Utilities Section Newsletter

League of Nebraska Municipalities

September 2022

SAFETY/HEALTH CORNER

Slips, trips and falls

By Rob Pierce, LNM Field Rep./ Training Coordinator

Annually, more than 250,000 workers suffer from non-fatal injuries falls. Falls were the second leading cause of accidental or unintentional injury deaths worldwide in 2018. Each year, an estimated 646,000 individuals die from falls globally and often adults older than 65 years of age suffer the greatest number of fatal falls. As our workforce ages (including me), the odds of a serious injury due to a fall are greater.

The reason falls are so common is because of the number of hazards all around us. Slips, trips and falls can occur in offices/shops on ground level, on stairways, from heights (ladders, scaffolding, aerial lifts), and in a variety of weather types (work environments). Preventing slips, trips and falls may be as easy as implementing a good basic housekeeping practice.

How we perform the job tasks can minimize injuries. What equipment we select to use and inspection before use can minimize injuries. How we carry or move items using proper lifting techniques and not over loading or obstructing our vision can minimize or eliminate injuries. If a load is too heavy or cumbersome, then material handlers such as forklifts, pallet jacks, two-wheelers or carts should be used. Sometimes, the job just may require an extra set of hands to minimize the load.

Proper personal protective equipment (PPE) or gear should be worn such as adequate footwear, which can protect your feet from many hazards. Those hazards may include sharp items such as nails or scrap metal. If these are potential risks, then shoes may be needed that have puncture proof (steel sole) or steel-flex resistant insoles. A chemical resistant boot should be worn when working with chemicals. If working with heavy items such as barrels, boxes, steel parts, heavy tools or metal pipe, your footwear should have metal toe protectors.

An insulated shoe may be needed to protect you from cold weather and when working around wet or icy environments, a good non-skid sole may be needed. In most cases, a good leather boot is adequate. Like any work environment, a variety of footwear may be used but in most cases, soft soled (tennis shoes), high heels, flip flops or other open toe shoes are not adequate.

Accidents often are unpredictable, but we can eliminate most slips, trips and falls by wearing adequate PPE and paying attention to the task at hand.

September is National Preparedness Month

Disaster events cause widespread human, material, economic and/or environmental damage, which may be long or short term. Disasters can be environmental events such as tornados, earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, fires, high winds, sleet (ice) and snowstorms. They also may be man made due to technology, bad judgment, accidents or a result of cyber hacks, terroristic actions or vandalism. A solid emergency plan needs to be in place to address whatever causes an event that changes a portion of our day-to-day lives. Preparation can help divert or minimize a disaster.

Does your facility/municipality have a current emergency preparedness plan? An emergency

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UTILITIES SECTION

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September is National Preparedness Month

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preparedness kit? How is your office, shop, auditorium/community center or other municipal facilities set to manage an event. What are the capabilities or actions your utilities can handle during and after an event? What material or equipment do you have to use in an event? Be sure to have backup power and know how long it can run on the current fuel supplies.

Working with groups such as the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) can help a community, county or the state arrange a plan. Local mutual aid agreements such as those with fire departments, electric utilities or water (NeWARN) systems can help prepare by supplying labor, equipment and material before and following an event.

This month is managed and sponsored by FEMA's Ready Campaign. The month of September was selected as "National Preparedness Month" due to historical hurricane season data occurring about the middle of the month.

A legislative act created FEMA in the 1800s and was officially launched in 1979 by President Jimmy Carter. Following the Sept. 11 terror attacks, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and FEMA became an agency under this department. FEMA has preparedness information on its website www.fema.gov or at www.ready.gov which includes home emergency planning information.

Apparently, the word **disaster** can be traced back to an ancient Greek word meaning "bad star." Something to do with bad happenings due to the opposition of the planets.

Upcoming Snowball Conferences at the Kearney Holiday Inn
Jan. 25-26, 2023
Jan. 24-25, 2024
Jan. 22-23, 2025

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Nebraska utilities history – McCool Junction

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

McCool Junction, located in York County, had settlers in the area by October 1867 with homesteaded claims along the Big Blue River. At the fork in the river, land was purchased from the railroad by Albert and Sarah Stone and the settlement was called Niota. The Stone family operated a store (1875) at what is now the corner of 4th & O Streets, and a small bank was operated by J. D. Stone on block 4 of Niota. In the spring of 1878, Charles Seeley began erecting a mill and constructing a race with a dam. The two-story Niota mill, which operated two buhr of stone, was located about one half-mile south of the townsite. Niota settlement consisted of a bank, a general store, a two-story hotel and about 40 buildings. The settlement was located in what now is the southern part of McCool Junction. In late 1886, a survey and plat were completed on land owned by L.L. Klinzman as the railroad was extending to the area.

In February 1887, a plat was registered as McCool and at this time, became the demise of Niota. The newly registered townsite was named for a promoter and general manager of the St. Joseph & Grand Island Railroad, Daniel McCool. Many structures were erected in 1887 with about 40 in the first seven weeks. By March, the Blue River Bank was established along with a newspaper called the *Record,* which was first published May 20, 1887. By June 1, 1887, the railroad track from Fairfield to McCool Junction was completed and the first train arrived June 3. A new railroad station house, water tank and pumping station was built by June 11. When a second branch line (St. Joseph & Grand Island railroad) was installed at the south edge of the settlement, Niota was a junction of two railroads.

The word Junction was added because the two railroads formed a junction south of town and some residents felt the name McCool might be confused with McCook. Seven weeks after the town was platted, the first ground was broken to put in a set of scales to weigh corn. By June 1, 1887, there were 75 residences and business places. On Feb. 4, 1888, the post office name changed from Niota to McCool Junction.

