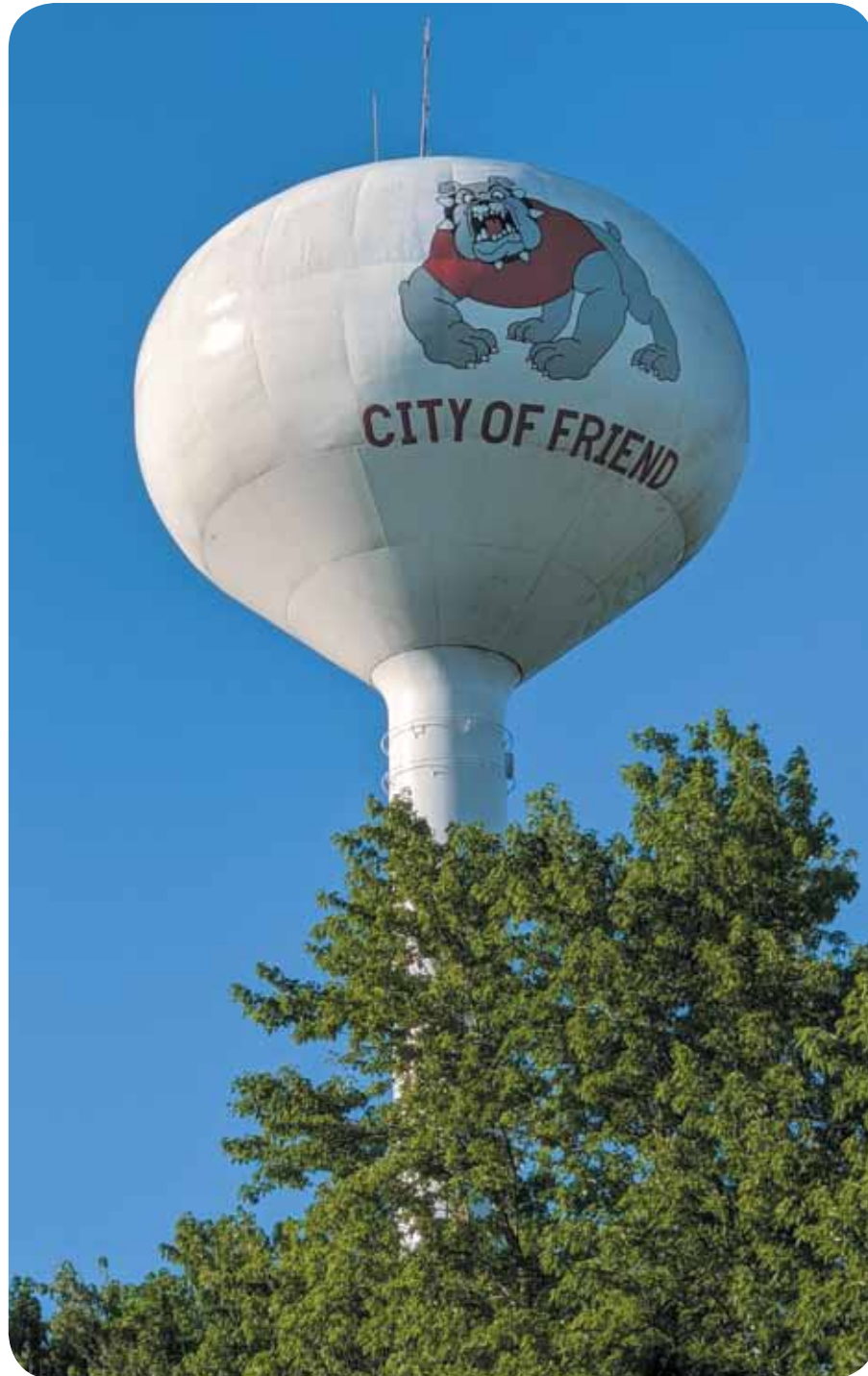


Nebraska Good Water News

ISSUE 4/2020



Nebraska Rural Water Association

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Nebraska Good Water News

Issue 4/2020

“Keeping Our Water Safe”

Board of Directors

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President:

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

Vice-President:

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

Secretary/Treasurer:

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

George Wagner
P.O. Box 226
Hooper, NE 68031
(402) 654-3649

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

Jordon Bang
P.O. Box 98
Bennet, NE 68317
(402) 782-3495

Cope Clark
P.O. Box 518
Hartington, NE 68739
(402) 254-6758

Staff:

Amy Kemerling, Office Assistant
Salli Kemerling, Office Manager
Carol Jasa, Secretary
Randy Hellbusch, Circuit Rider
Mike Stanzel, Circuit Rider
Scott Finke, Circuit Rider
Barney Whatley, Source Water Technician
Adam German, Source Water Technician
Charles Buckley, Wastewater Technician
Pat Petersen, Training Specialist
Ken Halvorsen, Systems Specialist

Website: www.nerwa.org

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

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

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

On the cover:

Water tower located in the city of Friend, Nebraska.

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

TRAINING

Below are the training classes for the remainder of 2020 and also the first three months of 2021. 2021 is the year your water and backflow licenses come up for renewal.

Registrations for **all fee-based** 1-day training classes and multiple day training courses will need to be made online, mailed or faxed to our office. We do not take phone registrations for those classes.

