

Sewer plant comes in under budget

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
kldavis@nwkansas.com

Sewer rates won't have to be raised as much as expected to pay for the city's new wastewater treatment plant because the plant cost around \$880,000 less than the engineer's estimate to build. City Administrator Gary Shike said he doesn't know how much the sewer rates will

increase to help repay a loan the city took out for the new plant, but it won't increase as much as it could have been.

The city council planned to borrow \$2.958 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to build the plant south of town. The city also got a \$400,000 Community Development Block Grant through the state.

The total cost was estimated at \$3.358 million, he said.

Mr. Shike said the main reason the city is so far under budget is because the bid on the liner for the lagoons came in way under the estimate. Everything else for the project, including the dirt work, was pretty close to the estimate, he said.

He said the engineers, Miller and Asso-

ciates of McCook, were pleasantly surprised by the lining bids.

The council has known since the beginning of the project that it would be under the budgeted amount, he said, just not how much.

Mr. Shike said the amount isn't an exact figure yet because the project isn't 100 percent done. There is still some finishing work

to do and the city wants to get a lawn mower to use at the plant.

The city, he said, doesn't actually have the loan money in hand from the Rural Development Administration, he said. The money is committed to the city and it is drawn down as needed. The grant money was used first, he added, so the lower bid means the city won't have to borrow as much.



MONDAY AFTERNOON, Bronson Scott (above) cranked open the underside of a semi-trailer truck to dump wheat at the Decatur Co-op elevator. Inside, Jori Diederich (below) took a sample of wheat off a truck while three semis (bottom) waited for a turn on the scale.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Harvest yields mixed

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
kldavis@nwkansas.com

Only a few days into the summer harvest, elevators report that wheat yields around Decatur County vary from 35 to 70 bushels per acre.

Harvest started last week, although none of the elevators are in full swing yet as farmers are just getting started.

At the Decatur Co-op in Oberlin, Grain Manager Dalene Horton said things are really just getting started so she couldn't tell how much of the harvest is in. Test weights so far have been 57 to 64 pounds per acre with yields at 50 to 70 bushels per acre, she said, but it's really too early to tell what will happen.

Most of the wheat has been dry, she added, although they have taken a little wet grain. So far they haven't heard of any bad or damaged crops.

Over the last three days, she said Monday, the Oberlin elevator had taken in close to 120,000 bushels of wheat.

The market opened a little lower Monday, said Ms. Horton, but at 11 a.m. it was up to \$5.27 a bushel. That's up \$2.35 from \$2.92 at this time last year.

Besides getting crops in, the elevator has been busy loading rail cars out. Ms. Horton said the crew loaded 10 cars Monday morning with last year's wheat and some from this year. The co-op should have more cars by the weekend, she



said.

So far, said Clint Johnson, general manager at Norcat Grain, the weather has been good. The only threat is rain. If it rains, he said, and if the humidity is high, it can delay cutting until later in the day.

About 5 to 10 percent of the crop in the Norcat area has been cut, he added, but he thought harvest probably wouldn't really start going until Monday or Tuesday. There is still some wet wheat in the field, he said, and it may take a few more days for it to dry down.

The test weights, he said, have been above 60 pounds per acre with yields averaging between 40 to 60



bushels per acre. A hail storm a couple weeks ago (see HARVEST on Page 10A)

Man OK after collapsing at elevator

The Decatur County Fire Department rescue unit helped a man who collapsed after possibly having a seizure on a platform about 100 feet up an elevator leg Saturday get back down to the ground.

Fire Chief Bill Cathcart said he couldn't give the man's name, but said he is a 30-year-old employee of the elevator. Another source identified him as Jeremy Stoney.

The call came in around 2:45 p.m. that a man on top of the Hansen-Mueller elevator in Oberlin had a

seizure and was hanging from the bin, said Chief Cathcart.

That wasn't the case, he said. Apparently the man had a seizure and collapsed on the platform. He was wearing his safety harness, but wasn't hanging from it.

The rescue team brought him back around and made sure he was in good shape before he climbed by himself back down to the ground. Chief Cathcart said the team tied the man off with a safety rope before he headed back down the ladders.

He was taken to the Decatur County Hospital by ambulance.

