



COMMITTED TO OKLAHOMA'S  
MUNICIPAL PROFESSIONALS

A publication of the Oklahoma Municipal Alliance

August 2019

## OMA Conducts First Confined Space Basics Training Session

OMA presented its first Confined Space Basics training session – for municipal water professionals – August 6 in Prague and second session in Checotah August 7.

The “Confined Space Basics” course covers the proper usage of equipment required for entry into a qualified confined space. Participants will review proper entry techniques, observe the proper setup of equipment, and can practice a limited entry.

Sessions currently scheduled include:

- September 4 – El Reno
- October 9 & 10 – Weatherford
- November 5 – McAlester

- November 6 – Norman
- November 7 – Collinsville
- November 13 – Perkins
- December 4 – Blanchard
- December 5 – Woodward

The training will qualify for four hours of Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality re-certification training for individuals holding an ODEQ water or wastewater license.

Seating is limited to 30 for each session. To register for any location, go to the OMA website — [www.okmainc.com](http://www.okmainc.com).

(see **CONFINED SPACES** , page 6)



## Judges Needed for the 2019 MESO Lineworkers Rodeo and Safety Training

The 2019 MESO Lineworkers Rodeo and Safety Training returns to Ponca City September 25 and 26, and judges are needed to help at the event.

Registration for competitors is available at [www.okmainc.com](http://www.okmainc.com). In order to be guaranteed a rodeo t-shirt, please register by the September 15, 2019 deadline. To volunteer at the event, email Deborah Gonzales at [deborah@okmainc.com](mailto:deborah@okmainc.com) or Tom Dougherty at [tomd@okmainc.com](mailto:tomd@okmainc.com).

The 2019 event will offer training sessions by Performed Line Products® covering Lineman Best Practices and Care, Maintenance & Testing of HV

Live Line Tools presented by Matt Tiffie and Doug Osborn with Fred Oberlender and Associates, Inc.

New for 2019 is a dedicated rodeo hotel. Anyone participating or attending the Rodeo can include a room with their registration. The cost for Training and Competing is \$159 per person. To compete only is \$85 and to only attend the training sessions is \$79.

All guests for Wednesday Lunch and Thursday Awards Luncheon need to pre-register, so please make sure you register your co-workers, friends and family who may be joining us.

(see **JUDGES NEEDED**, page 10)

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## UPCOMING OMA & AMERICAN PUBLIC POWER EVENTS

### **MESO Lineworkers Rodeo and Safety Training**

September 25 – 26, 2019  
Ponca City, Oklahoma

### **American Public Power Association Customer Connections Conference**

October 27 – 30, 2019  
New Orleans, Louisiana

### **Disaster Management for Electric Power Systems**

October 22 – 23, 2019  
Edmond, Oklahoma

### **ON-GOING PROGRAMS:**

#### **Electric Supervisor Development (ESD) Sessions**

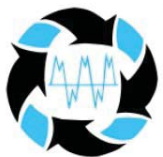
- Tuesday, October 1, 2019
  - Tuesday, December 3, 2019
- OMA Training Center, Okla. City

### **Supervisor Short Course**

Day 1 – August 20, 2019  
Day 2 – September 10, 2019  
Day 3 – September 24, 2019  
Day 4 – October 8, 2019  
Day 5 – October 24, 2019  
Day 6 – November 12, 2019

### **Confined Space Basics**

September 4 – El Reno  
October 9 & 10 – Weatherford  
November 6 – Norman  
November 7 – Collinsville  
November 13 – Perkins  
December 4 – Blanchard  
December 5 – Woodward



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## Understanding the Oklahoma's Medical Marijuana Mystery "Hiring in General"

*(Part one of a three-part series)*

By Suzanne Paulson, General Counsel, Oklahoma  
Municipal Assurance Group

By a vote of the people, medical marijuana became legal in Oklahoma in 2018, and earlier this year the Oklahoma Legislature passed legislation, which is now law to provide clarity, particularly for employers. In a series of three articles, we will try to provide further insight.

