

PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES

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

2012 February / March
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SNOW REMOVAL

Effort Receives Multiple Compliments

At midnight Saturday, February 4, Public Works and Utilities had 19 sanders working their routes. At about 4 a.m., plow trucks, motor- graders and contractors joined the operation for a total of 76 pieces of equipment. After the storm was over and the routes were completed, the City moved into a residential plowing program. This added 16 agricultural tractors and 10 miscellaneous pieces of equipment (other graders and plow trucks) for a total of about 102 units. Working in 12-hour shifts, the effort continued through Tuesday. The City continued to plow back areas in our districts where cars had moved and where problems existed on Wednesday and Thursday.

Playing an important support role is [Fleet Services](#), where personnel worked around the clock with only four mechanics per shift. Snow room staff took complaints and monitored the progress of our recovery effort. Over 900 requests have been taken by snow room and office staff since the beginning of the storm.

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PWU Director Esposito Appoints Marketing Committee

Public Works and Utilities Director Miki Esposito has appointed an internal committee to help promote the work of Public Works and Utilities employees.

“We need to take a proactive approach to educate the public about the core services we provide to them each day,” said Esposito. “We begin with the premise of adding value to the community in such a way that makes the community feel valued.”



Miki Esposito, Director of Public Works and Utilities

Ellen Wright, chair of the committee states, “We hope to start out with smaller groups from the committee working on events like Public Works Day at the Waterfest Event in June and a newsletter that will feature projects and employees doing their jobs.”

After five months on the job, Esposito is impressed by the professionalism of the employees, as well as their commitment to our community and to the quality of work that they do. She said PWU has 560 ambassadors who go out into the community every day, so they should be well informed. Often times those work efforts go unnoticed, even taken for granted. She said one of her goals was to spend a little more effort acknowledging and celebrating successes. Esposito says that Public Works and Utilities employees are often very humble when it comes to acknowledging those great accomplishments.



Members of the PWU Marketing Committee. Front row from left: Curt Weber, Rock Krzycki, Roger Tiedeman, Gene Hanlon, Joshua Meyer, Nick McElvain (co-chair). Back row from left: Amy Cornelius-Jones, Pam Gadeken, Michelle Zuhlke, Meagan Pratt, Karen Sieckmeyer, Kitty Elliot and Ellen Wright (chair)

The marketing committee is composed of representatives of each division. Each member brings different strengths and passions. Once the team establishes some of the basics, it should be able to start adding features to our department Web pages. One goal is to reach a whole new generation that gets its news from Facebook, Twitter, and other websites. The Internet is changing the way we

communicate and we need to embrace this opportunity.

Please feel free to ask questions and approach a member regarding items you would like to see in this newsletter. The committee hopes this will be a positive opportunity for all members of Public Works and Utilities.

EMPLOYEE KUDOS!

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

Miki Esposito

PWU Director Miki Esposito has announced the January 2012 Strong Linc Awards. This month's workplace principle and award focused on "initiative." Be sure to congratulate these Strong Lincs for their valued service:

Chris Koll (*Administration*), who is so helpful and always looks for ways to make our workloads easier.

Gary Lacy (*Watershed Management*), who took the initiative and increased role for erosion and sediment control inspections.

Doug Luedtke (*Business Office*), who assisted a plumber with getting a permit in less than a day!

Greg Stohs (*Engineering Services*), Greg stepped up to the plate helping to reconfigure the radio communications link for the traffic signals in the 27th and "O" area.

Steve Kostner, Gary Weger, Leroy Heier, Brian Murray, Danny Stetler, Jamie Mitchell, Shane Bottorff, Drew DeBuhr (*Street Maintenance*) This crew made their own asphalt and filled a patch at 10th and "O" streets where there was a water main break.

AGAIN - Drew DeBuhr, Brian Murray, and Shane Bottorff (*Street Maintenance*), For responding to a citizen's request to fill a series of potholes on West "O" Street.

