

LIVELines

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2016-2017 MEUW JT&S Program kicks off on September 6 with Overhead Sessions in Eagle River and Stoughton

The 2016-2017 MEUW Job Training & Safety Program will kick off on September 6th with Overhead Sessions in Eagle River and Stoughton. An additional 24 Overhead Sessions have been scheduled for September and early October around the state.

The Overhead Session provides trainees with the opportunity to work as a crew to complete an overhead task. Attendees will receive a detailed job briefing, learn various techniques to complete tasks, and practice how to coordinate as a team to complete a job. The session will be facilitated by MEUW JT&S Instructors Steve Hedden and Mark Zielsdorf.

The eight-session JT&S program will continue with Rescue Procedures (Session Two) in October/November and Line Clearance (Session Three) in November/December. These sessions will include training on how to use live line tools and how to conduct personal protective ground testing.

In 2017 the JT&S program will be offering Substation Switching Training (Session Four), Line and Equipment Testing (Session Five) Rope Splicing (Session Six), Underground Projects (Session Seven), and Job Site Inspections (Session Eight). The JT&S Program is also planning workshops and seminars on tree trimming (coming up in October), troubleshooting, watt-hour metering, locating, and pole climbing.

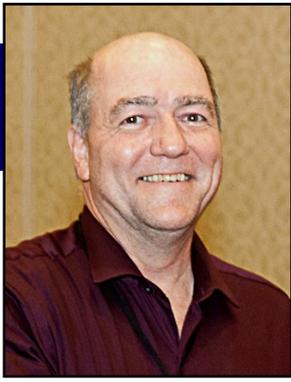
To learn about all upcoming JT&S sessions, please go to the [MEUW website](#). Registration for all upcoming events can be found by clicking [Events/Event Calendar](#) and selecting the workshop you are interested in. The schedule for the first three JT&S sessions is on the MEUW website under [Services/Job Training & Safety Program](#). On this page you will find links to the 2016-2017 schedule, session topics, and meeting site information.

Please watch for meeting reminders as they are sent out and make sure crews are scheduled to attend. In addition, some of the meetings require specific PPE and equipment to be brought to the session, so please watch for those requirements as you receive your reminders.

September/October 2016 Overhead Sessions:

September 6-Stoughton, Eagle River, 7-Fennimore, Norway MI, 8-Sturgeon Bay, 13-Medford, 14-Bangor, Marshfield, 15-Reedsburg, Wisconsin Rapids, 16-Prairie Du Sac, 20-River Falls, 21-Rice Lake, 22-Arcadia, 23-Sun Prairie, 27-Jefferson, Shawano, 28-Oconomowoc, New London, 29-Hartford, Kaukauna, 30-Waupun.

October 4-Menasha, 5-Plymouth, 6-Two Rivers, 11-Manitowoc.



MEUW Association Update

From Bob Trussoni, President, MEUW

It has been a very busy month at MEUW. We are making great progress in filling the open positions thanks to a lot of effort by many dedicated people. We have had some very impressive candidates and I will cover each position and the current situation.

Marketing and Member Services Manager

The search committee for this position consisted of Melanie Krause, Randy Jaeckels, Rachel Stevenson, and me. QTI handled the recruitment process for this position and worked with the search committee to narrow the candidates down to four whom we interviewed on July 13. We continued to look at any other potential candidates to cover all bases. On August 2, we conducted a second interview on the selected candidate. We extended an offer to Heather Breunig from Baraboo, which she accepted. Her starting date was August 30.

Heather has strong event planning experience. Most recently, Heather was working temporarily as a Marketing & Communications Manager. Prior to that, Heather was a social media strategist. She maintained the majority of the social media resources and measured the results to determine what was effective in terms of advertising. She coordinated events, taught the volunteer staff how to use their technology, and showed people inventory on the sales floor. She also took care of administrative tasks for the manager and has reworked the website for this company.

