

# 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/>

April / May 2015

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## April is National Safe Digging Month

April marks the eighth annual National Safe Digging Month, a reminder to Nebraska residents to always contact Nebraska811 at least two business days before any digging project.

National Safe Digging Month was created to increase awareness of the complex underground infrastructure of pipelines, wires and cables. Striking an underground utility line while digging can cause harm to you or those around you, disrupt service to an entire neighborhood and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

By law, Nebraska811 must be contacted before every digging project, from simple landscaping projects like planting trees or shrubs, to building a deck or installing a rural mailbox. Nationwide, every six minutes an underground utility line is damaged because someone decided to dig without first contacting the state's 811 center. Don't become a statistic – make sure to contact Nebraska811!

Last year, the City of Lincoln received 35,462 ticket requests to have underground utilities located, the second highest total since 1995 when Lincoln became a member of the new State mandated One Call Notification Act. To determine what needs to be marked, PWU reviews each request for 10 different utility elements, including water, sewer, stormsewer, traffic signal lines,

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## Get on Board



I have been Transit Manager for StarTran for almost two years now. It is an exciting time for public transportation in Lincoln as many aspects of the system are in the process of changing.

Safety, quality, sustainability, efficiency and customer service are specific areas we are currently emphasizing. We've introduced new training opportunities for employees as well as fun activities such as our bus rodeo. We are in the process of purchasing a bus simulator, funded by a Federal Ladders grant. The simulator will allow our professional team of drivers to practice in difficult driving situations that require quick reactions and will sharpen their overall driving skills.

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses were added to our fleet in 2014, and by June of 2015, we will be operating 13 CNG buses with four more in the purchasing process. Facility upgrades have been in the works, including modifications of our wash bay-area to accommodate the taller CNG buses. A methane detection system will be added this summer. The introduction of CNG buses will reduce tailpipe greenhouse gas emissions, save money and improve the overall riding experience for our customers.

We are also in the process of creating a Transit Development Plan (TDP). This will result in a five-year plan that will evaluate the existing bus service and provide a guide for making system-wide route and schedule improvements. In preparation for this study, our geographic information system (GIS) data has been updated, and the origin and destinations of our patrons have been surveyed along with the evaluation of customer transfers. The TDP will be finalized by the end of the year. Many opportunities for public comment will be available, including open house meetings at the end of April and an activity on the website giving you a chance to "build your own bus system." You can follow the progress at [lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov) (keyword: tdp).

System-wide changes include new branding and marketing strategies. A new paint scheme has been implemented on the buses serving UNL, with a system-wide paint scheme projected to be unveiled in 2016. New trolleys are being purchased for our downtown circulator, the Star Shuttle, creating a unique identity for this route.

So, if you haven't ridden the bus lately, I encourage you to give it a try, and experience the changes that are in progress.

Mike Davis  
StarTran Transit Manager

# STRONG LINCS

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

Miki Esposito

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

Tom Buechel, Mike Squibb, Tim Watts  
(*Wastewater*)

These men recently repaired a sewer line for a grateful citizen who recognized the crew's great work, attention to safety and consideration to keep him in service as much as possible. The citizen was "amazed at the detail and quality of the finish work."

Brion Perry (*Engineering Services*)

Brion has excelled in emergency management planning. He has taken great pains to ensure that plans are made and updated, providing a high level of safety for our employees.

Tim Hunt (*Engineering Services*)

Tim ensures that when he does things, they are done correctly. He follows up on paperwork, reports back to management, and ensures that his work is buttoned-up properly before declaring it complete.

Amy Cornelius-Jones

(*Engineering Services*)

Amy excels in the personnel-related portions of her job. She gets paperwork distributed well in advance of when it is due, sends out weekly reminders of the status on evaluations, checks and corrects the information and math on evaluation forms, and handles hiring and advancement paperwork flawlessly.

Melissa Ramos-Lampli

(*Engineering Services*)

Melissa excels in efficiency. Whenever she is asked to perform a task, it is almost always done sooner than expected and as requested.

Erin Sokolik (*Engineering Services*)

Erin was recognized for her work on the widening of Van Dorn Street by a citizen, who wrote that Erin not only provided all the information required, but "she later gave us the name and telephone number of the contractor, as we are in need of a larger approach to

our driveway. She informed the contractor of our request. We are most thankful."