<u>Wastewater Training</u> <u>2020</u> November 24 Auburn (Sustainability) December 22 Wahoo <u>2021</u> January 27 Wahoo February 24 Wood River March 24 Wayne	<u>Water Operator Training</u> <u>2020</u> November 17 Mullen December 9 Tecumseh December 15 Wahoo <u>2021</u> No classes until April	<u>Backflow Training</u> <u>2020</u> November 17 Wahoo December 8 Mitchell December 10 Cambridge December 16 Wahoo <u>2021</u> January 26 Gordon January 27 Bridgeport January 28 Ogallala February 9 Nebraska City February 11 Stanton \$75 members \$100 non-members
<u>Annual Conference</u> March 15-19 Younes Conference Center Kearney		

<u>Grade 6 Backflow Prevention Cross-Connection Control Course</u> January 11-15 April 5-9 All these classes are in Wahoo (\$500 members/\$550 non-members)

The NeRWA website has all our training. The agendas for upcoming classes are posted about 30 days prior to the classes. This is a good site to have bookmarked if you are an operator and need continuing ed hours. There is a link to TRAINING and then links to see the agendas. **You cannot register on the same site as the agendas.** There is a special link for registration—REGISTER ONLINE—under the link for the training agendas.

You can register online for ALL classes.
Fax registrations for ALL classes.
Register by phone for only water and wastewater.

Keep checking the training on our website for any additions or cancellations.

www.nerwa.org



NeRWA Update

By Salli Kemerling, Office Manager

This year since has been quite a turmoil for everyone, including Nebraska Rural Water Association.

It all started right before our annual conference in Kearney. We were able to have the conference, but right after that everything changed. We had to cancel all our classes for the months of March, April and May. Some of them were cancelled by us, but most of them were cancelled by the hosting system. The fall conference held in western Nebraska was also cancelled.

So far, all of our classes are back on. A good thing for operators to do is to bookmark our website and even check it at least once a month to be aware of any changes, cancellations, and updates for training. When you click the Training link, you will be taken to a listing of all our classes. If it is within 30 days of the class, you should be able to click on the class and see the agenda. **YOU CANNOT REGISTER HERE.** Going back to where the training links are is where you will register online.

All water and backflow licenses do come up for renewal at the end of next year, with 10 CEUs being required. Wastewater requires 20 in a staggered two-year period. The annual conference in Kearney makes it possible to obtain

all hours needed for a two-year period. Available will be at least 10 water, 10 wastewater and five backflow hours. So, if you attend the conference every year, you could get enough hours to take care of the requirements for all three licenses.

Now for some could be's. Depending on how the virus progresses, or by some chance goes away, will determine the stipulations for attendance at classes. Right now, we are trying to practice social distancing and masks are optional. We have had classes where everyone had a mask on. We do have masks available for anyone who wants to wear one. Keep in mind that this could change, and they could be mandatory.

The annual conference is in March. As of the time this article was written, we are planning the conference. This is another area that the virus is making challenging. We will be emailing and mailing updates to keep you informed on our progress. Feel free to register for the conference, but we ask only for credit card payments at this time — it is much easier if we have to refund any payments.

Thank you for all your patience and understanding during this time. If you have any concerns or questions, you can always call us in the office or any of the guys.



FOOD!



NOW THAT I HAVE EVERYONE'S ATTENTION, I'd like to explain how the chow line at the annual conference will be a little different. As you all know, the Younes Center takes pride not only in the quality of food they prepare for our conference but they also make sure everyone gets full!

Because of COVID, at this point and time, buffets cannot be used for the meals (if this changes, we may try to go back to them). Each meal will be prepared and served to the attendee by the conference center staff. **PLEASE**, if you plan to eat, check the box on the registration that shows the meals you will be eating. Also, make sure you show up for those meals! If you do not show up to eat, we still have to pay for those meals so do your **BEST** to be accurate on how you choose the meals you will be eating! Do not worry, the food will be fantastic as always and this change is giving the NeRWA an opportunity to see if this will work better for all of us.

We are still working on a way to show that you have chosen to eat the meals and hope that there will be no inconvenience to anyone! We look forward to seeing all of you in March!

NOTES *of* THANKS

CITY OF GORDON

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Fax: (308) 282-1431
E-mail: gordon@gpcom.net

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Kelly Grant, Vice-Mayor
Tom Evans
Tim Bouanos
James Paul

August 13, 2020


Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Drive
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear NE Rural Water Association:

The City of Gordon would like to thank you for all of the work you have done for our city as well as the cities throughout the area. Your efforts are greatly appreciated! Please accept the enclosed donation on behalf of the City of Gordon and our utility department.


The staff at NE Rural Water continue to be an invaluable resource to us!

Thank you again for all of your time and effort!

THE CITY OF GORDON

Shane Pascale
Utility Superintendent

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
September 9, 2020

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa
Wahoo, NE 68606

Dear NRWA

On behalf of the City of Hebron, we would like to thank Randy Hellbusch for taking the time to visit our city to complete a Water Rate study. We greatly appreciate his expertise and quick response. The information he provided guided the Mayor and Council to develop an Ordinance that will be very beneficial to our future.

Please accept the enclosed \$250 donation in appreciation of all the help provided to the City of Hebron. We look forward to working with you again.

Sincerely,

Jana Tietjen
City Clerk

Thank you for the help you have given to our little Village.
Ruth Kreenough
Village of Waterbury

Village of Juniata



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

October 8, 2020

The Village of Juniata wanted to thank Randy Hellbusch for his time and efforts he gave in helping the Village of Juniata establishing their new water and sewer rates.

He is a valuable asset for us and the Nebraska Rural Water Association.

Thanks Again!

Village Board of Trustees
& Village Staff



City of Bloomfield
Water Department
"Quality on Tap"

September 30, 2020

Nebraska Rural Water Association,

On behalf of The City of Bloomfield, I Bret Gieselman, am the water and waste water operator.

We would like to thank you the service you provide.

