

First Management & Leadership Training is a Success

I was pleased to hear the reports from those who participated this summer in KRWA's first "Management & Leadership Training" sessions. These sessions were held in a three-part series with the first two in Topeka and final session on Thursday, September 22 at Lawrence. They were very successful and appreciated by attendees.

Why this training? As many of the present managers and leaders of the water industry in Kansas begin to look toward retirement, there is a realization that the knowledge of these retiring water professionals will be lost. The Management & Leadership Training is one way that KRWA is trying to help the next generation of water professionals gain from the experiences of others to help lead Kansas' systems into the future.

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leaders to become the new water professionals in Kansas. Here's the program:

Day One: discussion of the roles and responsibilities of the different agencies involved with water and wastewater utilities in Kansas; discussion of the financial capacities of utilities which will include accounting, reporting, budgeting and planning, rate setting and asset management.

Day Two: review of technical capacities including laws and regulations, managing water resources, water and wastewater operations, energy conservation and safety programs.

Day Three: discussions on human resource management, relationship between the manager and governing body, customer service, emergency preparedness, public relations and public policy.

About the program

The Management & Leadership Program sponsored by KRWA provides three, non-consecutive days of management and leadership training. Current and former water professionals provide this training to share their knowledge to help the next generation of managers and

National recognition through Water University

Water University is a recent service of the National Rural Water Association. Kansas Rural Water Association has joined in this network. Certification in management is offered through Water University. Water University certification is based on general education, work experience, water and wastewater training attended and a certification exam. Those who choose to take and pass the exam receive a Utility Management Certification that will be valid for three years with renewal with additional training hours provided by KRWA. Gerald Bennett, Manager of Rural Water District No. 2, Miami County, was the first person in Kansas to achieve certification through Water University in Kansas. Water University maintains a national registry of those who have passed the certification. Water University certification gives water professional in Kansas the recognition and respect they deserve in the water and



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wastewater industries and helps prepare them to lead, or continue to lead, the utilities of Kansas into the future. The Kansas Management Leadership Program utilizes the Water University's "Utility Management Certification Guide" as an outline to assist those wishing to gain Water University certification.

My own retirement

While we often hear and read about the retirements of other people and while I have expressed the concerns particularly that rural water districts and public wholesale water supply districts nurture and develop new managers, it is with this column that I announce that I am now among the near-retirees. Due to a variety of reasons, I've reached the point where I am planning to move out of the role as manager of Public Wholesale District No. 4 later this year. The operation of Wholesale 4 has not been without its challenges. The district serves 14 cities and RWDs. I have been at the district for 28 years and the boards of directors over the years have been very progressive-minded in supporting policies and programs that helped this district serve as many people as efficiently as possible. It has been tremendously satisfying personally to know that the work that the district board and staff have done has made a big difference to help improve the lives of so many people. Having a good public water system is essential to help sustain local communities.

I will continue to serve on the KRWA board. I am passionate about KRWA and the services that your Association provides. I hope you share in my enthusiasm to see that the training and technical assistance services continue to be available. Times change and sometimes the processes need to change also. I encourage you to read about the new KRWA E-Train beginning on page 20. KRWA Training Coordinator Jim Jackson explains new online training that KRWA is announcing; this is a major new effort that KRWA sees as a way to help more people obtain a variety of training in the most cost efficient manner possible. Congratulations to the KRWA staff for working to make this new program available.

I also hope that you will mark your calendars for next March 27 - 29 for the 45th Annual Conference & Exhibition at Wichita. The KRWA conference is second to none; planning is a year long effort; it's something that I hope all the readers look forward to each year as much as I do. See you there.

Sam Atherton is manager of Public Wholesale Water Supply District No. 4 located at Big Hill Reservoir near Cherryvale, KS. Sam has been a member of the board of directors of the Kansas Rural Water Association since March 2006. He received a bachelor's degree from Fort Hays State University; he is also the past-president of the National FFA Alumni.



Mueldener, Waldo retire from KDHE

Two individuals, who have served notably for the interests of cities and rural water districts, recently retired from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

Karl Mueldener, formerly the Manager of the Kansas Department of Health & Environment's Bureau of Water, and David Waldo, Chief of Technical Services at KDHE's Bureau of Water, both accepted early retirement offers from the State.

Karl is a graduate of Kansas State University with an M.S. in Civil Engineering. He was involved with state water and wastewater programs since 1975. He served as Director of the Bureau of Water since 1988. Karl is a member of the American Water Works Association, The National Society of Professional Engineers, and the Water Environment Federation. In 1998, KRWA presented a "Special Recognition Award" to Karl.

Karl was responsible for statewide policy issues, making numerous appearances before legislative committees to testify on a variety of legislation. He also had the challenge of requiring various enforcements, but it should be noted, Karl always preferred to be a partner instead of a wrestler.



Karl Mueldener



David Waldo

David F. Waldo, Chief of Technical Services at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Topeka, also retired in mid-September. David was recognized at the 2011 KRWA conference with the "Friend of Rural Water" Award.

David was a lead person at KDHE and a constant in implementing wastewater and drinking water programs in Kansas. All Public water systems across Kansas were impacted by his efforts to help them learn about and comply with the various regulations of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

David holds degrees in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Kansas State University and is a licensed professional engineer in Kansas. From 1973 to May 1975, he worked as an instructor in engineering classes at K-State; from June 1975 to October 1983, he was Chief, Permits and Enforcement Unit at the Bureau of Water Quality at KDHE. In that capacity he was responsible for state administration of the federal Clean Water Act NPDES wastewater permit program. He also served as project engineer for Wichita and Kansas City municipal wastewater projects to assure design and construction were in accordance with federal and state requirements. Since 1996, David was very instrumental in the management of the Kansas Public Water Supply Loan Fund.