

The Commonwealth Quarterly

News from around the circuit.

Spring 2019



Commonwealth Electric Company
of the midwest

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Jon Folkers - Business Development & Marketing



Iowa Western Community College,
Council Bluffs, IA

Commonwealth Electric - Omaha, NE is on site at Iowa Western Community College (IWCC), located in Council Bluffs, IA. We have been chosen as the Prime Contractor for this college campus Security Management Project.

We all know that public safety is always a concern, now and into the future, for all college campuses. A college campus should be considered as a home away from home. So, if you'd put a high-tech security camera system in your house, shouldn't colleges and universities do the same for their students? Well, Iowa Western Community College is taking a pro-active approach to their students & faculty members safety.



Card Access Reader



Hallway Cameras



Welcome Center



Outside Security

There are currently 5 campuses that make up the IWCC campuses: Shenandoah, Harlan, Atlantic, Clarinda & Council Bluffs. Our security team is providing each campus with new card access, upgraded video management systems and all new IP cameras. We will also be replacing and upgrading all exterior doors and hardware. Each exterior door will get a fully-functional card access reader for staff employees and students. Once the Council Bluffs Campus is complete, we will move

to one of the other four campuses. Our operations will remain out of our head office on the main campus.

We're also providing new parking light and complex light fixtures. Seventy-five percent of all parking lot poles are remaining intact, but they will get new LED lighting. The remaining 25% will get new poles, bases, lights and new circuits. Work was also done in the Reiver Tower Welcome Center to provide them with a newly renovated vestibule, which included: New aluminum storefront, new entry carpet, new cabinets for office area, drywall, paint, countertops for office area and new light fixtures.

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Lincoln Service Department Embracing Change!

Angie Kelly - Service Coordinator

The Service Department in Lincoln has experienced significant and exciting changes over the last 1 ½ years. Our team has doubled in size to effectively meet the demands of increased business. This has led us to implement some new strategies to ensure we are maintaining our commitment to excellence as well as prioritizing efficiency.

Matt Briggs, our Service Manager is handling all Project Management, large estimates, customer relations and overseeing the continued expansion, growth and development of the department.

Alan Pendleton transitioned from Field Electrician into the role of Assistant Service Manager. He is assisting with the steady flow of estimating work, assisting Matt with building customer relationships and mentoring the Service Team with his wealth of knowledge and years of experience. Alan will be celebrating his 25th anniversary with Commonwealth this year!



(Back Row) Nathan Jakub, James Haake, John Markey, Todd Pfundt, Jacob Anderson, John Anderson;
(Front Row) Kevin Lugenbeel, Steve Lindgren, Paul Thompson, Nick Hurley, Jay Wells

I joined the team last February as the Service Coordinator. In addition to handling all our service account business and billings, Alan and I work together daily, with Matt, to ensure the scheduling of our electricians is aligned with our service and project needs. We work diligently to accommodate the various needs of our customers; including larger projects, routine monthly maintenance and emergency calls.

In 2017 we fully switched our work orders over to the Fleetmatics fleet management system which utilizes both web based and mobile applications allowing us to more effectively manage scheduling, dispatching communication from the office to the field and workflow solutions. This has also assisted in eliminating most work order and job-related paperwork. We will continue to seek out technologies to assist us with efficiencies and give us an edge over the competition.

We are privileged to have worked with the Wesleyan Science Building Project in conjunction with Johnson Controls, the HVAC upgrades for Windstream, KFXL Communications Tower overhaul, the Nebraska Department of Corrections wireless access point installations as well as various projects with Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center and Bryan LGH. What a great Community we get to live in and work with!

We are constantly amazed at the flexibility of our Service Team. They are often asked to change their daily plan to effectively meet the needs of a business that can change by the hour. Not to mention maintaining top notch workmanship, a customer centric vision and a level of professionalism that continues to make us proud.

Collaboration and teamwork have been crucial this last year in helping us to fine tune the new Fleetmatics management system to be more effective, learn new National Account mobile applications and call center regulations. We are looking forward to continuing education opportunities, providing additional equipment and cross training to our team in the Field to influence their versatility and to keep propelling them forward in their careers here at Commonwealth.

ALDI Refrigeration Power and Controls

Andrew Lawrance - Project Manager

ALDI is a nationwide grocery store that is present in 35 states including Iowa. They take a cost effective approach that utilizes ALDI brand labels instead of national branding.

Commonwealth Electric has recently negotiated the power and controls work for multiple ALDI grocery stores. We have successfully completed the first store in Ankeny, Iowa. The remodel of the Fort Dodge store will begin mid-March with more stores starting the Summer of 2019.

These projects consist of new electrical service power walls that house all breakers, panels and relays to control refrigeration equipment. Our work also involves cabling and installing the controls in walk-in coolers, open display cases, alarm and monitoring equipment, and new roof-mounted condenser racks.