McCool Junction Fire Hall. 2022 Photo.

The citizens of Niota were enthusiastic about the coming of a railroad, but were dismayed when the surveyors put the depot two blocks north of Niota.

By 1888, a second branch line of the SJ&GI, running east and west, had been built to a junction at the south edge of town.

During boom times, three passenger trains and at least that many freights came through each day. Burlington later purchased both lines from Union Pacific and operated them for a time. McCool Junction was organized (possibly

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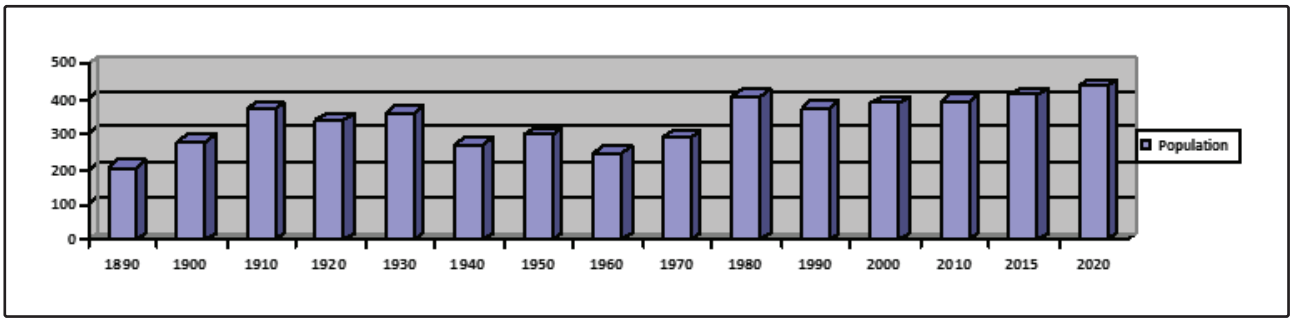

Nebraska utilities history – McCool Junction

Continued from page 3

incorporated) March 28, 1888. By 1890, the population was 204 and a two-story white frame school with a bell tower was in operation. J.N. Ingalls sold one-half acre of land for $15 to the Methodist and Baptist trustees in 1890 for use as a cemetery (McCool Cemetery). In July 1891, a grain elevator was being constructed. The weekly *Blue Valley Journal* newspaper was being published in 1894 and on July 26, a picnic was held.

The population increased to 276 by 1900 and a telephone system was installed (one source noted established in 1903). The Farmers & Merchants Bank was organized in 1904, Peter Donavan was the railroad telegraph agent in 1907 and a CB & Q Railroad depot was built in 1908. The first lights were gasoline. After several attempts to electrically light the town, an engine was purchased in the spring of 1907 to furnish the electricity. A Women's Club was organized in 1909 and by 1910, the population increased to 369. The two-story MWA building was used as a Lodge and Opera Hall and in 1912, the Blue River Bank was sold and became a part of the First National Bank of York. The Lincoln Telephone & Telegraph purchased the York County Company including the exchange at McCool Junction in 1912. The Continental Gas & Electric Corp of Cleveland, Ohio acquired the McCool Light Company in 1913. McCool Junction was installing electric lights in 1914-15 with current supplied by the electric light plant in York. The York plant had an 850 horsepower (HP) steam

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Nebraska utilities history – McCool Junction

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engine with a generator rating of 660 kilovolt Amperes (kVA) and the Public Service Company was providing electric lighting in McCool Junction by 1917. The A.R. Marshall Block had been built in 1913 and a new brick school was erected in 1916.

In 1920, the population was 338 and increased to 356 in 1930. The electric distribution system was operated by the Public Service Company and the mill, which had two buhr of stone, was sold (1920). The Lushton and McCool telephone exchanges consolidated in 1934 and a gymnasium/auditorium was built in 1936. By 1940, the population was 272 and in 1942, the Consumers Public Power purchased the Nebraska Public Service Company electric properties in Nebraska. The Farmers & Merchants Bank, which organized in 1904, liquidated assets in 1943 and in 1946, a telephone dial system was installed. In 1950, the population was 297 and in the spring of 1951, the McCool Junction Rural Fire District was organized. In June, a GMC truck was purchased for $2,071 and a truck body for $6,727. The fire department also purchased 100 feet (ft) of hose, two fire extinguishers, 12 nested buckets and 100 ft of rope. By 1958, the cost of street lighting was $600 per year ($50/month). A vote was taken in 1959 to complete the first sewer system with a bid of approximately $75,000 by Fulton & Cramer, engineers from Lincoln. By 1962, the sewer system was maintained from a sewer charge of $3 per month for residential and $5 per month for commercial. The population was 246 and the cost of electric current for pumping water was $725. The fire department's radios were purchased in 1965 and the department had 25 volunteer firefighters. A new fire hall was erected in 1966 and in July 1969, the former Woodman Hall was donated to the village.

By 1970, the population was 289 and the electrical distribution system was served by Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD). Additions were made to the school in 1964, including a new gym, lunchroom, lockers and a home economics rooms by 1974. A community improvement program was initiated in 1975 and on Nov. 7, 1977, the Comprehensive Planning and Zoning Committee was organized. The village dump was closed Nov. 13, 1976, and in 1977, the fire department acquired a new tank on an IHC chassis and other equipment. By spring, the Northside Park was planned and constructed. In 1980, the population was 404 and in 1981, the streets were renamed with new signs installed. The village received a grant for water system improvements and a water tower was erected along with main extensions by 1982. The wastewater plant was refurbished in 1984 and with donations, the library was started in March 1986 in the old Blue River Bank building. Both railroads had abandoned lines through McCool Junction as tracks were removed in 1984. In 1985, the Community Club initiated a community newsletter called *Blue River Ripple*. The population in 1990 was 372 and work was completed in 1992 on a two-cell lagoon system designed for 52,000 gallons per day (gpd). The York Area Solid Waste Agency, a solid waste disposal site, was located eight miles north. By 1998, there was an average daily flow of

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Nebraska utilities history – McCool Junction

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26,000 gallons at the wastewater facility with a new connection fee of $100.