Erika Nunes (*Engineering Services*)

Recently Erika has done an outstanding job in pulling copious amounts of information for the Mayor's Office regarding the needs for the arterial rehabilitation program. She answered questions with great knowledge and understanding at the news conference.

Trevor Hansen

(*Watershed Management*)

Trevor consistently completes work in a diligent and thorough manner and continually looks for ways to improve processes and methods used for inspections.

Erin Kubicek

(*Watershed Management*)

Erin produces empowering education graphics that help relay Watershed Management messages. She also has been a great addition in assisting other staff members with their projects.

John Bulling, Clint Bundy, Steve Groessor, Tom Johnson, Lane Loschen, Chris Miller, John Nemeck, Rudy Nuttelman, Jerry Pietzyk, and Mike Sanford (*Solid Waste*)

These individuals exhibited great distinction through a major soil excavation project. By moving over 30,000 yards of soil, they saved the City a substantial amount of money while increasing landfill air space and conserving cover soil.

Bonnie Lou Campbell (*Solid Waste*)

Lou excels at customer service by always having the best interests of customers and employees in mind. Many angry customers have contact with Lou, but few remain angry after speaking with her. She has an exceptional record of diffusing their anger and frustration.

## A FAREWELL NOTE...

Best wishes to our Public Works and Utilities colleagues on their retirement from City employment. We appreciate their service to our community. May they find success in all their future endeavors!

**Jerry Ronhovde**

(Fleet Services) – 28 years

**Floyd Anderson**

(Wastewater) – 33 years

**Kelly Sieckmeyer**

(Engineering Services) – 38 years

**Buff Baker**

(Engineering Services) – 43 years

**Ron Edson**

(Engineering Services) – 44 years

Tom Lawson (*Solid Waste*)

Tom excels at MS Excel! He queries data from the WasteWORKS database and completes analysis used to support or supplement manager-level decision making.

Jim Rosenthal (*StarTran*)

Jim shows excellence in everything he does, including running the morning shift as lead man, rebuilding bus components and making repairs. Jim also communicates well, which helps when solving difficult issues.

The next workplace principle will focus on **good communication**. Nominations are due to Miki by May 22.

## Mayor Presents Richard Scholl with Award of Excellence



Mayor Chris Beutler presents PWU Heavy Equipment Mechanic Richard Scholl with the **Award of Excellence for the month of March** at the April 13 City Council meeting. Scholl was nominated by Fleet Services Superintendent Jim Chiles for his consistent willingness to accept any challenge, especially for the role as the backup Supervisor for the Fleet Services Garage. Congratulations, Richard!



**Wednesday, April 29**  
Spring Safety Meeting  
Firefighters Hall

**Friday, May 1**  
StarTran's "StarPass" available  
Summer Youth Bus Pass  
[lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov)  
(keyword: starpass)

**Saturday, May 2**  
KFRX Mayor's Run  
8 a.m.

**Sunday, May 3**  
Lincoln Marathon  
7 a.m.



## TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN OPEN HOUSES

**Wednesday, April 29**  
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Jackie Gaughan  
Multicultural Center  
1400 "R" St. (next to  
City Campus Student Union)  
Room 202/Ubuntu Room

**Thursday, April 30**  
5 to 7 p.m.  
SCC Education Square  
111 "O" St., room 101

For more information, call StarTran  
at 402-441-7185 or visit  
[lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov) (keyword: tdp).

## A LOOK BACK

The City of Lincoln's 1915 Annual Report provides an interesting 100-year perspective on how much our city has grown. The quality of service provided by City workers back then is still reflected in today's operations.

Lincoln's population in 1915 was estimated at 52,000 (estimated growth based on the official 1910 census figure of 43,973 inhabitants). The City operated under what was known as a commission form of government. City operations and responsibilities were divided into five departments, with each department led by one of five elected officials, including Mayor Charles W. Bryan. Those five individuals also served as the City Council.



SEWER DEPARTMENT

William Schroeder, the Superintendent of Parks and Public Property back in 1915, was in charge of the parks, water and light departments, including a section designated as the sewer department, which maintained sanitary and storm sewers. Fortunately, back then a wise decision was made to have separate storm and sanitary sewer systems. This decision has kept the City from needing to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to separate them, like some communities are doing today.

