

PSC DEPARTMENT DIGEST

Nebraska Public Service Commission

Sept. 2025

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PSC Hosts Workshop on Housing Affordability

Stakeholders from industry and government joined Commissioners and PSC Housing Department staff for a workshop on housing affordability in Nebraska.

Designed to explore innovative, safe and cost-effective solutions to meet the state's growing housing needs, the workshop featured presentations on the Commission's role in the modular/manufactured housing industry, a look at alternative housing developments and information on tiny houses and regulations.

A presentation by BonnaVilla homes of Aurora highlighted several communities in Nebraska that were built with a focus on modular/manufactured homes. Monthly rent on homes featured in these types of developments can run under \$1,000, making them a more affordable housing option. When discussing options such as tiny homes it was noted that local regulations apply as to where these types of homes can be built.

"Owning a home is a dream of many Nebraskans," said Commissioner Christian Mirch. "Through conversation and workshops such as this we hope to raise awareness and ultimately help find solutions to housing affordability in our state."

Despite their diminutive size, any covenants that would need to be met could add to the cost of the unit making it a less than affordable choice.

Talk also centered on what, if any, federal, state or local policy tools or funding sources were available such as subsidies or downpayment assistance programs that could make purchasing a home more advantageous for would be buyers.

The commission plans to continue to collaborate with those involved in the workshop as it strives to keep the focus on advancing affordable housing options in the state.



Walklin Named Commission's New Executive Director

The Commission has named Greg Walklin as its new Executive Director. Walklin, 41, who had been the PSC's General Counsel, began his new role on August 1.

"As long as I can remember, regulatory law, particularly in the area of telecommunications has captivated my interest," Walklin said.

An attorney with extensive experience in state government, he previously served as the Director of Procurement and Grants for the Department of Health and Human Services, as well as an Assistant Attorney General with the Nebraska Department of Justice, before joining the PSC in October 2023.

Walklin said, "I appreciate the Commissioners confidence in my ability to lead the agency and am excited for what the future holds."

He replaces Thomas Golden, who retired from the role in July after four -years of service.



**Greg Walklin- Executive Director
Nebraska Public Service Commission**

Knutson to Fill Role of General Counsel

Shana Knutson has been named to fill the role of PSC General Counsel.

Knutson began her career at the PSC in 2000 and was serving as the PSC general counsel/deputy director before leaving the commission for the private sector in 2021. She rejoined the PSC in 2023, as its broadband attorney.

"We look forward to Shana returning to the role of general counsel," said PSC Executive Director, Greg Walklin. "We are extremely fortunate to once again have one of the state's most experienced regulatory law attorneys available to provide guidance to our commissioners and staff."



**Shana Knutson-General Counsel
Nebraska Public Service Commission**

Resolution & Roundtable Highlight NARUC Summer Policy Summit

Boston was the sight of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) 2025 Summer Policy Summit.

PSC Commission Chair, and Chair of the NARUC Telecommunications committee Tim Schram moderated a panel on the future of the Universal Service Fund (USF) in the 21st Century.

The sometimes-lively discussion centered on recent developments in funding reform and what USF might look like going forward.

Chair Schram also put forward a resolution (TC-2) supporting the federal USF working group and urging consideration of its recommendations.

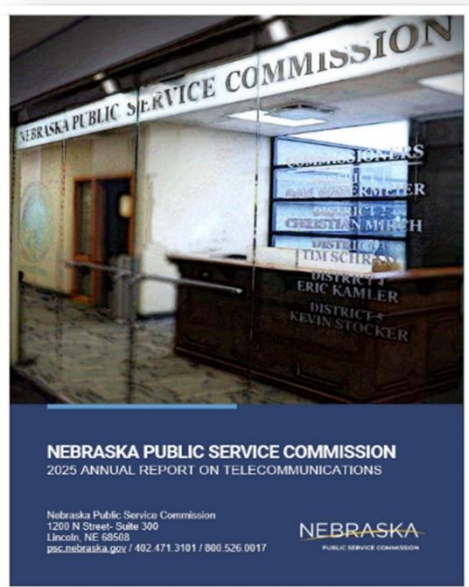


NARUC Summer
Policy Summit

July 27-30, 2025
Boston,
Massachusetts



Annual Report on Telecommunications



The Nebraska Public Service Commission has filed its annual report on Telecommunications with the legislature.

Required by statute the report highlights activity by the Commission's Telecommunication and State 911 departments.

You can find the report on the PSC website at <
<https://psc.nebraska.gov/2025-annual-report-legislature> >

Commissioners take part in MARC25

Nebraska Public Service Commissioners traveled to Indiana to participate in the 2025 Mid-America Regulatory Conference (MARC). The four-day event brought regulatory and industry professional from across the country together to learn and explore the top federal and state energy issues of today.

PSC District One Commissioner Dan Watermeier moderated a breakout session on BEAD funding and the impact on energy utilities.

Created by Congress in 2021, the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program is designed to expand high-speed broadband access across the country. BEAD is cooperatively administered by the National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) and state broadband offices. The breakout session focused on how communications and energy providers are addressing regulatory and economic developments challenges.

Among other topics discussed were cybersecurity and critical infrastructure, along with the pivotal role natural gas will play in ensuring energy reliability and affordability.



Commissioners & Staff Tour

Union Pacific Dispatch Center

Commissioners and PSC staff were recently given a behind the scenes tour of the Union Pacific's Harriman Dispatching Center in Omaha.

