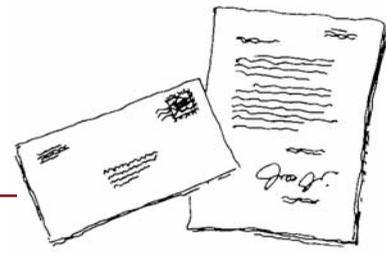


# Letters



**I would have had a really bad day** today if it had not been for Eric Davolt. One of the guys in the crew was off healing from hernia surgery and we were left with one man in the hole (me) and one on the machine. Eric has been working with me to try to resolve a problem with a customer who has a wood burning hot water heater / circulating floor heater and claims to have a water quality problem. Eric came by the construction site to check on us and firm up the time to go to the customer's home tomorrow, to take water samples. Just about the time he pulled up, things started to go really wrong.

I've been in the hole before and had a situation go from bad to worse in a micro-second. I've been in the hole and had "observers" just watch me as if they were waiting to see if I would drown, or be able to somehow pull it together all by myself. Figuring I was all by myself again, I climbed out of the hole and drove two miles to shut

my high service pumps down to reduce line pressure and cut down water loss. By the time I got back to the site, Eric had gone to our truck, pulled on some rubber boots, had a pump running and had jumped down in the hole to clear away the dirt from the line to uncover the leak. I pulled him out of the hole and jumped back in myself. Then Eric jumped in a truck with a valve wrench and started helping to slow down water flow so Brett and I could cut out the bad section of the line and affect a repair, while keeping positive pressure on the line.

I have had excellent working relationships with other KRWA field technicians over the past several years, and they have all been helpful in time of need. In that regard, Eric is not unique. But what is unique about this day is that it's the first time I've been in trouble with Eric Davolt on the scene. Eric was dressed pretty nice for a guy to jump in a muddy hole and help without having to be asked, and that's exactly what he did. Only a guy dedicated to supplying safe drinking water would have the understanding to know what to do immediately, and then what to do peripherally, in a situation like this one. You never really know what the "new guy" will do in a tight spot, but today I learned that Eric will do whatever it takes to get the job done.

Thanks (Elmer) for the technical help, advice and training, you make available to every water district in the state. I've come to expect good things from KRWA, but today was totally unexpected. Greatly appreciated, but unexpected. Thank you for having the foresight to hire Eric Davolt.

*JW Stephenson  
Operator/Manager  
Cherokee RWD 2*

**Thanks for your (Doug Helmke)** time and effort! We, the students, teachers, and administration at Spring Hill Middle School, want to thank you and your organization for the presentation at the Hillsdale Water Festival. The weather was not very inviting for outside activities so I think that using the Spring Hill Civic Center worked out quite well. Our students really enjoyed your presentation and hopefully now realize there are many types of job opportunities that use a lot of science. Students wished they would have been able to participate in all of the activities.

I hope that you will be able to present again next year and that the weather will allow us to go out to Hillsdale Lake. Thanks again for taking the time to share your knowledge with our eighth grade students at Spring Hill Middle School.

*Steven Haffener  
8th Grade Science Teacher  
Spring Hill Middle School*

## Support Associate Members

When a city or rural water district needs products or services,

## SHOP ASSOCIATES FIRST!

Associate Members support the Kansas Rural Water Association.

For a current directory, with contact, e-mail addresses and Web site information for Associate Members, check out

[www.krwa.net](http://www.krwa.net),

then under "membership."

office teamed up and made an offer that we could not refuse. This was before we knew about the grant available from the Kansas Water Office, which makes it unbelievable.

Kristen Jordan, with the Jefferson County GIS, informed me the maps were available to be viewed on line and I took the opportunity to look at them and WOW, what a product. I would like to thank Pete Koenig, Mark Thomas (sorry Mark about getting wet on the gator), Elmer, Greg and the Jefferson County GIS Office for making this happen. As I expressed to Kristen Jordan, this has saved the city over \$10,000 if not more if this was conducted by a mapping service. Thank you to everyone involved and I am sorry if I missed naming anyone. Also, I want to thank Jeff Lamfers for stopping by and giving us advice on a duckweed and muskrat problem that had just developed this past year on our polishing ponds. Again, thank you for all of your hard work and a supper product with the GPS mapping. Sorry we do not express enough Thanks to KRWA for all of the services we enjoy and take advantage of.

*Carl Chalfant, City Superintendent  
City of McLouth*

**Thank you to Doug Guenther** for his prompt trip to Lenora, Kansas to test fire hydrants as a part of preparing for an ISO inspection. We sometimes feel as if we are in the “middle of nowhere” but never do we get that feeling from Kansas Rural Water.

Thanks again.

*Gayle James, City Clerk  
City of Lenora*

**I attended the conference this year** and enjoyed it very much.

I am writing to request that you consider letting the Bookkeepers, Office Manager, etc., have a full day session to just discuss items and share ideas. This would be great for a Tuesday pre-conference session. This year I went to the one that Pat Shaffer

and Sharon Dwyer headed up and learned a lot.

