

PSC DEPARTMENT DIGEST

Nebraska Public Service Commission

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PSC Opens Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program 2022 Grant Funding Year

The Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program (NBBP) 2022 grant funding year was opened on May 10, with the Nebraska Public Service Commission's (PSC's) approval of the schedule and application materials ([C-5368](#)).

The Commission began accepting applications for the 2022 NBBP funding year on June 13. The application and program guide are available on the [Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program](#) (NBBP) page of the PSC website. Applicants must comply with all aspects of the application package.

The deadline for applications to be filed is no later than 5 p.m., Friday, July 1. All filings must be received electronically by email to < psc.broadband@nebraska.gov). Applications received will be posted to the NBBP page of the PSC website by July 6.

"This is the second year for the NBBP, and we are exciting to able to award new grants to help fund the deployment of broadband networks in Nebraska." Cullen Robbins, Director PSC Telecom/NUSF Department.

Created by the Nebraska Broadband Bridge Act, the NBBP provides grants to fund the deployment of broadband networks in unserved and underserved areas of the state. The Act allows public and private entities and private companies to enter into a partnership to apply for grant funding.

During the 2021 NBBP funding year, the PSC awarded 61 grants totaling more than \$19 million for broadband construction.



Cybersecurity Assessments Completed on Public Safety Answering Points

Over the past eight months, the PSC State 911 Department and its consultant Mission Critical Partners (MCP) have been working with Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) across the state to build cybersecurity awareness and strengthen the security of the PSAP environment.

“Every day critical public safety communications face the possibility of having their centers disrupted or even held for ransom by a cyber-attack,” said State 911 Department Director Dave Sankey. “By engaging PSAPs in this project we were able to work together to identify the risks to their facilities.”

Cybersecurity and physical security assessments were provided at no cost to the PSAPs. Each assessment included onsite interviews, networks scans, physical inspections and an assessment of a PSAPs network vulnerability.

Once completed each PSAP received a report of prioritized recommendations along with ways to address potential risks and strengthen the safety of their environments.

Cybersecurity Summary

Wrap-up

- PSAP now have a roadmap to strengthen the security of their environments
- Many low hanging fruit, low-cost initiatives can lead to significant improvements
- Future planning, funding opportunities



Controlling Higher Energy Bills

We don't have to tell you that natural gas prices have skyrocketed. According to an [online article from Reuters news service](#), U.S. natural gas futures have double in 2022, far more than increases in retail gasoline and diesel. The article sites a number of potential causes for a slowdown in production and a boost in demand.

As we all deal with rising costs, it's important to do what we can to take control of our energy bills. Black Hills Energy (BHE) one of two jurisdictional natural gas companies regulated by the Nebraska Public Service Commission recently provided tips for consumers to help reduce energy usage during the summer months, as a way to help lower energy bills by creating a more energy efficient home.

Below are just a few of the tips provided by BHE.

- Set your water heater to 120-degrees Fahrenheit
- Run complete loads of laundry and dishes
- Not using it. Unplug it

For a complete list of tips read the article on the [BHE website](#).

Just a reminder if you find yourself needing help to pay your energy bills, please go online to either of the PSC's two jurisdictional natural gas providers, [Black Hills Energy \(BHE\)](#) and [NorthWestern Energy](#) for available customer support options.



Grain Dealers Must Be Licensed in Nebraska



Want to be a grain dealer in Nebraska? If so, you'll need to be licensed by the PSC.

Any person, partnership, limited liability company, corporation or association that (i) buys grain from the producer of grain within the state of Nebraska for purposes of selling such grain or (ii) acts as an employee or agent of a buyer or seller for purposes of collective bargaining in the marketing of grain, must hold a grain dealer licenses issued by the PSC.

Producers or businesses, who sell their own grain or buy grain for feeding are exempt from the licensing requirement.

Learn more about applying for a grain dealer's license by visiting the [Grain Department](#) page of the PSC website.

Transportation Department Provides Moving Reminders for Consumers.

We're all looking for a deal, but when it comes to hiring a moving company it's important for consumers to do their homework.

The PSC licenses household goods movers to provide intrastate (within Nebraska) services of personal effect or property to a dwelling. Licenses issued by the PSC are valid for one year from the effective date and services are provided statewide unless otherwise noted.

"We currently have 54 household goods movers licensed to do business in Nebraska," said PSC Transportation Department Director Dillon Keiffer-Johnson. "However, it's important to note that 51 of those movers will need to renew their licenses by the end of June."

A list of [household goods movers](#) licensed in Nebraska and their companies effective date can be found under the Transportation tab of the [PSC website](#).

Household goods movers that provide interstate (outside of Nebraska) moving services are regulated by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA).