This three-article series will focus on "Hiring in General;" "Hiring CDL Drivers and Safety Sensitive Positions;" and "Job Applications and Job Descriptions" and will hopefully help unlock the "Medical Marijuana Mystery."

When "HIRING IN GENERAL," would you ask an applicant about race, religion, etc.? Of course, not. Both federal and state laws prohibit employers from using that information to make a hiring decision, and those pieces of information are irrelevant to hiring decisions. The simple rule is "job applicants should

not be asked to provide information that cannot be used as a lawful basis for making a hiring decision.

The Oklahoma Medical Marijuana statutes (OMM statutes) created a new protected class - Medical Marijuana license holders. The new law prohibits an employer from making an employment decision (hiring, promotion, discipline, benefits) based on an individual's status as a license holder unless the employer can show an imminent threat of losing some federal financial or other benefit.

The OMM statutes also prohibit an employer from making a hiring decision based solely on the fact that a license holder-applicant tested positive for marijuana on a pre-employment drug test unless that position qualifies as safety-sensitive. This protection only applies to license holders who test positive for marijuana. Applicants who do not possess a license are not protected if they test positive for marijuana. The protection does not apply to applicants who test positive for other substances.

*(see HIRING IN GENERAL, page 10)*



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## Register Today for the Supervisor Short Course

Are you needing to develop important leadership and supervisor skills designed to address today's workplace challenges?

If the answer is "yes," the Supervisor Short Course is for you.

"We have great people working among our membership," said Tom Rider, General Manager. "This program is designed to provide supervisors much needed skills to be successful."

Recognizing employees often move "up the ladder" with limited specific leadership skills training, it is important to note supervisors become effective when they:

- Establish the work group's values and standards based on their character.
- Develop their workers into self-starters who are committed to the organization's success.
- Constantly push for performance excellence through a positive approach and support.
- Communicate effectively with the multigenerational talent within every work group.

The program's 12 discussion courses focus on specific aspects of supervisory responsibility in the areas of — Management, Workforce Development, Communication and Performance Success Designed with flexibility in mind for today's busy worker, participants can complete the course at their own pace.

For example, a participant may complete some sessions in 2019 and the remaining sessions when the program returns in 2020. For recognition of course completion, a participant must complete all 12 sessions. Participants who complete all 12 sessions will be recognized with a certificate acknowledging their effort and commitment.

### Sessions and dates:

#### Day 1 – August 20

Session 1 - Understanding the Importance of Character & Ethics

Session 2 – The Roles of a Supervisor

#### Day 2 – September 10

Session 3 – The Power of Respect for Others

Session 4 – Developing Responsible Workers

#### Day 3 – September 24

Session 5 – Establishing a Change Mentality

Session 6 – Dealing with Conflict

#### Day 4 – October 8

Session 7 – Communicating Effectively

Session 8 – Project Management

#### Day 5 – October 24

Session 9 – Speaking before Groups

Session 10 – Effective Business Writing

#### Day 6 – November 12

Session 11 – Performance Management

Session 12 – Delegating

To learn more about the Supervisor Short Course, click here: [Details about the Supervisor Short Course](#).

To register, click here: [Supervisor Short Course Registration](#).

Tom Rider, General Manager, will present the course. Questions may be directed to him at [tom@okmainc.com](mailto:tom@okmainc.com). Registration questions are to be directed to Deborah Gonzales at [deborah@okmainc.com](mailto:deborah@okmainc.com).

## 2019 OMA Lineworkers Rodeo & Safety Training

September 25-26, 2019

Ponca City, Oklahoma

Register today at [www.okmainc.com](http://www.okmainc.com)



## Changes to OMPA CUP Being Studied by Committee

Discussion on overhauling the Competitive Utility Program (CUP) began at a CUP Oversight Committee meeting at OMPA offices in Edmond on July 18.