Prior to that, Heather was an events & tourism manager. She worked at the front desk and greeted visitors, answered emails, took phone calls, and answered questions from visitors and callers. She also processed gift certificates, work permits, DNR reservations, and issued park passes. Additionally, Heather took care of every event they sponsored in terms of planning, coordination, budget, and implementation. We welcome Heather to MEUW.

Regional Safety Manager

The search committee for the regional safety manager position was made up of Jason Bieri, Mike Pedersen, and Neal Wozney from the Safety and Education Committee; Tom Bushman, acting executive director and me. QTI handled the recruitment process for this position and worked with the search committee to narrow the candidates down to five, one of whom we interviewed on August 9 and three others on August 18. One was a no show.

We selected Michael Czuprynski from Baraboo. He has a BS from Whitewater in Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety. He is currently employed as the Operations EHS Manager for Encapsys, LLC in Portage. Michael is well-qualified for the position and brings a positive attitude and excellent communications skills. Michael plans to start at MEUW on September 14. We welcome Michael to MEUW.

Office Coordinator

We have begun the search for the Office Coordinator position. The search committee for this position is Tom Bushman, Randy Jaeckels, Tim Herlitzka, and me. After much discussion, the position title was selected and the job description was modified to fit the duties that we envision for this position. Marshfield Utilities' HR manager Melissa Barnes, will be handling the recruitment process and coordinating the interviews. The position has been advertised and as of this writing, we have more than 100 applicants. Melissa will narrow that down to those who meet the qualifications from which the committee will select a number for interviews. We should have the interviews completed and a person on board sometime in early September.

Executive Director

The search committee for this position is made up of Jeff Feldt, Paul Hermanson, Tim Herlitzka, Jem Brown, and me. Anita Gallucci has offered her assistance as well. Lanie Prouse, of Mycoff, Fry & Prouse is coordinating the recruitment process. We have conducted some interviews and have had considerable discussion. As you might expect, this position is taking longer to fill for various reasons. We do want to make a good selection and do not plan to rush the process.

Slowly but surely we are bringing the team together. We are focusing on people who will bring a positive, cooperative, and energetic attitude to the organization. We hope that this team will be in place for many years and we want to ensure that it is a successful team that will meet the needs of our members. We will coach each of them as to what we see them doing in order to ensure their success.

I thank all of you for your patience and understanding. I also thank all the MEUW members who have been so helpful in so many ways.

Bob Trussoni

General Manager
Marshfield Utilities



MEUW Interim Executive Director Report

From Tom Bushman

Well, the summer of 2016 is almost over and we are at that time of year again. You guessed it, budget time. MEUW will be putting its preliminary budget together, but I need your help. In order to best serve our members, I would like to have anyone who is thinking of changing their percentage or starting as a new member of the Regional Safety Management Program for 2017 to contact me or their coordinator with their anticipated changes before the end of September.

We need this information as soon as possible so we can both budget properly for the various regions and ensure we have enough trained coordinators to cover everyone's needs. Having this information allows MEUW to reorganize the groups, if necessary, into manageable geographical sizes so the coordinators will not be traveling long distances for training. Making this decision now also enables you to request from MEUW the cost of participation in time to include an accurate amount in your 2017 budget.

I mentioned the possibility of reorganizing the Regional Groups. This will happen as we grow the program and try to accommodate everyone's changing needs. We have been working toward a uniform system of documentation throughout the Regional Program so information can be accessed and exchanged across regions more easily. In particular, it will help in the event a group has to be reorganized and a new coordinator picks up one or more members of a different group. The new coordinator will know exactly where to find everything they need. This should allow for a more seamless transition.

When you contract with MEUW for the Regional Safety Management Program you purchase a service. We work closely with you to help bring you into compliance with all the required programs, training, documentation and inspections and so much more. Yes, I did say work with you, but you will also play a large role in working towards compliance. While we cannot do it all for you, we do make your end of the lift much easier. We still need you to help tweak each program to fit your needs. You will also be required to perform safety inspections at least annually, which must be documented, and you must supply your employees with the proper personal protective equipment (PPE).