I would like to see more sessions directed to the office personnel. The speaker was great and I got a lot of good tips from him to work with people. Thank you for another great conference.

*Kathy Hoch, Bookkeeper  
Butler RWD 7*

**We received a check for \$100** for a refund for registration fee. We really appreciated the gesture but the Board voted unanimously to return it because we are the ones to receive the benefit for all that KRWA does for rural water districts in Kansas.

I did attend the KANCAP session and I received a lot of valuable information from it. The notebook that they handed out has a wealth of valuable information in it as well as the discs. The only negative part about it was for guys like me who are hearing challenged. I had a hard time with the first half of the session. The second half, I got in there

early and found a seat up front and didn't have a problem. I would very much recommend repeating the offer of the session next year.

We recognize the amount of effort that you and your staff put into the association to help the Kansas rural water districts and appreciate it very much. We also know that funds are not always easy to come by for your organization and feel that returning your check will put the money where it will be well spent.

Thank you very much for a great conference.

*John Cleveland, Treasurer  
Butler RWD 7*

**Washington County RWD #2** would like to express our thanks to Doug Helmke, Water Rights/Source Water Tech, for his expertise and assistance in updating our water rights. We truly appreciate it.

*Board of Directors and Employees  
Washington County RWD 2*

### 2009 KRWA Officers & Directors

*Dennis Schwartz, President, Shawnee Co. RWD 8, Tecumseh  
Sharon Dwyer, Vice-President, Douglas Co. RWD 5, Lawrence  
Sam Atherton, Secretary, PWWSD 4, Cherryvale  
Darrell Schlabach, Treasurer, Washington Co. RWD 1, Hanover  
Patricia Shaffer, Director, Butler Co. RWD 5, Benton  
Larry Remmenga, Director, City of Concordia, Concordia*

### KRWA Staff

*Elmer Ronnebaum, General Manager  
Laurie Strathman, Administrative Assistant  
Gary Armentrout, Technical Assistant  
Lonnie Boller, Surface Water Tech  
Rita Clary, Technical Assistant  
Eric Davolt, Technical Assistant  
Greg Duryea, Technical Assistant  
Mike Fisher, KAN STEP Tech  
David Gilley, GPS/GIS Mapping Tech  
Doug Guenther, Technical Assistant  
Doug Helmke, Water Rights/Source Water Specialist  
Shane Holthaus, KAN STEP Tech  
Jim Jackson, Training Coordinator/Technical Assistant  
Jesse Knight, GPS/GIS Mapping Tech  
Pete Koenig, GIS/GPS Mapping Coordinator  
Jeff Lamfers, Consultant  
Pat McCool, Consultant  
Greg Metz, Technical Assistant  
Charlie Schwindamann, Wastewater Tech  
Jon Steele, Technical Assistant  
Mark Thomas, GPS/GIS Mapping Tech  
Delbert “Bert” Zerr, Consultant*

**On behalf of the city of Madison, I** would like to thank you (Charlie) for your help in assisting the city crew in flushing out the city lagoon discharge pipe. We greatly appreciate the service you and KRWA extend to our community on a continued basis. Thank you again.

*Carol Porter, City Clerk  
City of Madison*

**Thanks for the photo (Elmer).** Yes, I did receive my prize of \$150 and I am going to use the money to buy a pendant to remember the Rural Water Conference since it was my last one as City Clerk. My comment on the 50-foot putt: It was fun to do but I wish I

could have gotten a practice shot. But, it was fun and the fact that I won something was great. You as always put on a great conference.

*Connie West, City Clerk  
City of Deerfield*

**I want to thank you for the** "Office Manager of the Year" award given at the Annual Conference. To say that this was a surprise is quite an understatement. A SHOCK would be a more appropriate description. It is very easy to feel like a very small fish in a very large pond when attending the Conference, not only because there are so many people there, but because I come from a very small district. I am usually the only one from our district to attend, but this year, thanks to KRWA, one of our board members was there for the Awards Banquet. I am very fortunate to work with a Board that is very supportive and with a fellow employee who is very conscientious and has good PR skills. Ernest Fink can talk with customers who are complaining for some reason, and soon they are happy and understand the situation.

Elmer mentioned in the introduction about our computer being stolen. I want to publicly thank Merle and Linda Windler for their help in getting us back into business so quickly. I called Linda on a Monday morning; Merle was to be out of the office for the week. She and I discussed our computer needs and determined what to order. She ordered the computer and monitor and had them delivered by Friday. I left Saturday morning in a snowstorm and on very slick roads to go pick them up. Enroute, I called Linda to see if it was snowing in Topeka, hoping to run out of the snow. No luck; but Linda said, "You know, you can come over tomorrow". I gratefully thanked her, went back home and drove over on Sunday. Merle loaded everything on the computer; I came home and got to work. I seriously doubt that there is another software company that would

be so accommodating!

