Utilities Section Newsletter

League of Nebraska Municipalities

December 2023

Utilities/Public Works Section Annual Conference coming in January!

By Lash Chaffin,
Utilities Section Director

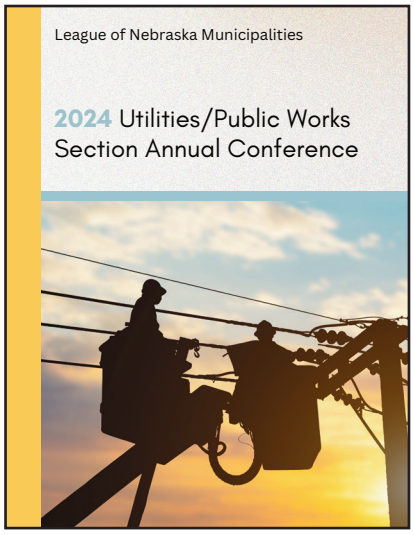
Mark your calendars! **The 2024 League of Nebraska Municipalities Utilities/Public Works Section Annual Conference is scheduled for Jan. 10-12 at the Embassy Suites in Lincoln.** In addition to the wonderful opportunities to share time and information with colleagues, there are some important educational opportunities. **This conference has been approved for up to 16 wastewater operator continuing education hours. We anticipate the conference will be approved for a similar number of water operator grades 1 – 5 continuing education hours.**

Click here for the conference program and registration information. Click here to register online with a credit card.

On Jan. 10, the conference kicks off with an optional **Preconference Seminar: *Financing, Managing and Maintaining Municipal Utility Infrastructure in Today's Crazy and Rapidly Changing World!!!*** This session will focus on maintenance policies, effective purchasing techniques, and how to calculate the life span of municipal property *(designed for 5 water credit hours and 5 wastewater credit hours)*. **This is a "stand-alone" session. Preconference Seminar attendees do not have to register for the entire conference.**

On Jan. 11-12, share time with your colleagues and learn how to better manage your utility and public works departments:

- Use of Personal Cell Phones and Other Public Records Issues Employees Need to Think About
- New and Innovative Health Insurance Options for Municipal Employees
- Lead Service Lines: State and Federal Expectations
- Remote Utility Infrastructure: Turning Vulnerability into Resilience.
- New Innovative Health Insurance Options for Municipalities
- Understanding Your Utilities History Benefits Customers
- Effective Employee Evaluations
- Project Management Basics
- Considerations for Hiring Seasonal Workers
- Per- and Polyfluorinated (PFA) Substances Update: Yes, This Is Real.
- Are Small Nuclear Power Units in Your Future for Well Houses and Other Remote Facilities?
- Acceptable Utility and Public Works Rules for Customers
- The Importance of Regular Infrastructure Maintenance Programs



- Preventing Office Injuries
- When to Use an Engineer or Architect
- Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act Updates
- Municipal Utility and Public Works Legislative and Regulatory Update: Whether you have a water, wastewater, electric, natural gas, street, recreation or other department, the Nebraska Legislature has a tremendous effect on how you do business. Do not miss the latest information on legislative and regulatory activities.
- And much, much more!

There will be water, wastewater, and engineering credits available for many of these sessions. Do not miss this great opportunity!

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UTILITIES SECTION

Lash Chaffin
Utilities Section Director
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SAFETY/HEALTH CORNER

OSHA top 10 citations list for 2023

By Rob Pierce, Utilities Field Rep./Training Coordinator

Once again, the general requirements for fall protection was number one on the list of most cited violations. This marks the 13th consecutive year they topped the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The 2023 list was announced at the November National Safety Council (NSC) Safety Congress & Expo in New Orleans. The top 10, listed in order, were: 1) Fall Protection-General Requirements; 2) Hazard Communication; 3) Ladders; 4) Scaffolding; 5) Powered Industrial Trucks; 6) Lockout/Tagout; 7) Respiratory Protection; 8) Fall Protection-Training Requirements; 9) Personal Protective and Lifesaving Equipment-Eye and Face Protection; and 10) Machine Guarding. The list was almost unchanged from 2022, but "Respiratory Protection" dropped from fourth to seventh and "Powered Industrial Trucks" rose from seventh to fifth.

Since 1994, all systems (public or private) in Nebraska must have an effective written injury prevention plan (EWIPP) and a safety committee including its documented meetings. In the past few years with retirements and employee turnover, now would be a good time to refresh who is on your 2024 safety committee and is the EWIPP up-to-date or current. The Utilities Section has a recorded webinar that outlines the safety requirements outlined in 1994. When planning your safety meetings for 2024, your municipality should

first focus on safety issues unique for your system. If you have had no accidents or incidents, then I would look at the OSHA top 10 violation list for your upcoming year's safety meeting focus.

Safety committees need to meet and document their meetings. The Utilities Section has a recorded webinar that covers the requirements of a written injury prevention plan and the activities of the safety committee. This webinar is free to Utilities Section members.

Nebraska utilities history – Bloomfield

The Utilities Section Newsletter will continue to feature histories of both utilities and associate members. Any historical data and/or photos of your utilities, a specific facility, or articles already written are welcome, along with permission to print. If you have questions, contact Rob at 402-476-2829 or robp@lonm.org.

By Rob Pierce, Utilities Field Rep./Training Coordinator

Bloomfield was sited in Knox County located about 15 miles from the Missouri River with the Bazile Creek running through the area. On Oct. 2, 1890, surveyed lots were auctioned off by the North Nebraska Townsite Company. On Oct. 16, 1890, a post office was established followed by the establishment of the *Bloomfield Monitor* newspaper and the opening of the Farmers & Merchant State Bank. Two sources differ on the naming of the community. One source stated it was named for the original owner of the townsite Bloomfield Dyer and the other noted it was named for the wild grasses and flowers blooming in the area fields (goldenrod). In January 1891, the village was incorporated, a large mill was built, and the first school (1891-92) was held in a hotel and a small school building. By 1892, a new frame four-room school building with a cupola and bell was built. By 1892, some of the businesses operating included a railroad depot, a freight depot, an icehouse, City Hotel, a feed yard, two harness shops, a furniture shop, a grocery, a bowling alley, a paint shop, a Chinese laundry, a bank, two confectionaries, an opera house, a livery, and a grain elevator. The population by 1895 was 195 and telephone service was available by 1898.

The population increased to 678 by 1900 and by January, the Chicago, St. Paul, Minnesota & Omaha Railroad was operating a passenger depot and other businesses were operating such as the City Hotel, Hotel Bloomfield, and a frame Commercial Hotel. Other businesses included the Peavey Elevator Company using a gasoline six-horsepower (HP) engine and the Bloomfield Roller Mill used two boilers, 150-HP engine, and a well. The waterworks were constructed as a 51,000-gallon standpipe was erected and water mains were laid in 1901. A new one-story elementary school was built in 1900 and by 1904, a new brick high school building was erected. The Woman's Club established a library in 1907 with the Bloomfield Public Library organized by 1908. As the population by 1909 was estimated to be 1,300, some of the businesses operating included a frame Cottage Hotel, a brick Pospeshil Theater, a Brick & Tile Company (four kilns, a boiler, and a 25 HP engine), a lumberyard, and two grain elevators. The fire department consisted of 16 volunteer firefighters, two hose carts with 750 feet of two-and-one-half-inch hose and a fire bell on a tower. The water system in 1909 consisted of a water storage standpipe capacity of 50,700-gallons, two six-inch wells 190-feet deep and six wells 40-feet deep. Had a Smith-Vaile Triplex (one cylinder not used), capacity 2,000 gph (5.5 x 8), two Gould single pumps (8 x 30) capacity 261 gpm each. All pumps' shafts were connected by belt to 21-HP gas engines with a daily consumption of 38,000 gallons. The domestic pressure was 60 psi and fire at 100 psi. The distributions system had about two miles of four-, six- and eight-inch mains along with 21 double hydrants. By July, the city/fire hall building, located on Main Street, housed a jail along with

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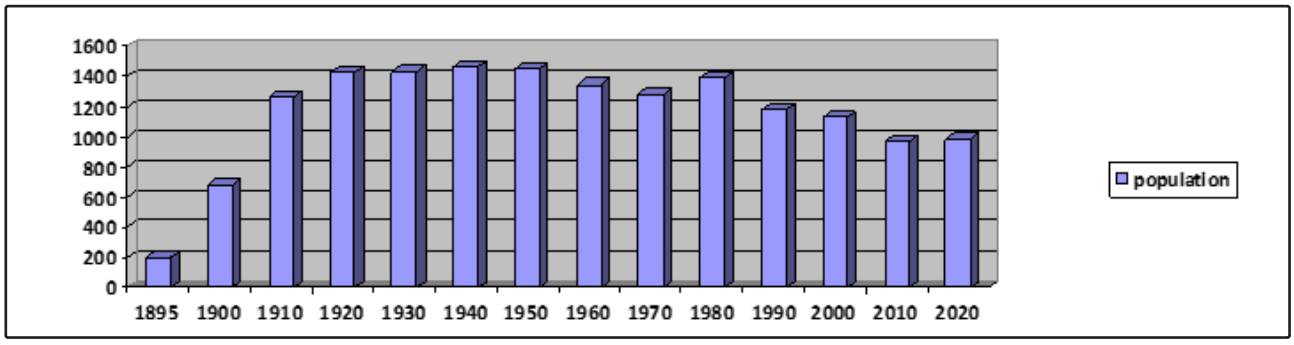

Nebraska utilities history – Bloomfield

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housed two hose carts and 750 feet of hose. A bulk gas plant with two engines (eight and two HP) and a gas storage tank supplied the public gas streetlights. The gas plant was located on Grant Street by the alley between Broadway and Washington Streets. A gas line was being installed from the depot to the power plant, which was under construction.

