

# PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES

PAVING THE WAY FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE BY EDUCATING, ENGAGING AND EMPOWERING OUR EMPLOYEES.

<http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/pworks/docs/newsletter/>

December 2012 / January 2013

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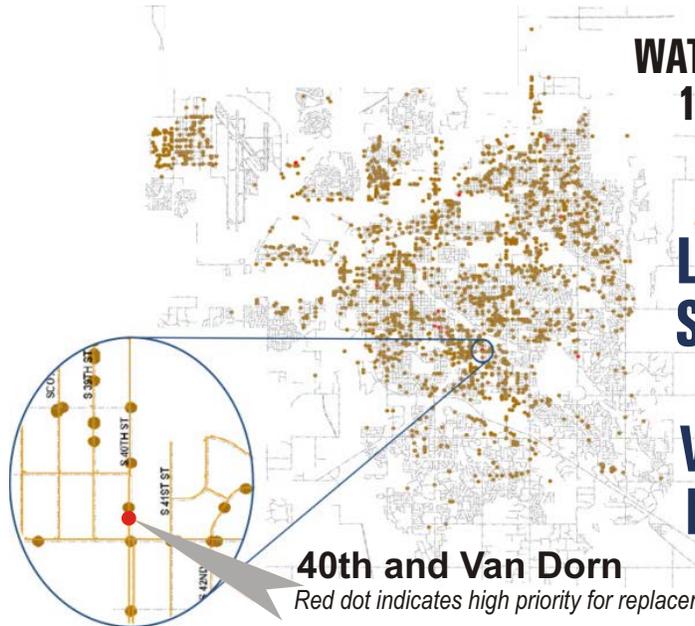


Husker football means fans dressed in red, tailgate parties, balloons, Herbie Husker and, of course, the game! StarTran staff is part of the excitement, operating the **Big Red Express** shuttle service to and from Memorial Stadium and six locations (Gateway Mall, Southeast Community College, the Public Works and Utilities Municipal Services Center, Holmes Lake, SouthPointe Pavilions and North Star High School).

Forty buses provide convenient transportation for over 5,000 riders each home football Saturday. Big Red Express is essential for many who need close access to the stadium or who want to avoid the traffic congestion and parking issues. With regular StarTran Saturday services also operating, nearly all StarTran employees – drivers, mechanics, supervisors and administrative staff – play an active role in transporting the red sea of fans for each sellout crowd.

## WATER MAIN BREAKS 1984 - PRESENT

### Lincoln Water System Utility Supervisors Vital to Asset Management



#### 40th and Van Dorn

*Red dot indicates high priority for replacement based on ranking criteria.*

Lincoln Water System (LWS) has over 1,100 miles of water mains. About 160 miles of those are cast iron water mains over 80 years old. Another 400 miles are ductile iron water mains constructed between 1960 and 1995. In both cases, pipe corrosion and age are beginning to cause failures, resulting in increased water main breaks over the years.

Like other City departments, LWS must manage pipeline assets and prioritize replacements with limited funding. The principle difference between water infrastructure and other City assets is that condition assessments are difficult because the pipeline cannot be readily inspected. The only opportunity to assess condition for smaller distribution pipes is when the pipeline fails and is repaired.

LWS has implemented a process to evaluate pipeline assets taking advantage of this “one time” opportunity. Field staff complete an assessment of the pipeline condition (the likelihood of another failure). Then they make a determination regarding the consequence of failure by taking into account, potential damage to public and private property, interruptions in traffic and the types of customers affected.

These critical observations of risk and consequences are performed by Utility Supervisors assigned to the pipeline repair. Jerry Hockemeier, Larry Wichtendahl, Duncan Ellis, Mike Kramer and Jason Lemay are Utility Supervisors at the center of asset rankings. Water Distribution Manager Steve Owen praised the team. “Utility supervisors have a great understanding of pipeline condition and are able to assess the consequences of pipeline failure from how it affects customers,” he said. By implementing an objective process, LWS is able to identify future replacement projects that have the highest return on investment.

A fundamental outcome of asset management is to have a system which provides a “business case analysis” to justify replacement of a particular asset when measured against other assets. While not as elaborate as some asset management processes used by other utilities, the process used at LWS respects the knowledge and experience of the field staff directly responsible for maintenance and repair of distribution system assets.

# STRONG LINCS

**"THERE IS NO 'DIVISION' AMONG OUR DIVISIONS."**

Miki Esposito

PWU Director Miki Esposito is pleased to announce the October/November Strong Linc Award recipients for the workplace principle of **responsibility**. Please congratulate these Strong Lincs for their valued service.

