska Rural Water Association for all of their help in several different areas. Throughout the past year the NeRWA has provided the City of Yutan, a water rate study, GPS locations for both water and wastewater maps, several water line locations, leak detection, and ongoing education for our water and wastewater operators. Not only have they offered these great services but sometimes just the professional voice of moral support offered by all employees at the rural water association speaks volumes.

The City of Yutan has called on the rural water association on several occasions, and never once have we not had a representative show up or find the answers to our questions. Yutan will continue to support the Nebraska Rural Water Association, so please accept this donation as a token of our support.

Once again, we would like to thank all of you for everything you do and encourage all communities in Nebraska to use the rural water association and support them any way you can!

Sincerely,



Patrick Petersen  
Utilities Superintendent

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## 2012: a Year of Challenges

*By Mike Lucas, Wastewater Technician*

NeRWA one day wastewater classes this year have been dedicated to identifying the sources and reducing the costs of dealing with collection system inflow and infiltration (I/I). It has been an unusual year in that more I/I for many of us would have been a very real blessing.

You are required to maintain a minimum depth of 2 feet of water in your lagoon cells. This requirement is meant to protect the integrity of the seal in the bottom of the lagoon and thus to protect the quality of the groundwater. This has been a very real challenge for many operators this year. Many have resorted to running potable drinking water down the sanitary sewer to maintain that 2 foot minimum depth.

A system can decide to allow a cell to dry up but before you will be allowed to return flow to that cell your City Engineer will need to certify to the NDEQ that the seal meets or exceeds minimum permeability requirements. This means that your ratepayers may well be required to assume the costs of the excavation and the compaction of the floor of the cell before the cell can be returned to service.

If you have been land applying water from your ponds through the irrigation of fields, it has been difficult in a drought year to discontinue that service to your community farmers but you may need to do just that. As a side note, make sure that you are maintaining the required records at the City/Village office (not with the farmer). For a review of those requirements refer to Title 119 Chapter 12 of the Nebraska Administrative Code.

As water levels fall, it encourages more vegetative growth that you need to control. It may also expose areas of erosion and/or animal burrows that you will need to address by re-compacting with clay and perhaps applying riprap. Be sure that any concrete riprap is a maximum of 1 foot in diameter. Riprap is an excellent way to control erosion of the lagoon

banks if you have erosion problems but to control vegetative growth in the riprap you will be limited to chemical applications.

Lagoon treatment of wastewater can be an excellent, low cost means of wastewater treatment but it does require some management. Be sure that you restrict access with the required signage and locked gates. Do not graze the area with livestock and keep vegetative growth controlled.

As an operator your challenges never end, only increase. I hope that next year we are all concerned with inflow and infiltration (I&I) once again but I guess we need to be careful what we wish for.

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**NeRWA Annual Conference  
Heartland Event Center  
Grand Island, Nebraska**

**March 18-20, 2013**

NeRWA's first conference was held at the Heartland Event Center in March 2012. It was a big success for the first year, but there will be some changes and improvements.



As usual, there will be CEUs for water, backflow, and wastewater. Well driller and on-site wastewater will also be applied for.

Watch for further details coming out - by mail and on our website, [www.nerwa.org](http://www.nerwa.org). The agenda is being prepared and should be in the mail soon. You can register by fax, mail, or on-line.

**Motels:**

Midtown Holiday Inn  
2503 S Locust St  
308-384-1330

Best Western  
2707 S Locust St  
308-381-8855

Super 8  
2603 S Locust St  
308-384-4380

We hope to see all of you back next March and we will sure welcome any new faces.