In 1910, the population was 1,264 and in July 1912, the village applied to Carnegie for a library which opened in 1913. The municipal water system in 1915 consisted of two 12-inch by 120 feet (ft) deep wells near the center of the business section. Pumps were two 50,000 gallons each, single Gould (1914) belted to a 20-HP Otto gas engine and a 25-HP International (1914) oil engine. The distribution system had a standpipe, four miles of pipe two- to eight-inch diameter cast iron, 25 fire hydrants, 121 valves left hand opening, and 100 Buffalo meters. Average daily consumption was 50,000 gallons serving about 300 with a system pressure of 45-65 pounds. Rates were a flat rate of $4 per year, and bath $3, closet $2.50, with a minimum meter charge at $4 per year, then $0.35 per 1,000 gallons maximum and a $0.25 minimum. The municipal water system in 1915 pumped water from wells to the standpipe (30,000 gals.), using three pumps/engines with a rated capacity of 720,000 gallons per day (gpd). The water system had three-and-one-half-miles of four- to eight-inch mains along with 28 fire hydrants. The fire department had 30 volunteer firefighters, four hose carts, 2,000

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feet (ft) of hose and an alarm bell/telephone. On May 10, 1915, bonds of $8,000 at 5.5 percent interest were let for the construction of a city hall building which was built later that year. The Bloomington Electric Light Plant, which provided electricity, had a small fire in 1917 at the plant which started when a pipe was being thawed by a torch. That year, Louis Knudson sold the local electric plant to the Nebraska Electric Company.

In 1920, the population was 1,431, most streets were almost level but unpaved and lit by electric streetlights. The municipal water system consisted of two six-inch and one eight-inch bored wells (avg. 190-ft deep), one Pamona centrifugal pump with a capacity of 50 gallons per minute (gpm). The water was forced into the system with excess over consumption filling a 50,700-gallon standpipe (12 x 60 ft). The waterworks had three miles of two- to eight-inch water mains, 28 double and three single hydrants. The daily consumption was 30,000 gpd. The one-company fire department had 25 volunteer firefighters, one traffic auto truck carrying 850 ft of hose, one 50-gallon chemical tank, one-20 ft extension ladder, two 18 ft roof ladders, one Ford combination hose/chemical truck with 1,000 ft hose, 200 ft of one-inch hose and two 35-gallon chemical tanks along with a fire alarm whistle/bell at city hall. The cost of pumping water in 1924 was about $325 per month billed by the private electric company.

Electric distribution in 1924 was provided by Tri State Utility Company with light rates at $0.18 per kW. A March 3, 1925, meeting discussed the electric acquisition from Tri-State Utilities Company or a totally new rebuild of an electric plant. On April 7, a survey of a potential electric plant was made and presented to the city council.

In May, there was a bond election with a vote of 360 for to 66 against installing a city power plant. On July 7, an ordinance was passed to issue and sell Municipal Electric Light & Power bonds in the amount of $50,000 to provide for payment. The contract was let to Fairbanks-Morse Company of Omaha and the contract for building went to Beckenhauer Bros. Construction Co. of Norfolk. A gas pipeline was laid from the depot to the plant, a building was constructed, along with transmission lines and poles erected. Two large Fairbanks Morse engines were installed along with connections to the system by the Fairbanks-Morse Co. Bids were set in September 1925 for the construction of a municipal power plant. From September to December, poles and transmission line was installed. On Dec. 21, 1925, the first electricity was produced from the new Municipal Electric Light & Power Plant. Light rates were first 25 kilowatts (kW) at $0.15, second 25 kW at $0.12 and all over 50 kW at $0.10. Power rates were first 100 kW at $0.08, second 100 kW at $0.07, third 100 kW at $0.06 and 4th 100 kW at $0.05. The former light rate with the private company was $0.18 per kW. In addition, lower electric rates saved the city about half the cost of pumping water. The water system in 1925 had rates of $0.35 per 1,000 gallons. Bloomfield was a member of the League of Nebraska Municipalities (1928-34). In 1929, the City of Bloomfield decided to shut down the municipal light plant and purchase electric current via the Hi-line from the Interstate Power Company.

By 1930, the population was 1,435 and the school sports

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boosters supported the Blue/White Bloomfield Bees. In 1932, the electric light rates were: first 50 kilowatts (kW) at $0.12, next 50 kW at $0.10, next 100 kW at $0.08, and all over 200 kW at $0.07, with a minimum charge of $1.20 per month. Power rates were: first 100 kW at $0.07, next 100 kW at $0.06, next 100 kW at $0.05, all over 300 kW at $0.04. The power plant in 1936 had a capacity of 660 HP, 491 kW.

The population was 1,467 in 1940, the electric current was supplied wholesale by the Interstate Power Company and the public owned the Bloomfield Light and Power Plant (1941). On June 23, 1953, Consumers Public Power District purchased the electric system for $250,000. The school system consolidated with rural districts in the area in 1959 becoming District #86-R. By 1960, the population was 1,349 and a new elementary school and gymnasium/auditorium were built.

The population increased from 1,287 in 1970 to 1,393 in 1980 and the electric system was operated/supplied by Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD). The gas system was operated/supplied by Kansas-Nebraska Natural Gas Company (1982). Work began in 1988 to upgrade the wastewater treatment facility. By 1990, the population was 1,181 and projects included a new Community Center/City Hall building completed in 1995. A water project included mains installed (eight-inch water line in a loop around town) and construction of a new 250,000-gallon elevated water storage tank. This tank replaced the 96-year-old standpipe. By 1999, the water system consisted of three wells with a 1,000 gpm capacity, average daily demand of 180,000 gals. and a maximum capacity of 1,440,000 gpd. The wastewater treatment consisted of a four-cell facultative controlled discharge lagoon system designed for 0.16 million gallons per day (mgd). There were six-and-nine-tenths miles of "gravity flow" mains consisting of 1,000 ft of 12-inch, 4,500 ft of 10-inch, 22,000 ft of eight-inch and 4,200 ft of four-inch mains. The two lift stations were located at the east end of town and at the city park. A new airport administration building was built in 1999, and the taxiways were expanded.

In 2000, the population was 1,126 and a new Bloomfield Public Library and Learning Center was completed. There were 21.35 miles of streets of which 80 percent were paved along with 63 percent had sidewalks. The city maintained three parks (15 acres) which included a swimming pool, tennis courts, a campground, and a nine-hole public golf course. The natural gas system was operated by KN Energy Inc. in 2000. In 2003, the natural gas system was operated/supplied by Kinder Morgan Inc. and by 2004, by the Kansas-Nebraska Natural Gas Company. In 2008, the gas system was operated/supplied by SourceGas. Solid waste collection was provided by a private company contracted by the city.

The population decreased to 970 by 2010, and the fire department consisted of 32 firefighters with an ISO fire class rating of 7 and 9. The natural gas system began being served by Black Hills Energy in 2015. Today, Bloomfield has a population of 986, has been incorporated since 1891, and a League of Nebraska Municipalities and Utilities Section member.

References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1965-75, 1977-87, 1990-91, 1993-2023; Nebraska Municipal Review, 1925,

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1928, 1932; Public Power in Nebraska, 1962; Water Resources of Nebraska, Dec. 1936; Atkinson Graphic newspaper, 1929; Bloomfield website, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2020; Sargent Leader newspaper, 1913, 1925; Nebraska Our Towns...North Northeast, 1990; A State of Readers, Nebraska's Carnegie Libraries, 2005; Maps Tell A Story, 1991; Pages of History Nebraska High Schools, Present & Past, 1854-1994; NDED website, 2005; Bloomfield Journal, 1915-17; Wikipedia website, 2019; Nebraska Fast Facts Community Profile website, 2010; Electric Review and Western electrician with which is..., Vol. 70, 1917; The McGraw Waterworks Directory, 1915; Nebraska Blue Book, 1928, 1946, 1978; Sanborn Map, Jan. 1900, July 1909, Dec. 1920; Biennial Report of Audits of Public Accounts to the Governor, 1935; U.S. Congressional Serial Set, House Document, Vol. 238, April 14, 1936; Directory of Electric Utilities in the US, Federal Power Commission, 1941; and the Insurance Yearbook 1915-16 Fire and Marine 43rd Annual Issue, 1915.

