

# Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

[www.ci.norfolk.ne.us](http://www.ci.norfolk.ne.us)

January 28, 2013

## “Gary Lund - Great Progress in Environmental Responsibility”



Thirty-three years ago most people weren't concerned about pouring their used oil on the ground or how to correctly dispose of their car batteries.

Gary Lund was just beginning his job at the City of Norfolk as Water Pollution Control Manager. Prior to that he had worked for the City of Fremont as the chief operator of the wastewater lab. He knew then that the way citizens were treating the environment wasn't sustainable.

“On the day that man walked on the moon was also the day the Cuyahoga River in Ohio caught fire because of pollutants. Things had to change,” Lund said.

Though he will soon be retiring as the city's Solid Waste Manager, Lund can look back on his years of waste management and see great progress in community and individual environmental responsibility. One of the most significant contributions he made in that regard was his involvement from start to finish in the

construction and management of the Transfer Station, and management of the Northeast Nebraska Solid Waste Coalition Landfill located near Clarkson. Norfolk City staff were the leaders of a group of community managers who met in the late 1980's to come up with a solution to safely and efficiently handle the ever increasing amount of trash generated by Norfolk and surrounding communities.

In 1994 LB1207 was passed by the state legislature requiring that landfills be properly contained and monitored which made organizing a community wide solution even more essential. Even with heavily publicized opposition, the landfill was built and began operating on October 30, 1995 with 24 cities and counties agreeing to support it. The City of Norfolk Waste Division has been the organization contracted ever since to manage the facility. At the end of fiscal year 2011 the Coalition's net assets were listed as \$5,906,760.

Five transfer stations have been built in several area communities to receive the trash from garbage haulers and private citizens. That trash is then loaded onto semi-trucks and transported to the coalition landfill located 32 miles southeast of Norfolk.

Currently the landfill takes 90,000 tons of garbage a year or 315 tons per day. That comes out to 18 semi loads of trash per day unloaded at the landfill five and half days a week unless the wind gusts over 40 miles per hour. Only then is the landfill closed.

"In 1990 there were 750 garbage dumps in Nebraska. Now there are 20. In the seventies, there were a lot of rivers you didn't want to swim in because of the untreated municipal wastes. Oftentimes you couldn't drink water from a well that was near a landfill. We've come a long ways," Lund said.

Lund has seen other changes in the solid waste industry. A new household hazardous waste facility was erected last year at the city's water pollution control plant located at 610 East Monroe Avenue. Open by appointment, people are able to drop off household quantities of cleaners, paints, thinners, lawn chemicals and antifreeze. In the last few weeks of working for the city, Lund is writing a grant for equipment that will grind up electronic devices- a so called shredder for memory cards and hard drives.

"The years have gone by quickly. I've worked with a great bunch of professionals. We've got the best city organization in the state," Lund said.

Lund said in his retirement he plans on golfing, traveling some, and tending the acreage he and his wife, Linda, have. They also have a daughter, Jennifer, who lives in Lincoln with her husband, Brian, and grandson, Christian.