

# 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/>

2013 August / September  
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## David Young Joins PWU as Fiber Infrastructure/ Right-of-Way Manager



David Young has a street construction background and over eight years experience in municipal network construction and right-of-way management. Prior to coming to Lincoln, Young served as the Senior Network Engineer for the City of Tulsa, where he supported 180 government building connections for the 550-mile fiber network and conduit system project.

Young is charged with establishing and maintaining the Lincoln Technology Improvement Conduit System. He will coordinate with private utility companies to build an electronic permit process for all right-of-way construction projects. Over the past year, he worked with City staff as a consultant to establish the Lincoln Technology Improvement District Master Plan and Conduit System lease agreements. Young is eager to use his love of construction and building to assist with the Department's network infrastructure and technology goals.

Although Young's large family is spread throughout Ohio and Oklahoma, Izabella, his Boxer/Mastiff mix, joins him here. Two of his favorite activities are deer hunting and fishing.

**Welcome David Young**



Public Works and Utilities (PWU) staff recently attended an Advanced Communication Training Workshop presented by communication expert Dan O'Connor. His workshops are intended to help individuals and organizations develop their communication and critical thinking skills based on self-development and powerful communication. O'Connor's audiences have seen positive results with corporate and government offices reporting fewer problems, more satisfied employees and higher productivity.

Having witnessed the issues caused by "office energy vampires," workplace negativity, interpersonal conflicts and employees and supervisors struggling to "find the words," O'Connor presented a tactical training program that goes beyond theory. Customer service is an important part of everyone's job, and having good communication skills is an integral part of that service.

O'Connor taught that when communicating, we should focus on being responsive instead of reactive. His tactics includes the following:

- Avoid danger phrases (i.e., "calm down") and power phrases (i.e., "unbelievable").
- Speak first to emotion and then logic.
- Recognize the importance of understanding social styles.
- Use coping statements (i.e., "I am strong") during difficult situations.
- Use "duct tape" phrases such as "That's interesting. Tell me more."

He encouraged participants to create a simplified mission statement or personal compass describing with positivity "who I am, why I'm here and what I want." He explained that if we eliminate workplace negativity, stress and conflict, we can provide "over-the-top customer service."

Look for O'Connor's taped session, parts [one](#), [two](#) and [three](#), on YouTube, courtesy of 5 CITY-TV. For more information, visit [powerdiversity.com](http://powerdiversity.com). PWU thanks Michael Davis, StarTran Transit Manager, for arranging O'Connor's presentation.

# STRONG LINCS

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

Miki Esposito

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

Carol Dunker, Jane Wilkinson, and Ken Hobza (*Business Office*) – Because of this group's conscientiousness, they perform at a high level and NEVER complain! They provide excellent customer service for both internal and external customers. They receive compliments from City managers on their conscientiousness, dedication and expertise. Their supervisor could not ask for a better staff!

Doug Schwartz (*Engineering Services*) – When given an assignment, Doug confirms he fully understands and provides a carefully thought out solution. He also points out the risks and down-sides of not following the plans as a means of limiting the City's liability.

Tim Hunt (*Engineering Services*) – Tim strives to ensure that everything he does is to the best of his ability. When needed, he asks for clarification to avoid mistakes. This leads to quality output.

Amy Cornelius-Jones (*Engineering Services*) – Amy is very thorough when doing her job. She knows the personnel processes and assists managers through them seamlessly.

Kelly Sieckmeyer (*Engineering Services*) – In addition to being incredibly knowledgeable about many of the engineering projects and processes, Kelly takes an active role in ensuring safety for motorists throughout town. When he sees something that he knows is not right, he works to ensure a positive result.