CUP was formed in 1995 as a best-practices program that provides incentives to OMPA members. It has been popular for its annual distribution of \$20,000 checks to those who certify, in addition to a chance to shave power bills during winter months. However, at the board retreat in the spring, the Board of Directors decided that it might be time to make significant changes to the program as a way to encourage cities and towns that have never been certified to do so.

All changes recommended by the CUP Oversight Committee will need to be approved by the Board of Directors.

One of the most-discussed changes involves making the awards tiered, certifying members on three different levels, depending on what qualifications they meet.

The concept would be similar to the American Public Power Association's RP3 Program, which has three levels of certification. The lower-level tiers would have easier qualifications, but less financial reward. As qualifications get more difficult, the reward level would rise.

Staff was also tasked at the board retreat with finding ways to make CUP less complex and to lessen some of the criteria required. Items related to that, discussed at the committee meeting, included having OMPA take over the task of customer surveys for all of the members and purchasing the APPA's eReliability Program to help them track outages.

For the programs section of CUP, suggestions have been made to find a way to add additional energy services programs and optional programs to reflect changes in the industry. Some of these include cybersecurity, different rate structures and emerging innovations.

Changes are also expected in training requirements, including the requirement that cybersecurity training be part of it.

The committee also discussed making all of the advertising eligible for matched advertising to be related to the Our Local Power campaign, replacing the requirement to advertise energy-efficiency programs.

In addition, changes are expected to be made to some of the advanced metrics CUP-certified cities and towns can meet.

The CUP Oversight Committee is expected to meet several times, before it brings all of its recommendations to the Board, with the expectation that the new manual will be adopted by the start of 2020.

To sign up to volunteer for the  
2019 MESO Lineworkers  
Rodeo and Safety Training  
**September 25 – 26, 2019 • Ponca City**

email Tom Dougherty at [tomd@okmainc.com](mailto:tomd@okmainc.com)  
or Deborah Gonzales at [deborah@okmainc.com](mailto:deborah@okmainc.com)

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Universal Field Services, Inc.  
Utilismart Corporation  
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## OMPA Dedicates Perry Substation

To honor his dedicated service to Perry and its electric system, the Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority (OMPA) officially named the electric substation that serves the city the “Earl Dean Hicks Substation” in a ceremony in Perry.

Hicks, who passed in March at the age of 80, was a long-time advocate of Public Power. He displayed that commitment during his time as a city councilman in Perry – including a stint at the time of his passing and another from 1984-1987 – as well as during his many years while working for the city.

Hicks played a crucial role in agreeing with the OMPA to serve as the city’s wholesale power supplier in 1994, while also ensuring that the city’s electric distribution system received much-needed reliability improvements shortly thereafter.

“Earl played a key role in bringing Perry into the OMPA family. His thorough, detailed analysis helped to show the city that OMPA was the best option for Perry, then and now. OMPA is pleased to name this substation in his honor,” OMPA General Manager Dave Osburn said.

The substation is located south of the city off Old CCC Highway. It is one of 16 owned by the Authority across the state. It received an upgrade in 2014, with more than \$300,000 spent.

“He is the father of the modern-day Perry electric system,” state Sen. Chuck Hall, former mayor of Perry, said at the substation dedication ceremony. “For 26 years, he constantly remained vigilant in what was



important to the community in Perry. I believe that Earl Hicks was the most selfless public servant that Perry has ever seen and will ever see.”

Perry is one of 62 Public Power communities in Oklahoma. All enjoy the benefits of local control, local crews to respond to outages in a timely manner and the financial reinvestment that an electric system provides to its community. These were concepts Hicks understood, according to a resolution passed by OMPA in April, allowing for the naming of the substation.

“Earl Dean Hicks was a leader for decades in advancing the cause of Public Power and the business interests of both the City of Perry, Oklahoma and the OMPA, and deserves a fitting tribute and memorial,” the resolution read.

