

Building strong communities through a well-trained workforce

A publication of the Oklahoma Municipal Alliance

April 2020

OMA's On-going Response to COVID-19 From Tom Rider, General Manager

As previously reported, the OMA office remains closed in compliance Governor Kevin Stitt's Executive Order as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We continue to have one person in the office to act as liaison, receive mail and other deliveries, and to act as a point of contact for any unanticipated actions. The remaining OMA staff is working from home and are available to you, our members. Email is still the best way to get hold of us. If you don't have the email for the person you need to contact, you can go to www.okmainc.com, select Contact Us and click on the person you need to get in touch with. If you need to call — call the office phone (405) 528-7564 and press the extension for the person you wish to talk with. We have forwarded our office phones so they will ring directly to our cell phones.

We know the challenges presented by the COVID-19 health event has impacted all aspects of our work lives has it has yours. We also understand many of you are working with skeleton staffs, so please know that we appreciate the work you are doing every day to keep the lights on and the water flowing.

A few updates:

- All OMA training at member sites and in our training room has been postponed through May 31. This is an extension from the previously announced date of April 30.
- The 2021 Public Power Conference will be April 25 27, 2021 in Norman, OK. The 2020 Public Power Conference initially scheduled for April 26-28, 2020 has been cancelled. We were unwilling to ask member municipalities to fund people to attend two conferences in the same budget year.
- OMA Annual Meeting has been postponed until October 23, 2020. More details will be shared as they
 become available.
- The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has suspended the July 1, 2020 deadline requirement for having four (4) hours of training to renew operator certification licenses. The grace period to not be assessed a late fee for renewal has been extended through September 30, 2020. As soon as travel restrictions are lifted, we'll work with DEQ and reschedule renewal training.
- Staff is developing 30-minute training sessions for JT&S training as well as other topics that should be of value to members. Once they are ready, we'll put them on the website.
- We are working on future training events including the OMA Fall Conference set for October 19-22 in Oklahoma City. The conference will have sessions for governing body members, senior staff, and topics for department personnel in electric, water and public works.
- We also will continue to send electronic updates on issues that are important to you. We know many of us receive too many emails, however we exercise caution and intentionally send emails of importance to you. We use Facebook to communicate many things, so please consider liking our page.
- We have put in place a Wednesday Weekly Message. Look for them in your email box, on our Facebook page and website.
- As soon as travel and meeting restrictions are lifted, our team will be in your cities at the first opportunity. Until then, we will work on your behalf on the information outlined above.

Let me ask this — how can we support you? What might we be able to do to help you as you diligently serve your customers? Please contact me at 405-528-7564 ext. 2 or by email at tom@okmainc.com.

Again, thank you. Each of you and all your fellow workers continue to work to provide the very best in utility and municipal services for your citizens. We know you'll continue to do so in the days ahead.

Take care of yourself, your family and your neighbors. We are all in this together.

Perry, Ponca City Our Local Power Champions

The City of Perry and the City of Ponca City were honored with the Our Local Power Champion award by Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority General Manager Dave Osburn at the Authority's Annual Meeting on March 12.

The award is intended to recognize the effort the cities have shown in communicating the benefits of the local electric utility to the community, including the utility's financial reinvestment in the community, grid reliability and local control.

The cities are two of 62 municipal electric utilities in Oklahoma. Perry has been an OMPA member since 1993, becoming the 34th of now 43 members, while Ponca City was one of the original 26 members, joining in 1985.

For more on Our Local Power, go to www.ourlocalpower.org.



Perry Clerk and OMPA Board member Dixie Johnson was in attendance to receive the award.



Receiving the award for Ponca City were Electric Superintendent Phil Johnston and Ponca City Mayor and OMPA Board member Homer Nicholson.



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OMPA Honored with National Award for Outstanding Safety Practices

OMPA has earned the American Public Power Association's Safety Award of Excellence for safe operating practices in 2019. The utility earned the first-place award in the category for utilities with 150,000 worker-hours of annual worker exposure.