The report shows that 6.78 miles of sanitary sewers were built from September 1, 1914 to September 1, 1915. Plans were under way to construct a main sanitary sewer extending from 20th and Vine streets to "H" Street.

During that fiscal year, 13 stoppage incidents were documented that required the use of sewer rods to clear the blockage. The total removal cost for those 13 stoppages was \$40. This low number of reports was due to regular inspections and flushing of lines when sluggish flow was noticed – an important operation that still takes place today using high velocity jet trucks.

On several occasions during heavy rainfall, storm sewers failed to carry water from the business district, causing flooding to occur in basements along "O" Street. The City planned to construct a relief storm sewer that would have the capacity to safely dispose of five inches of rain per hour.

In 1915, Lincoln's sewer systems consisted of 20.82 miles of storm sewer and 83.3 miles of sanitary sewer for a total of 104.12 miles. Two interesting budget line items for the sewer department indicated \$78.07 for "junk sold" and \$34.91 for "motorcycle expense."

Today, Lincoln has about 1,025 miles of sanitary sewer and 600 miles of storm sewer to serve a population of about 270,000. The mission remains the same: provide cost-effective, safe, reliable and sustainable utility systems that promote long-term economic prosperity, social well-being, and exceptional quality of life throughout the Lincoln community.

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fiber, cathodic protection and sprinkler lines. Through the use of maps and records, PWU is able to clear about 92 percent of the utilities for which it is responsible. Taking the time to evaluate and clear a request costs about \$2 a ticket, whereas having to locate a utility can average about \$15 to \$20. This helps keep our locating labor costs to a minimum.

**Here's how it works:**

- One free, simple phone call (811) or click ([www.ne1call.com](http://www.ne1call.com)) to Nebraska811 notifies all appropriate utility companies of your intent to dig.
- Contact Nebraska811 at least two business days prior to digging to ensure enough time for utility lines to be properly marked.
- Provide the location and description of your digging project to Nebraska811.
- Nebraska811 will notify affected utilities, who will then send a locator to the proposed dig site to mark the approximate location of utility lines. See the image below for identifying colors.
- Once lines have been properly marked, roll up those sleeves and carefully dig around the marked areas.

More information regarding Nebraska811 is available at [www.ne1call.com](http://www.ne1call.com). For questions regarding City of Lincoln Utilities, call 402-441-6855.

## GOLDEN SHOVEL AWARD

Tim Vogt with Vogt Construction was presented the Engineering Services 2015 Golden Shovel Award for his work on City-wide sidewalk repairs last year. Tim was an outstanding team player who was on time, punctual and on budget. Tim's work ethic and level of communication helped keep Lincoln residents happy, and he maintained great working relations with all involved. In addition, he was more than happy to assist the Mayor by providing any information that his office needed.

*Congratulations Tim Vogt and Vogt Construction!*



## PLATINUM PEN AWARD

The 2015 Platinum Pen Award goes to Ryan Kosola with Olsson Associates for his work as the Design Project Manager of the N.W. 48th Street Roadway Improvement Project. Over the past two-plus years, Ryan has been a great leader for his team as they developed multiple alternatives for the entire corridor. The final plan has support from the neighboring residents and businesses; City, County, State and federal officials; public and private utilities; the Lincoln Airport Authority; and environmental agencies. His work is a great example of a consultant truly being an extension of City staff and always representing the community's best interests.

*Congratulations Ryan Kosola and Olsson Associates!*

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### KNOW THE COLOR CODE

<b>WHITE :</b>	<b>Proposed Excavation</b>
<b>PINK :</b>	<b>Temporary Survey Markings</b>
<b>RED :</b>	<b>Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit and Lighting Cables</b>
<b>YELLOW :</b>	<b>Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum or Gaseous Materials</b>
<b>ORANGE :</b>	<b>Communication, Alarm or Signal Lines, Cables or Conduit</b>
<b>BLUE:</b>	<b>Potable Water</b>
<b>PURPLE :</b>	<b>Reclaimed Water, Irrigation and Slurry Lines</b>
<b>GREEN:</b>	<b>Sewer and Drain Lines</b>

### COLOR CODE CARD IMAGE (re: Nebraska811)

Utilities are marked using the American Public Works Association uniform color code. Most flags will have the utility type, company name and contact phone number on them for questions.

Please remember to "white line" your proposed excavation area.