# Nebraska Rural Water Association Annual Conference Pre-Registration

March 19-21, 2013  
Heartland Event Center  
Grand Island, Nebraska

Name (1 person per form) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Water System/Company Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Pre-Registration  
Deadline is  
March 7, 2013

**License numbers MUST be on this form to receive the correct CEUs.**

License #: Water: \_\_\_\_\_ BF \_\_\_\_\_ WW \_\_\_\_\_ OSWW \_\_\_\_\_ WD \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION INCLUDES TRAINING MATERIALS, MEALS AND BREAKS.** Registration fees on-site will increase by \$75. No registrations after March 12. Monday is free for all utility/rural water board members. Board Members can attend Tuesday and Wednesday for the price of meal tickets.

I am a Board Member attending Monday (no charge) \_\_\_\_\_

Tues \_\_\_\_\_ Wed \_\_\_\_\_ (Cost of meals only—check meals below)

I am the Voting Delegate \_\_\_\_\_

| DAYS ATTENDING                 | Member       | Member after March 7 | Non-Member   | Non-Member after March 7 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| FULL CONFERENCE (all meals)    | ____\$375.00 | ____400.00           | ____\$475.00 | ____\$500.00             |
| MONDAY (evening meal)          | ____\$100.00 | ____125.00           | ____\$125.00 | ____\$150.00             |
| TUESDAY (lunch & evening meal) | ____\$175.00 | ____\$200.00         | ____\$200.00 | ____\$225.00             |
| WEDNESDAY (breakfast & lunch)  | ____\$125.00 | ____\$150.00         | ____\$150.00 | ____\$175.00             |

All meals are included for each registration. Please indicate below if you will be staying for the evening meals. You will not be charged for them if you are registered—it's for a more accurate count. Guests need to purchase a ticket for every meal. The breakfast on Wednesday is complimentary for all registered for the conference.

| Extra meal tickets available | Guest Tickets | Cost | Total | Your Meals |
|------------------------------|---------------|------|-------|------------|
| Mon evening                  |               | \$25 | \$    |            |
| Tues lunch                   |               | \$15 | \$    |            |
| Tues Banquet                 |               | \$30 | \$    |            |
| Wed lunch                    |               | \$15 | \$    |            |

Registration \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tickets \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NeRWA member: Bill \_\_\_\_\_ Payment enclosed \_\_\_\_\_  
**Non-members—Payment must accompany registration**

Name of guest \_\_\_\_\_

**To Register:**  
 Fax: 402-443-5274  
 Mail: Nebraska Rural Water Association  
 3390 Ponderosa Street  
 Wahoo, NE 68066  
 Online: www.nerwa.org  
**NO PHONE REGISTRATIONS**

When making room reservations, mention you are with NeRWA

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Midtown Holiday Inn<br>2503 S Locust St<br>308-384-1330 | Best Western<br>2707 S Locust St<br>308-381-8855 | Super 8<br>2603 S Locust St<br>308-384-4380 |
|---|--|---|

DATE REGISTRATION RECEIVED: \_\_\_\_\_

**CANCELLATION POLICY: Cancellations after March 9 will be charged a \$25 processing fee.**

*For NeRWA office use only:* Payment received \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hours: Water \_\_\_\_\_ BF \_\_\_\_\_ Wastewater \_\_\_\_\_ OSWW \_\_\_\_\_ WD \_\_\_\_\_ Certificate mailed \_\_\_\_\_



## Getting Ready For Winter

By Russ Topp, Circuit Rider

I wasn't sure summer would ever end this year. With the one hundred plus degree weather throughout this summer you might think you would never see cold weather again. You know what they say about Nebraska, if you don't like the weather just hang around a few days. You guessed it, cold weather is just around the corner and by the time you read this article, it may have already arrived. Once again it's time to batten down the hatches for winter.

There are a few things to keep in mind before the cold weather arrives. Well houses are always a concern. Be sure to check those heaters to make sure they are functioning properly. It's not a bad idea to have two sources of heat. In some well houses you may be using heat lamps as a supplemental heat source. If you use two different sources of heat, I would recommend wiring them into two different electrical circuits. If for some reason a fuse or breaker is tripped on one circuit, the other circuit will hopefully keep the pipes from freezing until your morning rounds. If you are lucky enough to have a SCADA system that alerts you when the temperature drops in the well house make sure it is functioning properly.