I had Mike up to Bloomfield up this summer to help do a leak detection. The line goes under a main highway, and even though we didn't find anything, it was worth the time to make sure before tearing up the main highway. We also had Scott Finke up to exercise some of our main water valves, plus two of the valves out at the lagoons. This was a big help to us. It makes it a lot easier to turn valves. If it wouldn't have been for your expertise and machine, I would have never got the one valve closed

out at the lagoons. The help that you guys provide helps us, the operators out a lot and can take a lot of pressure off us.

Thanks

Bret Gieselman and the City of Bloomfield

Village Of Plymouth

313 East Main Street, P.O. Box 218
Plymouth, NE 68424
Phone: 402-656-3430, Fax: 402-656-5135

October 1, 2020

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Drive
Wahoo, NE 68066
Phone: 1-800-849-8039
Fax: 1-402-443-5274

Dear NE Rural Water Association,

The Village of Plymouth would like to thank the NeRWA staff for assisting our community. You recently performed a water and sewer rate study, assisted with water leak detections, and exercised water main shutoff valves.

Please accept the enclosed donation for your equipment fund as an expression of our sincere appreciation for everything that your organization and staff has done for us.

Yours truly,

Tana Hofstetter
Village Clerk / Treasure

VILLAGE OF LEIGH
P.O. Box 277
LEIGH NE 68643-0277

Thank you for your assistance with our rate study. Enclosed is a donation in appreciation for all you do. Thanks again!
Village of Leigh



Preventative Well Maintenance

By Mike Stanzel, Circuit Rider

As usual, there seems to be a lot of newer, inexperienced operators out here in this great state. I really enjoy getting to know them, provide training and answering all their questions. One question that pops up from time-to-time is do we really need to get our wells serviced? And my answer is always yes. I tell them your well costs close to a half million dollars, so it needs to be professionally cared for.

Several of the municipal water well drillers offer an annual well maintenance program for a very reasonable price.

I guess it keeps their technicians busy in the winter months when drilling slows down. In my opinion, this is a very valuable service. After the maintenance has been done, they send you a report on their findings. I would highly recommend sharing this report with the village board.



The technicians check things like wire to water efficiency. They can tell if the motor and pump are operating efficiently. This alone is very important information. There is no reason to be spending more on electricity than necessary. Unless you have the proper equipment, this would be difficult to calculate. If the motor or pump is starting to go out, you definitely want to be saving some money back for that. They also check the accuracy of the master meter. This is important when figuring water loss. I have been to several systems that thought they had a high-water loss and after looking at the well maintenance report, we discovered the master meter was not accurate. Some have been off as much as 20 percent.

Draw downs are performed and tracked with this service. Over a period of years, they will let you know if the screens are starting to plug. Acidizing the well screen may be necessary especially if you have an iron and manganese problem. This service also includes things like changing the oil on the motor of a line shaft turbine well. They will also give you a heads up if the line shaft bearings are starting to go bad.

What does all this add up to? Preventative well maintenance. It gives the system time to budget for a major repair. More importantly if repairs are needed you can schedule for a shut down. Many systems can't afford to shut down a large capacity well in the middle of August. Just as well get that well operating at peak performance for next summer this winter.

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HALLOWEEN TRIVIA

Did you know that Michael Myers' mask is actually a William Shatner mask? The movie Halloween was actually filmed on such a tight budget that the crew used the cheapest mask they could find: a \$2 Star Trek Captain James Kirk mask. They spray painted it white and reshaped the eye holes, making William Shatner look incredibly creepy.





The True Value of Water

By Randy Hellbusch, Circuit Rider



You have probably heard it said many times that water is our most precious natural resource. Yet the drinking water industry has long experienced difficulties in conveying to consumers the value of the service provided. Water itself is basically free. Anyone can take a bucket to a stream or river and dip out all they want. But are they willing to drink it? Maybe if people were forced to do this for a short period of time they would be more agreeable to paying the true cost of clean, safe water.

Clean, safe drinking water delivered right to the tap of the consumer comes at a price. Oftentimes though it does not come at the price that it actually costs the system to produce. Most consumers pay much less for water than they do for other utilities such as electricity, natural gas, etc. The electric and gas companies keep up with the rising costs of producing and delivering their product and pass those costs on to their consumers. I am fairly confident that there is no one out there that is paying the same for electricity or gas that they were five years ago. Yet there are many water systems out there that haven't increased rates for five years or longer. To the consumer this sends the message that water must not be worth much. It gives the appearance that water is less valuable than other utilities. Consumers say to themselves, "My water doesn't increase like the rest of my utilities do so it must not take much to produce and deliver it." The effect of underpricing a product is to understate its value. Many water systems' rates do not reflect the true cost of delivering clean, safe water. Many water systems are subsidized with funds other than revenue from the water sales alone. This practice is often more acceptable politically than actually raising the rates to cover the true cost of operation. This often catches up with a system when the source of subsidization

suddenly isn't there anymore or the water system needs major improvements but no money has ever been put aside for upgrades. Then what? In the words of Emeril Lagassi: "BAM!"

Suddenly the system needs a major rate increase. Now you have a major public outcry. "Why wasn't someone aware that our water system was losing money? Doesn't anyone keep track of this kind of stuff?" The water utility that thought they were doing their customers a favor by never raising rates now has a lynch mob on their hands. It is much easier for the average consumer to budget for a small increase every year or so, than to suddenly see their bill double from what they were used to paying. The water industry can learn a valuable lesson just looking around them and seeing what other utilities are doing. When your cell phone contract is up, do you expect the next contract to be the same price? Good luck with that. How often does your cable or satellite TV bill increase? Ask yourself what is actually more valuable, the cell phone and TV or clean, safe drinking water?

