The Commonwealth Quarterly

News from around the circuit.

Summer 2012

Commonwealth Electric Company of the midwest

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Appointment of Vice President

David F. Firestone – President/COO

CECM's Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Mike King to Vice President.

Mike has been with CECM since its inception in 1987. Mike has over 39 years of experience in our industry. Prior to his appointment, Mike was Lincoln's Service Manager from 1991-2002 and has been the Lincoln Branch Manager for the past 10 years.

Mike serves on the Lincoln Division of NECA's Labor Management Committee and has been the Division President as well as serving on the Nebraska Chapter's Board of Directors.

Please join me in congratulating Mike on his promotion.

Safety Update

Ruben J. Bera - Corporate Safety Director

Safety at Commonwealth continues to reflect improvements in all areas. We are approaching our 2nd year without a loss time accident. Overall, our recordable accidents have been on the decline. Considering the nature of our business, this is a very significant achievement. How have we been able to achieve this? I can attribute this to employee awareness. Each of us is more aware of the potential injuries that can occur if we don't stay focused. We know what to do and how to prevent injuries. There are new safety tools available and each branch continues to provide safety training to all. Each location conducts group safety meetings with key foremen who pass on the information to all other workers on their site. Communication is vital when we deal with employee safety.

A reflection on how our improvements are being recognized is the awards that branches receive from various agencies. Omaha was recently awarded the "Award of Honor with Distinction". This is the 6th year in a row Omaha has been recognized. Commonwealth Electric has received a "Zero Injury Award" from NECA District 7 which includes Nebraska and Iowa.

As I have stated many times over and over, awards are nice to receive and we should all be proud of them. It's not just one branch making a difference; it's all locations striving to keep everyone safe. As our COO Dave Firestone reminds us, we are a team and we all share in our successes. Our biggest award is to make sure we all go home safe.

We will continue to look for ways to improve our safety and provide education that will add to our awareness. Our safety motto says it all, Think Smart, Work Safe.

Pleasantville High School HVAC and Electrical Remodel

T. Michael Price - Vice President

Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest was recently awarded the contract for the Pleasantville High School HVAC upgrade. This project has an aggressive 9 week schedule and consists of a new 3000 amp, 120/208 volt service and main distribution panel, along with the replacement of a 1600 amp Switchboard and a 1200 amp Switchboard. Commonwealth will be making electrical connections to several roof top units, VRV's and other mechanical equipment throughout the school. We will also be relocating and adding new light fixtures. Baker Group will be acting as the construction manager and Modus Engineering is the engineer of record on the project. Mike Van Der Hart and Robin Pearson are Foremen on this project. Mark Ramsey will be supporting Mike and Robin from the office as the project manager.

Top Photo: A Commonwealth crew member bending large conduit

Middle Photo: Foreman Robin Pearson and crew, planning the work and working the plan

Bottom Photo: Foreman Mike VanDerHart and Safety Director Ruben Bera during a safety inspection

Commonwealth Columbus Selected for Vetter Health Services

Ruth Chermok – Business Development

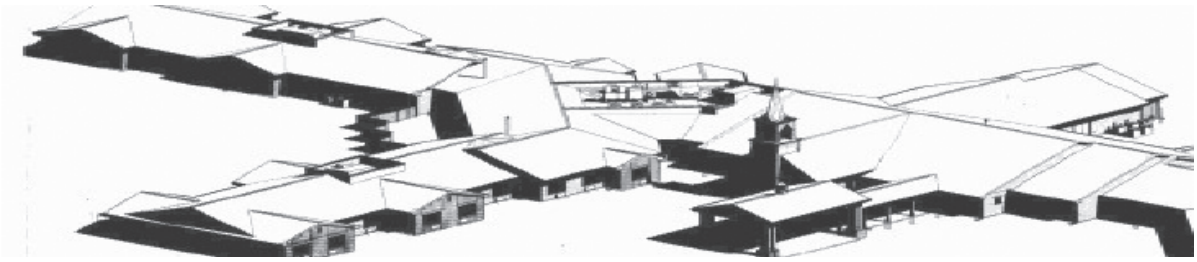
Commonwealth Columbus was selected by Weitz Construction to partner with them on a new building project for Vetter Health Systems in St. Paul, NE. Vetter Health Systems is based in Elkhorn, NE, and own 32 long-term care facilities, of which 24 are located in Nebraska. Vetter's commitment provides elder care with a focus on "Dignity of Life" and they strategically locate in many small towns to allow elderly residents to remain active in their community and live close to their loved ones. Heritage Living Center will be a long term skilled nursing facility, and will include Rehabilitation Services as well as a Memory Support (Alzheimer Unit).

The Heritage Living Center underway in St. Paul, NE, is 50,000 square feet and a 36 unit - 60 bed facility. The project involves two resident "wings" and a central commons area that includes 2 kitchens, a community room, beauty shop, and a chapel.

Each residential "wing" has a spa bath, this involves under slab heating in the bath area. Residential units range in size from 290 to 708 square feet. Some of the units are designed for two person occupancy.

The project will be challenging in that the Commons Area and the location for the main service and gear, will be the last phase of the project. Site layout, preplanning and project management will be critical due to the phasing of the building. The Commonwealth team will be led by Project Manager, Jake Gable, and the Foreman will be Kurt Hellbusch.

We are very excited to be part of this project and to earn the partnership with Weitz and Vetter Health Systems. This project fits our goals in terms of location and our efforts to expand into the Central and Western portion of the State; and also, because Vetter has announced a similar project for Columbus to be started in the very near future.