Now that you have your well houses nice and warm every mouse in the county will try to take up residence there for the winter. Remember if you have a rodent problem, use glue traps or snap traps. Stay away from mouse poison. Mouse poison or any kind of unapproved chemicals are a bad idea in or around wells. If you know where the little critters are getting into the well house, use some steel wool to plug their holes. Mice won't chew through steel wool.

Remember those old fire hydrants that didn't want to drain back this fall when you conducted your biannual main flushing? Be sure to check them to see if they are still full of water. You can use a large nut on the end of a light chain to drop down the barrel of the hydrant to determine if they are holding water. If they are, you will want to siphon or pump them dry before they freeze up. Most structure fires happen in the coldest weather, so make sure your hydrants are

functioning properly or bag them if they are not.

Check those main valve boxes that like to fill with gravel, water or both. Try to get these flushed out before cold weather. Styrofoam valve box plugs are inexpensive and seem to work well to keep gravel out of the boxes.

Remember the water tower you were trying to keep full last summer? You will probably need to operate it differently this winter. You may want to move your low water setting lower to achieve a longer fill cycle. This will allow the well to run longer and pump more warm water into the tower to help prevent ice build up.

Winter is also a good time to catch up on that dreaded paperwork that there is never time for in the summer. In between pushing snow, salting streets, scooping sidewalks, thawing pipes, fixing water main breaks, trying to start equipment in sub zero weather, you will have plenty of time to send out the cross connection control surveys for the tenth time, update your emergency plan, prepare your 2 and 10 year plan, write an operation and maintenance manual and send in your Bacti sample site plan and emergency contact list. When that's all done you may want to clean up the paperwork in those file cabinets. Attached you will find the guide lines as to how long records must be kept. If you would like some help with the paperwork this winter be sure and give us a call.

*continued on next page*

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**Bill Simmerman - Owner**  
Cell: (308) 233-4729  
[bill.s@municipalautomation.com](mailto:bill.s@municipalautomation.com)

# Recordkeeping Requirements

NEBRASKA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM



| Item to maintain on record   | Time frame                                  |
|--|---|
| Total coliform bacteria results  | Five (5) years                              |
| Turbidity records  | Five (5) years                              |
| Temperature and pH records   | Five (5) years                              |
| Disinfectant residual records  | Five (5) years                              |
| Chemical test results  | Ten (10) Years                              |
| Lead and Copper records  | Twelve (12) years                           |
| Consumer Confidence Reports (CWS only)   | Three (3) years                             |
| Actions taken to correct violations  | Three (3) years                             |
| Sanitary surveys and responses   | Ten (10) Years                              |
| Records concerning a variance or exemption to the system                                   | Five (5) years                              |
| Records relating to an Administrative Order to the system                                  | Five (5) years                              |
| Public notices and certification forms   | Three (3) years                             |
| Written customer complaints  | Five (5) years                              |
| Water main repair/replacement records-<br>including sampling results & disinfection method | Five (5) years                              |
| Chemical usage   | Five (5) years                              |
| Records of process control results   | Five (5) years                              |
| Records of test equipment quality assurance and quality control                            | Five (5) years                              |
| Records of cleaning, repair, inspection and coatings on water<br>storage facilities        | 20 Yrs. CWS/NTNC<br>10 Yrs. TNC             |
| Records of Location, Types, Tests, and Repairs of backflow<br>preventers                   | Five (5) years                              |
| Consumer surveys for backflow prevention   | Five (5) years                              |
|  |   |
| Item to be recorded  | Time Frame                                  |
| Well production records  | Weekly                                      |
| Water level readings (Static, Pumping, Drawdown)   | Monthly (May-Sept)<br>Quarterly (Oct-April) |