Crow Line: A line of positive communication that all can share

By Rob Pierce, Utilities Field Rep./Training Coordinator

Congratulations! Incorporation Anniversary Recognition: 90 years – **McCook** (1933-city first class); 130 years – **Clatonia** (1893-village); 135 years – **Giltner** (1888-village), Stockham (1888-village), and Tamora (1888-village); 140 years – **Ainsworth** (1883-village), **Chester** (1883-village), and **Shubert** (1883-village); 150 years – **Humboldt** (1873-village) and **Kearney** (1873-village).

Utilities Section members are bolded.

Congratulations to NWEA Award Recipients! Systems and individuals that received awards at the 2023 NWEA banquet in Kearney include the following: Ryan Hurst of **Wahoo** received the *William D. Hatfield Award*; and *Golden Manhole Award* inductees were Fred Tustin of **Grand Island** and Mike Mertz of **Omaha**. More information and a full list of recipients of these awards can be found on NWEA's website at www.nebwea.starchapter.com/Award_Recipeints.

Do you, your department, or facility have something to crow about? Received an award, had an article written highlighting an event or person, or have a project you want to acknowledgement in the *Utilities Section Newsletter*?

Let us help you celebrate events and accomplishments! Please send information to any of the League/Utilities staff at info@lonm.org.

Check out the League's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/leaguene. Be sure to* "Like" *us.

Nebraska utilities history – Geneva

The Utilities Section Newsletter will continue to feature histories of both utilities and associate members. Any historical data and/or photos of your utilities, a specific facility, or articles already written are welcome, along with permission to print. If you have questions, contact Rob at 402-476-2829 or robp@lonm.org.

By Rob Pierce, Utilities Field Rep./Training Coordinator

Geneva is located Fillmore County, which was named for Pres. Millard Fillmore. Fillmore County's boundaries were defined by the Nebraska Territorial Legislature on Jan. 26, 1856, and the county was formally organized in 1871. A post office was established April 19, 1871, and a townsite was surveyed in July 1871. The first election for county officers was in April. In July, the newly platted townsite was called Henry with surveyed 100-feet (ft) wide streets and 16-ft wide alleys. The new site was proposed as the county seat. Apparently, the townsite could not be occupied since it was located on state school land. In the summer of 1872, an act was passed by the Legislature to allow the sale of the school land. Lots were put on sale June 17, 1872. On June 22, the name was changed from Henry to Geneva, apparently at the suggestion of the daughter of a local settler who wanted it named after her family's old home of Geneva, IL. Depending on which resource you use, Geneva may have been named after Geneva, NY, or Geneva, IL. both of which were possibly named for Geneva, Switzerland.

A store was built in 1873 which also was the Putnam House hotel. A general merchandise store opened in 1874 and the *Geneva Republican* newspaper was being published. In the spring of 1875, a new hotel was built and the population increased from 25 to 140 by January 1876. The *Fillmore County Review* newspaper originally established (October 1875) in Fairmont was first published in Geneva in April 1876. By 1879, the community had 16 small businesses, a hotel, a newspaper, and three churches. On July 8, 1879, Geneva was incorporated as a village (one source listed 1876).

The population reached 376 in 1880 (other sources listed 300, 415, and 700) and on June 4, the Geneva Exchange Bank was incorporated. The first wooden boardwalks were installed along 8th and 9th Streets in 1881 and telephone service was brought to Geneva by the Nebraska Telephone Company in 1883. The Kansas and Nebraska Railroad was incorporated to build south from Fairmont to Geneva in 1885 and the population was estimated to be 650. The school was a two-story frame building on block 17. On May 21, 1886, the construction train arrived in town. The first roller mill was built in 1887 and the "Geneva

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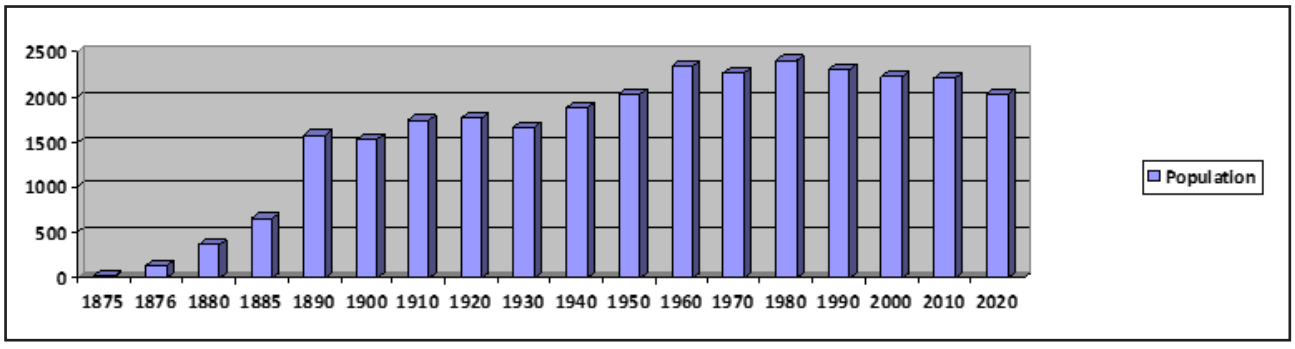
Geneva water tower. 2000 photo.



Nebraska utilities history – Geneva

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Milling Company" was powered by oxen to grind grain. Turkey Creek was located on the north side of town with the early water supplied by wells and windmills with cisterns for storage. On Aug. 15, 1889, a special election was held to vote on $23,000 in bonds for construction, maintenance, and cost estimates of a waterworks. The vote was 265 for to 14 against. An engine house and standpipe were placed on the west side of Garfield Street and faced Court Street between Lincoln and Court Streets. Plans and specifications for the waterworks were $200. In September, the bond of $2,000 was at a 5 percent interest rate. Also in 1889, Geneva was incorporated as a city of the second class and divided into three wards.

By 1890, the population was 1,580, and the final test of the waterworks system on Jan. 16, proved satisfactory thus the water system was established. The water system consisted of a 110-ft standpipe, capacity 93,000 gallons, two pumps – each capable of pumping 125,000 gallons-per-day (gpd), and driven by a 60-horsepower (hp) boiler. There were about two-and-one-half-miles of mains ranging from four- to eight-inch in diameter and 40 fire hydrants. Water rates were $5 per year for households and $2 for connecting onto the mains. In May, more bonds were voted on to install another two to three miles of water mains. Construction included buildings at the fairgrounds ($2,000) along

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with erection of the two-story brick Jameson Hotel, the Citizens Bank, Masonic Hall, the brick Fillmore House, and a brick windmill factory/foundry. The Geneva Fire Company was organized, which had two hose company fire departments supplying 1,200 ft of hose. By October 1892, the fire department had 32 volunteer firefighters with two hose carts with 100 ft of two-and-one-half-inch hose. The water system had two 12-inch bore wells with two No. 12 Cook pumps, a 12 ft x 110 ft standpipe and four-and-one-half-miles of four-, six- and eight-inch pipe with 38 double hydrants. In April 1893, the village board voted to grant an exclusive franchise for 10 years to the Geneva Electric Light and Power Company to erect and operate a plant with the privilege of purchasing the plant at the end of the 10 years, if desired. A new courthouse was completed in 1893-94 with a 125-ft clock tower (dedicated 1894). Water rent was raised in April 1894 to $18 per place, provided there were four taps per main. The water commissioner charged $0.25 per load of water. The Geneva Creamery was purchased by the Fairmont Creamery in 1894. By April 1896, the bonded indebtedness of the city was due to the water system ($27,000). A library was started in June 1897 with books housed in the Masonic Temple building. On Jan. 30, 1898, water meters were placed at the courthouse, Citizens State Bank, and Geneva National Bank buildings.

In 1900, the population was 1,534 and the first brick sidewalks were installed between 8th and 9th Streets on G Street.

Rural mail delivery was established in 1901 and in June 1902, water meters were installed all over town. Water rent was due quarterly at the rate of $0.20 per 1,000 gallons for the first 10,000 and $0.15 per 1,000 gallons thereafter for each quarter. Telephone lines were built (1903), and in May 1904, a new well was added for $673.05. The school was connected to the waterworks in the fall. A large fire on Oct. 28 destroyed the Fraternity Temple properties, the Fillmore County Telephone Co. building, and Geneva State Bank. The fire originated in the Benson & Hensley restaurant, a frame building. Gregory F. Skinkle, after 10 unsuccessful years trying to secure electric power, secured a franchise to build and operate an electrical plant in 1904. On Jan. 22, 1905, four arc lamp streetlights were illuminated for the first time with a total of 21 incandescent lamps in the residential areas. Only night lighting service was available at first, from dusk to 11 p.m. with a little longer service on Saturdays. More brick/concrete sidewalks were installed and a new three-story brick school building was erected in 1905 for $36,000. A new library opened Jan. 1, 1907. In the summer, "day electric service" was started for the purpose of running fans and furnishing motor power that could be sold. Several motors had been installed, which included a 115-hp Atlas Corliss with a 12-ft fly wheel, which occupied a floor space of 9 ft x 20 ft and weighed 23,000 pounds. A single-phase dynamo AC, manufactured by the Fort Wayne Electric Works, was 60 kilowatts (kW) with a frequency of 60 cycles and 1,100 volts at 900 revolutions per minute.

