

Delbert “Bert” Zerr joins the KRWA team

I am very pleased to introduce myself to readers of *The Kansas Lifeline* as a new consultant to KRWA. For the past 33 years, I’ve worn a “regulator’s hat.” In my capacity at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), I’ve worked with every city and RWD in the north-central Kansas KDHE district based in Salina. It’s my opinion that water and wastewater utility operators, managers, boards/councils and the Salina office have enjoyed a good working relationship. The rapport that I personally have with hundreds of systems across Kansas builds a good advantage for KRWA to provide additional services to systems. I retired from KDHE on July 1, 2005.

I began my career with the State of Kansas in 1964 in engineering and construction (construction of I-70) with the Department of Transportation in Oakley, Kansas. Five years later I accepted a transfer into the Photogrammetry Section of the Department of Location and Design Concepts in Topeka. For the next three years I worked with aerial photography to prepare maps and plan sheets. My next move was into the Kansas Department of Health and Environment in Salina where I remained until my retirement. For those next 33 years, I worked in water programs at KDHE in Salina. I worked with public water supplies and municipal wastewater treatment systems to achieve compliance with federal and state requirements.

My experience is that small systems are particularly challenged to meet new regulations. From the

average city clerk who receives notices of new regulations, to the operators who need to implement

efforts of ratepayers. I’ve seen many communities successfully demonstrate the need for facility

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them, there seems to be more and more to do and fewer and fewer people to accomplish the tasks. This poses a unique challenge to the governing bodies (boards and councils). In many cases, the staff members are often under valued. Somehow, people need to charge

improvements and implement those changes. It goes back to local leadership in explaining the need for the project and then having that project justified in the minds of the ratepayers.

My work with KRWA will be as a consultant. I appreciate the opportunity to work as a KRWA team-member. KRWA has always been and will continue to be a respected voice and provider of assistance and training. KRWA’s field staff members are second to none in getting out there to help local water and wastewater systems, often under circumstances that are in crisis mode vs. corrective. It’s a lot tougher to locate a leak when the tank is already empty – and too often, people wait until their problem has turned into a crisis to call for help.

I will be working in concert with KRWA

Tech Assistant Lonnie Boller and Pat McCool, another former KDHE District Engineer and also good friend, on water quality and



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what it costs to more appropriately maintain their utility systems. That requires some public education

compliance issues. Many systems, particularly surface water plants, need to have some evaluations conducted on them because they do not meet the stringent Federal and State requirements that have recently gone into effect. Some of these systems will need significant capital improvements while others will necessitate only operational changes. All have the additional burdensome and more complex requirements of monitoring, recordkeeping, and reporting to KDHE.

Examples where capital improvements were needed are as follows. Several years ago I met with the Council Grove City

Council to discuss how future compliance with the Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule and the new Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT1) would necessitate major capital improvements at the city's water treatment plant. The city then proceeded and now has completed the improvements that have resulted in compliance with these rules. These improvements included additional clarification and ozone addition.

Also, I met several years ago with the Mitchell County RWD 2 board and staff to discuss upcoming regulations and the need for additional capacity. The

district proceeded and now has an essentially new water treatment plant that will provide drinking water for many years to come.

KRWA has the capacity to perform the necessary evaluations for these systems. KRWA will also continue to work in close association and in partnership with the respective systems and their professional engineers to improve operations and meet Federal and State requirements.

Again, it is a pleasure for me to be joining KRWA. I'm looking forward to being of help to systems, to participate in training seminars and to be a resource to those who ask.

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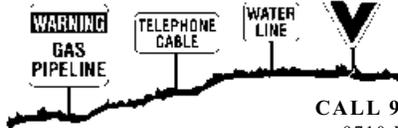


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