In 2000, the population was 385 and the electrical system was served by the York Rural Public Power District, which changed its name by 2002 to Perennial Rural Public Power District. In 2004, 1,900 ft of sewer main was installed for $82,000 with plans to install 1,800 ft in the next five years for $10,000 using TIF funding. A highway project on the west side of town changed from a two-lane to a four-lane and a car racetrack was constructed. A Stone Creek Event Center was built in 2005 and a water system project was designed to loop deadend mains for $10,000. The village water system by 2006 consisted of two wells with a pumping capacity of 1,100 gallons per minute (gpm), a 100,000-gallon capacity water storage tower with an average daily demand of 29,000 gallons in winter and 90,000 gallons in summer. Water rates for residential users were a flat fee of $15 per month and commercial rates were $15 for 4,000 gallons with excess at $1.45 per 1,000 gallons. The fire department had 21 volunteer firefighters, a fire insurance rating of 5 inside and 8 outside limits with plans in 2006 to erect a new fire hall building. The village had 17 miles of streets with 10 miles hard surfaced and seven miles with gravel, 58 percent curbed and 42 percent with sidewalks. In 2006, plans for seven-10 blocks of street guttering to be installed for an estimated cost of $290,000. In 2008, the village received a $1,586 Community Enhancement Program Funding (CEP) grant for community sign landscaping. The population by 2010 was 389 and water rates were $17 per 1,000 gallons with a minimum of $1.

Today, McCool Junction has a population of 453, been incorporated since 1887 and is a League of Nebraska Municipalities and Utilities Section member. The village maintains a park system, miles of streets and a water and wastewater system. Solid waste collection is provided by a private company and police protection is overseen by the York County Sheriff Department.

References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1956, 1958, 1962, 1964-75, 1977-87, 1990-2020; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Nebraska Our Towns...Central Southeast, 1991; Perkey's Nebraska Place Names, 1995; Nebraska Place Names, 1925, 1960; Old Settlers History of York County, Nebraska, 1913; Lincoln Journal Star Newspaper, 2005; Atkinson Graphic Newspaper, 1914-15; Nebraska Health & Human Services Website, 2004; Nebraska State Gazetteer & Business Directory, 1990-91; Maps Tell Nebraska's History, 1991; Wikipedia website, 2018-2020; McCool Junction website, 2018-2022; NEDED Website, 2005; NPPD Website, 2006;The Crete Democrat Newspaper, 1891; Electric Power Development in the United States, Dept. of Agriculture, January 1916; A Centennial History of McCool Junction, Nebraska, (1887-1987), 1987; Poor's and Moody's Manual of Railroads and Corp. Securities, Public Utility Section, Vol. 1, 1921; Browns Directory of American Gas Companies and Gas Engineering Appliances Catalogue, 1922; Electric Rate Survey: Domestic and Residential Electric Rates in Effect January 1, 1935 by U.S. Federal Power Commission, 1935 and Nebraska Blue Book 1928, 1942, 1946, 1978.

Backflow Workshops Held

Five Backflow Workshops were held in Beatrice Aug. 16, Wayne Aug. 17, Stuart Aug. 18, Ogallala Aug. 23 and Grand Island Aug. 24, 2022 with 225 water operators and plumbers in attendance.

Operators received five hours recertification for water operators grades 1-4 water and grade six along with five hours toward wastewater licenses. Speakers included Rich Koenig, Jeff Edwards with NDEE and Rob Pierce with the League.

The water training calendar can be found at the NDEE website www.dee.ne.gov/Publica.nsf/pages/WAT343.

The next Backflow Workshops will be held in 2023. If your system would like to host a backflow workshop, contact Rob at 402-476-2829 to set one up.

Nebraska utilities history – Ralston

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

Ralston is located in Douglas County, which was organized in 1854 and named for a Senator from Illinois, Stephen A. Douglas (1813–1861). Dr. George Miller, a physician/politician established the *Omaha Herald* newspaper (forerunner to the *Omaha World-Herald*) in 1865. In 1867, he purchased land west of Omaha and had 40,000 walnut, catalpa and oak trees planted and also stocked deer in the area. He named his estate "Deerfield," on which was built a 17 room, castle-like home (1887). About the time the Omaha & North Platte Railroad was building through the area, Dr. Miller platted a residential district tract of land which he called "Seymour Lake."

A test well was sunk in 1892 looking for oil, but instead found an artesian well which produced over 1,000 gallons per hour in the northeast portion of Seymour Park. A dam was constructed and the well soon filled a 47-acre area called Lake Seymour. The castle home of Dr. Miller was destroyed by fire in 1898. The Deerfield post office opened in the area March 23, 1898, but discontinued March 25, 1901. One source noted the post office was named for the deer in Seymour Park. In 1899, the Seymour Lake Artesian Ice Company was combined with three other ice companies to form the Reservoir Ice Company, which provided ice for area packing plants (the company closed in August 1900). The Cudahy Packing Company was established and the icehouse at the lake supplied ice via a railroad spur to the meat packing plant at 36th and Q. A recreation area was designed around the lake with rides, boating, a dance hall and water slides around Seymour Lake. The Omaha & North Platte Railroad line was persuaded to move its station to Deerfield. The "Belnap" station was moved down the track by a team of horses to that location.