In October, the city voted to furnish two motors, two transformers and two geared-head pumps in order to furnish full-day service of water and lights at a cost of $1,245. The plant added another boiler engine and dynamo, doubling the plant service for a full day. The Geneva Electric Company building in 1909 was either located on 9th Street or Center Street. On April 1, the city changed from steam to electric pumps at an annual cost of $1,953 for a five-year contract between the city and the Geneva Electric Company.

By 1910, the population was 1,741 and steam lines were being laid to heat the courthouse and businesses. On June 19, 1911, the city contracted 67 Mazda streetlights rated at 60 candlepower with a monthly rate of $1.75 per lamp. The lights were run on a midnight to moonlight schedule, dusk to midnight only and on moonlight nights were not turned on at all. The new Carnegie Library was dedicated Jan. 7, 1913.

A $10,000 bond was approved for erecting a new city hall building. On Sept. 1, 1914, the city had project bonds of $20,000 at 5 percent interest due on Sept. 1, 1934. The two-story brick auditorium was built as the new city hall at 160 N 9th Street, which opened in December 1915. The municipal water system, wells pumped to reservoir (94,000 gals.), pump/engine capacity 250,000 gpd, seven-and-one-half-miles of cast iron mains four- to eight-inch, 34 hydrants, 250 services (galvanized iron), Pressure domestic 40 fire 60 psi, cost of system was $27,000, cost of maintenance was $2,200.

The privately-owned Geneva Electric Company in 1915 had 200

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HP boilers, a 300 HP steam engine, a generator rating at 225 kilovolt amperes (kVA) with lighting rates between $0.08-$0.15, and power rates between $0.03-$0.12 per kWh. *The engine nicknamed "Betsy" and its 90-kW generator later were sold after a transmission line was built to Geneva.* The Continental Gas & Electric Corporation in 1916 acquired the Geneva Electric Company from Gregory Skinkle. A new electric contract provided for 24-hour service for residential and commercial use with the top rate at $0.20 per kilowatt hour and the cheapest at $0.09. Nineteen new "electrolier" lights were installed on the north side of G Street and along 9th Street and in January 1917, 20 more electroliers were installed.

A new fire company was organized in 1917 and in May 1919, the first paving contract was let for the paving of 10.5-blocks of streets and storm sewers. The business district streets were paved with brick. On May 8, 1919, a contract for the sewer system and a disposal plant was approved at a sum of $30,244.70. The sewer system was installed in 1921 and by November 1922, a modern sewage disposal system was accepted by the city. On May 4, 1922, the Nebraska Gas & Electric Company filed an application for the authority to construct a transmission line from Geneva to Strang, Ohiowa, Tobias, Western, Swanton then to Dewitt. The project was granted July 26, 1922. When the electric transmission lines were built to town, the electric light plant was to be abandoned and kept as standby generation if needed. The electric service was provided by the Public Service Company in 1922 and by 1925, rates were $0.12 per kW. In October 1927, Nebraska Gas & Electric passed its franchise to the Iowa-Nebraska Light & Power Co. On Aug. 19, 1929, the city awarded a 25-year franchise to Iowa-Nebraska Light & Power. In 1929, the first city street to be graveled was north 11th Street and several residential streets were being graveled.

The population decreased from 1,768 in 1920 to 1,662 in 1930 and street graveling was completed. On Oct. 14, 1931, a franchise to serve Geneva with natural gas was granted to Iowa-Nebraska Light & Power Company. On Dec. 22, natural gas was turned on for 42 customers. In 1935, a park and swimming pool were built, and the electric distribution system was operated by Iowa-Nebraska Light & Power Company.

By 1940, the population was 1,888 and in August, a new brick post office building was erected. In April 1941, the Consumers Public Power Company purchased the electric system from Iowa-Nebraska Light & Power Company. In July 1943, plans were accepted to enlarge the sewage disposal plant along with a Government Housing project.

On Feb. 26, 1945, the Central Electric & Gas Company purchased the natural gas distribution system and gas rates were reduced in 1946.

In 1950, the population was 2,031 and in January 1951, 61 luminaire streetlights were installed, replacing the electroliers extending from Highway 81 throughout the downtown area. A rural fire department was organized in 1952. A lift station was constructed at 10th and A Streets (1955-56) along with a sewer system extension project and street paving projects. The water system had 800 water meters in service in 1956 and solid waste was collected by private companies at a rate of $2 for residents and $4.10 for a businesses. A $10,000 bond issue for a swimming pool was voted on (611 for to 249 against) with plans to use a $7,000 federal grant. In 1958, the waterworks had 900 meters in service and natural gas was provided by the Central Electric & Gas Company. In May, the council awarded a contract for a new well and eight blocks of new water mains.

By 1960, the population was 2,352, the Fillmore County Hospital was built (1961), and the fire department had 30 firefighters by 1962. In 1962-67, the natural gas system was supplied by Western Power & Gas Company with gas purchased from Kansas-Nebraska Natural Gas Co. A new water well was added in 1965 to the three existing wells and a school addition was built in 1967.

The population increased slightly from 2,275 in 1970 to 2,400 in 1980 and a fire hall was built in 1972. In 1979, the electric distribution system was owned by the city and operated by Nebraska Public Power District. A bio-disk treatment (RBC) plant was built (1980-81) with a daily capacity of 644,000 gallons, an average daily flow at 180,000 gallons, and a historic peak discharge of 322,000 gallons. The natural gas system in 1985 was operated by Minnegasco.

Ground was broken in 1993 for a new 5,600 square feet (sqft) library, which was built in 1995 using private donation funds and

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Nebraska utilities history – Geneva

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a $75,000 Peter Kiewit matching grant. In 1994, the natural gas system was operated by the Peoples Natural Gas Company. A new water well was drilled in 1997 (cost $175,000) and the city had five wells in operation. Renovations were made at the wastewater treatment plant in 1998. The courthouse was renovated with a $1,255,000 bond issue which began April 26, 1998.

The Fillmore Central Public School was formed in 1999 with the merger of Fairmont and Geneva Schools.

The population decreased from 2,310 in 1990 to 2,226 in 2000 and the city received a grant/loan for extending water lines to new businesses with steel casting pipe-water main and new fire hydrants. A $433,848 grant/loan for infrastructure improvements to the sewer service included new sewer lines and a lift station.

By 2005, the water system had five wells with a combined capacity of 2,500 gallons per minute (gpm), overhead storage of 300,000 gallons, with an average daily demand of 593,400 gallons. There were 113 fire hydrants in the system and rates were $6.50 per month then $0.60 per 100 cubic feet (cuft) per month, with a minimum bill of $9.50 for a one-third-inch to one-inch service line. For a four-inch line, it was $64.50. In 2005, the city had 62.5 miles of streets with 50.8 hard surfaced, 95 percent curbed, and 80 percent with sidewalks. Solid waste collection was provided by a private company and hauled to either David City, Seward, or Milford. A sequencing batch reactor (SBR) wastewater treatment plant had been built (2005-2006) with a daily treatment capacity of 350,000 gallons. The natural gas system in 2005 was provided by Peoples Natural Gas Company/Energy One and by 2008, provided by Aquila and supplied by Kinder Morgan.

In 2010, the population was 2,217 and the natural gas system was operated by Black Hills Energy. The transmission provider was Tallgrass Energy Partners. Privately owned solid waste removal services were available with waste hauled to landfills in David City, Milford, and York. In 2013, the city maintained five parks covering 14.5 acres, including an aquatic park by 2017. In March 2019, a new community center was to be located at 19th Street by a City Council vote of 6-0. A water main project in an annexation area was to cost between $600,000-$700,000 along with the sanitary sewer work to cost between $900,000-$1 million. The new subdivision also included new streets to be paved.

The population in 2020 was 2,038, new decorative light poles were installed, and a new fire hall was built.

Geneva has been incorporated since July 1879 (144 years) and a city of the second class since 1889. Geneva has been a member of the League of Nebraska Municipalities and the Utilities Section for over 46 years (records only back to 1977).