"Strong safety programs are essential to ensuring that electric utility employees are informed and trained on safe work procedures," said Brandon Wylie, Chair of the Association's Safety Committee and Director of Training & Safety at Electric Cities of Georgia. "The utilities receiving this award have proven that protecting the safety of their employees is a top priority."

More than 335 utilities entered the annual Safety Awards, which is the highest number of entrants in the history of the program. Entrants were placed in categories according to their number of workerhours and ranked based on the most incident-free records during 2019. The incidence rate, used to judge entries, is based on the number of work-related reportable injuries or illnesses and the number of worker-hours during 2019, as defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

"OMPA is extremely proud of our safety record," said David Osburn, OMPA General Manager. "This award is a testament to the hard work that goes into ensuring that our team members go home safe to their families every day."

The Safety Awards have been held annually for the last 60 years. The American Public Power Association is the voice of not-for-profit, community-owned utilities that power 2,000 towns and cities nationwide.

GRDA Recognized for Exceptional Electric Reliability

For the second time in three years, the Grand River Dam Authority has received national recognition for achieving exceptional electric reliability. The recognition comes from the American Public Power Association, a trade group that represents more than 2,000 not-for-profit, community-owned electric utilities.

The association helps electric utilities track power outage and restoration data through its subscription-based eReliability Tracker service and then compares the data to national statistics tracked by the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) for all types of electric utilities.

"Community-owned public power utilities have an excellent record when it comes to reliability," said

the Association's Senior Director of Energy and Environmental Services Alex Hofmann. "These utilities are the best of the best when it comes to keeping the lights on in their communities."

Nationwide, the average public power customer has their lights out for less than half the time, compared to other types of utilities.

"GRDA is proud to receive this recognition from APPA. It reflects well on the efforts of our team to maintain reliability. It also reflects on the commitment GRDA has made to our customers and the standard that public power sets across the country," said GRDA Chief Executive Officer Dan Sullivan. "The reliable delivery of electricity is always a top GRDA priority."

(see GRDA, page 4)

OMA Begins Weekly Safety Message Program

Your safety is our #1 priority. Each week, on Wednesdays, we'll be posting short safety tips and reminders. We are sending these out by email and posting to our Facebook page. As you perform your day-to-day functions for the citizens of your community, please remember to do all things safely.

Be aware of worker fatigue.

Long work hours and irregular work shifts are common. Work schedules like these may cause fatigue and increase the risk of injury. Studies show long work hours can result in increased stress, poor eating habits, lack of physical activity, and illness. The link below will help you learn more about recognizing

and reducing symptoms of worker fatigue. <u>Click here to learn more about worker fatigue</u>.

Be aware of workplace violence.

Workplace violence includes physical threats, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening, disruptive behavior. Unfortunately, it ranges from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and even homicide. It is reasonable employers offer working conditions free of a risk of harm from a coworker or a customer. Here are some tips to keep your workplace safe. Click here to learn more about workplace violence.

We are all in this together. Your safety is our #1 priority.

Gov. Stitt announces Ready. Help. Go. Volunteer Readiness Program

Oklahomans encouraged to register for future volunteer opportunities to empower the state's COVID-19 recovery

Governor Kevin Stitt announced the launch of a new volunteer initiative that will connect courageous Oklahomans to volunteer opportunities in their communities, once health professionals determine it is safe and appropriate to do so.

The program, called Ready. Help. Go., provides a place for Oklahomans to offer their hand in future volunteer opportunities. Ready. Help. Go.'s first phase will focus on gathering information about willing volunteers and their skill sets and is intended to support communities throughout the state through the COVID-19 response and beyond.

Oklahomans who want to volunteer can visit readyhelpgo.org and fill out a quick form with their contact information, skills and interests. In future phases, once health professionals determine it is safe to mobilize volunteers, the program will assess where help is needed most and send emails to volunteers letting them know about personalized opportunities near them.

