

# 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 2014 / January 2015  
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## Christmas Tree Recycling Program

The City began the tree recycling program in 1987 in an effort to keep large quantities of trees from going to the landfill. Lincoln's tree recycling program is the oldest of its kind in Nebraska. Over the last 27 years, the City has recycled nearly 218,000 trees.

The City will accept trees for recycling at seven sites through Sunday, January 11. Go to [recycle.lincoln.ne.gov](http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov) and click on the Christmas tree recycling program for the location nearest you.

Hoefling Enterprises has again donated grinding services at each of the collection sites. The tree mulch will be taken to its facility at 2200 South Folsom Court and distributed free to the public during normal business hours on a first-come, first-served basis beginning Monday, January 19.

For more information on recycling, call the Recycling Hotline at **402-441-8215** or visit [recycle.lincoln.ne.gov](http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov).

Christmas Tree  
RECYCLING SITES



## Utilities Keeping the Pace



A year has almost passed since I arrived at the City. It has been a steep learning curve. I have had the help and support of the most amazing group of people – people who give their all for our citizens and are proud of their work. Behind and below this growing city, our utilities operate smoothly and efficiently, day-in, day-out.

The landfill has completed Phase 12 construction – covering 10 acres, 150-feet deep – to safely dispose of Lincoln's waste. To preserve space, we have undertaken a renewed effort to divert materials from the landfill. Our Recycle Working Group is made up of commercial, industrial, housing and waste professionals.

Watershed Management has been instrumental in the excellent rating the City received, that improves our Community Rating Classification to a Class 5 city. Based on many of the projects and efforts by Watershed Management, this rating provides a 25-percent reduction on flood insurance for property owners in the floodplain.

The use of technology and automation has made it possible for our utilities to serve a city that has grown by nearly 100,000 people with nearly the same number of staff as 40 years ago. With this technology, we now have electronic maps with linked information regarding the infrastructure. Our Water and Wastewater systems can remotely respond to needs in "real time" at our treatment and pumping facilities. With maintenance management systems, we can manage work flow more effectively and evaluate the maintenance history of our assets.

We keep Nebraska's best tasting water accessible 24/7 from every tap; clean the wastewater to pristine quality before discharging it to the creeks; improve water quality and protect homes from flooding through our watershed management; and dispose of waste in the most environmentally safe way possible. We do it all with a level of service second to none, and we do it with pride. Although it's often unrecognized, we work each day to help make a difference for the people we serve.

*Thanks to each of you and Happy Holidays!*

Donna Garden  
Assistant Director of Public Works and Utilities

# 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 **bravery/courage**. Please congratulate these Strong Lincs for their valued service.

Tan Pham  
(Technology)

With all the department changes made in the last few months, Tan has shown a willingness to push past historical problems and face issues head on.

Pat Schroeder, Kevin Stangl, Vince Morin, Mike Mandery, Ralph Pflasterer, Rich Munson, Mike Taylor, Mike Leedom, Brad Barber, Tim Gulbrandson, Jim Holz, Ron Swanson, Kevin Neth, Kevin Lutz, Brett Logue, Steve Schmalen, Doug Pfanstiel  
(Wastewater)

During the October 1 storm event, Wastewater employees dealt with flooding conditions at stormwater pumping stations, responded to basement backup calls, performed collection system integrity checks and monitored the operation of wastewater pumping stations. At the wastewater treatment facilities, emergency high-flow procedures were initiated and control measures were effective in the distribution and treatment of storm peak flows.

Joyce Evans  
(StarTran)

Joyce was willing to compete in a national bus competition even though the local competition was rained out. Her willingness to step forward and compete with only minimal practice is commendable and showed great courage.

