

# Bits & Pieces...

## News across Kansas

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### Proposed Power Plant Strain on Water Raises Concerns

Sunflower Electric Power Corporation's proposal to construct additional generating capacity near Holcomb in western Kansas is touching off concerns over the amount of water that the plant will require. The proposed plant would have a capacity of 895 megawatts or enough electricity to meet peak demands of 448,000 households. Already embroiled in a lengthy dispute over potential air quality issues. The Associated Press recently reported that seventy-eight percent of that capacity, or 695 megawatts, would be owned by a partner of Sunflower, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association of Westminster, CO.

The proposed power plant would use approximately 3.9 billion gallons of water annually. Since most of the electricity generated by Sunflower's new plant would initially be transmitted to its Colorado partner, critics suggest that Kansas will in effect be exporting its water.

The water rights for Sunflower's project are owned by a division of Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc., one of six western Kansas co-ops that formed Sunflower in the 1950s. Beginning in 2005, Wheatland Electric purchased 131 quarter sections of property in southwestern Kansas that were tied to the water rights. The land has since been leased back to farmers until the power plant is constructed.

Kansas law requires Wheatland to request the Chief Engineer of the Division of Water Resources, a division of the Kansas Department of Agriculture, to consider a conversion of the water rights to industrial use. The water rights would be decreased in such a conversion. Wheatland Electric's General Manager, Neil Norman, has been quoted as saying that Wheatland is not likely to go to the Department of Agriculture until 2014, when the power plant is within two years of beginning operations.

### City of Mount Hope Goes Underground With Electrical System; Makes Numerous Other Utility and Street Improvements

The city of Mount Hope, located on K-96 in Sedgwick County, eighteen miles northwest of Wichita and eighteen miles southeast of Hutchinson, KS, is digging in! It is burying as many of the electrical distribution lines as possible.

In January 2004 a major ice storm hit the city. Chris Rasmussen, City Superintendent, and the mayor and city council meet compiled data and discussed how to rebuild the electric distribution system and simultaneously, complete as many upgrades as possible. At the time these discusses were going on the city found out it was able to apply for FEMA funding to help cover the cost rebuilding the electrical distribution system.

The initial cost rebuild the system after the ice storm was \$750,000. FEMA paid for seventy-five percent of that cost; the State of Kansas contributed ten percent and the city paid the remaining fifteen percent. The city decided to bury all the electrical lines in easements with limited or no access with trucks and equipment. The initial burying with the FEMA project was 4,500 feet of CID primary cable. After the city council took a tour of the FEMA project when it was completed the council made the decision to bury the remainder of the system.

Superintendent Rasmussen developed a plan and obtained bids for the major project. "I made up several different projects for a program to bury 5,000 to 7,000 feet per year. Then I changed my mind and decided to set the projects on a dollar amount so the city could pay for the improvements out the electrical utility fund. The city council and I came up with a figure of \$100,000 per year," Rasmussen reported to KRWA.

Next, Rasmussen obtained bids for boring in the cable and extra help to install the equipment and transfer the overhead to underground. The city hired Allen Trenching, Wichita, KS to do the boring and one employee from Kenny's Electric from Hutchinson, KS to help with transferring. Two city maintenance employees and additional employee from Kenny's Electric have completed 15,000 feet underground primary and 4,500 secondary wiring to the residents' homes in the past six years. This is about seventy percent of the city's electrical distribution system.

Mount Hope has made many other improvements to infrastructure including applying a 2-inch overlay to twenty blocks of city streets. Also since 2004, the city reshaped the dikes and placed riprap rock on the city's five wastewater lagoons installing. The work is being paid for from the sewer operating fund. The city also contracted with Clarke Well & Equipment, Great Bend, KS to drill a new water well and install piping. Wilson & Company designed a new 10-inch main to connect to Well No. 7 in order to comply with the new Ground Water Rule. The project was installed by APAC Shears Division, Hutchinson KS. The city also replaced 2,550 feet of 2-inch cast iron water lines 6-inch C-900 pipe. This project was a design built project with the help of APAC Shears Division, Hutchinson, and the city staff. The new main was moved from the street to the street easement. All of the water projects were funded through the water utility fund and a General Obligation Water Bond.

## Twenty-nine Kansas Communities to Share \$9.2 Million CDBG Funds

Twenty-nine Kansas communities will share a total of \$9,261,370 in federal grants through the Community Development Block Grant program, the Kansas Department of Commerce announced in early August.

The announcement follows awards of more than \$12 million earlier in 2001.

The CDBG program provides federal funds to local governments for the development of viable communities by addressing their housing, public facilities and economic development needs. To be awarded funds, local governments must meet at least one of three program objectives: benefit

low- and moderate-income persons; prevent or eliminate slums and blight; or resolve an urgent need where local resources are not available.

CDBG funds are one of the Department's primary tools in supporting the state's small, predominately rural communities. The Department has distributed more than \$266 million in CDBG funding since 1998.