Nancy Nelson and Amber Null (*Street and Traffic Operations*) - Nancy and Amber are meticulous in ensuring the accuracy and validity of payroll for 111 employees. Their diligent progression runs something like this: Record and track paper and electronic leave requests; cross reference with daily

crew cards for five business units along with two-week time cards from supervisors and select staff; reconcile comp time from three logbooks; and enter all this information into the payroll program. Once payroll prints, they verify it against leave requests. This is all accomplished in two days along with other tasks. It may not be the prettiest of dances, but Nancy and Amber do it flawlessly and get their supervisor's vote!

Gary Novotny, Tom Buechel and Mike Squibb (*Wastewater*) – Property owners call frequently to report how much they appreciate the professionalism and quality of work on sanitary sewer main repairs on or adjacent to their property. Public concerns are a very high priority for this construction crew doing excavations in the public right-of-way or within utility easements. Gary and his staff are conscientious of the positive effect quality work has on how the property owner feels about the City of Lincoln.

Lisa Adams and Meagan Pratt (*Water*) - Lisa and Meagan receive over 30,000 One-Call (Digger's Hotline) tickets every year. During construction season, they may respond to over 300 tickets in one day to determine if a request can be "cleared" or if a buried utility should be located. After 18 and 10 years experience at this job respectively, Lisa and Meagan both know the consequences of damage to these buried utilities. They work tirelessly and conscientiously on each ticket to ensure the digger understands what is below ground and the locator knows where to mark buried infrastructure so that damage is minimized.

Avery Quakenbush and Don Frazier (*Lincoln Water*) and Paul Wimmer, Rick Roberts, Eric Lee and John Keith (*Ashland Water*) - During the Lincoln Production Section Superintendent's absence, these employees responded to all day-to-day activities, emergency repairs and failures of equipment in a professional, responsible manner – keeping in mind cost and duration of equipment outage. They did an outstanding job, and their supervisor is proud of their initiative and conscientiousness!

Jim Fogerty and Paul Donahue (*Water*) – Jim and Paul worked with the contractor to repair the leak at the Belmont Pump Station at 14th and Superior. Their supervisor is proud of their initiative and conscientiousness.

Dennis Haakenson and James Moore (*Water*) – After a contractor created a buckle at the 56th and Pine Lake water reservoir, Dennis and James came up with the idea of blocking off the air vents and using the pressure created by filling action to push it out. Within minutes, enough pressure was created to pop out the buckle. Their supervisor is proud of their initiative and conscientiousness.

*The next workplace principle for August/September will focus on collaboration. Nominations are due to Miki no later than Friday, September 13.*



## A Farewell Note...

Best wishes to Virendra Singh on his recent retirement from PWU Engineering Services after 45 years. May you find success in all your future endeavors!



Saturdays  
 August 31  
 September 7, 14, 21  
 October 5

Big Red Express  
 Husker Football Shuttle  
 Six Locations

Sunday, September 29  
 Streets Alive

## UPCOMING CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Construction projects and  
 street closures can be found at  
[lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov)  
 (keyword: closures).

## Discounted Big Red Express Tickets on Sale Now

Nebraska football  
 kicks off August 31  
 as Wyoming visits  
 Memorial Stadium.  
 Football fans wanting  
 to ride StarTran's  
 Big Red Express for  
 Nebraska's eight 2013  
 home football games are  
 encouraged to save  
 25 percent by purchasing  
 season bus tickets. The  
 \$80 tickets are now on



sale for \$60. They are available at the StarTran office, 710 "J" St., and at the SouthPointe Pavilions business office, 2910 Pine Lake Road, Suite Q.

Big Red Express bus service will begin operating continuous shuttle service two hours prior to kickoff from parking lots at these six locations:

- The City Municipal Service Center (I-80 airport exit #399), N.W. 12th and West Bond streets (take first right north of McDonald's)
- Southeast Community College, 88th and "O" streets
- Holmes Lake, 70th Street and Normal Boulevard
- Gateway Mall, 61st and "O" streets
- SouthPointe Pavilions, 27th and Pine Lake Road
- North Star High School (I-80 airport exit #403), 5801 N. 33rd St. (six blocks east of 27th Street and Folkways Blvd.)