Jim Mendlik, vice president of operations at Hansen-Mueller, said Monday the man had been released from the hospital.

Mr. Mendlik said the employee climbed the elevator leg to repair equipment on the platform. He was wearing a safety harness and an employee in the office was watching from the ground. Apparently, he said, the man on the leg had a seizure and collapsed on the platform.

Mr. Mendlik said anytime an employee goes higher than eight to 10 feet, they are supposed to tie themselves off and wear a safety harness just in case. Obviously, he said, this worker did do that.

Doug Claussen, general manager of Decatur Co-op, said they sent a worker familiar with Hansen-Mueller's operation over to help out. When an employee at another elevator is injured or has problems of any kind, he said, they want to help out and be friendly neighbors.

Dresden office to close doors at end of June

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
kldavis@nwkansas.com

The Dresden post office will close at the end of the month, with people getting their mail through a rural carrier out of Jennings instead of a box at the office in town, officials told residents and state officials at a meeting last Wednesday.

While the crowd was less than pleased, postal officials said the office, which they said was losing about \$13,000 a year, would be closed because no postal employee was willing to take the part-time job of postmaster.

Dan Taylor, manager of post office operations from Hutchinson, said the main reason the post office is closing is because they can't find anyone to man it. Currently, the post office is open two hours a day with Jeanette Krizek of Jennings as the temporary business clerk.

Herb Swan, district review coordinator for the Postal Service in Omaha, and Taylor, manager of post office operations for Kansas, met with state Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, Rep. John Faber and about 20 people who get their mail through the Dresden post office last Wednesday at the Dresden United Meth-

odist Church.

Although the language of a letter sent to Dresden postal customers recently says office had been suspended, Mr. Taylor said on Friday, June 29, the office will close for good. On Saturday, June 30, the rural carrier will start delivering mail that had been delivered to boxes in Dresden.

"This is a cut-and-dried deal then?" asked Dresden area resident Armin Sowers. "The post office is done?"

Mr. Taylor said there is a 30-day appeal process. A notice will be posted in the Selden and Jennings post offices, he said, but the office probably will not reopen.

Dean Gawith, a retired Dresden postmaster, asked if the community found someone to run the office on Main Street, if the service could keep it open.

Mr. Taylor said the Postal Service will not be hiring anyone. The position was opened up to postal workers in a 30-mile radius and no one volunteered. The Postal Service, he said, isn't a growing organization. Mail volume is down and so is the revenue.

(See OFFICE on Page 10A)

City told streets need milling, paved to fix old bumps

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
kldavis@nwkansas.com

The Oberlin City Council talked with an engineer Thursday night about repairing bad spots in city streets, learning that they would need to mill off the pavement and dig out the old gravel streets to replace the pavement.

Jerol DeBoer, an owner of Penco Engineering out of Plainville, said a lot of the streets in the City of Oberlin already are built up to above the curb. One reason for that, he said, is because the gravel streets were probably not taken out before asphalt was put over the top.

Weren't a bunch of the brick streets covered by asphalt? asked Councilwoman Rhonda May. Yes, said Mayor Joe Stanley, but he thought that mistake was taken care of.

To redo the asphalt, said Mr. DeBoer, would take about \$40,000

a block.

What about concrete? asked Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener. It would be around \$60,000 for a typical block, said Mr. DeBoer.

Concrete, he said, is getting more competitive in price compared to asphalt and takes less maintenance.

To replace the streets, said Mr. DeBoer, all of the asphalt would have to come off first, then the old gravel. Otherwise there is no way to get below the curb.

Compared to other cities, how do the streets in Oberlin look? asked Councilman Jay Anderson. Mr. DeBoer said the streets here are probably some of the worst he's seen.

It will help to keep sealing the streets, said Mr. DeBoer, but the pavement is old. If the council decides to mill about an inch of asphalt (See PAVEMENT on Page 10A)

Welcome section inside today's paper

Ever wonder where to get a tag for your dog or who offers propane service in the area?

Inside today's paper, readers will find *The Oberlin Herald's* "Welcome" section, which tells you that and a whole lot more. It covers everything from a little history of Decatur County to activities offered throughout the year. With summer here and new people moving in, this section is designed to help them know who to call to turn utilities on and to remind the rest of us about some of the fun things to do and places to go in the county.

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