CECM is partnering with Marick, Inc. on these projects. Marick, Inc. has been active in the Des Moines' refrigeration and HVAC market since the mid-seventies. We are genuinely excited about this partnership and its prospects.

Project Foreman Brad Ramsey and 5th year apprentice Connor Findlay were key members of our field team and did a great job completing the Ankeny project.



We've Partnered With Planet Fitness & Hy-Vee On Our 12-Week Biggest Loser & Fitness Challenge

Jon Folkers - Business Development & Marketing



Lezlie Haddad, Hy-vee Dietician, presents to our group over catered-in lunch

Commonwealth Electric - Omaha, NE has partnered with Planet Fitness for our 12-Week Biggest Loser & Fitness Challenge. During this time, Planet Fitness is giving our contestants 2 months free membership to assist them in their quest to get fit. At the end of the 12-week challenge, Planet Fitness is also rewarding one winner with a free One-Year Membership!

We have also made some changes at the office to assist in this challenge: (i.e. vendors who used to bring donuts to treat our staff, are now requested to bring fresh fruit instead).

The winner of the 12-week challenge will be the contestant with the highest percentage of weight loss. Weigh-ins are done individually (honor system) each Monday. Contestants post their own weight for the day on a Leaderboard, created by Eric Hoge.

We were sensitive to the fact that each person would not want to share their personal weight with everyone, so each contestant created other names for themselves. I have listed the Top 3 Places (Highest % of Weight Loss) after Week 3 Weigh-Ins: 1st: Am I Losing It (-5.05%); 2nd Romance (-4.92%); 3rd Ready to Lose (-4.44%).

During this time, we also partnered with Hy-Vee, by inviting their Dietitian, Lezlie Haddad, to speak to our group on the importance of fitness & diet in our everyday lives. She was able to present and answer our questions as we ate lunch, catered from Hy-Vee. Lezlie selected our food for lunch of chicken & turkey wraps, pasta salad with fruit/veggie tray.

The diet & nutrition topics of discussion were vast and included: Portion sizes, good vs. not-so-good fats, protein, sugars, simple vs. complex carbs and how to read product labels - to name just a few. The presentation was more of a discussion vs. a presentation, and one that was appreciated by all in attendance.

This presentation technique kept us all engaged, as it pertained to the slide presented by Lezlie. Although the food was good, the presentation and the information packets Lezlie shared with us answering our questions was just as good.

We want to thank Hy-Vee and Planet Fitness for partnering with us to make our Biggest Loser Fitness Challenge a success. We also want to congratulate all participants for their leadership and enthusiasm during this event. You have proven to our group that we all have the ability to make a difference, whether it be mental or physical changes through fitness and diet.



Improving Campus Security *Continued from front page*

The On-site Project Manager for this job is Scott Lamoruex. The Site-Superintendent duties are Nate Fenn's responsibility. Currently Scott and Nate have approx. 8-10 guys working with them daily on campus to make the deadline date of August 2019. Strong administrative support from Rochelle Burr helps in the day-to-day communications with Scott and his team.

A total team effort is needed to keep a project with such a broad scope of work, as this one, on time and within budget. All divisions have helped this project be a success. Troy in pre-fab, Alex in shipping and Eric from engineering, have all assisted to ensure we are delivering a professional install to our customer. We've been able to deliver an install that is not providable by any other local contractor. Everyone involved, from the architect firm to the owner, have taken notice.

It's interesting to look back 3 years ago when our Security Manager, Clinton Stoffer, was working with IWCC providing them cameras and software support only. Over the next 3 years, Clinton's steadfast work and attention to detail, helped us understand IWCC needs better, while building a strong working relationship along the way. It's exciting to think what started with a simple phone call has grown into a valued customer of ours. Who knows what the future will bring!

Michael Lovelace Accepts New Opportunity in Des Moines

Danielle Thompson - Service Coordinator

After 12 years of being a Service electrician with us, Michael Lovelace decided to accept the role of Field Superintendent in the Des Moines office. Michael's new role will include facilitating job site manpower within our project teams, mentoring construction wiremen and apprentices, coordinating foreman trainings and keeping job site safety regulations up to date.

Michael has hit the ground running and has been actively visiting jobsites to observe job progress and to establish relationships with the field employees. Michael will also become the key contact to discuss opportunities with candidates that want to join the Commonwealth team. We are excited to have Michael in this role and know he will do an outstanding job!



UNMC Is Using Dual-Fuel Boilers For Economical & Redundancy Reasons

Jon Folkers - Business Developer & Marketing



4160 V Sub-Station:
shown here in its new
home (without cover)



Control panels for the
new control system

Commonwealth Electric – Omaha, NE recently finished working on a job for (UNMC) University of Nebraska Medical Center Central Utility Plant. The Utility Plant is located at 42nd and Emile Street. We worked as a sub under Mechanical, Inc. (previously Pitlor Mechanical) in Omaha, NE, to provide the electrical portion to this ten-month project. Our Omaha staff consisted of Scott Logan, Foreman and Coleman Wright, Apprentice. Assigned to overseeing the success of this project was David Hitz, Project Manager.