I have heard the argument from some utilities that they cannot afford to purchase the PPE or don't have money for the required special equipment required to perform various tasks. I ask these people to consider what one accident would cost them or — God forbid — how they would feel if they had a fatality. Everyone always thinks it will happen to the other guy. When it happens to you, though, to everyone else, you are the other guy. By the time you add up the cost of an injury, the additional cost to your worker's comp, the cost to come into compliance anyway (because the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) will come to check you out after an accident), and the loss of productivity, you are much better off putting the money into your budget now.

So in conclusion, please let us know as soon as possible about any changes to your current percentage or if you plan to start as a new member of a group in 2017 so we can start preparing on our end and are ready to serve you at the start of the year. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me any time.

Thank You!

Tom Bushman
Interim Executive Director

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Registration opens for Session F—Customer Service & Public Relations

October 12, 2016

Deadline to Register: September 28 ; Registration Fee: \$275

The MEUW Management Training Program Session F: Customer Service and Public Relations will be held at the Glacier Canyon Lodge in Wisconsin Dells. Online registration opens after September 6 at www.meuw.org.

For electric utilities, providing customer service takes many forms. It may be a personal exchange at your office, a phone call, or an online interaction. A customer may come into your office with a question or need or they may talk with your field crew. When they walk away, what will they think? Will they tell others about the good experience they had or will they damage your utility's image and reputation by broadcasting their bad experience? More often than not, you won't hear from a customer who has had a good experience, as that's what they expect. But you will hear from the customers who have bad experiences. This seminar will look at the importance of providing good customer service. This starts with knowing your customers and instilling the importance of customer service into each employee on your staff.

Our speaker, Jeff Russell founded Russell Consulting, Inc. in 1987 with the vision of building effective, productive, healthy, and enduring organizations. Since its creation, Russell Consulting has worked hard to create significant value for their clients by helping them identify and understand where they are today . . . and where they must go tomorrow to achieve their goals. "We hold a mirror up to the lives of our client organizations, which enables them to see what they need to see so that they can do what they need to do. We don't provide answers to our clients, we guide them in discovering their own path."

The hardest situation your employees face is dealing with difficult customers in sometimes difficult situations. Are they prepared to respond appropriately? This can be hard when it isn't our fault but it is even more difficult when it is our fault. Employees need to understand how to listen to customers' concerns and give answers without promising more than they can deliver. To do this you must inspire a customer-oriented attitude in all your employees. This seminar will show you how to train and coach your employees to be "customer service all-stars."

Jeff will also touch briefly on the role social media plays in affecting customer attitudes toward your organization and the importance of maintaining good relationships with local, state, and national political leadership.

Finally, you will learn how to respond and relate to the media and other interests. Many times municipal electric utilities do a great job, but they're not great at promoting themselves. The public needs to hear about your infrastructure improvements, your service performance, and your involvement in the community or they will only hear from you in the aftermath of a storm or during a difficult situation when you won't have the option to say nothing.

Remember you can begin and end the Management Training Program at any point, so if you have never attended previously, start now. You complete the program when you have attended all six sessions. You may not be interested in the entire management program, but just want to improve your customer service skills and strategy. This would be the perfect seminar to attend as you will not only hear from the presenter, but will also learn from the ideas and successes and failures of your peers.

MEUW Upcoming Events

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| September 13 | MEUW Accounting and Customer Service Seminar, Wisconsin Dells |
| October 2—8 | PUBLIC POWER WEEK! Tell us what you are doing to celebrate and we'll publish it in our next issue! |
| October 12 | Management Training Program Session F Customer Service and Public Relations |
| October 17-18 | MEUW JT&S Tree Trimming Workshop, Rice Lake |
| October 19-20 | MEUW JT&S Tree Trimming Workshop, New London |
| January 10-11 | JT&S Troubleshooting Seminar, Madison |
| January 18—20 | Joint Superintendents Conference |
| February 22 | Management Training Program Session A Time Management, Wisconsin Dells |

Mark Your Calendars! Visit the MEUW [website](http://www.meuw.org) for a full list .