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We Can Do This

By Pat Petersen, Training and Technical Assistance Specialist

It may look different, it may feel different, but we are moving full steam ahead with the planning of the Nebraska Rural Water Association's Annual Conference. When we left the Younes Conference Center last year a lot of us thought that this Coronavirus would pass. Well it hasn't and it has definitely changed the way we move through everyday life. Of course, in the drinking water field, our days can't change very much! Water and wastewater operators are needed every day of the year. Needed to provide safe drinking water to all Nebraskans, and clean wastewater to keep Nebraska streams and rivers safe. It is our job (Nebraska Rural Water), to keep the operators of Nebraska up-to-date with their training, new methods of how things are done, and if necessary, information about the ever-changing world of regulations. With all of that being said, I would like to invite all water and

wastewater operators to our annual conference scheduled for March 15-17, 2021, at the beautiful Younes Conference Center in Kearney, Nebraska.

With NEXT YEAR being a recertification year for water operators, the conference will give you an opportunity to receive at least 10 hours of water and five, if not more, of backflow hours. We will shoot for at least 10 hours of wastewater hours also. We realize how difficult it has been to get anywhere for training and we hope to fulfill your needs with the conference and our several one-day trainings in the following year.

The conference will give you several opportunities to learn about the blood and guts of water and wastewater systems but we hope to expand on various types of pumps, meters and general tools of the Industry. Some names will look familiar on the agenda but that does not mean they do not have something new to share. Also, you will see some new names that will provide new insight on the "tricks of the trade!"

As we move forward these next five months, the uncertainty of what we need to do will remain the same. If social distancing becomes a permanent part of conferences this size, we have made the arrangements to possibly use two of the larger ballrooms at the venue right next to the Younes Center. If this is what we have to do, we will do it. The vendor and exhibit hall may also have to take on a new look. It may be "one-way" traffic and masks required...we just won't know until we get a little closer to the date.

In the upcoming months, the Younes Conference Center is having some conferences comparable to the size of ours. I plan on attending those and actually seeing if what they do would actually work for our unique group. It may also help me try to streamline or make our conference even better!

At this point of the planning, I think the best motto will be "Whatever It Takes" to pull this off. Most of you know that this could be the actual slogan of the Nebraska Rural Water Association. If that means helping you find a leak, putting together a source water protection plan, valves exercised, lines located, cameras ran down the sewer lines, your board trained and even a copy of your certificate regenerated for your attendance records, we will do whatever it takes! WE CAN DO THIS!

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Nebraska Rural Water Association Annual Conference Pre-Registration

March 15-18, 2021
Younes Conference Center
Kearney, Nebraska

Name (1 person per form) _____
 Water System/Company Name _____
 Billing Address _____
 Certificate Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Attendee's Email _____

**Pre-Registration
Deadline is March 8.
THERE IS A \$25 LATE FEE
AFTER February 26**

I am the Voting Delegate _____

(Certificates will be emailed if an email address is provided)

License numbers MUST be on this form: WO: _____ BF _____ WW _____ WD _____

**REGISTRATION INCLUDES TRAINING MATERIALS, MEALS AND BREAKS.
No registrations after March 8. Registration fees on-site will increase by \$50.**

IF YOU REPLACE AN ALREADY REGISTERED PERSON AFTER MARCH 2, THERE WILL BE AN EXTRA \$25 CHARGE.

**CANCELLATIONS AFTER MARCH 8 AND NO SHOWS THE DAYS OF THE CONFERENCE WILL BE CHARGED A \$25 FEE
TO COVER MATERIALS THAT WERE PREPARED BEFORE THE CONFERENCE.**

FORM MUST BE COMPLETED IN FULL OR YOU WILL NOT BE REGISTERED

The entire conference is free for all water system board members. I am a Board Member (no charge) _____

DAYS ATTENDING	Member	Member after February 24	Non-Member	Non-Member after February 24
FULL CONFERENCE (all meals)	____\$395.00	____420.00	____\$420.00	____\$445.00
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

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

All meals are included for each registration. Please indicate above 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.

Name of guest _____

When making room reservations, mention you are with NeRWA

To Register:
 Online: www.nerwa.org
 (If you register online, DO NOT mail one)
 Fax: 402-443-5274
 Mail: Nebraska Rural Water Association
 3390 Ponderosa Street
 Wahoo, NE 68066
NO PHONE REGISTRATIONS

Registration \$ _____
 Tickets \$ _____ Total \$ _____
 NeRWA member: Bill _____ Payment enclosed _____
Non-members—Payment must accompany registration or pay when checking in.
CERTIFICATES WILL NOT BE ISSUED AND HOURS WILL NOT BE SUBMITTED TO STATE AGENCIES UNTIL PAYMENT IS RECEIVED.

DATE REGISTRATION RECEIVED: _____

For NeRWA office use only: Payment received _____ Check # _____ Other _____
 Hours: WO _____ BF _____ WW _____ WD _____ Certificate mailed _____



Water Meters

By Scott Finke, Circuit Rider

Should you have a water meter or not? That is the question. Most towns that have water meters see their consumption go down after they have been installed. This is because customers will receive their first bill after the installation of a meter; and the customer will have a heart attack because there is no way he could have used that much water. The customer is used to turning the water on and letting it run down to the curbs and

gutters — essentially wasting water. Someday we will be in the predicament where we will have to watch how much water we use because if it runs out, we could be in big trouble.

When a village does not have meters, the city is only taking in a certain amount of revenue. The city has to prioritize where the money is going when it comes to whether you are taking in enough money to cover the cost of pumping the water, fixing water leaks, or any other expenses that may come up. Not to mention the wastewater side of things. Is your monthly fee enough to cover costs?