# 2012 TRAINING

## Wastewater Training

November 15 Wahoo

## Backflow Continuing Education Training

November 14 Gordon  
 November 27 Wahoo  
  
 December 11 Mitchell  
 December 12 Imperial  
 December 13 Cambridge  
 December 19 Wahoo

## Water Operator Training

November 15 Red Cloud  
  
 December 18 Geneva  
 December 20 Wahoo

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
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 Wahoo, NE 68066  
[www.nerwa.org](http://www.nerwa.org)



## 2013 TRAINING PREVIEW

**Water Operator:** January 8 West Point  
 January 10 Firth

**Wastewater:** January 8 Wahoo  
 February 13 Syracuse

**Backflow Continuing Education:** January 8 Alliance  
 January 9 Atkinson  
 February 19 Nebraska City  
 February 21 Norfolk - Nucor Steel

**Grade 6 Backflow Certification - 5 Day:** January 14-18 Wahoo

**Wastewater Certification Course:** January 22-25 Wahoo

**Annual Conference:** March 18-20 Heartland Event Center  
 Grand Island, Nebraska

# 2012 FALL CONFERENCE AT GERING



# 2012 FALL CONF





# CONFERENCE AT GERING



# 2012 FALL CONFERENCE AT GERING



# Western Conference Reflections

The Fall Conference was well received by the 19 people who evaluated it. They all felt it was worthwhile because it was informative, as well as, a good review. The wide variety of topics, the location, the new information, the vendors, the very informed speakers, the meals, the networking with other operators, the facilities and the giveaways were all mentioned as things that were the “most “ liked about the conference. The dislikes were minimal: a projector that wasn’t working all the time, a lack of well driller hours, the length of the day on Wednesday, more handouts and juice to go along with the soda on breaks. Thank you to those who took the time to fill out an evaluation. They will help NeRWA in preparing for next year’s fall conference.



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## 2013 Rate Study

One project is winding down, the NeRWA water and sewer rate study. THANK YOU to all the systems that turned in their information for the study and, also, helped clarify and update the information that was received. Proofreading, totaling some of the numbers and making an index are left to be done.

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## 2013 NeRWA Membership Directory

BE WATCHING for a letter asking for your help to create the 2013 NeRWA membership directory. The letter will be out shortly. The information that will be in the directory is being sent to you so all you need to do is look at it, see if any of the information has changed, make the changes on the sheet and return it right away to our office. Hopefully, this method will be quick and easy for you. Thank you in advance for your help on this next project.

### ATTENTION OPERATORS...

As you all know by now, the Department of Health changed the term of the water, backflow and well driller licenses. They are now 2-year licenses and 10 CEUs are required for renewal. You can attend one training session each year and receive five hours at each class, or you can attend two classes in one year. Our annual and fall conferences offer the entire 10 hours. There is still time to get some hours this year. Refer to the training schedule in this magazine.

If you have any questions regarding hours, you can call the Department of Health or the NeRWA office.



**Victor W. (Bill) Campbell - City of Oshkosh**  
**2012 Fall NeRWA Conference – Gering, Nebraska**

Victor W. (Bill) Campbell Jr., came to work for the City in 1993. He started as the Sanitation truck driver and was promoted to City Clerk soon after. Along with holding a Grade IV water operator license, he is also the City Administrator, Street and Utilities Superintendent and maintenance worker. Even though he is the City Administrator, he's not afraid to roll up his sleeves and work right alongside the water system designated operator in responsible charge (DO) on any project.

Although he is not the DO of the water system, he's been instrumental in helping the DO improve the efficiency of the water system by looking into what would be the best method to convert two of their wells from vertical turbine to submersible pumps. This included the installation of VFD's, helping to obtain a lightly used portable generator to have emergency power on-site, applying for and receiving a grant for a much need water study for the installation of several new water lines, and by assisting in the updating of the water system map.

He's always glad to see the DHHS DPH Field Representative, especially if the Field Rep. happens to catch him at the local C-Store during his morning break.

