Bob Arraj Innovative Service Award

This award is presented annually by the **Nebraska Municipal Power Pool** (NMPP) to an individual of a municipal utility system who has excelled in the area of service and/or used innovative technological changes in the utility industry. **The Bob Arraj Innovative Service Award winner receives a check in the amount of $500.00 to be given to a special project or program.**

Origin of the Award

Bob Arraj served as city administrator and utilities superintendent of Kimball, Neb., for 35 years. The award recognizes dedication to service and the use of "out of the box" creativity to address challenges. The award was initiated in 1990.

Eligibility

Any appointed or elected utility board member, city council official or employee of a community that is a participant of one of the NMPP Energy organizations (ACE, MEAN, NPGA) is eligible.

Award Criteria

- Demonstrates there is more than one way to complete a project;
- Possesses ability to envision new technological application for NMPP member systems;
- Investigates possibility of long-term application of an innovative method for performing a task;
- Possesses leadership capabilities to bring people together for consensus to improve customer service;
- Promotes positive growth and changes in the industry;
- Displays enthusiasm and promotes new ideas.

Examples of past winning qualities

- Visionary leader of the community
- Utilizes new technology
- Assisted with new recruitment of new industry
- Arranged exchange of service territory between neighboring rural electric and municipal utility
- Exemplifies principles of cooperation and mutual trust
- Utilization of city-owned GIS (geographic information system)
- Encouraged annexation to serve wider variety of industries/businesses with public power

Recent Award Winners

- 2026 – Ryan Hurst, Wahoo, Neb.
- 2025 – Jeff Kohrs, Nebraska City, Neb.
- 2024 – Gene Hansen, Wayne, Neb.
- 2023 – Russ Pfeil, Alma, Neb.
- 2022 – Jerry Fales, Cozad, Neb.
- 2019 – Curtis Mitchell, Fountain, Colo.
- 2018 – Lance Hedquist, South Sioux City, Neb.
- 2017 – Bob Lockmon, Stuart, Neb.
- 2016 – Leroy Frana, Nebraska City, Neb.
- 2015 – Randy Woldt, Wisner, Neb.
- 2014 – Larry Brittenham, Superior, Neb.
- 2013 – Doug Goracke, Tecumseh, Neb.
- 2012 – Lynn Longmore, Callaway, Neb.
- 2011 – Gary Mader, Grand Island, Neb.
- 2010 – Marvin Schultes, Hastings, Neb.
- 2009 – Chris Anderson, Central City, Neb.
- 2008 – Dan Berlowitz, Seward, Neb.

2027 Bob Arraj Innovative Service Award Nomination

Name of Nominee: _____ Title: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____
Telephone: _____

Your Name: _____ Your Title:_____
Utility Name: _____
Address: _____City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Telephone: _____

Give a brief explanation of how the nominee has demonstrated "out-of-the-box" creativity and recognized the challenges associated with change in the utility or NMPP Energy. Explain why you are nominating your appointed or elected utility board member, city council official, or employee.

Please return by February 19, 2027 to:

Amber Degner
Email : adegner@nmppenergy.org
Phone : 402-474-4759
Fax : 402-474-0473