The benefit of water meters is that with water meters you can set a fee for the meter, and charge per 1,000 gallons for how much water a person, family, or household uses. By having these meters, the city can find how much to average in fees in order to make revenue for the city. For example, the best time to find the revenue for wastewater is by averaging the months of December, January and February's total water consumption. Taking the amount of water consumed during those three months and then charging the same amount the other months will make life so much simpler. Most meters will last 15-20 years, so staying up-to-date on the age of your meters is imperative.

If you have a 3-inch water meter in a school, it will not catch the low flow of water coming out of that water fountain. Therefore, you must have a water meter that will go down to an eighth of a gallon so that it can register the low flow of that water fountain. A bigger meter is needed to keep track of the water consumption for the school. An example is in the locker rooms with showers or in the kitchen with all the dishes. But it is still useful to have a meter that will accommodate for the low flow and high flow areas of the school.

If you have any questions about anything, don't hesitate to call NeRWA office.

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Funding Source Water Projects

By Barney Whatley, Capacity Development Specialist

After a system completes a source water protection plan, there are usually several “Action Items” that the system would like to see implemented. One of the main roadblocks many small systems seem to run into is finding a source of funding for these projects. There are many different sources of funding available for projects to protect the quality of groundwater. Which source would work best will depend on the size and scope of the project to be completed, the amount of funding that will be required, and the ability of the system to produce any matching funds that might be required.

The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) has several programs available to assist systems in funding projects to protect their source of drinking water. Source Water Protection Grants are available for systems serving less than 10,000 people and who can show a financial hardship that prevents them from borrowing the money commercially. The application for these grants is usually issued in late winter or early spring of each year. There is a 10% match requirement for this funding.

Non-Point Source Water Quality Grants are available under Section 319 of the Federal Clean Water Act in five different categories. Local sponsors of eligible projects can apply for the grants for the prevention or abatement of non-point source water pollution. There is a requirement for a 40% match with non-federal funds for this grant, and other requirements that must be met.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service has several programs to help agricultural producers to make and maintain conservation improvements on their land. The community can partner with agricultural producers within the source water protection area to apply for funding that will improve conservation and protect the community’s source of drinking water.

Local NRDs have programs to cost share with local landowners for many different projects. One very important program funded by local NRDs is the decommissioning of abandoned and unused wells. Many NRDs offer to fund up to 75% of the total cost of decommissioning wells that are no longer being used. The actual work must be done by a licensed well driller. Communities that are very concerned

with abandoned wells within their source water protection area could budget a set amount of money each year to either pay the landowner’s share of the project, or at least a portion of the cost share to make the project more appealing to the landowner. The total cost for each well will vary depending on the diameter of the well and the depth. Determining an average cost for decommissioning wells within the source water protection area will help the community to decide the number of wells they would be able to assist in decommissioning per year.

By investigating these funding options and partnering with landowners within the source water protection area, communities can take positive steps to ensure they have a safe supply of drinking water for future generations.

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Jack of All Trades

By Adam German, Source Water Technician

The Fall season is in full effect, which makes driving throughout the state of Nebraska a lot of fun. I have heard many people say that most of Nebraska is “fly over” country. Obviously, the people with this opinion have not been to Long Pine or Valentine in the Fall. The Fall colors that have taken over Western Nebraska are worth the drive to see. After completing the very scenic drive to Long Pine, there was work to be done. The NeRWA set up their flowmeter at a manhole in a field to see if they could help the village determine an accurate amount of water entering their lagoon system. The math wasn’t adding up, more water was entering the lagoons than metered. The flowmeter is a very helpful tool for circumstances like these and others when it comes to getting accurate flow readings. If you think your village could benefit with the use of the flowmeter, give myself or Buck a call.

Another popular tool the NeRWA has available to you is the sewer smoker. We have been all over the state smoking sewer

lines. We have found everything from broken clean-outs to actual broken sewer mains. The sewer smoker comes in very handy when it comes time to find any inflow and infiltration issues.

I was hired to be the second wastewater tech for NeRWA. Two months after I was hired, the grant was discontinued. This is why it is so important for our members to support rural water by contacting their senators and congressman to let them know how vital these programs are.

NeRWA is doing a bit of fall re-arranging. The board has asked me to hang out with Barney and learn the ropes. This will involve learning how to get source water programs started at our small villages and helping out with backflow classes. Which means I better get my Grade 6 license. I’m sure I will get to meet some of you there. It promises to be an exciting new adventure and I am looking forward to it. Stay safe out there!

NeRWA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

The Nebraska Rural Water Association is pleased to announce it will be presenting two \$1,000 scholarships for higher education purposes for the school year 2021-2022 fall and spring semesters. The scholarship is available to children and stepchildren of member public water system employees. Employees of the Nebraska Rural Water Association Board of Directors and staff are not eligible. Interested persons should complete and submit the application. Applications are due March 8, 2021. Please type or print – printing must be legible and papers must be clean. Winners of the Scholarships will be announced at the Annual Conference in March. Send all information to the NeRWA address. **DO NOT FORGET TO EITHER SEND THE TRANSCRIPT AND GRADES OR HAVE THE SCHOOL SEND THEM.** Your application will not be valid unless everything is received. PLEASE SEE APPLICATION ON NEXT PAGE.

Official Rules

This grant of \$1,000 will be made to a student to defray the cost of tuition, books, or room and board at an accredited institution of higher learning approved by the Nebraska Rural Water Association (NeRWA). Disbursement of the money will be made upon presentation of winner’s college or university invoice as proof of full-time enrollment. The scholarship money will be paid directly to the student, \$500 per semester. The scholarship will be awarded to children or stepchildren of member utility system employees. In order to be eligible for scholarship, applicants must complete the application form in its entirety by filling in all blanks. If item is not applicable please place a N/A in the blank. Upon completion return it to the NeRWA Scholarship Committee by the entry deadline, March 8, 2021. All applications will be first screened on the basis of leadership responsibilities in community and school activities as well as grade point average. Applicants will be evaluated on a comparative basis at the sole discretion of the committee. Decisions will be final. Application material and decisions of the committee shall be confidential. Acceptance of scholarship constitutes permission to use recipient’s name and/or likeness for purpose of promotion.