For more information, contact the Rural Development Division of the Kansas Department of Commerce at (785) 296-3004 or [ruraldev@kansascommerce.com](mailto:ruraldev@kansascommerce.com), or visit [www.kansascommerce.com](http://www.kansascommerce.com).

### The grant recipients announced in August are as follows:

**City of Alta Vista: \$500,000** – This project will move 8,800 linear feet of water mains from the center of the streets into the city's right-of-way. The city and other sources are matching this grant with \$378,600.

**City of Altamont: \$333,330** – This project includes the repair of 8,400 linear feet of sewer lines with cured-in-place pipe, as well as smoke testing and TV inspection of additional lines and inspection of manholes. The city will match this grant with \$50,000.

**City of Barnes: \$302,000** – The city proposes to replace 13,300 linear feet of water lines, seventeen fire hydrants, seventeen valves and other items to the water distribution system, including work on the water tower. The city is matching this grant with \$320,000.

**City of Chetopa: \$500,000** – The project will include removing sludge from the sewer lagoon and repairing dikes. USDA-Rural Development is providing \$604,533 in matching funds.

**City of Concordia: \$466,500** – The city will replace and relocate a sanitary sewer line along Broadway Street. The city is matching this grant with \$71,500.

**Graham County: \$397,148** – The proposed project will connect the county fairgrounds to the City of Hill City's sewer system. The county is matching this grant with \$70,086.

**City of Green: \$278,000** – The project consists of replacing the water distribution system, which was installed in 1910. The city will provide matching funds to this project.

**City of Harveyville: \$400,000** – The project will upgrade twenty-seven blocks of city streets with asphalt and chip and seal. The city is matching this grant with \$68,286.

**City of Holyrood: \$60,698** – The proposed project will demolish two dilapidated commercial buildings in the downtown area. The city and other sources are matching this grant with \$10,712.

**Labette County: \$24,123** – The proposed project is a storm warning system for Osage Township. The township is providing \$4,257 in matching funds.

**Labette County: \$500,000** – This project will include asphalt overlay on 24000 Road from Anderson to Elk. The county is matching the grant with \$222,169.

**City of Lincoln Center: \$500,000** – The city will replace 16,000 linear feet of water distribution lines that are breaking and failing throughout the city. The city is matching the grant with \$107,550.

**City of Linwood: \$340,000** – This project will install an emergency water connection to RWD #10 and construction of a new water well to replace Well #5. The city is matching this grant with \$64,400.

**City of Mayetta: \$489,565** – The project includes reconstruction of several streets in town. The city is matching this grant with \$73,435.

**Meade County: \$208,000** – The county will replace two trucks that serve the Fowler Rural Fire District with a new dual-purpose tanker/pumper fire truck. The county is providing \$40,000 in matching funds.

**City of Morland: \$298,000** – The proposed project includes street system improvements. Other sources are providing \$118,000 in matching funds.

**City of Norton: \$281,945** – The project will purchase a new custom pumper truck for the city. The city is matching this grant with \$49,755.

**Norton County: \$106,845** – The county will purchase a brush fire/rescue vehicle for the Solomon Valley RFD #3. The rural fire department is providing \$18,855 in matching funds.

**City of Onaga: \$500,000** – The project will consist of improvements to Leonard Street. The city and county will provide \$153,450 in matching funds.

**City of Osawatomie: \$500,000** – The project will reconstruct several streets. Other sources will provide \$1,202,700 in matching funds.

**Osborne County: \$104,040** – This project will involve construction of an addition to the fire station in Alton for Osborne County Rural Fire District #3. Other sources are providing \$18,360 in matching funds.

**Ottawa County: \$138,000** – The county will replace two existing bridges with new structures after demolishing the old bridges. The county is providing matching funds of \$208,000.

**City of Parsons: \$408,513** – This project will consist of various renovations to the city's sewer system in a targeted area of town. The city is matching this grant with \$72,090.

**City of Plainville: \$500,000** – The project will replace 8.5 blocks of waterline. The city is matching this grant with \$203,566.

**Rooks County: \$227,774** – This project will replace two 1995 ambulances in two different service areas within Rooks County. The county will provide matching funds of \$40,196.

**Smith County: \$86,434** – The proposed project involves removal of an unsafe bridge and replacement of a new one. The Kansas Department of Transportation is providing matching funds of \$353,593 for this project.

**City of Soldier: \$232,000** – This project consists of improvements to the sewer system, including pump station replacement, de-sludging and dike work. The Kansas Department of Health & Environment will provide matching funds of \$182,270.

**City of Tescott: \$78,455** – The project consists of purchase of a brush fire truck for RFD #6. The city is matching this grant with \$13,845.

**City of Yates Center: \$500,000** – This project proposes to conduct spot repair and lining of approximately 8,000 linear feet of sewer line and manhole repairs in various locations throughout the city. The city is providing matching funds of \$75,000.