"Every Oklahoman can help from home by filling out the form," said Gov. Stitt. "Our state is facing an unprecedented crisis, but the Oklahoma Standard is to step up when things get tough. Let's be good neighbors during this trying time and start planning for recovery."

Ready. Help. Go. is a collaboration between Gov. Stitt and the Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

"Our goal with Ready. Help. Go. is to help people to direct their energy into safe, appropriate volunteer opportunities to lift up their neighbors," said Secretary of Human Services and Early Childhood Initiatives Justin Brown. "The Department of Human Services has the right partners to connect volunteers with opportunities that fit their talents. Right now, we're asking Oklahomans to help us get ready by signing up from the safety of their home."

The public rollout and enrollment of volunteers for the Ready. Help. Go. campaign will include a paid digital media effort along with public service announcements. Purchased media was supported in-full by the Arnall Family Foundation, the George Kaiser Family Foundation and the Inasmuch Foundation.

"We are grateful for these great foundations who saw the need in their communities and are willing to help us promote this effort," said Sec. Brown.

For more information about Ready. Help. Go., please <u>visit www.readyhelpgo.org</u>.

GRDA (continued from page 3)

GRDA received the recognition primarily for its reliability record among its distribution customers in the MidAmerica Industrial Park. Based on EIA data, GRDA ranks in the top quartile (25 percent) of utilities for System Average Interruption Duration Index (SAIDI). GRDA also received this recognition in 2018. In April 2019, APPA also designated GRDA as a platinum level Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) utility.

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Wind, Solar, Natural Gas Dominate Capacity in Development

From the American Public Power Association By Susan Partain

Wind, solar, and natural gas are the three dominant sources in the development pipeline for electricity generation in the US, according to a report from the American Public Power Association.

<u>America's Electricity Generating Capacity, 2020 Update</u> is the Association's 14th annual look at the country's current and future capacity.

Wind, natural gas, and solar projects account for 94% of all capacity under construction, which is consistent with additions over the past five years, of which 97% came from these three resources.

Boost in wind construction

Wind represents the highest share of capacity under construction, with 19,597 MW, which is more than 8,000 MW more than the wind capacity listed as under construction in 2019. The <u>Energy Information Administration</u> cites the production tax credit set to expire at the end of this year as a major reason for this boost. The boost also represents a jump of wind's capacity from about 31% to nearly 42% of capacity under construction from 2019 to 2020.

The amount of solar capacity under construction also more than doubled from 2019 to 2020, from 4,685 MW to 9,967 MW.

Fewer overall capacity additions, less variety

While both wind and solar are projected to increase capacity additions, overall capacity additions went down by about 11,500 MW from 2018 to 2019, or about a 40% reduction in these additions.

The report also shows that when compared to 2015, the fuel sources in each stage of development in 2020 are less varied. The report shows that in 2020, wind and solar capacity across development stages has begun to look roughly equal to natural gas, however, sources such nuclear and hydro feature less in the pipeline.

Coal retiring, largely absent from development pipeline

This is the first time the report has shown no coal capacity either under construction, permitted, or pending application. There are 77 megawatts of coal-fired capacity in the proposed stage, which is an uncertain stage and includes capacity that is unlikely to be built. This same amount of capacity was also in the planning stage in 2019.

In 2019, one 17 MW coal generation facility came online in Alaska, representing the sole addition for the source that year. More than 3,800 MW in planned coal-fired capacity additions were canceled in 2019.

Coal-fired plants represented more than three quarters of the capacity that retired in 2019, with 13,666 MW taken offline. Natural gas and nuclear plants represented the bulk of the remaining retirements, with more than 1,600 MW each.

Looking ahead for the next five years, coal, natural gas, and nuclear resources comprise more than 90% of announced retirements through 2024.

Distributed generation

Although most of the report focuses on utility-scale generation, this year's report also includes a summary of EIA data related to distributed generation capacity from 2018. Across both net metered and nonnet metered customers, the EIA reports more than 22,639 MW of DG capacity, the overwhelming majority (20,097 MW) of which is solar PV. At the end of 2018, more than 2 million residential, commercial, and industrial customers had DG that was net metered.