NEBRASKA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION 2021

Personal Data

NAME _____
Last First Middle
ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Eligible System Employee Data

NAME _____ TITLE _____
ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
MEMBER SYSTEM _____ TELEPHONE _____
RELATIONSHIP TO APPLICANT _____ EMAIL _____

High School Data

SCHOOL NAME _____ GRADUATION DATE _____
ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
YOUR CLASS RANK _____ NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN CLASS _____ YOUR GRADE POINT
AVERAGE _____

(High School Transcript and grades must be submitted with application)

LIST BELOW ANY ACADEMIC AWARDS, MEMBERSHIPS OR OTHER SPECIAL RECOGNITION YOU HAVE RECEIVED DATING BACK TO YOUR SOPHOMORE YEAR.

College/University Data

IS THIS YOUR FIRST YEAR OF HIGHER EDUCATION? YES _____ NO _____ IF NO, CREDIT HOURS COMPLETED _____
NUMBER OF CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED TO GRADUATE _____ COLLEGE GRADE POINT AVERAGE _____
SCHOOL NAME _____
ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PLEASE INDICATE: _____ 4-YEAR COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
_____ 2-YEAR COMMUNITY/JUNIOR COLLEGE
_____ VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL

MAJOR COURSE OF STUDY _____

Priority will be given but not limited to water related studies.

(For those already in college, a first semester transcript or grade report and second semester enrollment must accompany application)

Essay

ON A SEPARATE PAGE IN 250 WORDS OR LESS, WRITE A BRIEF MESSAGE ON YOUR GOALS AS THEY RELATE TO YOUR EDUCATION, CAREER AND FUTURE PLANS

Certification

IN SUBMITTING THIS APPLICATION, WE CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IS COMPLETE AND ACCURATE TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE. FALSE INFORMATION WILL RESULT IN THE REVOCATION OF ANY SCHOLARSHIP GRANTED.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____



Attracting and Retaining Water System Employees

By Ken Halvorsen, Systems Specialist

What happens when all those aging operators leave the work force? How are we going to fill their numbers with young, responsible, qualified workers?

If water and wastewater utility representatives are going to encourage members of the younger generation, they are going to need to get creative.

There are two components to this problem. First is how to attract young people to the field. Secondly, we need to figure out how to retain these employees once they become truly valuable personnel; with knowledge, training and experience. Each of the components have a monetary and non-monetary element. In order to attract young people into water and wastewater utility work they have to be paid a fair wage. This will often likely require a substantial rate increase. Some look at this as an unrealistic expectation considering their small community's plight of having many patrons on a fixed income. Communities with this problem claim they cannot raise their utility rates, even though these same fixed income people manage to adjust budgets to other necessary expenses

and usually have cable or dish TV. None of these suppliers are freezing prices on their product.

How does starting pay for a water or wastewater operator stack up at your system? Will the low pay at your utility attract young workers? Does the pay scale elevate water and wastewater to the status of viable career opportunities? The word career suggests long-term or permanent engagement in something meaningful; not merely a source of income.

There are also non-monetary ways to engage interest of young adults. Emphasis on certification, continuing education, and responsibility can better portray the professional nature of the work. When the utility has attracted young individuals to its workforce, how to promote retention so they keep working there. This challenge can be divided into monetary and non-monetary forms of appeal.

A survey would be an excellent tool to see what your employees value. Priorities would vary according to age. Young workers would most likely need extra spending money which could be a reward for short-term uninterrupted work periods. As employees gain maturity their priorities often change. Small financial rewards may give way to flexible work schedules. The freedom to work around personal conflicts provides a form of "social equality" allowing employees to fulfill personal and professional needs.

Whether it is as a result of health concerns or family obligations, personnel eventually seek health insurance. This benefit may be a mandatory obligation which the utility must offer from the beginning of employment, although it may not be an incentive for younger workers. Another important retention tool may be a pension plan with increasing employer-employee matching limits as workers age. This can offer another tangible reason to remain with the utility. One more key element in retaining employees is respect. This is one non-monetary ingredient that holds a more lasting value than any cash reward. If an employee is not respected, that person will leave in short order.

Vacancies in the water and wastewater utilities will increase as the workforce continues to age. We will have to become creative and break away from established notions of the workplace. It is now important more than ever to adapt to the needs of our younger employees. Young workers will need an environment that fosters personal growth and elevates their spirit.



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UV Preventative Maintenance

By Charles Buckley, Wastewater Technician

The use of Ultra Violet Disinfection has been around for decades. In 1878, it was discovered that sunlight kills microbes in broth. In 1910, the first UV system was used to disinfect drinking water. In the 1970's, the EPA discouraged the use of chlorine. In the 1970's, the EPA also started funding research and grants for UV systems. In 1978, full scale UV system was successfully used at a wastewater plant. In 1982, modular UV system for open channel disinfection in wastewater was introduced. Since then the use of UV disinfection has continued to grow.

With that being said, I would like to share some tips on maintenance on your UV system. UV disinfection is required during the recreational months starting May 1st thru September 30th.

Change your UV bulb every two years or as needed. UV bulbs typically last for 9,000 hours and, in time, lose

intensity. Order bulbs in advance or always have spares on hand. As we have seen with the recent situation parts and materials are on back order or currently on hold. Keep the sleeves clean of contaminants. The buildup will inhibit disinfection.