In addition to his working responsibilities, he's currently a volunteer fire fighter and was the secretary/treasurer for the VFD for over 10 years.

He and his wife Jill have two rescued cats named Carl & Jonna. His hobbies include golfing, fishing, hunting, looking for treasured arrow heads, and vacationing somewhere warm.

It is with honor that the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services presents this Certificate of Recognition to Victor W. (Bill) Campbell from the City of Oshkosh.

Douglas L. Woodbeck  
DHHS DPH Field Services & Training Supervisor



## Back To Work

*By Barney Whatley, Capacity Development Specialist*

Immediately after the Annual Conference in March of last year, Charles Bausch resigned to take a position with HD Supply. Since that time, the remainder of the staff have been very busy picking up the slack and trying to keep up with the projects that Charles had started. EPA has once again funded the Training Specialist program through the National Rural Water Association, and that program became effective as of September 1<sup>st</sup>. Patrick Petersen was hired as of October 1<sup>st</sup> to fill that position, and he will be handling the water operator workshops and setting up the two conferences that NeRWA holds each year. Other NeRWA staff members will still be training Pat on how to complete his duties and assisting with training classes and the conferences, but with the hiring of a Training Specialist, we can now get back to work and

start concentrating on getting our work caught up.

I have had several systems interested in completing income surveys to determine their eligibility for grant funding and reduced interest loans. It should be noted that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is currently not funding water and wastewater projects, although I have heard that they are considering the possibility of picking them back up sometime in the future. The process for completing an income survey is relatively straight forward, and if it is done correctly the results can be used for USDA and Drinking Water State Revolving Loan (SRF) loans as well as CDBG funding for other community projects.

USDA and SRF use median household income (MHI) to determine eligibility for loans and lower interest rates, while CDBG uses percent of Low to Moderate Income (LMI) persons. The survey form that we use for an income survey includes all the questions needed so that both types of eligibility can be determined from the same fully completed form. The MHI survey requires a certain percentage of return for it to be considered statistically accurate, while the LMI survey requires 100% return. In the LMI survey, any survey forms not returned are considered to be high income, and if you cannot verify the actual population of the system, the census population must be used. Since many of Nebraska's smaller communities are losing population, even the 2010 census is overstating the population by an amount that will skew the survey results. Therefore, it is important to get at least the number of persons living in every household even if the household refuses to divulge the income data for the LMI survey while a form without income data will not be used at all in a MHI survey.

It would be acceptable for me to go door to door to deliver and explain the survey forms, but I feel that a total stranger asking for financial information would

*continued on next page*

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not be received as well as a person that is known to the respondent. I usually request that the system see if either the governing body or a civic organization can be induced to distribute the survey forms. They can explain why the survey is being conducted, why it is important that the survey form be filled out completely and returned, and also that the survey form will be kept at the NeRWA office and the completed forms will not be revealed to anyone living in the community.

If your system is looking at a major water project in the near future and are interested in determining whether or not you would be eligible for USDA or SRF funding for that project, you can contact the NeRWA office to set up a time for us to meet, or you can call Scott Sprague at (402) 471-0088 to request an income survey. Once I am aware of the request for an income survey, I will contact you so that we can meet and determine what information I will need to begin setting up the survey and the system can determine who will distribute the survey forms to the people served by the system.



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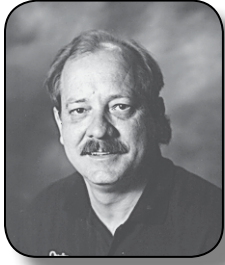
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# Are Water Systems Important?