A two-story brick schoolhouse (District 54) was operating by 1900. Charles A. Ralston acquired 35-acres of land in 1905 and promised the construction of a railway locomotive shop that would rival Havelock. (The railroad shops were never built.) On May 23, 1907, a townsite was established with the sale of 282.7 acres of land to the Ralston Investment Company and about 1908, a plat was made by Roy N. Towl. The Rogers Motor Car Company was established in 1909 and the car plant only produced eight cars before it was sold to a firm for making butter tubs. By 1909, a varnish factory, a cement silo maker and a furniture factory had been established. On Oct. 25, 1909, a rural post office was established as Ralston, named in honor of Charles Ralston of Chicago, a prominent businessman. By early 1910, the Nebraska Traction & Power Co. had acquired the street railway franchise, completed tracks from Papillion to Ralston (four miles) with plans to erect a power plant and a car barn in Ralston. The plant would supply the city with electricity. A 50-year franchise to build a street railway from Q Street in Omaha to the new village of Ralston. By

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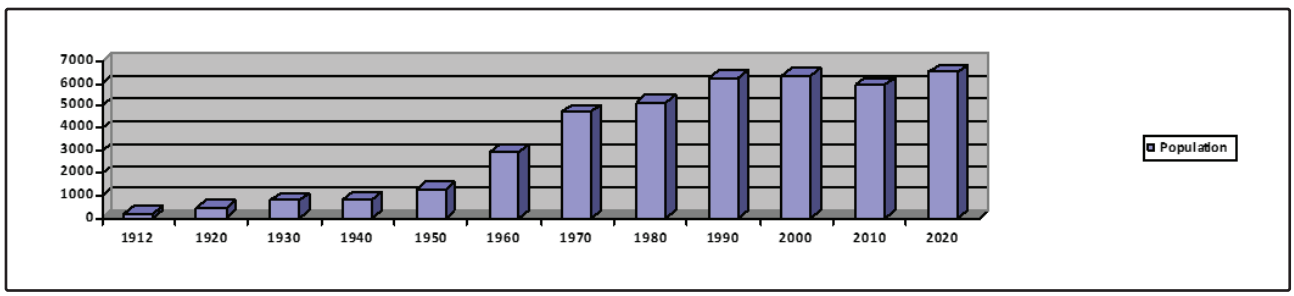

Nebraska utilities history – Ralston

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May 1910, the village had a Rogers Motor Car Company, a Brown Truck Manufacturing Company, a Howard Stove Works and a cement silo maker business. The Brown Truck & Manufacturing Company made wooden wheels for small carts and baggage trucks.

By June 1912, with inhabitants of 200 or more and a school enrollment of 86 (k-8), a petition was filed June 22 to incorporate as a village, which was granted June 24, 1912. Plans were completed for a waterworks system in 1912 and by 1925, the municipal water system had rates of $0.30 per 1,000 gallons with a minimum of $0.50 per 1,000. On March 23, 1913, a tornado struck Ralston, killing seven, leveling Main Street and destroying many of the industrial businesses. After the tornado, the fire department was upgraded, streets improved, a ball diamond was built and a library was started by the Women's Club. A local newspaper was started and Pitzel's pasture became a golf course. About 1913-14, William B. McKinley purchased the Nebraska Traction & Power Co. and changed the name to Omaha & Lincoln Railway & Light Co. and secured the options to buy the OL & B Railroad and Lincoln Traction Co. in Lincoln. By 1915, the Omaha & Lincoln Railway & Light Company, a subsidiary of the Illinois Traction Company, was providing electricity to Ralston, Papillion, Louisville and Gretna. *The Rialto Film Company was started (1915-16) in town by a con artist who skipped town by June with $100,000 soon after the cornerstone was laid. The village declared bankruptcy and some years later, the con man was apprehended in Philadelphia.* By 1917, a flour mill, a bank, a newspaper, several hotels and a two-story brick Ralston School building were in operation.

The population was 455 by 1920 and in 1922, the Ralston Public Library was opened at the Stewart Real Estate office. In 1924, the library moved to the Centennial room in the basement of the city hall. The population increased to 809 by 1930 and the village had a rural volunteer fire department in 1932. In 1934, a fire destroyed half a city block and Ralston declared bankruptcy (one of the first in the country to do so).

The Nebraska Power Company provided electricity to the electric distribution system by Jan. 1, 1935. By 1940, the population increased to 834 and the natural gas system was supplied/operated by Peoples Natural Gas Company in 1942. Following World War II, about 1945-46, Seymour Lake was drained and a housing development was constructed. The Omaha Public Power District in 1946 acquired the Nebraska property of the Nebraska Power Company and now served Ralston with electricity.

A storm window factory was operating by 1948 and the population increased to 1,300 by 1950.

1953-54 marked the first year Ralston High School opened on Lakeview Drive with over 300 students by 1955-56. In 1956, the population was estimated between 2,500-2,700 and new streets, sewers and water mains were installed in the northern part of the village. The village-owned sewer addition in the northern part of the village included a disposal plant and garbage collection service was provided for $1 per month. The municipal water plant had 650 meters in service, a meter deposit of $3 and rates of 2,000 gallons (gals.) at a minimum of $1, next 9,000 gals. at $0.40 per 1,000, next 40,000 gals. at $0.30 per 1,000 and all over 51,000 gals. at $0.15 per 1,000 gallons. In December 1957, the 85-foot (ft) water storage standpipe was torn down and by 1958, there were 725 water meters in service. By 1958, water rates increased to a minimum of $1.50 for 2,000 gals., next 9,000 gals. at $0.50 per 1,000, next 40,000 gals. at $0.35 per 1,000 and all over 51,000 gals. at $0.20 per 1,000 gallons. Ralston became a city of the second class in 1958 and a privately owned swimming pool (cost $25,000) was operating and financed by memberships (1958-60).

