

# Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

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## “Water Tower Coming Down”

Is it worth \$300,000 to repaint the City of Norfolk’s water tower when it’s used mostly as a fixture to attach antennas onto? Norfolk City Council members voted at a recent council retreat that it wasn’t.

“Not only is the cost exorbitant but it would have to be re-painted in the future,” said Council member Dale Coy.

According to Dennis Watts, Water and Sewer Director for the City of Norfolk, the City has other water storage tanks that amply supply Norfolk’s needs.



In 1942, a 750,000 gallon underground water tank was constructed along 25<sup>th</sup> Street. The tank is covered by dirt and is the large mound adjacent to the water tower. In 1964 the elevated water tower was built to serve the higher elevation or to Norfolk citizens that live in northwest Norfolk (Zone 2) while the underground tank continued to supply water to Norfolk’s citizens in the lower elevations (Zone 1). As northwest Norfolk grew, in 1996 the City constructed a one million gallon underground tank at 49<sup>th</sup> and Eisenhower to serve the Zone 2 area.

The Norfolk water system consists of two water treatment plants with much of the water treated at the West Water Treatment Plant at 300 South 49<sup>th</sup>. That water goes into a two million gallon storage tank at the plant. The tank was recently repainted and refurbished inside and out.

“The only time we need water storage is in the summer when more water is used in watering lawns and we like to have backup storage. The two million gallon tank at the water plant takes care of that,” said Watts.

Currently the City receives \$22,000 each year from telecommunications companies for allowing them to have their antennas on the top of the water tower.

The plan is to take down the water tower and build a new galvanized steel tower that would support the antennas. The cost for the steel tower would be \$200,000 with very little maintenance needed in the future. Estimated cost for demolition of the existing water tower is \$25,000.

No date has yet been set for taking down the tower.

Traditional city water towers came into existence in the late 1800s as cities' water mains were unable to provide enough water pressure to get water to the top floors of tall buildings. Most water mains today provide pressure enough to get water to the taller buildings with booster pumps used depending on water needs.