I have been an ardent supporter of KRWA since attending the first conference years ago. KRWA offers so many helpful sessions and the opportunity to visit with the vendors and staff from other districts is invaluable. Elmer always asks for input and ideas, but I think what he, his staff and Linda & Merle Windler don't think of, can't be thought of!

However, the Conference is not only the only reason I champion KRWA. It, as an organization and personally, doesn't discriminate between small districts, large districts and small towns and large cities. Our Board and staff appreciate that very much. Elmer and his staff, in our area, Gary Armentrout, have made themselves available to us either by phone or in person on many occasions when we have asked for their help. I am surprised sometimes, when Elmer answers the telephone himself and then takes time to answer my questions in an unhurried manner. Gary has been to our office on numerous occasions. He has attended our Annual Meeting, at our request, to help answer questions from our district members; he conducted the KanCap program at our office for our Board and has helped in other capacities as well. The water entities in the State of Kansas are very fortunate to have the Kansas Rural Water Association.

Thanks again; it was a lot of fun and it is nice to be recognized.

*Corky King, Manager  
RWD 4, Miami County*

**I cannot thank you enough** (Doug Helmke) for helping with the Miami County EARTH Festival. Your head, heart and hands were truly appreciated by the 300 fifth and/or sixth grade students enjoyed the event. I appreciate you taking the time to present a workshop at the 2009 EARTH Festival.

Thank you again for your time and assistance for our EARTH Festival. It is important as we raise awareness about how young people can help our

## KRWA New Members 2009

### Cities, RWDs and Other Systems

City of Clay Center  
City of St. Marys  
City of White Cloud  
City of Zenda  
North Crest Mobile Home Park  
Saline RWD 7  
Wilson RWD 2

### Associate Members

AdEdge Technologies  
AECOM  
AllMax Software, Inc.  
Baker Manufacturing Company  
Berry Tractor & Equipment Company  
Environmental Technologies  
Ever Mark Signs  
K.C. Construction  
Kansas Public Entity PAK  
Lee Mastell & Associates  
M Con, LLC  
Monica R. Kellogg, CPA, LLC  
NovotX, LLC  
Preload, Inc.  
Reline America  
SIP Industries

environment. One 6th grade student said that learning about the environment is important because "So we can take action with what we learn in the future".

Thanks again and again!

*Karla J. Hightower  
E.A.R.T.H. Program Coordinator*

**I want to thank (Eric Davolt) for** taking my call to help me locate and fix a leak on May 12. His help was greatly appreciated. It is good to know someone will actually come to help

Our leaks are hard to locate, especially when they need to be found quickly. Most people don't realize the number of miles of line in pastures, farm ground and brushy areas that requires walking to see if the leak is there.

Thank you for all the assistance from Eric and KRWA.

*Jon Houser, Manager  
Cherokee RWD 3*

**I have attended the KRWA** conference with my husband for the past three years. I have enjoyed it thoroughly. I have always admired the quilts Kathleen Ronnebaum makes (for prize drawings). So I was truly thrilled when I won the "Kansas Spirit" quilt.

Thank you so much.

*Jan'et Dawson  
Shawnee Cons. RWD 1*

**Congratulations to you Elmer and** the KRWA Board of Directors on an outstanding 2009 Annual Conference. We are proud to be a part of this great gathering of Rural Water systems and those who work with rural water systems in many different ways.

Rural water is a very important element to our rural communities. In these times of economic challenges, water is even more critical to the success and sustainability of these communities and rural areas. The many workshops held at your conference are excellent opportunity for all attendees to gather up to date information on new

services, industry tips, funding availability and many other topics.

We look forward to another year of working with the KS Rural Water Association and in helping rural water systems meet their funding needs. With the recent passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, additional funding opportunities are now available. We hope the rural communities seize the opportunity to utilize the funds and make necessary improvements to their systems.

The conference is a great forum to share information with many systems and to meet the new faces in rural water each year.

Congratulations again on a successful conference.

*Gary L. Smith  
Director, Business and Community Programs.  
USDA Rural Development*

**Just a quick note to thank you** (Pat McCool) once again for helping me develop that rough estimate for rehab/upgrade work on our surface treatment facility. Dave Mayfield (city of Marion) was great to work with, and

I think my staff and I will take him up on an offer to visit his facility sometime in the coming months. In short, your expertise and referrals made for a quick turn-around of the project cost data we were looking for, and helped us out tremendously.

I look forward to meeting you when you come up and visit Dawn to discuss those other Horton water system issues. Until then, take care...

*Jim Whisenant, City Administrator  
City of Horton*

**Cecil Miller asked me to write to you** (Charlie) for the job well done at the Methodist Church April 21, 2009. This was greatly appreciated as the city was being blamed for the smell in the church.

Without your great help, the city could have had to spend lots of money trying to locate the problem and having it fixed.

Thank you so very much for the help you gave to us. All of you do great work!

*Connie Herndon, City Clerk  
City of Lebanon*

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