WITH THE RECENT COMPLETION OF THE NEW CIMARRON BEND WIND FARM in Western Kansas, Kansas City BPU expects over 45 percent of its power generation to now come from renewable energy sources. From a capacity standpoint, KCBPU is well beyond the current State of Kansas’ Renewable Energy Standard goal of 15%, and will be three times the state’s goal of 20% renewable capacity for utilities by 2020.

With its use of hydropower, landfill methane gas, wind energy, and in the near future a new community solar farm in Wyandotte County, BPU has become one of the “greenest” public utilities in the nation. KCBPU is currently working on the new community solar farm to be located near the Nearman Power Plant.

“Maintaining a well-diversified mix of generation capabilities allows BPU to provide affordable, reliable, and environmentally friendly energy to our community and customers,” stated Don Gray, General Manager of BPU. “We are proud to be a recognized industry leader, with renewable energy sources now exceeding BPU’s coal generation output for the first time in history.”

With 200 MW coming from Cimarron Bend, and another 50 MW from the Smoky Hill and Alexander wind farms, these assets will produce enough energy to power approximately 110,000 homes annually. The Bowersock hydropower plant on the Kansas River in Lawrence, KS can power 3,500 homes, while methane gas energy from the Oak Grove Landfill can power another 1,500 homes annually.
ONE OF THE TWO TRANSMISSION MAINS that feeds Emporia’s water system from the treatment plant failed early last Thursday morning. Although the break on the 20-inch water main was repaired by 11:00 a.m., the break resulted in the loss of pressure across the city leaving Emporia’s 25,000 residents and those in the surrounding area without water.

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) issued a boil water advisory for the city and 11 other public water supply systems in Lyon and Coffey counties impacted by the water main break. KDHE issued the advisory because failure to maintain adequate water pressure might result in a loss of chlorine residuals and bacterial contamination.

Other systems affected by the boil water advisory included Admire; Allen; Coffey County Rural Water District 2E; Hartford; Lyon County Rural Water Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5; Olpe; and Park Place Management.

The boil water advisory issued for Emporia was lifted Sunday morning, according to a news release from KDHE, but the boil water advisory remained in effect for the other impacted water systems in Lyon and Coffey counties until certified lab tests show the water is safe.

The Salvation Army, Westar Energy, and others community agencies and volunteers helped with distribution of the bottled water to the public at the Lyon County Fairgrounds during the advisory.

2017 Work in Water Intern Program

by Tonya Bronleewe, WSU Environmental Finance Center

THIS SUMMER THERE ARE FIVE WORK IN WATER INTERNS working at water and wastewater treatment plants in four communities across Kansas. The students are local high school students who are serving their communities in Garden City, Ottawa (two interns), Pittsburg, and Wichita.

In the first few weeks of their internship experience, these students have observed and assisted local water operators to flush out clarifier draw tubes, replace a return active sludge...
Work in Water is a program funded by an EPA Environmental Education Grant. The program is hosted by Wichita State University Environmental Finance Center (WSU EFC) in partnership with Kansas Section American Water Works Association (KsAWWA), Kansas Water Environment Association (KWEA), Kansas Municipal Utilities (KMU), and Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE).

Before they were selected to be interns, these high school students each participated in the Work in Water Experience hosted by WSU Environmental Finance Center and their local utility. The Work in Water Experience teaches students where drinking water comes from, how it is treated to meet Safe Drinking Water Act requirements, what happens to wastewater after the flush, and how effluent is recycled back into our environment for use again downstream.

The Work in Water Experience classroom session rounds-out with a field trip to the local drinking water utility and/or water reclamation facility. It is here that students learn first-hand what it is like to work in the water industry, the importance of water service to public health, and the sense of satisfaction and fulfillment utility staff have for the work that they do in their community.

Since April 2016, more than 150 high school students and 17 counselors and teachers have participated in the Work in Water Experience. School counselors say that the program was valuable because students were able to learn about their local water utilities via real-life experience. Counselors also noted their appreciation of the local utility staff who took the time to tell students about their unique roles in public service and how their career path lead them to a career in water.

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