

THE UTE LETTER

267 Edition of the Nebraska City Utilities News

March 2021

FROM THE DESK OF JEFF KOHRS:

As I'm writing this I'm looking at the forecast for the next week or so. We've really enjoyed some nice weather this past week, but see a change coming to bring us back to more seasonal weather. Spring is on it's way, but will still be a ways off.

Two of our employees have recently announced their intention to retire. Dave Hoyle will be retiring the end of April after 25+ years of service. Carl Abbott announced his retirement to be sometime this July. Carl has over 43 years of service. We are in the process of filling both positions. Thank you both for your dedicated years of service to NCU and our customers.

On March 3rd a majority of NCU personnel received their first COVID-19 vaccines. The second of two vaccines is scheduled 4 weeks out on March 31st. Please remember your appointments and remember to take the card given to you when you got your first shot. I believe this will be the only record that will be given to you to prove you've had the vaccine. Probably will want to keep that card just in case you have to prove you've received the vaccine going forward. Thanks to everyone that opted to get vaccinated.

We are still realizing the impacts of the extreme cold and prolonged weather last month. I am asking all departments to really watch their spending. We have already seen some very high energy costs due to that event.

We are currently going through a billing software conversion, which means the bills going out to our customers will have a different look. We had previously done the inventory system. More recently we did the conversion for the general ledger/financials and accounts payable. The billing system is the most challenging because of the number of customers, number of locations, different rates, making sure the bills are calculated correctly and the timeframe to stop the old system and start the new and still get the bills out on time. A special thanks to all of our staff involved with this. It takes a lot of time, especially after hours to pull all this together. Thank you everyone for your dedication.

Please remember to work safe and let's be careful out there.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS:

Mitch Buck	4-13-93
Kevin Grundman	4-15-56
David Hoyle	4-23-60
Jerry Osborn	4-27-60

APRIL WORK ANNIVERSARIES:

Shane Bassinger	4-09-18
Mark Lant	4-14-03
Howard Orndorff	4-23-90
Teresa Runkles	4-06-98

ELECTRIC DEPT:

Carl Abbott

It is getting a lot closer to spring with the melting of the snow. We probably will still get some days that will still let us know that mother nature is still in charge. The forecast is also cautioning us toward some future severe storms and weather.

With the changing of the weather, the contractors are already pushing for their projects to make sure they are in line. It will be a very busy summer with the projects that will likely come into this budget year. The Hyvee store and Studio One Townhomes have already started dirt work. The crews have completed the 3 phase 4160 volt overhead line for the circuit to the Hyvee property and will be starting soon on the 3-phase parallel feet to the transformer. Many of the jobs are quite large this year and will take considerable patience to keep all the jobs going. Talmage recently called confirming they will be doing their expansion at the Grain Elevator. This will be a large 3- phase overhead upgrade, as well as a 3 phase underground primary and Transformer.

Thanks to Brian Spurlock for his great work and ideas for some warehouse improvements. Want to remind everyone the safe way is the only way. Our new employees are looking for training and leadership. Please take the time to use tailgate sessions, show them and help them get good hands on training.

GAS & WATER DEPT:

Bryan Turner

March has started with great weather and the work is really picking up. All of the guys have been finishing up their performance evaluations for OQ, it has gone really well. Ron and Dan's crews have each installed a new gas service and started on the annual gas valve maintenance. They have also been working on some projects out on the Transmission main filling in some washouts and replacing a barricade that was damaged this winter.

With the nice weather the locates coming in have really increased and that's keeping Brad and Kenny hopping. Brad and John have been the ones overseeing the performance evaluations and getting everyone signed off on them. John has nearly completed the business survey and has used the opportunity to do some training and go through the procedures with the crews. Tommy and Derek have been able to get some maintenance done on the lift stations, after that cold spell when they didn't dare open the hoods on them as the pump lines would have frozen up. Thankfully, they made it through that spell with no major issues. Someone who has been extra busy since the cold spell is Shawn, there were a lot of frozen and broke water meters during that spell, and we are still discovering some.

I want to congratulate all of the winter sport athletes at NCPS and Lourdes on successful seasons and for getting through them healthy. With the spring the schools will be having there plays, musical, and band concerts and it looks like they will be opening up the attendance to them. If you have the chance get out and support them, there is a lot of talent in this town and the shows are worth seeing. Another opportunity to help out the community will be coming in April with Keep Nebraska City Beautiful spring cleanup event, if you look around town since all of the snow has melted you know this is needed, let's all do our part. And finally let's keep an eye out for each other and stay safe out there.

WATER PLANT:

Mark Lant

Hello NCU Family, and Greetings from the Water Plant Crew. We hope that the month of March has been good to you all so far. We want to thank everyone that was involved in helping burn off the Wellfield this month. It will be nice to get the area cleaned up so that it will be easier to maintain. The Water Plant is running great, and we are all keeping busy with various projects.

I am going to take this time to thank Carl Abbott for his service to the Nebraska City Utilities for all the years he has been here. I will be honest that it always hits me to the core when I see another job posting that signals someone's retirement. I really do feel like we are part of a big family here and after spending so many years with people, it is hard to see them go. Carl when the day comes and you close your office door for the last time, I hope you know how much everyone appreciates you and what you have done here. I am even betting that some of your crew will be shedding a tear on that day when no one is looking. I myself will probably shed a few as well, but I am a natural crybaby so I will do it publicly...🥹 I hope for God's best for you in all that you do beyond here.

NCU Family.....Be Blessed, Work Safe, and have a great month!

NEW EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

WELCOME to Mitch Buck, he is our new Gas & Water guy. He is married to Elise. He enjoys fishing, hunting, and working out. Mitch has previously worked at AKRS Equipment and he was an Ag Diesel Tech in Syracuse for 8 years.

Let's all give him a warm welcome into the NCU Family!