Make sure all energy sources are disconnected before handling. Never look directly at lit lamps, even with UV safety glasses or shield. Clean sleeves using a soft cloth soaked in vinegar, mild acid or commercial scale remover like CLR. Remember always use proper PPE such as gloves and UV safety glasses. Inspect all electrical wires, ballasts and connections.

Always read your Owner's Manuals and Manufacturer's Instructions before handling the UV unit. Store in a dry climate-controlled area when it is not being used.



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Thanksgiving Facts

By Thomas Turkey

Since we did not have the fall conference this year, we had a few empty pages in the magazine. Here are some facts and questions about Thanksgiving you might not know. All of us here at Nebraska Rural Water hope you all have a great Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving Day be America's most beloved national holiday, but its history is all over the place. Even the details of the famous feast between the Plymouth Colony settlers and the Wampanoag Indians in November of 1621 are sketchy. The best account we have is a letter from English settler Edward Winslow that never mentions the word "Thanksgiving," but tells of a weeklong harvest celebration that included a three-day celebration with King Massasoit and 90 Wampanoag men "so we might after a more special manner rejoice together."

Over the centuries, that briefly-mentioned feast week has taken on a life of its own, with each generation adding its own take on the fall tradition. This trivia was taken from an article from the History Channel to talk about (other than politics) around the Thanksgiving dinner table this November.

Where was the first Thanksgiving?

Colonists and Wampanoag Indians shared an autumn harvest feast in 1621 in Plymouth, Massachusetts, that is widely acknowledged as one of the first Thanksgiving celebrations. But some historians argue that Florida, not Massachusetts, may have been the true site of the first Thanksgiving in North America. In 1565, nearly 60 years before Plymouth, a Spanish fleet came ashore and planted a cross in the sandy beach to christen the new settlement of St. Augustine. To celebrate the arrival and give thanks for God's providence, the 800 Spanish settlers shared a festive meal with the native Timucuan people.

What did they eat at the first Thanksgiving?

The Thanksgiving meal in Plymouth probably had little in common with today's traditional holiday spread. Although turkeys were indigenous, there's no record of a big, roasted bird at the feast. The Wampanoag brought deer and there would have been lots of local seafood (mussels, lobster, bass) plus the fruits of the first pilgrim harvest, including pumpkin. No mashed potatoes, though. Potatoes had only been recently shipped back to Europe from South America.

When did America first call for a national Thanksgiving?

America first called for a national day of thanksgiving to celebrate victory over the British in the Battle of Saratoga. In 1789, George Washington again called for national day

of thanks on the last Thursday of November in 1777 to commemorate the end of the Revolutionary War and the ratification of the Constitution. And during the Civil War, both the Confederacy and the Union issued Thanksgiving Day proclamations following major victories.

Which president refused to recognize Thanksgiving?

Thomas Jefferson was famously the only Founding Father and early president who refused to declare days of thanksgiving and fasting in the United States. Unlike his political rivals, the Federalists, Jefferson believed in "a wall of separation between Church and State" and believed that endorsing such celebrations as president would amount to a state-sponsored religious worship.

How long has pumpkin pie been a traditional part of Thanksgiving?

Pumpkin pie was a staple on New England Thanksgiving tables as far back as the turn of the 18th century. Legend has it that the Connecticut town of Colchester postponed its Thanksgiving feast for a week in 1705 due to a molasses shortage. There could simply be no Thanksgiving without pumpkin pie.

When did we start canning cranberries?

Cranberries were eaten by Native Americans and used as a potent red dye, but sweetened cranberry relish was almost certainly not on the first Thanksgiving table. The pilgrims had long exhausted their sugar supply by November 1621. Marcus Urann canned the first jellied cranberry sauce in 1912 and eventually founded the cranberry grower's cooperative known as Ocean Spray.

How did a botched Thanksgiving order lead to the TV tray dinner?

In 1953, an employee at C.A. Swanson & Sons overestimated demand for Thanksgiving turkey and the company was left with some 260 tons of extra frozen birds. As a solution, Smithsonian reports, a Swanson salesman ordered 5,000 aluminum trays, devised a turkey meal and recruited an assembly line of workers to compile what would become the

(continued on page 19)

ANNUAL WATER TASTING CONTEST

As most of you already know, NeRWA has the Best Tasting Water contest at the Annual Conference each year.

Last year, the City of Franklin won and will be sending their water to the national water tasting contest that is being held at the Water Rally in Washington, DC, in February. It is possible for any of your systems to win the National Contest. Remember to submit your water at the conference in March.

The water contest is to be held at the Annual Conference in Kearney. A panel of distinguished taste testers will judge all samples. The winner will be announced at the banquet on Tuesday, March 10. The winning system will compete against finalists from the other 49 states in the National Contest at the National Rural Water Association Water Rally in Washington, DC.

Contest Rules:

1. Must be a member of Nebraska Rural Water Association
2. Sample must be from a Nebraska public water supply system
3. One entry per water system
4. Water must come before any point-of-use treatment
5. Water must come from the distribution system
5. Water should be in clean, unmarked gallon container
6. Entry form must accompany sample

Water must be received by 3:00 P.M. on Monday, March 16, at the conference registration table.

Water System:

Submitted by:

If at all possible, please call our office in advance at 800-842-8039 or 402-443-5216 or email to salli@nerwa.org to let us know you are entering. Thank you.



2021 NeRWA Membership Directory

The letter asking you to update the NeRWA membership directory has been mailed. Please check the information to see if it is up to date. You can either approve it or make any changes on the sheet and return it to our office. Hopefully, this method will be quick and easy for you. Thank you in advance for your help on the new directory.