In 1960, the population was 2,977, the fire department had 25 volunteer firefighters and the final connection from the sewer network was made to the Omaha sewerage system. Treatment was provided by the Omaha treatment plant and the sewer system was maintained by a $1.50 per residence sewer charge and a $0.10 per 1,000 gals. of water used by businesses. The electrical system was owned/operated/supplied by Omaha Public Power District (OPPD). In 1963, the library moved to 7900 Park Lane and was renamed the Bariight Public Library. The water system had 800 meters and a meter deposit

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Nebraska utilities history – Ralston

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of $10. In 1964, Omaha tried to annex Ralston, but an informal agreement allowed Ralston to stay independent so long as the population does not exceed 10,000. By 1966, the population was estimated to be 3,800 and Layne Western Co. of Omaha was digging a new well. The water tower was repainted by Baburek Preserving Co. of Plattsmouth with a bid of $4,835. Natural gas service was provided by Peoples Natural Gas Company and the post office became a substation of Omaha in 1967.

By 1970, the population was 4,731 and in 1972, the city signed a 25-year agreement for MUD to operate its water system. The population increased to 5,143 by 1980 and Ralston became a city of the first class. In 1986, Ralston was a Tree City USA member and the population increased to 6,236 by 1990. By 2000, the population was 6,314 and in 2003, Aquila operated the natural gas system. In 2009, the city maintained eight parks and the gas system was operated/supplied by Black Hills Energy. The Ralston High School enrollment jumped from 850 to 1,090 by 2006 and the population by 2010 was 5,943. Solid waste collection service in 2015 was provided by Papillion Sanitation and hauled to the Douglas County Landfill.

Today, Ralston has a population of 6,494, has been incorporated since 1912 (110 years) and is a member of the League of Nebraska Municipalities and the Utilities Section. The electricity distribution system is operated by Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) and the natural gas system by Black Hills Energy. The water system is operated by the Metropolitan Utilities District and trash/recycling service is provided by Papillion Sanitation.

References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1965-75, 1977-87, 1990-2022; Nebraska Municipal Review Magazine, 1925, 2019-2020; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Nebraska Traveler Magazine, 2003; Nebraska Place Names, 1960; Nebraska's Forest Service Newsletter, April 2002; Omaha Daily Bee newspaper, 1910; Maps Tell Nebraska's History, 1991; Wikipedia website, 2019-2020; Municipal Journal and Engineering, 1912; Electric Power Development in the United States, Dept. of Agriculture, January 1916; Wikipedia website, 2018, 2020; Nebraska Blue Book, 1920, 1928, 1942, 1946, 1978; Utilities Section solid waste survey, 2015; Federal Power Consumers Electric Rate Survey, Domestic and Residential Electric Rates in Effect January 1, 1935 in the state of Nebraska, 1935; The Electric World, A Review of Current Progress in Electricity and its Practical Applications, Volume LV January 6 to June 30, 1910 and the Federal Power Consumers Electric Rate Survey, Domestic and Residential Electric Rates in Effect January 1, 1935 in the state of Nebraska, 1935.

Nebraska Breaktime Trivia "Just For Fun"

Q-1. Where was the first Nebraska State fair held?

Q-2. What village in Nebraska starting with the letter "U" was named after a General/U.S. President?

Q-3. Where is the John G. Neihardt State Historic Site located?

Answers on page 17.

Milestone celebration recognition

Is your municipality or utility celebrating a historic milestone? We are encouraging members to provide any information on milestones being celebrated such as 75 years of operating the electric system. About 1942, private electric systems were phased out in Nebraska and several municipalities took over the systems in the 1940s.

When was your water, wastewater, electric, power generation system established? When were facilities built, improvements made, etc. If your utility is celebrating a 25, 50, 75, 100-year milestone, let the Utilities Section help you celebrate by recognizing it in the newsletter.

Nebraska utilities history – Spalding

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By Rob Pierce, Utilities Field Rep./Training Coordinator

Spalding, located in Greeley County, had its first homestead file a claim in 1871 and was originally founded about 1875 as Halifax on the Cedar River by a colony of Irish Catholic settlers. On Sept. 23, 1875, a post office was established as Halifax, named for Halifax, Vt. by N.S. Worden, the first postmaster. The community of Halifax was located less than a mile from present-day Spalding.

On May 20, 1881, a post office was established as the name was changed from Halifax to Spaulding in honor of Bishop John Lancaster Spalding, who was the co-founder of the Catholic University of America and president of the Irish Catholic Association that founded the town. By 1881, a general merchandise store, a hotel and school were in operation. Spalding Public School District 55 (once a part of District 10) was organized in 1892 with the first school built in 1895. In 1894, the spelling of the community's name was corrected to Spalding. In 1898, Spalding was incorporated as a village. (Interesting note: I found two other sources that listed the incorporation dates as 1877 and another 1881). In 1889, a five foot (ft) deep raceway was dug by hand on a bend of the Cedar River, located three-quarters-of-a-mile south of the village. The water was diverted to accommodate the flour roller mill, which had a five foot high log dam. By 1890, the population was 150 and some of the businesses included a flour mill, a millinery, two general stores, a blacksmith, a Spalding House, a livery, a Catholic Church, a druggist, a hardware store, a shoe store, the Spalding Milling and Cattle Co., a meat market, a saloon and *The Index* newspaper. A flood later destroyed the original mill, which was rebuilt and later wired to turbines with electricity created by belting a direct current generator to the turbine shaft.