Rod Hendrickson  
(*Engineering Services*) In his short time as building maintenance superintendent, Rod has done a great job ensuring that projects get done quickly.

Barnie Blum  
(*Engineering Services*) Barnie has accepted increased responsibility since taking over the sidewalk program. After moving to the Development Services Center and following a steep learning curve, Barnie continues to ensure that the sidewalk program runs efficiently.

Thomas Shafer  
(*Engineering Services*) Thomas is known to volunteer and follow through with multiple tasks. He recently offered to submit a self-assessment draft for a few of the divisions. Thomas also routinely drafts an agenda and weekly notes for meetings between Engineering Services and the Director.

Curt Weber and Dave Bernt  
(*Engineering Services*) He was asked to provide a senior utilities inspector for the downtown fiber project on short notice, both Curt and Dave rearranged personal time and juggled existing duties. Curt also worked responsibly with other key staff to see that all aspects of the work were completed in a timely manner.

Jeremy Lackey  
(*Solid Waste Management*) Jeremy assumed responsibility for preparing the seed bed and permanently seeding over 20 acres at the North 48th Street Landfill. He also assisted in determining the fertilizer and seed requirements.

Tina Baker  
(*Solid Waste Management*) Tina volunteered to coordinate the relocation of the north perimeter fence at the Bluff Road Landfill to facilitate replanting of trees that were removed due to federal requirements relating to an electrical transmission line. She will work with Lincoln Electric System and its landscape architect to finalize the tree planting plan.

Ryan Boyer and Jerry Pietzyk  
(*Solid Waste Management*) Ryan and Jerry were responsible for digging a trench to install a pipeline from the landfill gas flare to the leachate storage tank. The need was caused by landfill gas condensate freezing in the existing pipeline. They were able to complete the work for about \$2,500 less than what a contractor had requested.

Mike Weston  
(*StarTran*) Mike is responsible for the StarTran Big Red Express services operated each home football game Saturday. Mike organizes over 40 bus assignments, arranges for stadium access, works before the game at the Gateway lot and supervises the post-game passenger loading and bus operations. Mike supervises this service effectively, efficiently and safely in all types of conditions – heat, cold, rain and darkness.

Rick Roberts  
(*Water*) Rick demonstrates an untiring dedication to energy-efficiency savings. Rick's innovative pumping strategies save the City over \$100,000 a year and are simple for operators to implement.

Ben Higgins and Ed Kouma  
(*Watershed Management*) Ben and Ed worked on the North Star High School stream bank project. The North Star Principal sent a letter thanking them for their time, talent and effort. They also followed up to ensure a successful project.

Ellen Wright  
(*Watershed Management*) Ellen is very responsible, knowledgeable and helpful in working with residential landowners to construct rain gardens. She is an asset to the program and was lauded in a recent communication from one of the landowners.

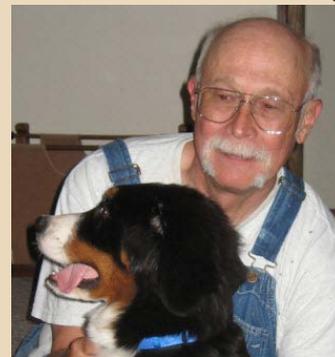
The next workplace principle for December/January will focus on generosity. Nominations are due to Miki no later than January 18.

**BRIAN  
DITTMANN**  
is retiring!



As a 40-year Public Works employee, Brian Dittmann has served the citizens of Lincoln in numerous capacities. He has been involved in the construction of everything from sidewalks to major structures. Brian's more notable accomplishments include being Chief Sidewalk Inspector for the City's highly successful sidewalk repair program, the Project Manager/Construction Liaison for the Ashland Water Treatment Expansion Project and completing over 6.5 miles of the 84th Street water transmission and road-widening projects. We wish Brian well in retirement, where he plans on enjoying his outdoor interests and traveling with his wife.

**STEVE TITUS**  
is also retiring!



**"WORK has got to go, it interferes with my MODEL RAILROADING."**

This is the sign in the workspace of this master model railroader Stephen Titus who has worked for the City for 38 years. Steve and his wife Claire can be found running 1/12 scale live steam trains at the Seward County Historical Society Museum in Goehner, Nebraska. Retirement will allow more time for visiting wineries and tasting rooms as well as working around their home. They intend to also spend time with son Joe and wife Carrie and daughter Audrey and husband Adam. Danica, their young Bernese mountain dog, knows that retirement also means more time to spend with her.