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## Confined Spaces Workshop

*(continued from page 1)*

Questions about the training sessions are to be directed to Tom Rider — who will be presenting the training — at [tom@okmainc.com](mailto:tom@okmainc.com). Registration questions can be directed to Deborah Gonzales at [deborah@okmainc.com](mailto:deborah@okmainc.com).

Municipalities wishing to host the training should contact Kelly Danner at [kelly@okmainc.com](mailto:kelly@okmainc.com) or call, (405) 528-7564, ext. 7.





## Okla. Co-located Facility Includes 200-MW, Four-hour Battery Storage

*From the American Public Power Association*

By Paul Ciampoli

Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (W FEC) on July 23 said it has entered into a power purchase agreement with a subsidiary of NextEra Energy Resources for a combined wind, solar and energy storage project.

W FEC said the combined wind, solar and energy storage project is the first of its kind announced in the Southwest Power Pool, the electric grid region that includes Oklahoma and 13 other states in the central U.S. covering 546,000 square miles.

It is also the largest co-located wind, solar and energy storage project in the U.S., according to W FEC.

The project will come online in two phases:

- Skeleton Creek Wind (previously announced): 250 MW of wind energy, expected to begin operations by the end of 2019;
- Skeleton Creek Solar: 250 MW of solar energy, expected to begin operations by the end of 2023;
- Skeleton Creek Storage – 200 MW, 4-hour battery energy storage project, expected to begin operations by the end of 2023.

W FEC said the Skeleton Creek wind, solar and energy storage projects, once commercial, will help further diversify W FEC's generation portfolio to consist of 521 MW of solar generation: 955 MW of wind generation and 270 MW of hydroelectric generation.

Also, when completed, some 50 percent of W FEC nameplate capacity will include facilities generating electricity by wind, solar or hydroelectric power.

W FEC noted that it purchases or produces energy from various wind and solar resources. "However, W FEC has not historically, nor may not in the future, retain or retire all of the renewable energy certificates associated with the energy production from these facilities."

W FEC is a generation and transmission cooperative that provides electric service to 21 member cooperatives, Altus Air Force Base in Oklahoma and other power users. The members are located primarily in Oklahoma and New Mexico, with some service territories extending into portions of Texas and Kansas.

## Metering Basics Held in Edmond

A wide range of municipal professionals attend the OMA/ MESO Metering Basics training July 17 in Edmond. The training began with single phase meter application and moved through all aspects of metering field — self-contained and CT metering.

Topics covered included:

- Metering Terminology
- Selecting the Correct Meter
- Demand/TOU Metering
- Software Programming Overview

Larry "the Old Guy" Chapman, who founded Chapman Metering, presented the training.

### Session attendees included:

#### City of Blackwell

Brian Brown  
Dale Moulton  
Eric Gove  
Ivan Trevizo  
Trudy Rowe

#### City of Duncan

Colton Ballard  
Jaramie Wilson

#### City of Edmond

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#### City of Stroud

Bobby Clark

#### City of Waynoka

Michael Jones  
Mike Perot  
Wes Brogan

## Team GRDA's Summertime Crew

They come from several different backgrounds and several different hometowns. Some are familiar faces around the Grand River Dam Authority, others are being introduced to the organization for the first time. However, all of them, at least for a few months in the summer, become part of Team GRDA. They mow the grass, paint the walls, work in the offices, patrol the waters and help in many other ways during this time.

Of course, we are talking about GRDA's summer employees. Comprised mostly of students who will be back in the classroom next month, this special workforce plays an important role during what can be a very busy time of the year. With multiple facilities, crews, departments and responsibilities spread across a wide area of Oklahoma, GRDA depends on the many contributions of its summertime team members.

And the benefits go both ways. While the summer employees and interns earn a paycheck, they also garner some valuable work experience in offices,

water labs, power plants and along Oklahoma lakes and rivers. It is a chance to get an up-close look at the many careers and tasks within GRDA. For some, it is a sneak peek at the very career they are studying for in college or tech school. For others, who are actually filling summer intern positions, it is a chance to earn college credit and experience. In fact, at the July board meeting, GRDA approved an interagency agreement with the University of Oklahoma that will help support the work of graduate and undergraduate students working on water-quality research projects on GRDA waters.