Keiffer-Johnson said, "Far too often we get calls from consumers who are having difficulty receiving their household items from an interstate mover. Unfortunately, any recourse in this type of situation is out of our hands."

The PSC encourages consumers needing an interstate moving company to visit the [protect your move page](#) of the FMCSA website for free resources and tools to help prepare for a move and to protect yourself against fraud. The page also contains a data base of Registered Movers.



Growth Anticipated in Modular Housing

The 2022 World of Modular annual convention and trade show provided the PSC with some valuable insight on the future of modular housing.

According to data from the Modular Product Market Competition (PMC), the U.S. market share doubled from 2.14% in 2015 to 5.52% in 2021 and is poised to double again in 2025.

"If those numbers hold true, it most likely will mean inevitable growth for the PSC when it comes to modular housing regulation," said PSC Housing/ Recreational Vehicle Department Director Lenora Isom.

Isom said breakout sessions in Off-site Construction Standards, Fire-Rated Assemblies for Modular Construction and the Government Affairs Forum for State Regulators provided valuable information that will aid the PSC in determining the direction of the department over the years to come.



Isom Elected NCARB Regional Director

Congratulations are extended to Lenora Isom, RA, on her recent election as a regional director to the [National Council of Architectural Registration Boards \(NCARB\)](#).

A Registered Architect with more than 20 years of experience, Isom joined the Nebraska Board of Engineers and Architects in 2016 and has served as the program director for the PSC housing/recreational vehicle department since May 2021.

The Region 5 (Central Conference) chair since 2020, Isom will serve on the NCARB board of directors representing the Region 5 licensing boards of Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Wyoming.



Three New Faces Join the PSC Legal Team

We are excited to welcome three new faces to the PSC legal team.

Trevor Matulka is our new attorney. He holds a Bachelor's in Science (B.S.) in Political Science from UNO (2017) and a law degree from UNL (2020). After passing the bar, Trevor spent a year and a half in private practice, working primarily in insurance defense litigation. While in private practice he had the opportunity to serve as an Assistant City Attorney for the City of North Platte, advising city government and prosecuting city ordinance violations. His experience inspired him to seek a role in the public sector, where he could make a difference in the lives of Nebraskans. Trevor and his cat Winnie, reside in Lincoln and call it home.

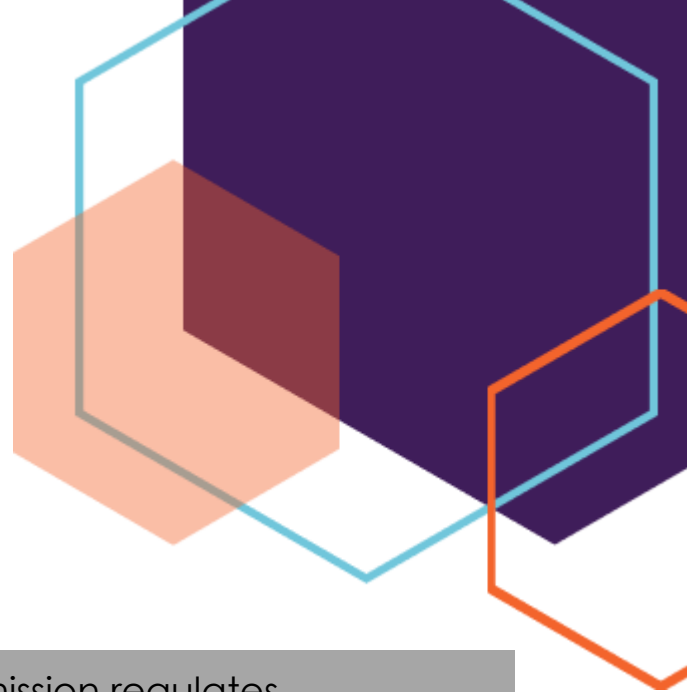


Born and raised in North Platte, **Brittany Roos** joins the PSC as its first ever Paralegal. With an extensive background in healthcare, she spent the past five years as a Technical Services Librarian at the Public Library in North Platte. Working toward her Bachelor's in Science in Legal Studies since 2019, Brittany was most recently an intern with Nebraska Appleseed fueling her love for public interest law. The mother of an 8-year-old son, she is a voracious reader who loves graphic design and has recently designed three book covers for a Nebraska author.



Alison Earnhardt is our new law clerk. Originally from North Carolina, Alison is entering her third year of law school at UNL. In her free time, she enjoys being outdoors and spending time with her two dogs Cookie Bear and Judy.





The Nebraska Public Service Commission regulates telecommunications carriers, natural gas jurisdictional utilities, major oil pipelines, railroad safety, household goods movers and passenger carriers, grain warehouses and dealers, construction of manufactured and modular homes and recreation vehicles, high voltage electric transmission lines, and private water company rates.

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