By Randy Hellbusch, Circuit Rider

The number one concern among water systems and water system managers is the protection of public health. It always has been and always will be. But if you step back and take a closer look at water quality and quantity with a holistic approach, you would soon realize that water systems are also a major factor in the economic vitality of our communities. We take clean and affordable water and wastewater treatment for granted in most of this nation, but without this key ingredient, economic growth would be paralyzed. The majority of our energy, the food we eat and a large portion of our manufactured products come from rural America. Wimmer's Meats/Land O' Frost in West Point, Nebraska employs 125 people and does approximately \$50 million plus in sales an-

nually. This would not be possible without the safe, quality water supplied by the City of West Point. This is just one example. Over 50% of the water produced by the Cuming County RWD is consumed by livestock. This is just one example of how abundant, affordable, clean water is a benefit to some of the over 20,000 beef cow operations in rural Nebraska that adds \$12.1 billion to the state's economy.

Rob Johnson, CEO of the National Rural Water Association, recently attended a function of utilities in which each utility was explaining the important roll they played and the impact they had on the nation's economy. After listening to several entities speak, he had the realization that although each was vital, without clean, safe water, none of them would exist! Water is the one utility that impacts everyone's lives.

Although your system may not have a Wimmer's Meats or serve large cattle feeding operations, just think of the impact on your local businesses if your water systems were unable to operate. For example, convenience stores, hair salons, restaurants, meat lockers, and the list goes on and on.

Often times, when a small water system is in need of major upgrading or needs to undertake a major project to remain in compliance and supply clean, safe water I hear, "We just can't afford it!" The real question is: How can you afford not to?

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# My First Article

*By Pat Petersen, Training Specialist*

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Rules, Rules, Rules! Just when you think you have them all figured out they change again! So, I decided I wanted to help others follow the “rules” and joined the Nebraska Rural Water Association to help train water operators about the many rules we face in our profession. Not only will we learn about the rules, but several training classes throughout the year will focus on things such as emergency chlorination, proper sampling techniques, capacity development, emergency planning, and many more topics throughout the state of Nebraska.


Now that I have that out of the way, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Patrick Petersen and I have been named the Nebraska Rural Water Association’s newest team member; The Training Specialist. I have been married to my beautiful wife, Nicole, for 15 years and we have two wonderful children. Ellie our daughter is 13 and Sam our son is 8. They both have amazing talents in the classroom, on the hardwood floor, the ball fields, and even marching down mainstreet playing a musical instrument. If you need to find the Petersens during the summer months you will usually find us at the ball park. I will be in the bleachers eating popcorn while my wife is coaching third base.

Before joining NeRWA, I worked for the city of Yutan for 21 years, the last 7 as the Utilities Superintendent. I am proud to say that during my years of service I accomplished many things for the city of Yutan and its citizens, but felt that the time was right for this next step in my life. During my career at Yutan there were many times I was in a pinch needing water lines located, leak detection done, and rate studies done to set our water rates and there was always one organization I could call on. That organization is the Nebraska Rural Water Association. After using the NeRWA on several occasions, it really hit me that I would love to become a part of this group. So, when opportunity knocked, I knew it was time to move on.


Throughout this first week on the job I have been made to feel right at home. Thank you to Barney for all of the hands-on help, Salli and Carol for all of your office help, Randy and Russ for lunch on Monday, Doug and Mike Lucas’ friendly welcoming handshake, and Mike Stanzel’s supportive e-mail when I was caught scratching my head wondering what I should do next. I also want to thank the Nebraska Rural Water Board for lunch and giving me the opportunity to introduce myself at the October Board meeting. A special thanks to Randy for his confidence in my ability which really meant a lot!

My first two classes that I was in charge of were in Axtell and North Platte. The topics discussed were chlorine residual testing, emergency response, sampling techniques, cross-connection programs, and budgeting. The classes were very well attended. Axtell had 26 participants and North Platte had 17. It is great to see this many operators, state field representatives, DHHS staff and NeRWA staff at these continuing education opportunities.

Finally, as I continue my new journey with the Nebraska Rural Water Association I look forward to meeting as many water operators as I possibly can. This may be a lofty goal but I really hope to achieve it through training courses, conferences, and visits to your systems to discuss any water or training issues you may be having. Thanks again for all the warm welcomes and I hope to see you all soon!!