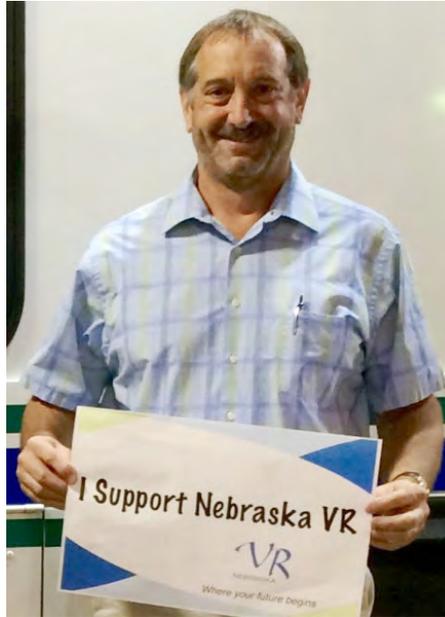
Ellen Wright  
(Watershed Management)

When PWU Director Miki Esposito envisioned a Marketing Committee made up of staff volunteers, she asked Ellen Wright to chair it. Ellen very willingly took charge of the group, got them organized and proceeded to guide three very successful years of newsletter preparation, Water Fest and Public Works Day and a variety of related

efforts. Although the concept was new, Ellen bravely jumped in with both feet and took on the task.

The next workplace principle will focus on **loyalty**. Nominations are due to Miki by Friday, January 23.

Knust Recognized for Work with Vocational Rehab



Glenn Knust, StarTran Maintenance Superintendent, has been recognized with a 2014 Excellence Award by the Nebraska Department of Education-Vocational Rehabilitation.

Glenn and his staff have been working with the organization for the past two years to provide employment training for people with disabilities. These young people between the ages 16 and 21 – who've never had a job before – get hands-on experience in the StarTran Maintenance Shop. They work a total of 90 hours over the summer as bus cleaners, which includes a host of other miscellaneous duties. **"We are happy to help them out with this program,"** said Glenn Knust. **"It helps us as well. It has been a rewarding partnership for all of us."**

**Congratulations, Glenn, and keep up the great work!**

## PWU Recognized at NWEA and AWWA Conferences

Water and Wastewater employees were recognized for their great achievements at the Nebraska Water Environment Association (NWEA) and American Water Works Association (AWWA) conferences November 5 through 7 in Kearney.

### LINCOLN WATER SYSTEM Best Tasting Water in Nebraska

**Water Industry Service Award**  
(presented to AWWA members of the Nebraska Section who have served for a minimum of 20 years with the Water Works industry)  
Eric Lee



**2014 Top-Ops Competition**  
First Place – Jerry Obrist (retired)  
Third Place – Steve Owen and Dave Beyersdorf

### LINCOLN WASTEWATER SYSTEM

**Scott Wilbur Awards**  
(presented for outstanding operation and maintenance of a wastewater treatment facility)

**Large Facility Award**  
Theresa Street  
Treatment Facility

**Medium Facility Award**  
Northeast Treatment Facility



## FEBRUARY 13-15

2015 Home and Garden Show  
Lancaster Event Center



# Artistic Snow Plow Program

Eleven more City snow plows are sporting blades painted by local students in the third year of the Artistic Snow Plow project. This project is a collaboration of PWU and Lincoln Public Schools.

These functioning mobile art murals are assigned to the participating school's snow route, which gives the students an opportunity to see their plow performing winter maintenance activities. The program strengthens community relationships and communication about winter weather response efforts.

Thank you to everyone who participated and to Sherwin Williams for providing the paint.



Huntington Elementary



Kooser Elementary



Lakeview Elementary



Norwood Park Elementary



Arts and Humanities



Prescott Elementary



Randolph Elementary



Culler Middle



Schoo Middle



Hill Elementary



Zeman Elementary



Thank you!