References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1958, 1960, 1962, 1964-75, 1977-78, 1980-2015, 2017-2023; Nebraska Municipal Review Magazine, 1925, 1928; History of Richardson County, Part 1, The Heritage Collection-Edwards, 1917; Andreas History of the State of Nebraska, 1882; The Fillmore County Story, 1968; Nebraska Life Magazine, 2001; Lincoln Journal Star, 2003-2006, 2008-2009; Sargent Leader newspaper, 1925; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Geneva Internet Website, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2020-2021; Community Facts Geneva, NE April 2005, Nebraska Our Towns... Central Southwest, 1991; Maps Tell A Story, 1991; NEDED Website, 2005; Wikipedia website, 2020; The Nebraska Signal, 2019; The Crete Democrat Newspaper, 1891-92; Johnson's History of Nebraska, 1880; Community Facts Report, 2006; Community Facts, Geneva Nebraska, NPPD, April 2005; Who's Who in Nebraska, 1940; Moody's Manual of Railroads and Corp. Securities, Vol. 2, Part 2, 1921; Electric Power Development in the United States, Dept. of Agriculture, January 1916; Nebraska Gazetteer & Business Directory, 1890-91; Sanborn Maps October 1892, June 1897, August 1902, July 1909, June 1922, July 1933, July 1943; Nebraska Blue Book, 1928, 1942, 1946, 1978; Manual of American Water Works, 1891; Manual of American Water Works, 4th Edition, 1897; The "Auburn Granger" newspaper, 1913-15; Annual Report of Nebraska State Railway Commission to the Governor, Issue 15, 1922; Poor's and Moody's Manual of Railroads and Corp. Securities, Public Utility Section, Vol. 1, 1921; Biennial Report of the Auditor of Public Accounts to the Governor of the State of Nebraska, Nov. 30, 1890, 1890; Biennial Report of Audits of Public Accounts to the Governor, 1935; U.S. Congressional Serial Set, House Document, Vol. 238, April 14, 1936;

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Nebraska utilities history – Stanton

The Utilities Section Newsletter will continue to feature histories of both utilities and associate members. Any historical data and/or photos of your utilities, a specific facility, or articles already written are welcome, along with permission to print. If you have questions, contact Rob at 402-476-2829 or robp@lonm.org.

By Rob Pierce, Utilities Field Rep./Training Coordinator

Stanton is located in Stanton County which was formed in 1862 and was once a part of Izard County (1856-62).

Stanton County was named after the Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton during the administration of Pres. Abraham Lincoln. The first white men settled in the area with many coming from Indiana and Wisconsin about 1865. Stanton County was organized in 1865 with the first election held in October 1866 and by 1869, an election designated Stanton as the county seat. A post office was established July 11, 1868 (one source listed 1867) as Pleasant Run at the Botorff farm.

On Sept. 9, 1870, the original survey/plat was made on a 40-acre tract with Block 26 set aside for a courthouse square (one source noted a survey/plat in June 1870). A store was moved from the south side of the river to the new townsite. The Nebraska House was established (1871) and more additions were platted in April and June. A plat was officially recorded June 17, 1871. *One source noted the name Stanton came from an original owner of the land in honor of his wife, whose maiden name was Stanton. Another source noted it was named after the war secretary in Lincoln's cabinet. At first, it as referred to as Stantonville. Another source thought it as named after Stanton County.* The *Stanton Bugle* newspaper first was published in 1872-73, another plat was filed in 1874, and by 1875, a tri-weekly stage line made runs through the area. The first school in Stanton was opened and on April 3, 1877, the Pleasant Run post office was moved to the townsite and renamed Stanton. By 1877, the *Bugle* newspaper was suspended and in 1877-79, the *Index* newspaper was being published. The Cady/Frost Brickyard was operating by 1878, which was located west of the Maskenthine Creek with a capacity of 110,000 bricks in one kiln. A general store was opened in January 1879 and later that year, three plats were added to the townsite. By August 1879, the Fremont, Elkhorn, and Missouri Valley Railroad, a division of the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad, came to town. The railroad depot initially was located one mile west of the original townsite, so several businesses were moved closer to the tracks. Businesses by 1879-80 included a banking house, three general stores, a hardware store, two

Stanton water tower. 2001 photo.

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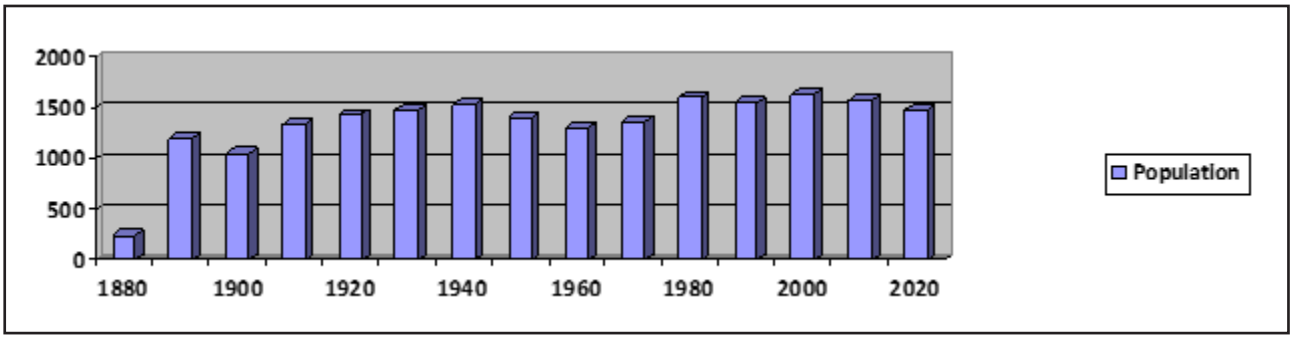

Nebraska utilities history – Stanton

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blacksmiths, a furniture store, a drugstore, a millinery, a harness shop, a livery, three real estate offices, two churches, and a weekly paper.

In 1880, the population was 248, a mill was built on the Elkhorn River, and in the fall, a school was built for $1,300. The population later was estimated to be 400 and Stanton was incorporated as a village Sept. 3, 1881 (one source noted September 1882). A weekly *Register* newspaper was being printed (1882), the village had brick sidewalks and by 1882, the brickyard had made 190,000 bricks. A contract was awarded on March 15, 1883, to construct a courthouse. Three more additions were filed in 1883 and two in 1884. Businesses included a saloon, a railroad station with telegraph, an insurance business, along with the weekly *Stanton Register* newspaper. A graded school system was operating and telephone lines were being constructed. Another addition was platted in June 1886 and in September, the mill/elevator was destroyed by fire. The need for firefighting apparatus equipment anda fire department was brought up by the newspaper and in 1886, a library was established. The Stanton County Library Association was incorporated Feb. 14, 1887.

The population increased to 857 by 1890, land was donated for a park when the Holman Addition was platted, and the volunteer fire department was organized with a hose cart and hose purchased.

Businesses included the Commercial Hotel, Citizens National Bank, a feed mill, two millinery shops, First National Bank, *Stanton Democrat* newspaper, two livery stables, a drug store, a grocery, a livery, a hardware, Russell House, a shoemaker, a meat market, Stanton Creamery, a training stable, a real estate office, a blacksmith shop, ag implement dealers, a bakery, a feed mill, a furniture store, a washing machine manufacturer, a brick manufacturer, general stores, saloons, a telegraph office, and an insurance business. A steam flour mill, which cost $13,000, was operating and a waterworks was being considered. In a spring election, bonds were voted on in the amount of $7,500 to go toward the construction of a waterworks. The bonds were to run 20-years and draw interest at the rate of 7 percent. M.C. Gamble in 1892 offered to furnish 100 barrels of water for $1 per day. In August 1892, bonds were sold and bids were advertised for the construction of the water plant. In October 1892, Julius Possnecker

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Nebraska Breaktime Trivia "Just For Fun"

Q-1. When was the last time gasoline was 27 cents a gallon?
Q-2. Where in Nebraska was the "Prairie Pride" beer brewed and bottled?
Q-3. What city/village in Nebraska held a harmonica contest in April 1926 at the Isis Theater?
Q-4. Do you know where the mural below is located?
Answers on page 18.

Nebraska utilities history – Stanton

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offered to furnish water to Stanton for domestic and fire purposes for five years at the rate of $0.35 per hour. The first city hall was a frame building on Block 36, Lots 4 & 5, which was purchased for $3. Telegraph connections were established by 1893 and in April, Stanton was incorporated as a city of the second class. On the first Tuesday, the city was divided into two wards. A Mayor was to be elected to three-year terms and the city clerk, city treasurer, and magistrate were appointed annually. The mayor and council appointed other positions and boards. On August 17, 1893, a volunteer fire department organized as a hose team with a hose house located on the irregular block with the bell tower and a jail. By September, the city had a volunteer hook & ladder company with a fire alarm bell approved in 1894 and received in 1896. A cigar factory was operating in 1896, the water system was extended in 1897, and a broom factory was operating in 1899.