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Haunted Hills of the Seven Sisters (7 Sisters Road) Otoe County, Nebraska



A few miles south of Nebraska City there lies a group of hills that are the subject of one of the most gruesome haunted legends known in the state. As the story goes, over a century ago, a man lived in the area along with his family which consisted of seven sisters. One day for some unknown reason, he led each of his sisters in turn to a separate hill near their home and hung each one from a tree until they were dead. This area today has been the focus of many reports of paranormal phenomenon. Accounts of cars suddenly and inexplicably stalling have been widespread. Other electrical drain phenomenon have been reported as well. There have been reports of car headlights suddenly going extremely dim when entering the area of hills of the seven sisters, then after leaving the area, the car lights would suddenly get bright again. Perhaps the most chilling tales of all are the numerous accounts over the years of travelers in the area hearing the screams of young women seemingly coming from the nearby hills.



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NeRWA Equipment

The equipment below purchased by NeRWA is used for on-site technical assistance.

All of our assistance and use of the equipment is at "no charge" to any member water system except the Valve Exerciser for which there is a mandatory charge to help with the upkeep and maintenance.

Below is the equipment that you may borrow if it is available. The items in **BOLD** have to be accompanied and operated by one of our technicians.

Water Equipment

AWWA Standards on CD	Hydrant Flow Meters	Pressure Gauges
Backflow Test Benches	Leak Correlator	Pressure Recorders
Certified Backflow Test Equipment	Leak Data Loggers	Pressure Relief Valves
Chlorine Residual Testers	Leak Detectors	Temp & pH Meters
Chlorinators	Line Locators	Valve Box Locators
Groundwater Models	Nitrate Testers	Valve Exerciser
Handheld GPS Units	Pipe Freezer	Well Sounders

Wastewater Equipment

Flow Meter	pH Meter	Sludge Judge
Microscope	Sewer Smoker	TV Camera

Donations help our association purchase new equipment and maintain it so that we can better serve the needs of water systems throughout Nebraska. We would like to thank you for your support in this endeavor.

If you have any questions regarding this fund or would like further information on what is available, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thanksgiving Facts

(continued from page 16)

first TV tray dinners. A culinary hit was born. In the first full year of production, 1954, the company sold 10 million turkey TV tray dinners.

Why is football a Thanksgiving tradition?

The winning combo of football and Thanksgiving kicked off way before there was anything called the NFL. The first Thanksgiving football game was a college match between Yale and Princeton in 1876, only 13 years after Lincoln made Thanksgiving a national holiday. Soon after, Thanksgiving was picked for the date of the college football championships. By the 1890s, thousands of college and high school football rivalries were played every Thanksgiving.

Who was the first president to pardon a turkey?

Starting in the 1940s, farmers would gift the president with some plump birds for roast turkey over the holidays, which the first family would invariably eat. While President John F. Kennedy was the first American president to spare a turkey's life ("We'll just let this one grow," JFK quipped in 1963. "It's our Thanksgiving present to him.") the annual White House tradition of "pardoning" a turkey officially started with George H.W. Bush in 1989.

Which president received a raccoon as a Thanksgiving gift?

In 1926, President Calvin Coolidge received a somewhat odd Thanksgiving gift in the form of a live raccoon. Meant to be eaten (the Mississippi man who sent it called raccoon meat "toothsome"), the Coolidge family adopted the pet and named it Rebecca. Rebecca was only the latest addition to their already substantial White House menagerie that included a black bear, a wallaby, and a pygmy hippo named Billy.

When was the first Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade?

To celebrate the expansion of its Herald Square superstore, Macy's announced its very first "Big Christmas Parade" two weeks before Thanksgiving in 1924, promising "magnificent floats," bands and an "animal circus." A huge success, Macy's trimmed the parade route from six miles to two miles and signed a TV contract with NBC to broadcast the now famous Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

When did the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade start featuring balloons?

The first oversized balloons debuted in the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade in 1927. The brainchild of Anthony Frederick Sarg, a

(continued on inside back cover)

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NeRWA Contact Information:

Nebraska Rural Water Association
 3390 Ponderosa Street
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Office phone numbers: 800-849-8039
 402-443-5216
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Email
buckley@nerwa.org
scott@nerwa.org
adam@nerwa.org
ken@nerwa.org
randy@nerwa.org
pat@nerwa.org
mike@nerwa.org
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Thanksgiving Facts

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German-born puppeteer and theatrical designer who also created Macy's fantastical Christmas window displays, the first balloons were filled with oxygen, not helium. That year they featured Felix the Cat and inflated animals like elephants, tigers and a giant hummingbird.

Which president tried to move the date of Thanksgiving and why?

Concerned that the Christmas shopping season was cut short by a late Thanksgiving, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt decreed in 1939 that Thanksgiving would be celebrated a week earlier. "Franksgiving," as it was known, was decried by Thanksgiving traditionalists and political rivals (one even compared FDR to Hitler) and was only adopted by 23 of the 48 states. Congress officially moved Thanksgiving back to the fourth Thursday of November in 1941, where it has remained ever since.

- A. **Question:** *How long was the first Thanksgiving celebration?*
- B. **Question:** *How many calories on average are consumed, per person, at Thanksgiving dinner?*
- C. **Question:** *When was the first Thanksgiving football game?*
- D. **Question:** *When was the first Thanksgiving NFL game?*

- E. **Question:** *Who was the first President to receive a ceremonial Thanksgiving Turkey?*
- F. **Question:** *How many women were at the very first Thanksgiving celebration?*
- G. **Question:** *Which President first ordered a national day of Thanksgiving?*
- H. **Question:** *Which President made Thanksgiving a permanent national holiday?*

ANSWERS: A. Three days; B. 4,500; C. 1876; D. 1920; E. Harry S. Truman; F. Five; G. George Washington; H. Abraham Lincoln.



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