Team GRDA is proud to welcome its summer crew each year. The contributions made by these employees help to carry on the important GRDA mission to deliver affordable, reliable electricity, focus on efficiency and remain committed to environmental stewardship. Like our full-time Team GRDA, the summer employees are among GRDA's most valuable assets.



Register today for  
**Disaster Management  
for Electric Power Systems**

**October 22 – 23, 2019**

Edmond, Oklahoma

To learn more, click here: [Disaster Management for Electric Power Systems](#)



## City of Edmond & UCO Receive Grants for EV Charging Stations

The City of Edmond and the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) have been awarded two grants totaling \$50,505.60 to install ten public and workplace Level 2, dual charging stations for electric vehicles. The grant partnership was made possible because of a common interest in providing these amenities to Edmond residents and students.

“Electric Vehicles reduce emissions and save you money. These sites will also be powered by 100% domestic wind energy through Edmond Electric and the OMPA. The current plan is to have the stations in place before the end of October,” said Phil Jones, City of Edmond Sustainability Planner.

These two grants were received in coordination with the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) Clean Air Public Fleet Grant (\$25,138.60), and the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality 2019 Charge OK Grant Program (\$25,367.00).

“UCO has long been committed to infrastructure upgrades that encourage sustainability. We’re happy to partner with the City to implement EV infrastructure for students, faculty, staff, and visitors who drive electric, and continue our tradition of promoting sustainable initiatives on campus and in our students’ lives,” said Eric Hemphill, UCO Manager-Sustainability and Alternative Transportation.

The four locations chosen in the grants are at Mitch Park near the Senior Center and trails, the Service-Blake Soccer Complex, the City First Administration Building in downtown, and the UCO Nigh Center Visitor Parking Lot. Additional future public stations



are being planned by Edmond Electric and currently include Show Biz Cinemas and the future Edmond Tennis Center on 15th Street. Edmond locations will be registered with the Alternative Fuel Data Center station locator tool at [www.afdc.energy.gov](http://www.afdc.energy.gov).

In addition to the City of Edmond, OnCue was also awarded money through the Charge OK Grant Program for a Level 3 fast charging station in Edmond. “OnCue is excited to have been awarded four Level 3 Fast Charging Stations, including the store on the southwest corner of 15th and I-35 in Edmond.

## Free Cybersecurity Monitoring for 1-Year

American Public Power Association has secured a Department of Energy (DOE) grant to make available FREE cybersecurity monitoring of members’ IT/OT networks for a year – this offer is available to the first 50 utilities that sign up so don’t wait!

The American Public Power Association is committed to making member utilities more resilient and secure. Under this DOE grant program, utilities will receive cyber threat alerts that are detected on their network, phone support to help understand the threats and actions to take, as well as insights into cyber threats affecting other public power utilities and guidance on proactive steps to take to protect against these. The Association is also planning to collect anonymously the alert data from program participants, aggregate it and share it with its members to share

insights into common threats and recommended preventative actions to reduce risk.

The Association has selected to work with N-Dimension Solutions, a cybersecurity partner of Hometown Connections, to help collect and analyze the cyber alert data, and provide phone support to utilities to understand the data and remediation steps.

Don’t wait to take action until after your utility has been compromised — act now! Learn more about this exciting program and sign-up today for this American Public Power/DOE cybersecurity grant.

For more information or to apply for the grant, please contact Nathan Mitchell, American Public Power Association, at [nmitchell@publicpower.org](mailto:nmitchell@publicpower.org) or Scott Mossbrooks, N-Dimension, at [scott.mossbrooks@n-dimension.com](mailto:scott.mossbrooks@n-dimension.com).