The population by 1900 was 148 and the Union Pacific Railroad extended its line to town in 1902. One source noted that by 1906, the population may have reached 1,000. The brick Spalding Public School building was built in 1907-08 and St. Michael's Church was built in 1909. In 1910, the population was 637 and in October, a bond was issued for $7,000 to install a water system and electric plant as presented by Martz Bros. Engineering of Seward in October 1910. Electric lines were constructed to town and a 75 horsepower (HP) diesel plant was built by Metz & Weiss with a 40-kilowatt (kW) alternator. The generator was slod belted to a turbine as the mill could be run by water or diesel power. On Feb. 1, 1911, the electricity was turned on and powered by the privately owned hydro-generating plant. The village in 1917 had two newspapers (*Democrat & Enterprise*), a public library and two schools operating. The hydroelectric plant generated between 10-30 kilowatt hours (kWh) for $0.16 per kWh. The cost ranged from $1.60

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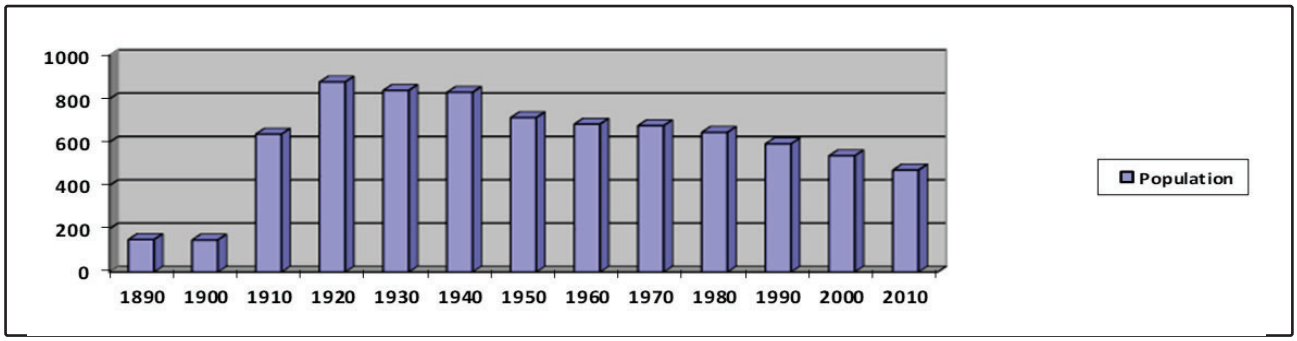

Nebraska utilities history – Spalding

Continued from page 10

at lowest to $4.80 at highest. In 1919, a hydroelectric generation unit was installed on Cedar Creek and the population increased to 878 by 1920. A cement dam was constructed in 1923 at the power plant and the Spalding Academy School was constructed in 1912 and added a convent by 1927.

On Jan. 1, 1935, the electric distribution system was operated by the Spalding Electric plant. The Cedar Valley Roller Mill power plant had 175 kW or internal combustion power and a 225-kW hydroelectric power generation, which was under construction in 1936. The golf course created in 1921 was flooded in 1934 and the power plant installed a diesel unit in 1947. The population held steady with 839 in 1930 and 830 by 1940.

The population in 1950 was 713 and the "Friendship Village" founded in 1944 erected a building in 1951. In 1954, the city purchased the electric system and power plant facility, establishing a municipal electric system. A hydroelectric generation unit was installed in 1956 and the municipal power plant (diesel and hydro) in 1958 had a 400 kW capacity. The village owned 17 miles of distribution lines and 310 meters. The meter deposit was $5 with the cost of street lighting at $200 per month. Electric current was purchased wholesale from the

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Nebraska utilities history – Spalding

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Cornhusker Public Power District at $0.01. Propane gas service available was privately owned and garbage was hauled by a private collector with a minimum fee rate of $0.75. The airport was operated by contract and the auditorium, which initially cost $30,000 was maintained from rental income. The water plant in 1956 had 286 meters in service and rates of first 10,000 gallons (gals.) at $3, the next 10,000 gals. at $2.50, next 10,000 gals. at $2 and excess at $1.50. The cost of pumping water in 1958 was $85 per month. By 1958, the auditorium was maintained by a tax levy and 50 percent rental income. The public swimming pool was under construction (cost $32,000). The primary survey was completed on the sewer disposal plant and sewer mains extensions were installed. The power plant installed a diesel unit in 1959 and the fire department had 35 volunteer firefighters.

The population by 1960 was 683 and in 1962, the auditorium was maintained by a tax levy and 60 percent rental income. The sewer system was maintained from a sewer charge of $0.50 per month per consumer. The village water plant had 283 meters in service and rates of first 10,000 gallons (gal.) at $3, next 10,000 gals. at $2.50, next 10,000 gals. at $2 and the balance at $1.50. In the six months starting with May and ending in October, 10,000 gallons were given for free. The municipal electric plant (diesel and hydro) in 1962 had a capacity of 959 kilowatts (kW), 322 meters, a meter deposit $5 with the cost of street lighting at $200 per month. Electric current also was purchased wholesale from Cornhusker Public Power District at the cost of $0.01. In 1970, the population was 676 and a diesel engine was installed at the power plant. A time capsule was filled with memorabilia and buried in the city park on July 4, 1976, the nation's bicentennial. It is to be opened after 50 years (2026).