By 1900, the population increased to 1,052, arc vapor gas lights were installed on the streets (lit each night), and the streets were unpaved but graded level. The water system in January consisted of 10 three-inch drilled wells pumped to 10 x 50-foot (ft) standpipe, located on the hill, which had a capacity of 29,389 gallons. A Barr compound duplex pump had a capacity of 149,000 gallons per 10 hours. There were one-and-one-half-miles of four- and six-inch diameter mains, 18 double fire hydrants with an average daily consumption of water in summer at 60,000 gallons and in winter at 15,000 gallons. A pump house on Nebraska Avenue had a Barr compound duplex pump with a capacity of 147,000 gallons per 10 hours, powered by a steam engine using coal fuel. The fire department consisted of 26 firefighters, a hose cart with 950 ft of hose, and a hook/ladder truck. Bonds for an electric light plant were declared as the council secured electricity from a private company, the Stanton Electric Light Company. On April 24, 1901, the Stanton Water Power Company was organized to furnish power for the flour mill, pumping station, and the electric light plant. In October, a boiler was purchased from the former canning factory and the Dynamo of the Stanton Electric Light Company was used until the mill race could furnish power. A franchise was to run from six to 60 years with the Dynamo to furnish power. Trees were planted on the school block and in June 1902, a flood washed out the east end of the mill dam causing it to be moved uptown near the railroad. On Jan. 13, 1903, the city contracted with the light company to furnish streetlights. Ordinance #51 was passed in April which defined the rights, privileges, and duties of the electric company. Ordinance #16 was passed April 24 establishing water rates with charges based on the number of faucets and other outlets used along with the type of business (ex. banks $5, bakeries $10). The Stanton Cement Company factory was operating and many of the sidewalks were laid in town stamped "JVR." Poles and wire were installed and by June 1903, the Stanton Electric Light Company was to make electricity available for street lighting. The Stanton Water/Power Company, which had secured a mill and an electric light plant, was sold in 1906. On July 15, 1907, the city voted (132 to 68) in a special election to issue bonds for a municipal light plant. On Nov. 6, electric light bonds of $5,500 were sold and an addition was added to the power plant building. A sewer system began when the city ordered a carload of pipe to be laid on July 16, 1907. Pipe was laid with an outfall at the Elkhorn River below the county fairgrounds. The Stanton Independent Telephone Company was incorporated again Jan. 30, 1909 (initially incorporated Jan. 30, 1901). The light plant, which used a 125 horsepower (HP) gas engine Dynamo with gas generator, was located two-and-one-half blocks south of the Elkhorn Hotel (former Barnes Hotel). The fire department had 48 volunteer firefighters, two hose carts with 1,200 ft of hose, and a light hook/ladder truck. The water system had a pump house on Nebraska Avenue, an Aldridge duplex pump with a capacity of 350 gallons per minute (gpm), 23 double fire hydrants and two miles of water main. The average daily consumption was 2,800 gallons.

By 1910, the population was 1,342 and on Sept. 15, 1911, a bid was rejected for Mr. Sanders to furnish power for light and water. The decision to increase the steam power was approved by the board. Extensions and improvements to the municipal electric plant included the installation of a 100 HP steam, a 125 HP boiler, and a new generator. The old gas engine was kept for emergencies. By December, the kerosene lamps were discarded for electric lights with power furnished by a threshing machine engine. A

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second brick high school was built in 1912 and another addition to the powerhouse was made. In June, the water system plans and specs called for meters for all residents. A one-story brick Carnegie Library was built at SWC 11th & Jackpine Streets in 1914 using a Carnegie grant for $8,000. By 1915, the water distribution system consisted of two-and-seven-tenths of a mile of four- and six-inch pipe, 23 Kupferle fire hydrants 14 valves, and 203 meters of various brands. The average daily consumption was 45,000 gallons with water rates of $0.25 per 1,000 gallons. Plans were considered in 1917 to extend electric service from the municipal electric plant into farming district, which would require the erection of about 13 miles of transmission lines. Under the arrangement, the farmers would build the line to the city limits. In 1918, a "second" city hall was built on lot 14 block 8 (Holman & Graves addition), which also housed the fire department and a jail. Test wells were sunk in 1918 and in 1919, electric current was leased from Stanton to Pilger at a rate of $0.06 per kilowatt.

In 1920, the population was 1,437, and the fire department consisted of 50 firefighters, a Ford combination hose ladder/chemical truck with 1,250 ft of hose, a 50-gallon chemical tank, 100-ft chemical hose along with a 30 ft extension and two 18 ft ladders. A street grading project was underway in 1920 and a brick city/fire Hall was located on Pacific Avenue. The Carnegie Public Library was located on the corner of New York Street and 4th Street. The pumping station/light plant, located on the Nebraska Ave. and 8th Street corner, had steam engines using coal fuel oil, a 146-HP engine with a 100-kilowatt (kW) generator, and a 70-HP engine with 50 kW generator. An eight by nine Aldaise duplex pump was used and a water softener was purchased. On Feb. 21, 1921, an addition was platted. The Nebraska Gas/Electric Company was authorized in 1923-24 to construct 33,000-volt and 6,600-volt three-phase transmission lines from Norfolk to Stanton and from Stanton to Oakland. By 1925, electric current provided via the transmission lines had rates between $0.08-$0.12 per kilowatt hour (kWh). The first paving contract was awarded in 1925 to the Western Asphalt Paving Company. Paving districts were created and 30 blocks were paved while other streets were graveled. The spur from Highway 275 was oiled into town. Alleys in the business district were paved by the property owners. A third school called the "Annex" was built in 1928 to house first and second grades and the population by 1930 was 1,479. In the 1930s, the sewer system was extended with sewer districts organized with the aid of the PWA and WPA. On Jan. 1, 1935, the electric distribution system was operated by the Western Public Service Company. The power plant in 1936 had a capacity of 291 kW of steam power generation. In 1937, the fire department purchased a pumper from the Central Fire Truck Corp. mounted on a REO truck and the fire insurance rating was changed from 8 to 7.

The city contracted with Consumers Power and Electric Company of Columbus to furnish power with Stanton and continued to supply Pilger with power. In 1941, the eighth grade was transferred to the high school and in 1944, the water system had three municipal wells in operation. The first rural fire truck was purchased in 1945 and a revision of ordinances was made in 1946. The population decreased from 1,526 in 1940 to 1,403 in 1950 and the electric distribution system was rebuilt. A franchise was granted for gas installation in 1950 with gas service by 1953.

New fluorescent streetlights were added in 1954 and by 1956, the electric distribution system had 615 meters in service with current supplied by Consumers Public Power District at the wholesale rate of 1.25 mills. The meter deposit was $10, the cost of street lighting was $3,682.17 per year, and the cost of current for pumping water was $2,116.80 per year. The high school and auditorium were built in the 1950s and solid waste collection was provided by a private collector. An asphalt oiling project on gravel streets started in 1956. The natural gas system was supplied by the Central Electric & Gas Company. An 80 ft x 100 ft swimming pool was operated by the city. In 1956, the municipal sewer system had a sewer charge of $0.50 per resident per month and $1 per month per commercial business. The water system had 531 meters in service with a meter deposit of $10.

In 1956, the water rates were: first 20,000 gals. at $0.25 per 1,000 gals., next 40,000 gals. at $0.20 per 1,000 gals., next 60,000 gals. at $0.15 per 1,000 gals., and excess of 120,000 gals. at $0.10 per 1,000 gals. with a minimum of $1.50 per quarter.

Improvements to the water system in 1958 included 4,000 ft. of eight- and six-inch cast iron main

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along with a new 100,000-gallon water storage tower on the hill on Ridge Road. In 1959, a new well improved the water service in east Stanton.

The population was 1,300 in 1960, street repair projects were underway, and a new elementary school was built. The electric system in 1962 had 600 meters in service with the cost of street lighting at $4,916.63 per year and cost of current for pumping water was $2,175.67 per year. A street sign project was initiated and natural gas was supplied by the Western Power & Gas Company. By 1962, the water plant had 566 meters in service. A new sewage disposal plant was built in 1965 with a third of the cost supplied by federal government grants. On Sept. 11, 1966, the Ivy Manor was dedicated and in November, the railroad depot closed and the Stanton County Fair became known as the Centennial Fair.

By 1970, the population was 1,363 and the electrical system owned by the city was supplied by the Nebraska Public Power District. A rural fire department was organized and in 1972, a wastewater treatment plant project was started. A golf course was established in 1976 and the municipal electrical system by 1979 was operated by Stanton County Public Power District with current supplied by Nebraska Public Power District. In 1982, the natural gas system was operated by Cengas and supplied by Minnegasco. Rail service ended completely by June 1984 and the population decreased from 1,603 in 1980 to 1,549 in 1990. In 1994, the natural gas system was supplied by Peoples Natural Gas Company. A new high school was built in 1996 and the library was remodeled in 1998. The wastewater treatment plant in 1999 consisted of a rock trickling filter system designed for 0.165 million gallons per day (mgd), an Imhoff tank/Spiragester/clarigester discharged to surface water.