## Hiring in General

(continued from page 3)

The best-practice advice currently is to avoid asking applicants if they possess a Medical Marijuana license during the hiring process. Exceptions to this advice would include: 1) if an applicant tests positive for marijuana then you would need to know if they had been issued a license, and 2) the position is safety-sensitive or if possession of a license would legally preclude the applicant from obtaining some required certification or license or otherwise preclude them from being hired for the position (e.g. CDL drivers).

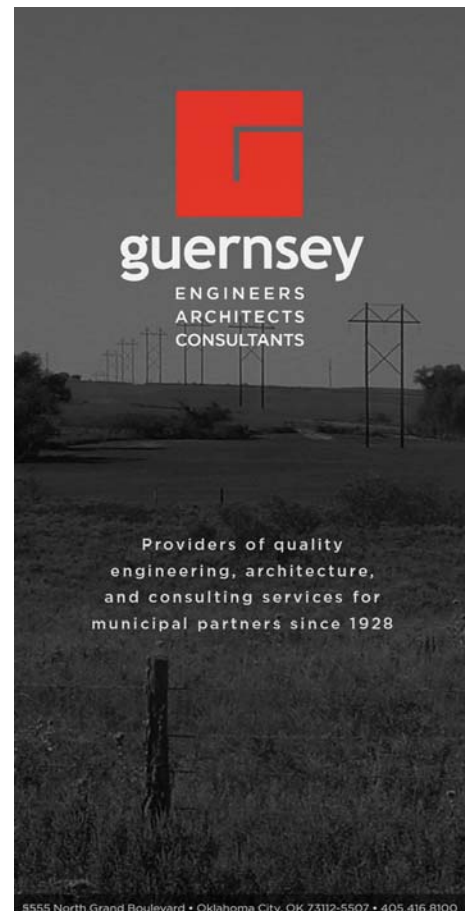
**DISCLAIMER:** OMAG members seeking advice on the medical marijuana statutes should be aware that there may not be clear-cut answers on some of the issues. OMAG offers this guidance to help your municipality make informed decisions about policies and procedures, directly or indirectly related to medical marijuana, until some of the issues can be decided by the Legislature or the Courts.

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## Judges Needed (continued from page 1)

Individual Rodeo T-Shirts are available by pre-order and limited quantities will be on sale at the event.

Follow rodeo activities, ask questions, etc. at the MESO Annual Lineworkers Rodeo Facebook page.



The advertisement for T&amp;R Electric Supply Company is set against an aerial photograph of a large industrial facility with numerous buildings and a vast parking lot filled with cars. The main headline 'TRANSFORMERS DISTRIBUTION AND SUBSTATION' is in large, bold, black letters with a white outline. To the left is the T&amp;R Electric logo, which features a red starburst shape with the text 'T&amp;R ELECTRIC' inside. Below the logo, it says 'SUPPLY COMPANY, INCORPORATED', 'BOX 180', 'COLMAN, SOUTH DAKOTA 57017', and 'THE TRANSFORMER PEOPLE' with a registered trademark symbol. To the right of the main headline is a circular anniversary seal that reads 'T&amp;R ELECTRIC SUPPLY CO. INC.', '56th', '1961 ANNIVERSARY 2017'. Below the seal, the text 'Modern Rewind Facilities', 'More than 61 Acres Inventory', and 'Prompt Delivery-Coast to Coast' is displayed. In the bottom left corner, contact information is listed: 'CALL TOLL-FREE 800-843-7994', 'FAX 605-534-3861', 'E-Mail: t-r@t-r.com', and 'Internet: www.t-r.com'. In the bottom center is the EASA logo, which is a globe with 'EASA' in the center and 'ELECTRICAL APPARATUS ASSOCIATION' around the perimeter. Below the EASA logo is the text 'BUY - SELL - RENT'. In the bottom right corner, the text 'Complete Outdoor Substations, Circuit Breakers, Regulators, and Switchgear' is listed.





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