## Public Works and Utilities

wants to thank residents and visitors for their continued patience and support during the 2014 construction season. 2015 will be another active construction year. PWU reminds drivers to *drive slowly and safely through construction zones.*



# Receives \$2 Million Federal Grant

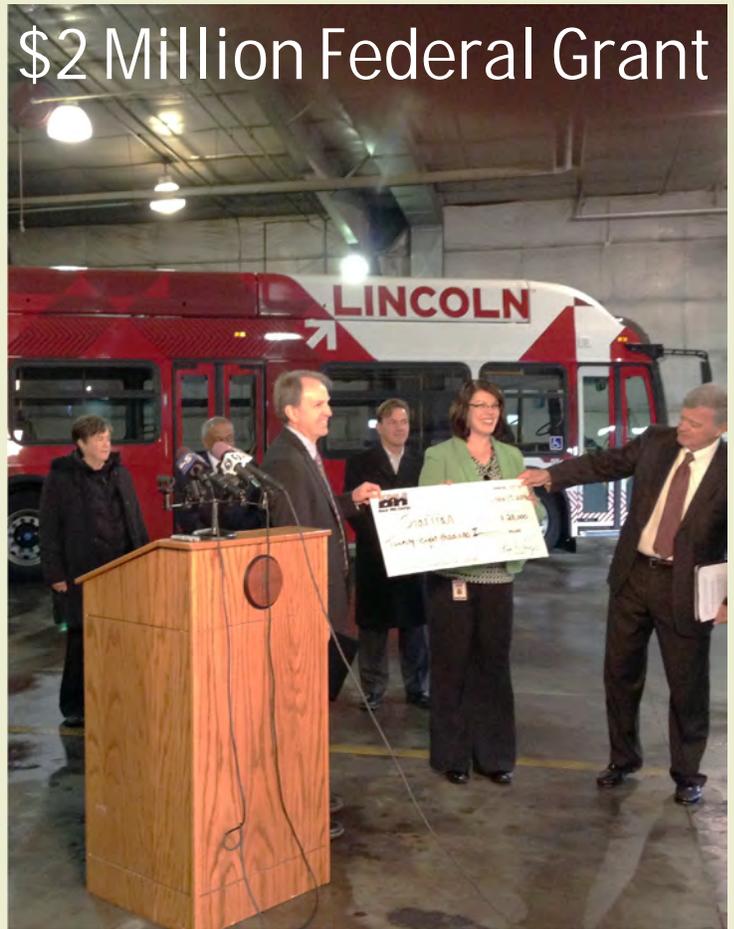
The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has awarded a \$2 million Ladders of Opportunity grant to StarTran. The funds will be used to buy three buses and two downtown trolleys that run on compressed natural gas (CNG) as well as a bus driving simulator.

***“The Ladders of Opportunity initiative supports the modernization and expansion of bus service,”*** said Mayor Beutler at a November 13 news conference. “The goal is to connect disadvantaged and low-income residents with the vital services they need to improve their lives – services like education, employment, job training and health care. The grant process was very competitive – only 24 transit systems in the U.S. were selected to share in the \$100 million in grants.”

The Mayor thanked Black Hills Energy for its cash match commitment of \$28,000. Black Hills Energy also helped the City purchase its first five CNG buses earlier this year.

StarTran Transit Manager Michael Davis said CNG buses are less expensive to operate, better for the environment and safer. He said StarTran’s fleet of CNG vehicles will grow to 29 over the next two years.

“A lot of effort by Barb Baier, Brian Praeuner, Scott Tharnish and Ryan Kacirek went into this application. With the competitive process, we feel very fortunate to be an award recipient of this FTA Ladders Grant – a credit to their success!” said Davis.



## TECHNOLOGY BITS AND BYTES

With input from all division representatives, the PWU Policy Team recently adopted the first department-wide Desktop Computer Policy. The complete policy is available on the IntraLinc at <https://intralinc.lincoln.ne.gov/city/pworks/tech/policy.htm>.



This policy outlines the acceptable use of computer equipment at PWU and standardizes all software used Department-wide on four major platforms. This makes it more efficient for Technology Services staff to work with one operating system and one consistent version of office software, and easier for users to stay proficient.

The policy includes the following:

- All computers will run on the MS Windows 7 Operating System.
- Word Perfect and Lotus software products will be phased out in favor of Microsoft Office 2013.
- All computers will come with Adobe Reader. Adobe Pro will be an optional upgrade
- Symantec Anti-Virus will be installed on all computers.

Technology Services staff will meet with each division to create a transition plan similar to the recently completed Novell migration. The Windows 7 upgrade project is anticipated to be completed by March 2015.

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