The population was 1,627 in 2000 and the city was looking to install a sequencing batch reactor (SBR) treatment at the wastewater plant. By 2004, the SBR treatment facility with a rated capacity of 0.250 mgd had an average daily demand of 0.180 mgd with UV disinfection. In 2007, the water system wells had a rated capacity of 1.440 mgd with an average capacity of 0.500 mgd and a peak demand of 1.0 mgd. The streets were 91 percent paved by 2007 and the natural gas system was supplied by Aquila. The gas system in 2008 was supplied by Black Hills Energy

The city received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) of $24,100 for a sewer system study in 2010 and the census listed the population at 1,577. Some ramp sidewalks were installed by 2013 and the former city hall was a museum (2018). Today, Stanton has a population of 1,480, has been incorporated for about 142 years, and is a member of the League of Nebraska Municipalities and Utilities Section.

References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1965-1975, 1977-87, 1990-2020; Nebraska Municipal Review Magazine, 1925, 2010; Perkey's Nebraska Place Names, 1995; Nebraska Place Names, 1925, 1960; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Train Time in Nebraska: The Post Card Era, 2005; Nebraska Traveler Magazine, 2003; Maps Tell Nebraska's History, 1991; NEDED Website, 2005; History & Biography: History of the Elkhorn Valley Nebraska, 1892; Electric Power Development in the United States, Dept. of Agriculture, January 1916; Electric World, Vol. 58 No. 1, July 1, 1911; Electric World, Vol. 69 Part-2, April 7, 1917; Electric Review, 1917; A History of Stanton County, 1944 or 1969; Nebraska Our Towns…Central Northeast, 1990; Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey Reconnaissance Final Report of Stanton County, Nebraska, June 1, 1988; Nebraska Blue Book, 1928, 1942, 1946, 1978; McGraw Waterworks Directory, 1915; Sanborn Map, January 1900, December 1909, November 1920; Directory of Electric Utilities in the United States, Federal Power Commission, 1941; The Insurance Year Book 1915-16 Fire and Marine 43rd Annual Issue, 1915; Omaha Bee Newspaper, 1909; and Federal Power Consumers Electric Rate Survey, Domestic and Residential Electric Rates in Effect January 1, 1935 in the state of Nebraska, 1935.

Nebraska utilities history – Geneva

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Browns Directory of American Gas Companies and Gas Engineering Appliances Catalogue, 1922; The Insurance Year Book 1915-16 Fire and Marine 43rd Annual Issue, 1915; and the Electric Rate Survey: Domestic and Residential Electric Rates in Effect January 1, 1935 by U.S. Federal Power Commission, 1935.

Fall Water Operator Training Workshops held

The fall 2023 water workshop sites included: North Platte, McCook, Grand Island, Norfolk, South Sioux City, Lincoln, and Auburn. These workshops were well attended with participants receiving **5 hours** toward their grade 1-4 water license and **5 hours** toward wastewater certification. These workshops were co-sponsored by the Utilities Section and the Nebraska Section-American Water Works Association.

Topics at these workshops included sampling requirements and plans, sampling techniques/procedures, analysis, and evaluation of sampling site plans along with current water industry and regulatory issues update.

Special thanks to Jamie Mays, Rich Kemmis, and Jake Dugger of Maguire Iron, Inc. for presenting at the fall water workshops along with Brad Harris of Layne Christensen and Steve Kelley of Beatrice (on behalf of AWWA).

The 2023 water workshop attendance was 491 with 422 water operators in attendance. In the past 10 years, over 4,000 licensed operators have attended the water workshops sponsored by the Utilities Section and the Nebraska Section of AWWA.

The 2024 Water Operator Training Workshops have been scheduled with sites in Schuyler, Nebraska City, and Kearney for January and Beatrice, Grand Island, and Lexington in February. For the entire schedule, check out the League website www.lonm.org or the training calendar on the NDEE website www.ndee.gov.

Work Zone Safety Workshops

For the fall of 2023, Work Zone Safety Training Workshops were held in Wayne, Grand Island, and South Sioux City. Megan Patent-Nygren provided updates on the MUTCD requirements, proper barricading, and flagging.

A Work Zone Safety Training Workshop is scheduled for **Jan. 23, 2024**, in Kearney. Space may be limited, so be sure and register early.

Backflow Workshops

Four Backflow Workshops were held in Beatrice, Wayne, Ogallala, and Grand Island with 140 operators in attendance. This was one of the lowest attendances in the past 10 years, partly due to less snail mail correspondence and issues with digital-only mailings. **The next Backflow Workshops have been scheduled for August 2024.**

December: Monthly celebration acknowledgments

Holiday Season Drunk Driving Campaign www.nhtsa.gov

Go to www.calendarr.com/united-states/observances-2023/ for a list of celebrations or events for every day of the year.

Mark your calendars!

Attend the **Snowball Wastewater Conference** on ***Jan. 24-25, 2024,*** at the Kearney Holiday Inn!

Attend the **Nebraska Meter School** on ***Feb. 13-14, 2024,*** at the Kearney Holiday Inn!

Click here to register online with a credit card.

"Just For Fun" Answers

A-1. About 1950. By 1969, the price jumped about 21 percent to 34 cents per gallon. *(In perspective, 27 cents in 1950 would be $3.39 in 2023 per online CPI calculation.)*

A-2. Hastings. (The beer was made using Hastings' water.) *Since 2016, an unrelated brewery has operated in Grand Island with the name Prairie Pride.*

A-3. Sterling.

A-4. Gering Public Library.

Reminder: The 2023 AWWA/APWA/NWEA/SWANA Annual Conference held in Kearney had the following credit hours available: NDEE Water Operator grade 1-4 (8.5 hours), NDEE Water Operator grade 6 (4.5 hours), NDEE Wastewater Operator (10 hours), and SWANA (12 hours).

Classifieds

Apprentice Lineman. City of Benkelman is accepting applications for the position of Apprentice Lineman in the Electric Department. This position's responsibilities include, but aren't limited to: Construction and maintenance of overhead and underground electric distribution systems, operate a high lift bucket truck, digger derrick, and other equipment, assists other city operations, and perform other duties as required, available for 24-hour emergency calls. Requirements include high school graduation, ability to obtain a CDL license issued by the State of Nebraska within one year of hire. Excellent benefits package is included. Employment is contingent upon successful completion of a post-offer physical and drug test. Applications can be picked up at the City of Benkelman Office located at 126 7th Ave E, Benkelman, NE 69021 or by calling 308-423-2540. The City of Benkelman is an EOE.

Journeyman Lineman. Village of Morrill (Population 934) is accepting applications for the position of full-time Electric Journeyman Line Worker with a pay range of $22-$30 per hour DOQ. This individual will perform skilled line work in the operation, construction, maintenance and repair of overhead and underground electric distribution and transmission systems. A Class B CDL with Airbrakes is required. Applications, with resumes, will be accepted until the position is filled. A complete job description for this position and an application is available at www.villageofmorrill.com or at the Village Office located at 118 S Center Avenue, Morrill, NE. This position includes an excellent benefit package including health insurance, retirement, vacation, sick leave, and paid holidays.

Electric Distribution Superintendent. The City of Wayne is accepting applications for the position of Electric Distribution Superintendent. The Electric Distribution Superintendent supervises electrical distribution operations and maintenance work of overhead and underground electrical distribution systems and equipment for the City of Wayne. This position is responsible for accomplishing goals and objectives of the City by using independent discretion in utilization of personnel, equipment, and supplies within existing financial resources. This position directs and supervises the work of the electric line crew and provides oversight and field supervision of daily work and project management. *Qualifications:* Experience and extensive knowledge of the operations of an electrical distribution and transmission system. Must be able to interpret electrical distribution drawings, and electric building and safety codes. Must be able to work with customers, answer questions, and resolve problems. Five to 10 years of experience in a supervisory, management, or in a line Foreman position is preferred. An equivalent combination of experience and education may be considered. Excellent fringe benefits including Group Health, Accident Insurance, Life Insurance, retirement plan along with vacation and sick leave. Starting pay ($74,422.40-$96,657.60) will be based on prior experience and certifications. Application and job description are available at the City of Wayne, 306 Pearl Street, Wayne, NE 68787. Applications, along with cover letter and resume, will be received until position is filled and should be returned to Betty McGuire, City Clerk, with applicable resume. First review of applications will begin Jan. 22, 2024. City of Wayne is an EOE. For more information, call 402-375-1733 and ask for Wes Blecke, City Administrator.