Dave Tivis (*StarTran*), who displayed a high level of compassion by accommodating a passenger and her disabled mother.

Mark Stevens (*StarTran*), who volunteered to straighten out the parts room records and inventory for a formal upcoming audit.

Lance Sittner, Doug Miller and Gale Ogg (*Street and Traffic Operations*), who took initiative to assist a woman searching for her missing 2-year old.

Avery Quakenbush, Jim Fogerty and Paul Donahue (*Water*), These guys gave up their personal plans to come into work on a Saturday to locate a water main.

Jerry Morris, Dennis Gergen, Pat Schroeder, Mike Gergen, and Mike Greving (*Wastewater*), Jerry and crew helped out Watershed Management by shooting a video of an old 16-inch pipe near the old "A" Street Water and Power Plant.

Gene Hanlon (*Solid Waste Operations*), who took initiative in providing great leadership in the development of the marketing plans.

Randy Winch receives Mayor's December Award of Excellence

The [Mayor's Award of Excellence winner for December 2011](#) is

Randy Winch. He is a Heavy Equipment Mechanic for Fleet Services and has worked at the City of Lincoln for over 34 years. Randy and his wife Diane have been married for five years. He has one daughter, four stepchildren and six grandchildren. He is a graduate of Norris High School and received his Associates Degree in Auto Mechanics from Southeast Community College. When not at work, he spends time with his family and likes to target shoot. Randy also loves to fly. His first airplane was an Ercoupe.



Jeff Janda receives Mayor's January Award of Excellence

The [Mayor's Award of Excellence winner for January 2012](#) is Jeff Janda.

Jeff has been with StarTran for two years as a bus operator. He and his wife Kristi have been married 25 years. They have two boys Trevor, 24 and Lance, 19. Jeff is a graduate of North Bend High School. When Jeff isn't working he likes to coach Little League Baseball, which he has done for 17 years. Jeff also serves on the Board of Trustees for the Village of Roca.



Terry Ullsperger
Receives Award From HBAL



The Lincoln Home Builders Association of Lincoln (HBAL) awarded Terry Ullsperger, Engineering Specialist for Watershed Management, the annual award for Development Services Center Employee of the Year January 17. Terry is largely recognized and respected in the construction field for his great efforts in sediment and erosion control. Terry maintains a great rapport with contractors and homeowners.

Congratulations, Terry!

2012 Home & Garden Show

Wastewater and Solid Waste Operations and the Watershed Management Division represented Public Works and Utilities at the 40th annual Nebraska Builders Home and Garden Show February 9. Volunteer staff served at educational booths to provide the public information about available City services. Many questions were answered regarding Household Hazardous Waste collections, recycling, land management, floodplain issues and water quality. The event at the Lancaster Event Center drew an estimated 15,000-plus attendees, making it the best attended Home and Garden Show on record.



Monday and Tuesday
MARCH 26 and 27
 Earth Wellness Festival

Friday through Sunday
APRIL 13 - 15
 StarTran Stuff the Bus

Wednesday and Thursday
APRIL 25 and 26
 Spring Safety Meeting
 Firefighters Hall

UPCOMING CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

1. [Downtown Lincoln Street Resurfacing](#) (includes traffic signal replacements on "N" and "Q" streets)
2. [Antelope Valley - "K" to "P" streets](#) (includes "O" Street, 17th to 21st)
3. [Centennial Mall Renovation](#)

SNOW REMOVAL

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2012 International 7400
 with Wing Plow

It is important to note that after every major snow storm a snow committee gathers to evaluate the efforts of the snow removal operation and to reassess any procedures. The efforts of everyone involved were greatly appreciated and well recognized. Below are a few of the many "thank yous" that Public Works and Utilities received. Great job everyone! Keep up the good work!