A Big Thank You to Employees

Mike King - Vice President

May was National Safety month. Instead of doing the safety cookout as we have done in the past, the Lincoln branch decided to do things a little differently. It has been our experience that many of the people that help make Commonwealth a safe place to work were unable to attend the cookouts and pizza gatherings we have offered over the past years. So, we decided to try and put a thank you out to all employees for their high standard of safety. We came up with a 2012 safety backpack. The overall response has been good and this way everyone gets a THANK YOU!

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Covidien Medical – Norfolk, Nebraska

Brian Orton - Project Engineer

In April of 2011 our Business Development Manager in Columbus, Ruth Chermok, found a seemingly small, but promising opportunity in the Norfolk market. Norfolk is a midsized Nebraskan city that we've been targeting for gains in market share due to its high density of industrial manufacturing - an underserved segment that fits Commonwealth's capabilities well. The opportunity was at Covidien Medical's plastics molding and manufacturing plant. If you find yourself watching a Red Sox's game, look to the Big Green Monster, and you'll find Covidien's Logo dead center.

Covidien's Electrical Supervisor, Eric, had a problem. He knew that his lighting systems were inefficient, outdated, and costing him a lot of money. He had tried previously to get lighting system changes into the capital budget, but was repeatedly denied. Covidien's corporate standards for efficiency projects called for a five year return on investment, and no one had been able to propose a system that could meet that standard. Ruth and Eric hoped that Commonwealth could provide a solution and succeed where others had failed.

We began the process by conducting a thorough audit of the nearly 250,000 sqft facility. There were three distinct types of areas in the plant, each of which needed to be addressed in a different way. The storage and large manufacturing areas were lit with T12HO type fixtures and needed both efficiency savings and better light levels at the equipment. The plant's intensive manufacturing areas were lit with T8 type fixtures and needed a layout that would optimize area lighting and energy usage with as little additional investment as possible. The building's offices also used T8 style lighting that limited the changes we could make due to mechanical positioning and the fixed grid.

To prepare our proposal, our engineering team used a number of tools to simulate the changes we were considering on both the area lighting and the system power consumption. Our final design indicated that we could eliminate 140 kW (over 400A at 208V) from the plant's base load electrical system. The projected energy savings were used to maximize the utility's rebate for energy efficiency projects. The rebate (projected at $ 80,000), coupled with the annual energy savings (projected at $ 45,600) showed a potential project ROI of 3.0 years.

With this design and proposal in place, Commonwealth was able to win corporate approval for the project. The next step was to complete a formal design for our crew in the field. Marijo Bosiljevac, our 3D BIM expert, built a model of the manufacturing plant including the new lighting systems. With this model, we were able to coordinate fixture layouts with the building and equipment, and ultimately, create sheets for our field team to execute the project.

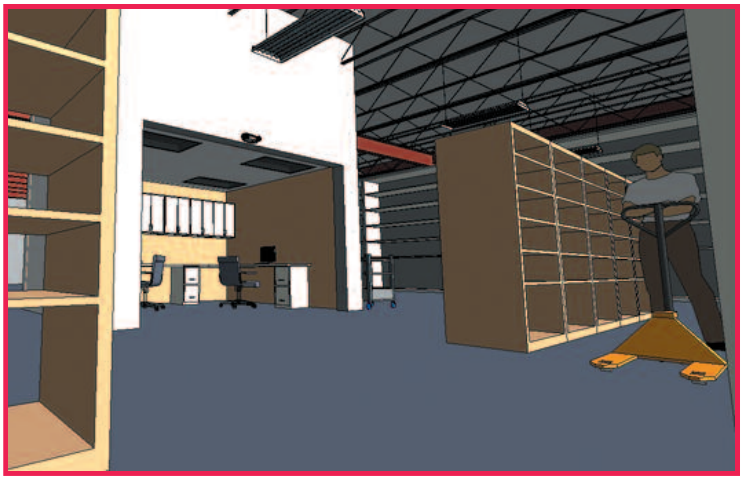

Photo supplied by Marijo Bosiljevac

Our efforts in the field were led by our foreman Don Volbrecht. Don and his team of electricians and apprentices had no small number of complications on this project. Nearly every portion of this project was done in a working plant that runs three shifts, with limited windows available to do work in any one area. Equipment layouts were tight, ceilings were high, and the spaces often didn't allow for easy reach by ladder or lift. Worst of all, this project had a hard deadline and needed to be completed in three months.

Despite these complications, Don's crew was able to average over 20,000 sqft per week and completed the project on schedule. Because of the nature of the products being made, a single careless drop would have required a thorough cleanup and inspection before production could continue. Over the course of the project, the team handled over 2,000 fixtures and 20,000 lamps, and didn't cause a single line shutdown. Best of all, the crew was able to do all of this with zero injuries or accidents – a credit to the team's focus despite the challenges.

The project was a complete success for both Covidien and Commonwealth Electric. Together we were able to succeed in developing a plan where others couldn't. The team executed the plan, despite an array of foreseen and unforeseen challenges. Ultimately, we delivered a system to Covidien that not only exceeded our projections for energy savings, rebating and ROI – but also gave them better quality lighting throughout their facility. Covidien and Commonwealth Electric's partnership will continue for years to come as we maintain this system to keep it in peak operation, and continue to assist Covidien in expanding and maintaining their facilities and production equipment.