

Spoofs and Scams Becoming More Ingenious; Surveys Go Uncompleted



In recent weeks, several water system websites have been “spoofed” – where the customers’ payments end up being redirected to an account that looks like it is owned by the water district or city but the payment information is collected by a fraud. A “spoof” is when someone disguises an email address, sender’s name or website URL to convince you that you are contacting a trusted source.

Also recently, some KRWA members have received emails offering to provide “contact lists” of various events conducted by KRWA. Those were bogus; KRWA doesn’t provide contact lists for sale. Recently, KRWA received what appeared to be an order from one of the Association’s Associate Members. That company’s website had been compromised. That same offer likely went to all email addresses that the company had in its address book.

The latest method for fraudsters is to bury ransomware inside of PDF attachments. According to “Cybersecurity Insiders”, as the victim (that’s you) clicks on the email a PDF doc attached to the email gets opened by the on-system Acrobat Reader in the form of an MS Word Doc. The document then asks the user to enable editing and here’s when the social engineering attack gets launched after a macro downloads and runs the crypto ransomware.

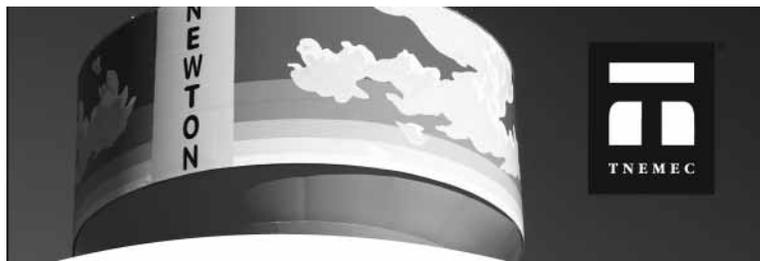
Back to some basic rules . . .

1. Keep backups of your data on separate storage devices.
2. Never open an unsolicited attachment to an email.
3. Keep you PC updated. Software updates and patches are always essential to keep your PC from viruses.
4. Be careful of what information you share online or on social media. By openly sharing names of pets, where you went to school, family members, birthdays, etc. you provide a scammer all the information they need to guess your password or answer your security questions.

Read more about Ransomware in the recent issue of *The Kansas Lifeline* and how it attacked major internet service providers. The article is by Jen Sharp and can be viewed at <https://krwa.net/portals/krwa/lifeline/2103/Ransomware-What.pdf>

KRWA – RWD Salary Survey

In early April, KRWA emailed a “Survey Monkey” survey to 212 rural water districts. The survey asked for responses to 15 questions. The survey was resent three additional times with requests to provide information about the

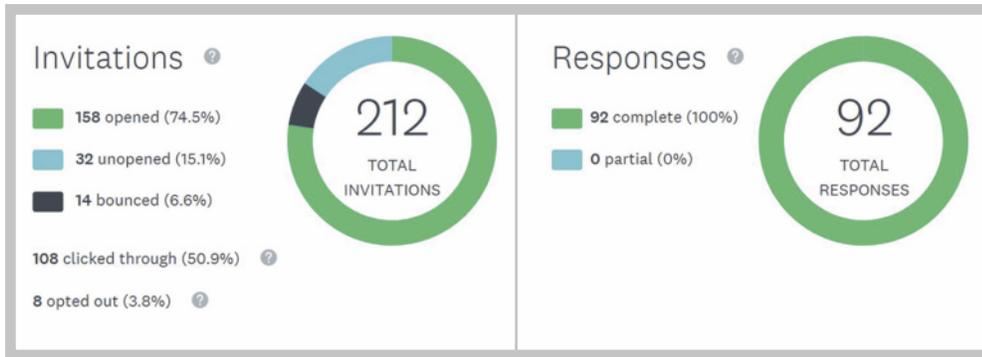


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Hourly wages for operators in this group ranged from \$18.34 to \$35.00.

Concerning benefits, eight of the districts in the group pay full costs of health insurance. All districts except for one offer paid vacation and sick leave.

Benefit unit charges (i.e., connection fees) for the ten

respective district, namely concerning salaries and benefits. As of June 3, 158 of the surveys were opened; 14 bounced due to incorrect or changed emails, and eight opted out. While KRWA had hoped for 100 percent response, there were 92 districts, or 58 percent that completed the survey. Those who completed the survey spent an average of less than six minutes on it.

For the ten districts that reported serving 1,000 or more residential taps, the monthly salary for manager ranged \$5,272 to \$12,697. Several districts in this category pay their manager an hourly rate. Two districts pay \$29, and the other pays \$30 per hr. The 76 districts serving less than 1,000 taps provided information that was not consistent with the survey questions; the range of manager salaries for these districts is not available at this time.

Concerning salaries for office managers, the hourly wage ranged \$16.75 to \$36.41. For bookkeepers other than office managers, the hourly rate ranged from \$16 to \$25.13.

districts serving 1,000 per more taps have a mean value of \$4,019 (standard deviation, \$1,437; range, \$1,000 to \$6,000).

Benefit unit charges for the remaining 76 districts that reported have a mean of \$2,969 (standard deviation, \$1,638; range, \$300 to \$8,000).

KRWA acknowledges that the 58 percent participation rate may affect the true value of these figures, and will attempt to obtain additional information to make the survey as complete as possible.

Elmer Ronnebaum is KRWA General Manager; he has been employed by KRWA since 1983. He served seven years on the KRWA board of directors prior to that. He also helped develop a large RWD and served for fourteen years on a water district board of directors.



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