"I just wanted to let you all know, and want to make sure you pass this on to your folks, that I got a call first thing this morning from Councilman Doug Emery, who happened to be walking in the mall. Doug told me that not only was he very impressed with the snow removal effort, but he also had several people walk up to him in the mall and specifically thank him for your efforts this past weekend. He appreciates all your efforts during the snow storm and in serving the citizens of Lincoln. Great job!" - Scott Opfer



"Having experienced my first major snow event as a City Councilman, I am very appreciative of the efforts of you and your staff in getting the city moving again. As an ombudsman for the State, I fully expected a significant number of calls, but that did not happen. It appears that you guys were well prepared and did a commendable job. Thank you!" - Carl Eskridge, Lincoln City Council, District 4



In the February 5 Lincoln Journal Star, columnist Don Walton called it the "Best city street snow removal ever."



"I'm a lifelong Lincoln resident and have never been prompted to e-mail your department prior to this last weekend. The snow removal efforts were wonderful and your department deserves a huge pat on the back. Not only was the service great, but very much ahead of schedule. I live on a tiny little residential street that was plowed by 1 p.m. Sunday. I had just made an assumption I might be taking the bus to work Monday because I would not be able to leave my driveway. What a pleasant surprise!"

Please visit <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/pworks/engine/traffic/snow/topten.htm> for answers to the top ten most-asked questions about snow removal.



Sees 20 Percent Increase in Ridership Over Two Years

Mayor Chris Beutler announced the ridership on StarTran's fixed route buses was up 20 percent in the first four months of this fiscal year compared to the same period two years ago. Ridership totals for

September through December of each year were:

2009 - 633,607

2010 - 691,263

2011 - 761,573

Need more info?
402-476-1234 or
startran.lincoln.ne.gov

up 20%

"Economic conditions and the price of gas could be factors in this increase of nearly 128,000 riders," said Mayor Beutler. "But we also have to credit StarTran for its system improvements, special promotions and focus on customer service."

StarTran Transit Manager Larry Worth said recent improvements include the addition of **bike racks** to all buses; new downtown bus shelters with digital signs for arrival times; and "**get on board**" web access to track buses live online. He said school **booster service** is meeting the needs of many students. The **Big Red Express** service for UNL home football games and the special event shuttles also continue to be popular.

Worth said full-price **fares** have remained consistent since 2008, and the pass **program for low-income riders** continues to increase, with a record high usage of 2,900.

WE'RE LISTENING



Why does it take so long to clear my cul-de-sac?

When the City of Lincoln snow crews are out in force clearing snow packed streets, it can be quite frustrating to be a homeowner living on a cul-de-sac and watch as the City crews just plow on by your area. The fact of the matter is, the City equipment is just too big and bulky to get into the cul-de-sacs and plow. The city hires subcontractors with smaller equipment, such as agricultural tractors, to plow the cul-de-sac areas in the City of Lincoln. You may still make reports to the Snow Center regarding unplowed cul-de-sacs at 402-441-7644.



City Has Filled More Than 7,000 Potholes This Winter

The number of potholes repaired this winter is up over last year. In December 2011 and January 2012, the City spent 3,283 hours repairing 7,283 potholes. In the same time period a year ago, City crews had repaired 2,406 potholes. One reason for the increase is the mild winter – crews have not had to deal with much snow, so crews have been more aggressive about taking care of potholes in residential areas. The number of potholes filled in the last two years is still less compared to the winter of 2009/2010 where crews repaired 17,644 potholes.

Residents can report potholes and other non-emergency street problems in four ways:

- Call the Pothole Hotline at 402-441-7646.
- Call the Street Maintenance Division of Public Works and Utilities at 402-441-7701. Street problems requiring immediate action should be reported to this number.
- Use the [online form](#) available on the home page of the City website, lincoln.ne.gov, under the heading Citizen Action Center ("Street - Pothole"). This form also may be used to report stormwater, snow and ice problems.
- Send photos to the City's ACTION Center using mobile phones with [Android](#) or [iPhone](#) technology.

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