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*Happy Holidays*



*The Board of Directors and Staff would like to wish everyone a happy holiday season. We hope you will all be safe and be able to spend time with families and friends.*

*Thank you for all your support this past year.*



## Small System Struggles

*By Mike Stanzel, Deputy Circuit Rider*

I have recently been spending quite a bit of time assisting a very small town in Nebraska. Now when I say small town I'm talking way less than 100 residents and approximately 30 service connections. Over the past 4 years I have assisted this village many times and I have seen firsthand the struggles they face day in and day out mainly financially.

Being a town this small and having no businesses they are working with a very small tax base. This in turn also means a very small water budget.

Last year they lost their operator and were not able to hire one from a neighboring town mostly due to the fact that the salary they could offer was not worth the time and trouble. They did find a local resident to take the grade 4 class and become the certified operator for the system this past summer. The only problem with this is the operator is very young and has zero experience.

Throughout the summer this operator faced numerous challenges, including a large amount of deficiencies on the sanitary survey, well/tower controls not functioning, several coliform violations, and to top it all off, an E-coli violation resulting in an Administrative Order for 6 months of chlorination. This is a lot of stress to throw on an inexperienced operator, especially one that receives very little compensation.

When the board chairman was notified of the A.O. he instructed the operator to get assistance from the previous operator to get the chlorine pump installed, only to find out later that the pump was way oversized and not installed properly. The big problem with this was the previous operator no longer had a license. A BIG NO NO!!

Well, after getting scalded from the DHHS this operator was thinking "Why did I get myself into this?" and was ready to quit.

I did get there and got them to order the proper equipment, installed it correctly and gave instructions on mixing the chlorine, the dosage and the residuals. The operator was relieved that there is an agency out there that is able to provide assistance free of charge and can make a very stressful time a bit more bearable.

These problems are not just in a few towns. They are all over the state and we see these small systems struggling to keep their heads above water every day.

One reason this particular town struggles is their water rates are way too low. \$12.50 per month for all the water you can use is killing this system and the current board does not want to raise them. My comment to the clerk was to ask the board when they go to a gas station do they get to give the attendant \$12.50 and take all the fuel they need for the month? Absolutely Not!!! Secondly, they do not enforce the disconnecting of residents who don't pay. They currently have one customer that owes over \$500 and they will not shut them off. This town would benefit from doing a rate study and taking a serious look at their policies to see how they can generate more cash for their budget so they can ensure they will exist in the future.

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# 2012 Western Conference

The 2012 Western Conference is in the books, and once again it was very successful. The conference kicked off on Tuesday with the preconference, the theme of which was "Operator Basics". Attendees received information on rate setting, basic water operator math, sampling and drawdowns, emergency planning and cross connection control program requirements. Following the sessions in the preconference, many of those present found their way to the local golf club where the annual tournament was held. Many of our vendors donated prize money and pin prizes for this event.

On Wednesday morning, the trap shoot was held in Mitchell, and a number of hearty souls ventured out on a poker run through the scenic countryside. The conference itself then started in the afternoon with a regulatory update from Jack Daniel of DHHS. Sessions on the new lead-free requirements and the upcoming rewrite of Chapter 22 of Title 179 were presented by Doug Woodbeck of DHHS, and Natalie Furrow updated attendees on USDA loans and activities. That evening the banquet was held, with the prize money from the golf tournament and the trap shoot being distributed. DHHS also presented a Water Operator award to Bill Campbell of Oshkosh for his many years of outstanding service to the community.

Thursday completed the conference with seven hours of classroom training occurring in three separate concurrent locations. Operators had a variety of sessions to choose from, and most of the sessions were well attended. Final attendance numbers are not available yet, but it appeared that the attendance for the last several years has been very consistent. NeRWA is looking forward to next year's conference with our new Training Specialist, Pat Petersen, in charge.