**Thursday through Sunday  
FEBRUARY 7 - 10**

2013 Home and Garden Show  
Lancaster Event Center

**UPCOMING  
CONSTRUCTION  
PROJECTS**

The designs for improved safety and traffic flow at Warlick, 14th Street and Old Cheney were unveiled at a public open house November 15. Three engineering firms have worked independently for four months in the City's first-ever design competition. The City will select the best concept or combination of concepts, by the end of December based on public input and engineering factors. The final design process will occur next year, with construction anticipated to begin in spring 2014. For more information and to see the proposed designs, visit [lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov) (keyword: warlick).

**PWU TEAMS UP  
WITH LINCOLN  
PUBLIC SCHOOL  
STUDENTS**

Art teachers from nine Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) and their students participated in the "Artistic Snow Plow Program" by creatively painting the City's three-foot high, 10-foot wide plow blades with images they felt represented their school and/or community. The program was initiated by Street Maintenance West District Manager Roger Tiedeman, who felt it was a great opportunity to educate the public about the new and improved snow routes that incorporate LPS schools. The program was initiated by Street Maintenance West District Manager Roger Tiedeman, who felt it was a great opportunity to educate the public about the new and improved snow routes that incorporate LPS schools. The 18 existing snow routes that each cover 60 to 70 miles. That's a total of 1,179 miles the City needs to clear when it snows.



Zeman



Kahoa



PWU's hope is to make this an annual event, giving other schools the opportunity to participate and learn about snow operations and maintenance.



For more information, visit [lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov) (keyword: plow).

# DOLLAR\$ & ĆENT\$

The Engineering Services Division manages infrastructure projects for each division of PWU, other City departments and some projects funded by the state and federal governments. They also function as an internal design consultant for the operating divisions.

About 85 employees work in Engineering Services, and 16 of those are assigned to Traffic Operations, funded from the City's General Fund. The remaining employees' work is funded through a revolving fund. Unlike the water, wastewater, solid waste and landfill operations that are all funded through utility revenues, the revolving fund revenues come from the capital improvement projects on which these employees work.

In the revolving fund, each employee's time is billed to projects worked on throughout the year. In addition to billing these employee salaries to the projects, all of the overhead expense, including employee benefits, holidays, vacation, sick pay, office space, mileage, support staff and insurance must be added to create enough revenue to cover all of the expenses.

Each year, accounting staff project how many hours will be billable. Dividing the total cost to operate the division (\$7.5 million) by the total billable hours charged in a year determines the overhead factor. That factor is added to each employee's direct salary costs to keep the fund "revolving," or at a break-even point for the year. "While it has been a challenge to keep the revolving fund stable, the overhead rates have remained competitive with local consulting firms," said Roger Figard, City Engineer.

## Municipal Services Center Continues Renovations

The Municipal Services Center (MSC) includes two buildings at 901 and 949 West Bond. A master plan has been developed for the entire facility, and most of the space will be in full use by this time next year.

The project began by relocating Engineering Services from leased space to temporary quarters in February 2011. Early this year, renovations for the Phase I partners (Bureau of Fire Prevention, 911 Communications / Radio Shop, Urban Search and Rescue and Engineering Services - Soils and Paving Lab) were completed. At this time, over 32 percent of the MSC building is occupied (including Experian's presence).

Sampson Construction began renovations for Phase II partners (Street and Traffic Operations, Parks and Recreation and Lincoln Fire and Rescue) in October 2012. The contract completion date for this project is July 31, 2013. However, current estimates indicate that renovations will be completed in late April or early May.

After the Lincoln Public Schools employees move to their new administration building at 5901 "O" Street, renovations will continue on the second floor of the 949 building for Engineering Services' final move.



The Public Works and Utilities marketing team wishes everyone a safe and happy holiday season. We also would like to encourage those interested in being a part of any of our marketing endeavors to contact Ellen Wright at [ewright@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:ewright@lincoln.ne.gov).

## PWU Praised for Cooperative Efforts



Members of the community continue to praise PWU staff for their cooperation this summer during construction. Below is an excerpt from a local church bulletin: "Thank you for your patience in getting into and out of the building safely during curb, sidewalk, and street construction. We thank the Public Works Department of the City of Lincoln, Constructors, Inc., and Ready-Mixed Concrete for working with us in allowing all regular-scheduled events to take place during construction. Thank you for your patience and safety during this construction project."

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