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Water Organizations Seek Applications for Utility of the Future Today Recognition Program

From the WateReuse Association

The application period is open for the Utility of the Future Today recognition program, which seeks to honor water resource recovery facilities for community engagement, watershed stewardship, and recovery of resources such as water, energy, and nutrients.

The Utility of the Future Today concept is being promoted as water systems transform operations through innovation and technology. The Utility of the Future is a model for utilities of all sizes to achieve more efficient operations, enhanced productivity, and long-term sustainability. Since the program launched in 2016, 118 utilities have been recognized with the honor.

The Utility of the Future activity areas focus on the key building blocks of this transformation:

- · recovery and new uses of a range of resources;
- engagement as a leader in the full water cycle and broader social, economic, and environmental sustainability of the community;

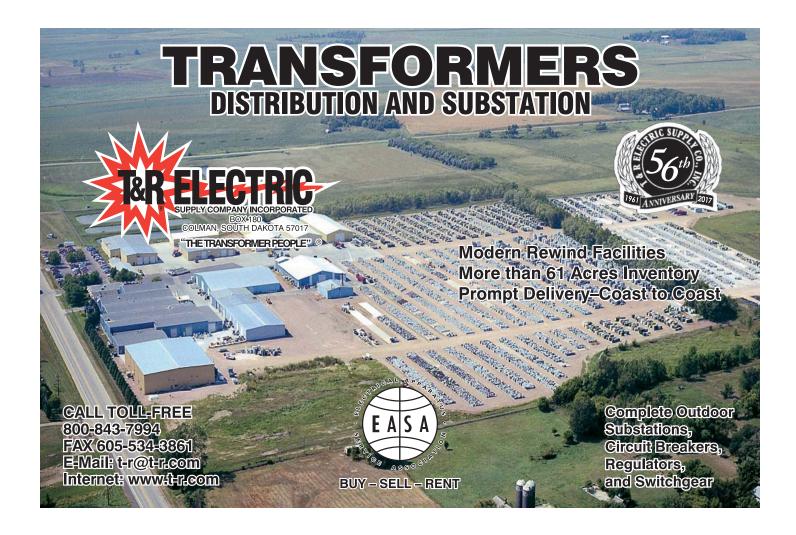
- engagement in the community and formation of partnerships necessary for success when operating outside of the traditional span of the utility; and
- transformation of the internal utility culture in support of these innovations.

Public and private water sector utilities of all sizes that can demonstrate achievement of the application requirements are encouraged to apply by May 29 at 5 p.m. EDT. Applicants must have no major permit violations in the year prior to the submission date of their applications.

Honorees will be notified during the summer and formally recognized during an awards ceremony at WEFTEC 2020—the Water Environment Federation's 93rd annual technical exhibition and conference—this October in New Orleans.

Since the Utility of the Future concept was introduced in 2013, many utilities have successfully

(see WATER ORGANIZATIONS, page 8)





CORONAVIRUS vs. COLD vs. FLU vs. ALLERGIES

SYMPTOMS	COVID-19*	COLD	FLU	ALLERGIES
Fever	Common (100F or higher)	Rare	High (100-102F, can last 3-4 days)	No
Headache	Sometimes	Rare	Intense	Sometimes
General aches, pains	Sometimes	Slight	Common (often severe)	No
Fatigue, weakness	Sometimes	Slight	Common (often severe)	Sometimes
Extreme exhaustion	Sometimes (progresses slowly)	Never	Common (starts early)	No
Stuffy nose	Rare	Common	Sometimes	Common
Sneezing	Rare	Common	Sometimes	Common
Sore throat	Rare	Common	Common	No
Cough	Common	Mild to moderate	Common (can become severe)	Sometimes
Shortness of breath	In more serious infections	Rare	Rare	Common
Runny nose	Rare	Common	Sometimes	Common
Diarrhea	Sometimes	No	Sometimes**	No