Public Power Weekly Exclusive: The Unexpected Leader

Justin Nickels is the mayor of Manitowoc, Wisconsin, a public power town that recently filed its third consecutive rate decrease in three years. But Nickels isn't the stereotypical civil servant — he's 29, and he's been mayor since he was 22. He ran for a council seat when he was 18 — still in high school — and won. The first campaign the lifelong politician ever worked on? Bill Clinton's re-election in 1996. And now he's presented with the unique and sometimes challenging opportunity of managing a city that owns its own utility.

What's your advice for public power utilities engaging with their governing bodies?

Our utility commission is going through a strategic plan for what we want our utility to be like in the next five to ten years. Right now, we provide electricity, water, steam and some broadband. And also right now, we can only sell water to city residents. So we're really focused on being the utility for the city. Do we want to provide regional service? The commission is getting engaged and really tackling the high-level questions of what do we want to be in the future.

The utility employees are involved, too. There is an employee committee, for example. But we also have our customers, who we talk to on a regular basis. One great thing about being a public power utility is we have an ability to really work with our local businesses and our customers much more than a privately owned utility can. We're able to do that on a local level because the community can talk to the mayor, who sits on the utility commission.

What are some of the keys for leadership in a town that owns a public power utility? Does it make your job challenging?

The most important thing, first and foremost, is to understand that the citizens own the utility. Really the utility is there to provide the basic services of providing quality electric and water at the best cost possible, but it also gives back to the community. I think the utility's role being a public power utility, is to give back to their shareholders, which is each and every citizen of the community. I like the fact that if a citizen has an issue with anything in their utility in a public power town, they can call their council member, they can call their mayor. At a larger, privately owned utility, you don't have that option. And I think it's pretty neat, too, that way back when the utility was established, it was the mayor who got it going. We just celebrated our 100-year anniversary. If you think back to

that time, compared to politics today, if someone were to propose that the city create a utility — they probably thought the guy was crazy. How can you provide electricity to every household? And back then they thought the taxpayers were going to be footing the bill for the ratepayers. But ever since the utility started, the ratepayers have funded it.



Mayor Justin Nickels

What's up with your low rates, what is your secret?

We just filed another rate decrease of 3 percent, which is the third consecutive rate decrease we've seen. I don't think anyone else in Wisconsin has done that. Really what it comes down to is the commission has made sure that we hired the best general manager we could find and that's Nilaksh [Kothari], who knows the business and knows the industry. And he has hired a lot of good people below him who monitor the prices and find the best prices and work with other municipalities. We're also part of Great Lakes Utilities, which is a conglomerate of several different communities. I think all those things put together makes up the reason why we can keep lowering our rates.

So, uniquely, you're a Millennial. How can public power utilities engage with Millennials?

That's a good question. I think one of the things we're starting to see when you look at the current generation's expectations — one of those expectations is looking at alternative energy sources and resources that protect the environment. Another is where can we maintain a certain cost that's affordable while also looking at other types of utilities that we provide, like broadband. More and more we're seeing the availability of internet access is becoming just as important as water or electricity in our everyday lives. That's where I think, again, being a public power utility we can understand that that's what our citizens are looking for from us, and we're able to provide that to them. So I think a lot of what we're doing at the utility is looking for those alternate energy sources to incorporate into our portfolio and also looking at the evolving needs of our customers and how a utility can provide broadband.

(Reprinted by permission from the August 22, 2016 edition of Public Power Daily)

Two Tree Trimming Workshops slated for October in Rice Lake & New London

Rice Lake—October 17 & 18

New London—October 19—20

Deadline to Register: October 4; Registration Fee: \$275

This year the MEUW Tree Trimming Workshop will be held in two locations — one on the western side of the state and one on the eastern side. The tree trimming workshop is designed not only for lineworkers trimming around power lines but also for public works and parks department employees that maintain trees in their cities.