The last buses will leave from the parking lots to the stadium about 45 minutes prior to kick off. Buses will transport passengers back to the lots immediately after the game. The buses unload and load near Memorial Stadium on "R" Street between 12th and 14th streets.

Those without passes will need exact change when boarding the bus. The single-game fare for Big Red Express is \$5 each way or \$10 round trip.

More information on the Big Red Express and regular StarTran service is available at [startran.lincoln.ne.gov](http://startran.lincoln.ne.gov) or by calling StarTran at 402-476-1234.

## HAVE YOU SEEN OUR BILLBOARDS?

Every year, Lamar Outdoor Advertising provides about eight to ten 14-foot by 48-foot billboards for City public service announcements for only \$1,750 each (the cost of the vinyl and printing). The customary price of billboard space the City receives is \$30,000 for each billboard. This discounted rate makes it possible for thousands of citizens to view our messages using a venue that would otherwise not be available. The cost savings to the City for eight billboards is \$226,000 a year and over \$1,130,000 for the last five years! The City of Lincoln is extremely grateful to Lamar for its generous donation of billboard space.

Like StarTran  
 on Facebook!



Don't miss out on special pricing  
 and promotions.

Additional information can be  
 found at [startran.lincoln.ne.gov](http://startran.lincoln.ne.gov).



# Adopt me!

[lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov) keyword: adopt-a-stream



# Stevens Creek Trunk Line

Lincoln Wastewater has constructed the Stevens Creek trunk sewer from the Northeast Treatment plant to Holdrege Street, a distance of 4.8 miles. Stevens Creek runs one to four miles east of 84th Street within the Stevens Creek Watershed on the eastern edge of Lincoln.

The installed pipes range in size from 30 to 84 inches in diameter and have sufficient capacity to serve about 18,000 acres – all of Tier I and half of Tier II development shown in the Comprehensive Plan for Stevens Creek drainage area. Former Mayor Coleen Seng initiated the advancement of a sanitary sewer into the Stevens Creek basin, and Mayor Beutler has continued the support.

The Waterford and Sky Ranch Acres development are both connected to the trunk line. The 84th and Leighton area soon will be connected through the installation of the Regent Heights connector sewer. Development adjacent to the Hillcrest area also has been discussed.

As the trunk sewers advance and provide service to these additional areas, private treatment plants and septic systems will be taken out of use. This will reduce contaminants entering the watershed and improve overall stream quality.

The Steven's Creek trunk sewer is a critical first step in the development of the east side of Lincoln. For more information visit [lincoln.ne.gov/city/pworks/waste/wstwater/studies/stevens/index.htm](http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/pworks/waste/wstwater/studies/stevens/index.htm).



## DID YOU KNOW?

Every vehicle on the road commuting an average of 10 miles adds one pound of pollution into our air. Today, over 80 percent of Lincoln residents drive alone to and from work. Encourage commuters to "Get on Board" StarTran so we all can breathe easier! At only \$17 for 31-consecutive days, you can't beat it!



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# Pinnacle Bank Arena



The West Haymarket redevelopment project has been the largest and most aggressive redevelopment project in Lincoln's history. The Pinnacle Bank Arena was officially turned over to the City on August 12.

During the past month, crews worked on the finishing touches, such as interior painting, carpet installation, fire alarm testing, completion of the luxury suites and installation of seating. The exterior entrance plaza decorative concrete and landscape plantings have also been installed.

The infrastructure components of the entire redevelopment area are nearly completed, including the underground utilities and Phase 3 of the District Energy piping. The remainder of the street paving is also nearing completion, with most West Haymarket streets expected to be open by the end of August. "P" Street will be completed in 2014 in conjunction with the completion of the adjacent private development. Other private development projects are progressing, with the first of the private businesses planning to open by the end of August.

## Marketing Team Wants You!

Are you a PWU employee interested in becoming a member of the Marketing Team? If so, please contact Ellen Wright at 402-441-7075.

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