By 1980, the population was 645, Spalding celebrated its centennial in 1981 and in 1983, a wastewater project was in progress. The electrical system was owned/operated by the village and supplied by the Bureau of Reclamation. From 1982-87, the hydroelectric plant generated between 700-1,305 kilowatt hours (kWh) at a cost of $0.04 per kWh. The cost ranged from $28 at the lowest to $57.20 at the highest during this time period. In 1986, the natural gas system was operated/supplied by Kansas-Nebraska Gas Company and in 1989, the nine-hole Cottonwood Greens Golf Course was rebuilt. The population as 592 in 1990 and the lake was dredged as the hydroelectric plant was refurbished with the installation of a hydro-suction system to minimize silt problems. The plant had two water wheels and diesel engines. The electrical system was owned and operated by the village with 395 customers in 1993. By 1998, the hydroelectric plant provided 10 percent of Spalding's electricity needs at a cost of $0.02 per kilowatt (kW). The dam and powerhouse were listed on the historic register in 1998. In 1999, the village electrical system was supplied by MEAN, with additional sources being WAPA, Cornhusker Public Power and Nebraska Public Power. Ten percent of the village streets had been paved by 1999 and the natural gas system was operated/supplied by KN Energy Inc. The water system had two wells (average depth of 150 ft) with a capacity of 560 gallons per minute (gpm). The fire department in 1999 had 35 volunteer firefighters and the village operated a facultative lagoon sewage treatment system designed for 0.07 million gallons per day (mgd).

In 2000, the population was 537 and the natural gas system was operated by KN Energy Inc. and supplied by ACE. In 2004, the village received a $202,300 grant to expand the fire hall. The water system in 2018 consisted of two wells with 52 commercial and 288 residential connections. Today, Spalding has a population of 436, has been incorporated for over 124 years and is a member of the League of Nebraska Municipalities and Utilities Section.

The village maintains a park, swimming pool, streets and electric, water and wastewater systems. The natural gas system is operated by Black Hills Energy.

References: Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials, 1965-75, 1977-87, 1989, 1991-2003, 2005, 2007-2009, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020-2022; Municipal Journal and Engineering Vol. XXIX, July-December, 1910; Perkey's Nebraska Place Names, 1995; Nebraska Place Names, 1925, 1960; Water Resources of Nebraska, December 1936; Spalding Internet Website, 2003; Public Power Magazine, Vol. 51, Number 1, January-February 1993; Depart-

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Drought Update

Much of Nebraska was mostly listed in the severe and extreme drought. Many of the plants in yards and city parks needed to be watered as they likely were impacted by the dry conditions. Landscape plants, trees, shrubs and lawns may have needed a deep soaking to survive the summer drought and increase chances for winter survival.

Sandy soils have less water-retention capabilities than clay soils, so trees in sandy soils tend to be more affected during drought. Trees with smaller root systems also may experience adverse due to drought, and drought conditions can impact trees up to five years after an event. A tree's defense system can be affected, making them vulnerable to pest and disease infestations. About two to four inches of wood chip mulch or shredded bark can help keep soils cooler and help maintain moisture.

Kentucky bluegrass lawns can go dormant to save on water or be watered every other week or so with about one-half inch of water. Fescue grass has a deeper root, thus a somewhat drought tolerant, does not go dormant and will require water at least once a month with an inch of water to survive. (Never fertilize plants affected by drought.) More information can be found at www.extension.unl.edu/statewide/dodge/drought-2022.

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

Congratulations! Incorporation Anniversary Recognition: 140 years – **Norfolk** (1881-village).

Utilities Section members and associate members are bolded.

Do you, your department or facility have something to crow about – new hires, promotions, awards, certifications, anniversaries/milestones, accomplishments or grants/funding and projects?

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

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ment of Energy Website, 2004; Nebraska Our Towns...Central & North Central, 1989; Early Days of Spalding, 1976; Spalding Picture Book, 1981; Maps Tell Nebraska's History, 1991; NEDED Website, 2005; Wikipedia website, 2020; Andrea's History of the State of Nebraska, 1882; Johnson's History of Nebraska, 1880; Who's Who in Nebraska, 1940; Nebraska State Gazetteer & Business Directory, 1890-91; Nebraska Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1917; History of Hamilton & Clay Counties, Nebraska, 1921; Nebraska Blue Book, 1928, 1942, 1946; and the Federal Power Consumers Electric Rate Survey, Domestic and Residential Electric Rates in Effect January 1, 1935 in the state of Nebraska, 1935.

Classifieds

The City of North Platte is Hiring!

Due to growth and retirements, the City of North Platte is currently looking to fill the following job positions:

- Director of Information Systems
- Public Service Director
- Administrative Secretary/Public Relations Coordinator
- Personnel & Payroll Technician
- Assistant Concessions/Rides Manager
- Semi-Truck Driver (Maintenance Worker III)
- Sanitation Driver-Loader
- Assistant Accountant/Internal Auditor
- Part-time Parks Maintenance I
- Police Officer
- Part-time Technology Assistant – Library
- Senior Accountant
- Storm -Water Management & Code Enforcement Officer
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator

Please refer to the City of North Platte's web site for the job descriptions of each job position listed at: https://www.ci.north-platte.ne.us/. A job application is on the City of North Platte's web site or you may get an application at the City Clerk's Office at City Hall. Closing for the job positions will be Monday, Nov. 14, 2022, unless otherwise noted on the City of North Platte's web site. Please submit completed job applications by email to: info@ci.north-platte.ne.us. Mail to: City of North Platte, Attn: City Clerk's Office, 211 West 3rd Street, North Platte, NE 69101.