This project was performed in two phases. The first phase of the project was moving a 4160V sub-station, and then re-locating it to another part of the Central Utility Plant. We hired O'Brien Rigging to assist in the move. We thought this was going to be a big obstacle for us, but with the proper planning, correct personnel and good communication amongst all team members, the relocating of the substation was a success.

The second phase of the project was to install two underground fuel tanks, supplied by Mechanical, Inc. We performed the wiring of the fuel tanks to the newly installed control system for this project. UNMC also had three hot water dual-fuel boilers (natural gas/diesel) installed. The deciding factors to make the change to dual-fuel was made for future economical, efficiency and sustainability reasons. The ability to switchover from natural gas to diesel can be possible within one minute, and as simple as flipping a switch at peak periods. The ability to switchover at peak periods enables UNMC to get a better rate from utility companies. Research shows, that other plants in North America that have made the change to dual-fuel systems have seen gross profits increase up to 36% to 43% in a year!

Troy Savich, and his pre-fab shop team, helped in building the control panels for their new control system, as well as general pre-fab support. Our Engineering Services team also played a big part in the success of this project. Eric Hoge, and his staff ensured this project had the correct schematics and wiring diagrams for the control panels that we provided for the project. Our CECM team did a good job of ensuring that our drawings met the needs/expectations of UNMC Central Utility Plant project personnel.

We were encouraged by the outcome of this project, and we look forward to working with Mechanical, Inc. & UNMC on future projects. Mechanical, Inc. and UNMC were pleased with our performance and provided us with positive feedback regarding our planning abilities, providing the correct personnel for a successful job, and staying ahead of the work-plan.

“Where redundancy is required for critical heating processes, such as the ongoing operation of health care facilities, dual-fuel burners can provide an uninterrupted operation in the event of a primary fuel disruption.”

CECM ESOP Communications Committee's Continued Education

Cathy Maddox - HR/Benefits Administrator

Recently, members of the CECM ESOP Communications Committee attended the 2019 Iowa Nebraska Chapter of The ESOP Association Winter Conference held in Omaha. Those attending focused on sessions tied to culture and communications. Members heard from other ESOP companies and legal counsel on required communications and ESOP awareness within your company.

One session focused on the small things – “It’s the small things that make a big impact on our bottom line.” Continuous improvement programs encourage even the smallest of process changes to net huge time-savings and efficiencies – improving the ESOP bottom line. The smallest of employee appreciation can create improved self-worth, stronger, more empowered owners – which in turn reduces turnover cost – improving the ESOP bottom line. Small things add up in a big way. CECM management supports and encourages education for the Communications Committee because they know this will help grow and solidify a strong ESOP culture.



From the left: Dylan Busby, Des Moines; Malinda Christensen, Columbus;
Cathy Maddox, Lincoln Corporate; Micah Edson, Lincoln Branch
Cheryl Keyes, Omaha; Brian Lund, Omaha.
(Not shown but also attending, Dan Maca, Omaha)

Safety Training Pays

Todd Longenecker - Senior Safety Manager

There are many things that go into creating a safe work place and ensuring the safety of all employees at CECM. A major part of this is training. Over the past 2 years we have put on over 350 trainings on various topics such as First Aid/CPR, OSHA, MSHA, NFPA 70E, Lock out/Tag out and many more. Training is an ongoing requirement that we must keep up on, but most importantly it helps prevent accidents/injuries from happening. Without a constant emphasis on training we would essentially be crossing our fingers and hoping our employees go home safe every day. Instead, we are equipping our work force with the knowledge necessary to do their jobs safely and effectively every day, so they can go back home to their families the same way they showed up to work. This is apparent in our impressive EMR of .60 (lowest in CECM history) but there is always room for improvement. Only together can we continue to make sure Commonwealth Electric is one of the safest electrical contractors to work for and, our safety is regarded as one of the best in the industry.



Todd Longenecker Conducting Safety Training

*An educated and informed electrician is a safe electrician.
Commonwealth Electric Safety,
Sell it, Promote it, Be proud of it!*

Improvements at I2 Tech in Des Moines

Kelly Reames - Project Manager

This past year, Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest negotiated the latest phase of a multiyear improvement project working directly for Innovative Injection Technologies, Inc (I2 Tech). This facility operates 24/7 producing plastic components for agricultural, automotive and recreational equipment.

The electrical and low voltage scope of this project consisted of the installation of a networked electrical metering system that monitored all busways. In addition, a new 1200-amp 480-volt busway, LED lighting, power capabilities to operate a crane, cable tray, fiber-optic network, and communication cabling to I2 Tech's molding presses were also installed.

Key foremen for this project included Dustin Waage and Kevin Harris. On the safety front, Ruben Bera provided his expertise on the use of the scaffolding for the roof structure.

We are currently wrapping up this phase and looking forward to the expansion of I2 Tech's office building.