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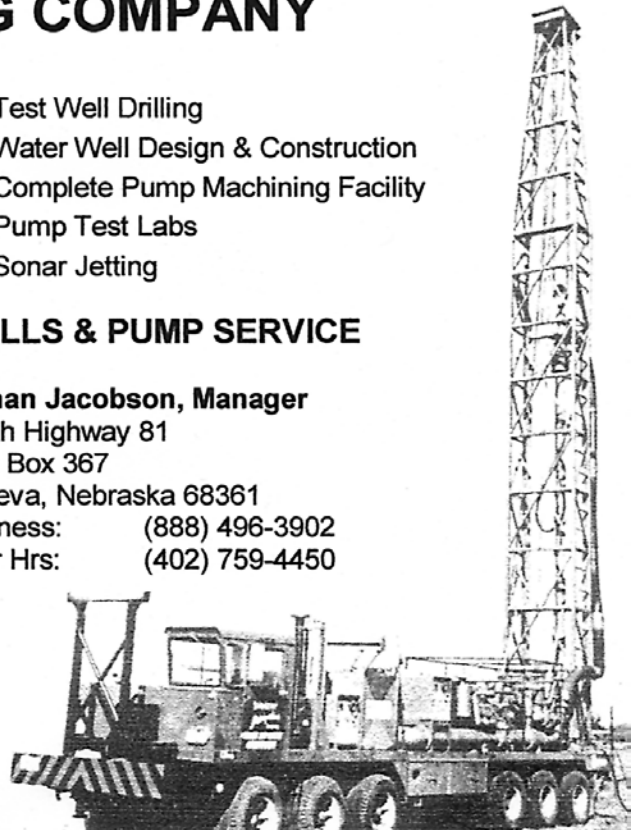
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## September Conferences

*By Mike Lucas, Wastewater Technician*

September was a busy month of conferences. We had another successful fall conference in Gering. This conference has become a favorite for many members. We always appreciate the sponsors and exhibitors that help make it all possible. It takes the efforts of many to make it a success.

I returned home from Gering only to load up my vehicle and drive to Denver. From Denver we flew to Nashville for the NRWA Water Pro Annual Conference. My wife, Marcy, was able to accompany me on the trip. She enjoyed tours while I received more training. It seems that a husband's work is never done. This is one of two national conferences that we are required to attend annually. Some of you may have attended these annual conferences yourselves. There are an unbelievable number of exhibitors along with 3 full days of training. Rural water staff from all fifty states were in attendance. This year the Groundwater Federation also participated in the conference. I was able to bring home several ideas for next year's training classes.

Marcy and I are not frequent flyers so we arrived early for our flight home on Thursday. As we boarded the plane for our flight we were all directed to return to the terminal as there were mechanical problems with our plane but they expected to make the repairs soon. After an hour of waiting they brought up another plane for us to board. Marcy was relieved that we weren't boarding the repaired plane. Her relief was only temporary however as the attendant told us that it would take awhile to cool down the interior temperature because the replacement plane was really old. Soon after we were up and flying toward Denver on our way home we experienced significant turbulence. The attendant actually hurriedly assumed a sitting position on the floor in the aisle. More gasps and stress for Marcy. I think my spouse was getting really close to the Lord by then and probably confessing to things that she had only thought about doing. The turbulence continued intermittently most of the way home. I was

thinking that I might need to locate the little brown paper bag. Finally the attendant announced that we may experience some more "bumps" as we crossed the Rocky Mountains. It occurred to me that as we were flying west to begin the flight and if we were then going to cross the Rocky Mountains to get to Denver that we were indeed lost. We did land at the correct airport however. As we left the plane Marcy said that if it wouldn't cause a scene that she would fall down and kiss mother earth.

The plan is to drive to the next NRWA Conference.

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# Nebraska Good Water News

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## NeRWA Contact Information:

Nebraska Rural Water Association  
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