^{*} Information is still evolving ** Sometimes for children







INFORMATION + UPDATES CORONAVIRUS.HEALTH.OK.GOV CALL CENTER: 877-215-8336 OR 2-1-1

What We Can Do Today to Limit the Spread of the COVID-19 Virus:

- Clean and disinfect regularly
- Be diligent of surroundings and to increase hand washing and personal hygiene techniques
- Adopt a "no hand-shake" policy
- · Practice "social distancing" by keeping a 6-foot space between individuals when interacting
- Use telephone calls, video conferencing and/or email will replace "face-to-face" meetings
- Restrict workplaces to essential staff and service providers only
- · Self-isolate anyone who has been in proximity to anyone suspected or confirmed having the virus for 14 days.

COVID-19 Resources:

- Centers for Disease Control
- Oklahoma State Department of Health

- American Public Power Association COVID-19 Update Page
- Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management
- · Gov. Stitt's Website
- American Gas Association COVID-19 Update Page
- American Water Works Association COVID-19 Resources Page
- Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration Home Page
- US Department of Labor OSHA COVID-19 **Update Page**
- FEMA Coronavirus Rumor Control
- National Governors Association COVID-19 Update
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration COVID-19 Update Page

Groups Seek Testing, PPE Prioritization from Mission Essential Workers

From the American Public Power Association
By Paul Ciampoli

The American Public Power Association and several other energy industry trade associations and unions on April 3 sent a letter to organizations representing state and local governments asking them to give mission-essential workers a higher priority when it comes to testing and personal protective equipment (PPE) as the country grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Given the indispensable nature of the energy our members and federal electric utilities produce and deliver, it is vital that they be able to continue their work to ensure electric and natural gas service remains safe and reliable throughout this unprecedented health emergency," the <u>letter</u> said.

"To accomplish this, we are asking for your help and that of your members in recognizing that there is a limited number of highly skilled, mission-essential workers who serve on our frontlines and who need priority access to personal protective equipment (PPE) and testing."

The letter was sent to the Council of State Governments, International City/Council Management Association, National Association of Counties, National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, National Council of State Legislatures, National Governors Association, National League of Cities, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

APPA and the power sector acknowledge that healthcare workers should have first access to personal protective equipment.

APPA and the other energy groups and unions "acknowledge and appreciate that many state, local, territorial, and tribal leaders already have adopted the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS's) guidance on Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers, which

was designed to help leaders appropriately prioritize critical infrastructure operators to ensure 'continuity of functions critical to the public health and safety, as well as economic and national security," the letter went on to say.

The DHS guidance "was a good first step, and has allowed critical construction, maintenance, and power restoration projects to continue in many jurisdictions."

APPA and the other energy groups and unions are now asking for additional assistance that is consistent with a memo that the National Governors Association sent to its members on March 25 on the challenges the energy industry is facing.

"Specifically, we need your support in helping mission-essential employees -- those who operate power generation facilities, staff the control rooms that serve as the 'nerve centers' for transmission and distribution networks, and maintain the system and do emergency repairs as necessary -- to be treated as a higher priority," the letter said.

"This is particularly important in emergency situations when workers must enter customers' residences or businesses and as some of our members are going to the extraordinary measure of sequestering this workforce or decentralizing their operations to limit the impact a positive case would have on this category of workers."

Along with APPA, the following energy groups and unions signed on to the letter:

- · Edison Electric Institute
- Electric Power Supply Association
- National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
- Nuclear Energy Institute
- American Gas Association
- American Public Gas Association
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
- North America's Building Trades Unions
- United Brotherhood of Carpenters
- · Joiners Utility Workers Union of America

Water Organizations

(continued from page 6)

implemented new and creative programs to address local wastewater technical and community challenges. The recognition program was launched in 2016 by the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), the Water Environment Federation (WEF),

The Water Research Foundation (WRF), and the WateReuse Association —with input from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

To learn more, visit the <u>Utility of the Future</u> Recognition Program website.



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