Apprentice/Journeyman Linework. Experience in construction, operation and maintenance of overhead and underground high voltage electrical facilities or graduation from an accredited technical college line-technician program is desirable. Willing to train the right person. 40-hour week, rotating call schedule; residency requirement – Nemaha County and no more than 12 miles from where they report to work; competitive salary and excellent benefit package. Send resume including salary history and three references to Board of Public Works, PO Box 288, Auburn, NE 68305-0288 or email to dhunter@auburnbpw.com. Position is open until filled. EOE.

Full Time Maintenance Personnel. The Village of Eagle (Population 1,065) is currently accepting applications for full time Maintenance Personnel. This position requires a variety of duties including the operation and maintenance of light, medium and heavy equipment such as street sweepers, snowplow trucks, backhoes, skid steers and mowing equipment; operation of the water well system and wastewater treatment facility; routine building and property ground maintenance; general repair and maintenance of equipment; and experience in basic plumbing and construction or maintenance techniques. Municipal or maintenance background preferred. Candidate must have a valid Nebraska driver's license. Physical and background

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Classifieds

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check required upon offer of employment. Certification as a Class IV Water Operator and Class II Wastewater Operator desired or may be required within 12 months of employment. Salary range is $13-$19 per hour (without Water and/or Sewer License); $16-$26 per hour (with a single Water or Sewer License); and $19-$29 per hour (with both a Water and Sewer License). Benefits package includes health, dental, vision, disability/life insurance, retirement, paid vacation, holidays and sick leave. Applications may be obtained at the Village of Eagle office located at 747 South 2nd Street, Eagle, NE 68347 or online at www.eaglene.gov/employment-application. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Please contact Nick Nystrom at 402-781-2748 or by e-mail at nick@eaglene.gov for additional job description information.

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 NE within 1 year of hire. Excellent benefits package is included. Employment is contingent upon successful completion of a post-offer physical and drug test. The City of Benkelman is an EOE. 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.

Western Electric Underground Training

The Western Electric Underground School was held Sept. 7-8, 2022, at the Don Winkelman Training Field (dedicated in 2015), 2432 Road Number #3, located just north of Sidney. Following the registration and rolls and coffee/cold drinks, the school started with vendor introductions and brief summaries of tasks, tools and equipment available for use at this hands-on school. The attendees were divided into hands-on work groups.

Forty-two line workers were in attendance with 28 from REA's and 14 from municipalities in Nebraska and Colorado. Municipal systems in attendance included Broken Bow, Chappell, Gering, Holdrege, Morill, Sidney along with Aspen and Julesburg. Colo.

Hands-on works groups at the Electric Underground School.

The workstations held outside included Group 1 – Secondary locating and secondary fault finding with Jim Meyer of Wesco; Group 2 – Locating and finding faults on primary line with Brian Winfield of Moehn Sales; Group 3 – Trench safety with Bob Hessler. Inside the building, sessions included Group 4 – 600 amp elbows (components, installation & safety) with Bill Amelse; and

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Western Electric Underground Training

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Group 5 – Terminators & inline splices with Jim Stephens of 3M. Coolers with water, Gatorade, soda and ice were located at each of the three outside stations and in the building for the two inside sessions.

The hands-on stations enable all attendees to perform the task of locating, installing elbows, splicing and terminations. Four vendor tables displayed underground tools, safety equipment and related hardware. Jason Bowman of Utility Solutions Inc. had two tables of tools, a ground tester and transformer test simulators for demonstrations. Brian Winfield and Jim Stephens had demo tools, cable, etc. on display tables along with some usage at the stations. The one-and-one-half day session ended with a short evaluation and cleanup session before breaking to travel home.

A special thanks to all vendors, speakers and attendees for once again a successful workshop. The 2023 Rubber Gloving Workshops are scheduled for May in Norfolk and August/September in Sidney. The 2023 Underground School only will be held in May in Norfolk.

Mark your calendars for the **2023 Utitilies/Public Works Section Annual Conference** to be held **Jan. 11-13** at the Embassy Suites in Lincoln.

2022-2023 Training calendar

Visit our website at www.lonm.org
for a complete list of workshops and conferences.

December 2022

Dec. 7	Water Operator Training Workshop	Water Department Facility, Lincoln
Dec. 8	Water Operator Training Workshop	TBA, Hastings

January 2023

Jan. 11-13	Utilities/Public Works Annual Conference	Embassy Suites, Lincoln
Jan. 18	Water Operator Training Workshop	Library, Blair
Jan. 24	Water Operator Training Workshop	Holiday Inn, Kearney
Jan. 25-26	Snowball Conference	Holiday Inn, Kearney

February 2023

Feb. 7-8	Meter Conference	Holiday Inn, Kearney
Feb. 27-28	League Midwinter Conference	Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln

A complete list of the water operator workshops for the remainder of 2022 can be found on the NDEE website at www.ndee.ne.gov/NDEQProg.nsf/OnWeb/Train05. The League website is www.lonm.org.

If your municipality or water system would like to host a water workshop, contact Rob at the League office at 402-476-2829. The 2023 workshop schedule is being put together in the next few months.

"Just For Fun" Answers

A-1. Nebraska City. After Nebraska became a state, the first state fair was held in 1868 in Nebraska City. In subsequent years, the fair was held in Brownville, Lincoln and Omaha until Lancaster County was named the fair's official home in 1901. After more than a century, the fair stayed in Lincoln before it moved to Grand Island.

A-2. Ulysses (named for President Ulysses Grant), located in Butler County and a Utilities Section member.

A-3. Bancroft.