Home to Union Pacific's headquarters since 1862, Omaha remains the heart of the railroad's operations.

Employees at the Harriman Dispatching Center are responsible for train movements across UP's 23- state, 32,000-mile network.

The tour included an informational presentation and the opportunity for Commissioners and staff to get behind the wheel of a train simulator to experience what it's like to be at the helm of a locomotive.



Town Hall Meetings Held in BHE Rate Case

In August the Commission held a series of virtual town hall meetings as a part of the Black Hills Energy rate case application (NG-124).

Black Hills Energy (BHE) filed its application with the PSC May 1, seeking a \$34.6 million general rate increase. The proposal will increase fixed customer charges and distribution charges, rates regulated by the Commission. The Company provides natural gas service to more than 304,000 customers in Nebraska.

During the three virtual town hall meetings, attendees heard a presentation from Black Hills Nebraska. The presentation focused on BHE's mission, rate areas, customers served, community impact, and investments in safety and reliability.

Information on the rate review process and its effect on Choice Gas Customer was also provided with BHE explaining that Choice Gas suppliers decide if they will pass the interim rate onto their customers now or wait for the completion of the rate case before making any adjustments. BHE began charging a higher rate for its natural gas customers in Nebraska on August 1. State law allows a utility to charge an interim rate during the Commissions review of the application. If the Commission approves a rate that is lower than the interim rate, the utility must refund the difference with interest.

A presentation from the Public Advocate (PA), an attorney experienced in natural gas matters followed. The PA represents customers during the rate application. The PA's presentation focused on the process to this point, to include the gathering of information from BHE in a variety of areas such as cost of service, environmental issues, inflation, insurance, and Choice Gas. Customers were also encouraged to reach out to the Commission to provide feedback on the potential rate increase.

A link to view a recording of a town hall meeting can be found on the PSC website at < <https://psc.nebraska.gov/natural-gas/ng-124-black-hills-nebraska-gas-llc-dba-black-hills-energy-rate-case> >. A formal hearing on the BHE rate case application (NG-124) is set to take place at the Commission, 1200 N Street, Suite 300 in Lincoln, October 14-17.



PSC Shares Information During Husker Harvest Days

From grain to telecommunications and more PSC staff were joined by Commissioners for another successful Husker Harvest Days (HHDays).

Its booth at the world's largest totally irrigated working farm show, affords the PSC the opportunity to answer questions and give information on the regulatory process in Nebraska and the services provided by the Commission.

In addition to ag and telecommunications, the Commission plays a role in the regulation of natural gas, transportation and housing/recreational vehicles.



Donation Drive Collects items for the United Way

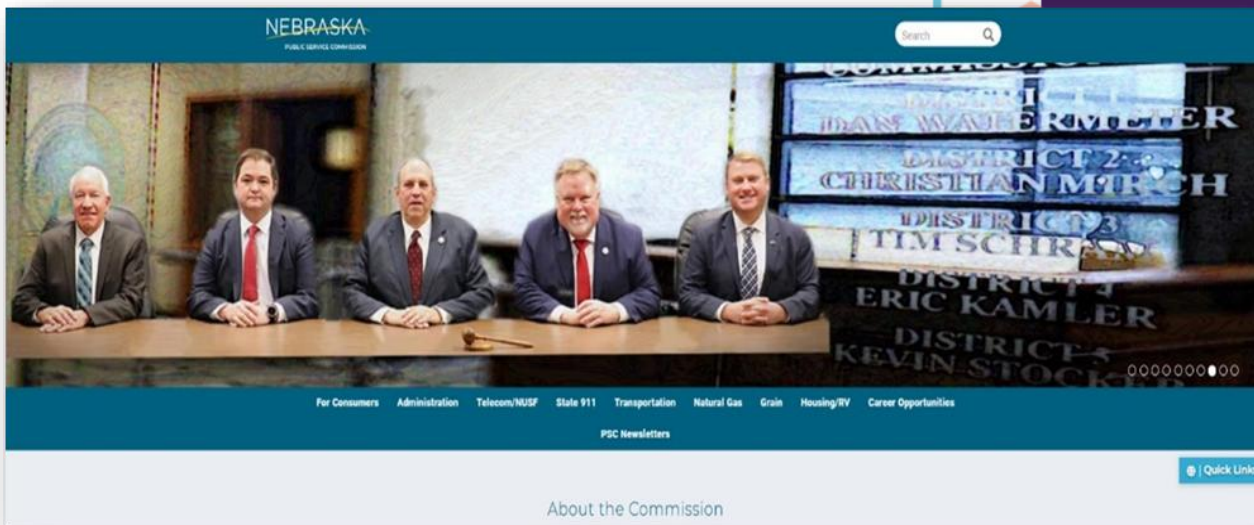
From school supplies to hygiene items, PSC staff once again answered the call as they participated in the Commission's 2025 donation drive.

Organized annually by the PSC social planning committee, the drive partnered this year with the United Way in support of those in need.

School supplies collected during the nearly month-long drive will be distributed to schools in the Lincoln-Lancaster County area. Hygiene items collected will be used in hygiene kits supplied year-round by the United Way for children & adults who may not have access to toiletries in their daily lives.

A big thank you to the social planning committee, and to everyone who contributed to the annual effort.





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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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