Foreman II - Streets. The City of York is seeking to hire a full-time Street Superintendent. Under the direction of the Public Work's Director, this position manages the activities of workers engaged in a wide variety of construction, maintenance and repair programs related to the public works department, specifically, the street department. *Essential duties include:* ability to operate heavy equipment; ability to supervise, direct, and schedule employees and equipment to various road construction projects, bridge maintenance projects, and building construction projects; prepare reports on staffing, materials and equipment utilization; oversee and perform checks to maintain efficiency; and coordinate work assignments with other agencies and departments. *Experience:* Four year's supervisory experience in general construction, maintenance or repair work; including street work/maintenance preferred; and customer service experience. *Education:* high school diploma or equivalent; must possess or ability to obtain a valid Class B commercial driver's license and maintain an insurable driving record; must possess or ability to obtain Street Superintendent Class B Certification within 2 years. *Salary range:* $25.615-$34.326 plus excellent benefit package. Applicant must be 18 years of age and authorized to work in the United States. Apply online at www.cityofyork.net or e-mail application to dpfeifer@cityofyork.net. Applications will be accepted until position is filled. City of York is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Looking back at 2023

By Rob Pierce, Utilities Field Rep./Training Coordinator

The year 2023 once again was a busy year for the Utilities Section staff (Rob and Lash). Over 50 workshops, conferences, and safety meetings were held this year. The past 20 years, over **21,000** attendees have participated in training workshops and conferences sponsored or co-sponsored by the Utilities Section. The past two months, several water and wastewater awards have been highlighted in the newsletter. Nebraska City and associate member Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) also were recognized for electric safety awards by the American Public Power Association (APPA) in August. Natural gas grants were received by Stuart, MUD, and Alma.

The monthly *Utilities Section Newsletter* featured the following topics for the 2023 year: Nebraska Supreme Court reaffirms, expands municipalities authority to hold landlords responsible for tenant utility bills; EPA best-practices for assessing cybersecurity risk in water and wastewater utilities; Legislature adopting measures affecting utilities and public works departments; national transportation summit held in Omaha; safety issues working in the heat and requirement changes; NDEE: clay lines lagoons, decreased flow issues in sewer lines; and records management by NDEE.

Other articles highlighted included the 32nd Annual Snowball Conference, Membership Appreciation Month, safety awards, Nebraska Lineman Rodeo, Nebraska Section-AWWA 75th Anniversary History books provided to members, drought and fire concerns, National Lineman Appreciation Day, six listings added to National Register of Historic places, drinking water proclamation, backflow program updates, electric safety training, Nebraska mosquito monitoring, fastest growing cities in Nebraska, water utility board training, state broadband map, and early Nebraska fire brigades along with milestone recognition, revised standards, new manuals in publication, veterans memorials, water and wastewater license renewal year notice, awards, construction projects across the state, and numerous job and material classified ads.

Safety articles featured working in cold weather, OSHA top 10 most cited standards, snow shoveling tips, silicosis exposure safety, safe heart health, tornado watch, scaffolding safety, machine guarding, distracted driver awareness, lockout/tagout, working in the heat, UV protection, office/shop safety, compressed air safety, proper lifting, fire prevention month – fire extinguisher safety, trench and excavation safety, roadside construction worker safety, safety committees, underground utility color coding, and hydrant color codes.

Monthly member **history articles** highlighted several municipalities with an emphasis on their utilities, including the following: Aurora, Bancroft, Battle Creek, Bayard, Beaver Crossing, Chappell, Curtis, Dakota City, Deshler, Dodge, Doniphan, Fort Calhoun, Fullerton, Genoa, Gering, Gretna, Hartington, Humphrey, Imperial, Indianola, Kenesaw, Laurel, Milford, Nebraska City, Plainview, Pleasanton, Shickley, Silver Creek, Stratton, Superior, Wakefield, Winside, and Wymore.

To date, 274 history articles on municipal members have been in the *Utilities Section Newsletter* as of December 2023. This year, 36 system histories were printed.

2023 workshop host thank you

A special "thanks" to the 2023 workshop/conference host cities and villages. The Utilities Section would like to take this opportunity to thank the communities, their management, and staff for their dedication, hard work, and hospitality in efforts to host Utilities Section-sponsored seminars, workshops and conferences in 2023: Auburn, Beatrice, Blair, Chadron, Columbus, Gering, Grand Island, Hastings, Kearney, Lincoln, McCook, Nebraska City, Norfolk, North Platte, Ogallala, Sargent, Seward, Sidney, South Sioux City, Valentine, and Wayne.

If your system would like to host a workshop in 2024, contact Rob at the League office 402-476-2829 or email robp@lonm.org.

Remember to recognize your employees' anniversary milestones. The Utilities Section provides certificates for 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60 and 65.

You can request them by contacting the League office by email brendah@lonm.org, fax 402-476-7052 or call 402-476-2829.

2024 Training calendar

Visit our website at lonm.org/education-events/
for a complete list of workshops and conferences.

January

Jan. 10-12	Utilities/Public Works Section Annual Conference	Embassy Suites, Lincoln
Jan. 16	Water Operator Training Workshop	Rowe Memorial Public Safety Complex, Nebraska City
Jan. 17	Water Operator Training Workshop	Library, Schuyler
Jan. 23	Work Zone Safety Training Workshop	Holiday Inn, Kearney
Jan. 24-25	Snowball Conference	Holiday Inn, Kearney

February

Feb. 6	Water Operator Training Workshop	BPW Building, Beatrice
Feb. 7	Water Operator Training Workshop	Engineering Building, Grand Island
Feb. 8	Water Operator Training Workshop	Glenn Hawks Building, Lexington
Feb. 13-14	Electric Meter Conference	Holiday Inn, Kearney
Feb. 26-27	League Midwinter Conference	Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln

March

March 5	Water Operator Training Workshop	Chadron
March 6	Water Operator Training Workshop	Gering
March 7	Water Operator Training Workshop	Ogallala

Utilities Section Webinars

(Credit hours for water 1-4, 6, and wastewater available where listed)

Email info@lonm.org to request a webinar.

Safety Committees by speakers Rob Pierce and Lash Chaffin, LNM; covers requirements, liabilities, financial benefits, unions, etc.
(Approved for 1 hour grades 1-4 and 1 hour wastewater)
Members $0 (free), non-members $35

Safety Session Series (If you purchase all five sessions as a bundle, the cost for members is $140 and for non-members is $180.)

Implementing an Effective Safety Meeting by speaker Rob Pierce, LNM; covers requirements, topics selection, how and when to present, safety focus, and building a safety culture.
(Approved for 1 hour grades 1-4 and 1 hour wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Safety: Lockout/Tagout Programs (Practices and Procedures) by speaker Rob Pierce, LNM.
(Approved for 1 hour grades 1-4 and 1 hour wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Safety: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) by speaker Rob Pierce, LNM.
(Approved for 1 hour grades 1-4 and 1 hour wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Safety: General Roundtable Discussion by speaker Rob Pierce, LNM; covers safety programs, injury/near miss issues, and hot topics.
(Approved for 1 hour grades 1-4 and 1 hour wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Safety: Slips, Trips & Falls by Speaker Rob Pierce, LNM.
(Approved for 1 hour grades 1-4 and 1 hour wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Water/Wastewater Sessions

Asset Management by speaker Shelly Rekte, DHHS; covers a general overview on asset management and associated recordkeeping options.
(Approved for 1 hour grades 1-4 and 1 hour wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Pump Application, Operations & Maintenance by speaker Brad Harris, Layne Christensen.
(Approved for 1 hour grades 1-4 and 1 hour wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Well Rehabilitation and Relining by speaker Brad Harris, Layne Christensen.
(Approved for 1.5 hours grades 1-4 and 1.5 hours wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Steps and Guidelines to Drilling a New Water Well by speaker Brad Harris, Layne Christensen.
(Approved for 1.5 hours grades 1-4 and 1.5 hours wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Water Storage Tank: Operation/Maintenance by speaker Jake Dugger, Maguire Iron.
(Approved for 1.5 hours grades 1-4 and 1.5 hours wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Utilities Section Webinars

Backflow Sessions (If you purchase all four sessions as a bundle, the cost for members is $60 and for non-members is $100.)

Cross Connection Control Programs: Past & Present by speaker Mike Wentink, DHHS.
(Approved for 1 hour grades 1-4, 1 hour grade 6 and 1 hour wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Cross Connection/Backflow Safety: Confined Space by speaker Rob Pierce, LNM; covers a variety of confined space issues.
(Approved for 1.5 hours grades 1-4, 1.5 hours grade 6 and 1.5 hours wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Basic Requirements of a Cross Connection Control Program by speaker Rich Koenig, DHHS; covers requirements and regulations in a summary overview.
(Approved for 1 hour grades 1-4, 1 hour grade 6, and 1 hour wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Public Education concerning a Cross Connection Control Program by speaker Rob Pierce, LNM; covers options for educations, communication options, monitoring, feedback, etc.
(Approved for 1.5 hours grades 1-4, 1.5 hours grade 6, and 1.5 hours wastewater)
Members $35, non-members $45

Landfill/Transfer Station Session

Hazardous Waste Identification and Random Load Inspections by speaker Rob Pierce, LNM.
Members $35, non-members $45