Chainsaw safe use and maintenance will be covered along with tree felling, pruning, and rigging techniques. The two-day class will include both indoor instruction and outdoor field experience, so attendees will have the opportunity to both observe and take part in the techniques being taught.

The instructors and content that have made this workshop a huge success in the past remain unchanged. Back again this year are Jim Olive and Lee Schauman of Chain Saw Safety Specialists, LLC, who have been part of this workshop since its inception. Both Jim and Lee have worked in the logging industry for many years and are former trainers with the Forest Industry Safety and Training Alliance (FISTA). Jim and Lee always receive great reviews; they are the type of trainers that have so much knowledge that you can always pick up something new each time you attend. On day one of the workshop, Jim and Lee will instruct attendees on the safe use of chainsaws and their proper maintenance (including sharpening). They will also provide instruction in the use of personal protective equipment while operating chainsaws. In the field they will teach the tree felling techniques that enable an operator to safely control trees as they fall to keep workers safe and to avoid damage to customer property and other trees.

Also back again this year is Dan Traas of Ranger Services. Dan will teach proper tree trimming and rigging. Proper tree trimming will promote a tree's health and reduce the need to trim it in the future by encouraging where future growth will occur. Attendees will also get experience in the use of rigging. Rigging is used when a tree that needs to be cut down has simply outgrown the reach of bucket trucks and climbing is the only option.

Attendees must bring appropriate personal protective equipment to participate in the interactive portion of the workshop. This includes a hard hat, safety glasses, hearing protection (or a forestry helmet), work gloves and proper footwear. In addition attendees should be prepared for outside weather conditions and dress appropriately.

Hotel accommodations are provided by the AmericInn in Rice Lake and New London. Go to [Events/Event Calendar](#) on www.MEUW.org after September 6th for more information, to register, and to get hotel booking instructions for this workshop.



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Classifieds

The Village of New Glarus is seeking a Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator - Water Resources. The responsibilities of this full-time position include observing and reporting on wastewater facility operations and using biological/chemical parameters to analyze overall wastewater treatment plant operations. Deadline for applications is **September 6, 2016**. [Click here](#) for more information and application details.

Manitowoc Public Utilities (MPU) is seeking applications for the position of Water System Operator. This full-time position involves duties that include the control, operation, and maintenance of the state-of-the-art microfiltration water treatment plant and related production facilities, and the maintenance and repair of the water distribution system and related facilities. Minimum requirements include completion of a two-year associate degree supplemented by technical school courses in the water field and possession of an appropriate WDNR certification. [Click here](#) for a complete job description and application details.

Reedsburg Utility Commission (RUC) is taking applications for the position of Sales Representative and Marketing Specialist. This position is responsible for all sales, marketing and advertising functions at RUC. Qualified candidates must be well-versed in graphic design, publishing and editing software, have a positive attitude, be a proven team player and successfully manage multiple projects. **Applications will be taken until the position is filled.** [Click here](#) for a complete job description and application details.

Cedarburg Light & Water Utility is seeking a full-time Journeyman Line Mechanic or a 3rd or 4th year Line Apprentice. The ideal candidate will possess general knowledge of power line systems and their components and have the ability to perform strenuous physical labor and heavy manual tasks. **Applications will be taken until September 30.** [Click here](#) for a complete job description and application details.

Waunakee Utilities is accepting applications for a journey-level electric line worker. This position is involved in the operation, construction, maintenance and repair of the electrical system and includes strenuous physical labor, heavy manual tasks, climbing, and working with energized lines. Applicants must have successfully completed an apprenticeship program. **The position will be open until filled.** [Click here](#) for a complete job description and application details.

Send your employment opportunities to info@meuw.org.



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