

Central's control center to get \$1.2 million upgrade

Written by Gothenburg Times
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Expansion and improved security are driving a \$1.2 million project for The Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District's Gothenburg office and control center.

Electrical superintendent Devin Brundage briefed the Central board Tuesday on plans for revisions and expansion of the Gothenburg office and control center.

The plans would address issues related to North American Electrical Reliability Corporation (NERC) standards and requirements, and would meet the needs of current operations at the Gothenburg office. Security improvements for the control room have already been completed.

NERC is the electric reliability organization certified by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to establish and enforce reliability standards for the bulk-power system. NERC develops and enforces reliability standards; monitors the bulk power system; and educates, trains and certifies industry personnel.

The Gothenburg office houses Central's control room, the main communications and operations center for Central's hydro-irrigation project. All of Central's hydroplants and control structures along the Supply Canal and main irrigation canals are monitored and controlled from Gothenburg.

"Our current setup was built for needs that existed in the 1970s," Brundage said. "Due to changes in operations and increasing requirements for security and reliability, we felt it was time to reevaluate what is needed comply with NERC standards, while addressing Central's operational needs in the maintenance shop and offices in Gothenburg."

The improvements will provide access control, video surveillance and control room security at the Gothenburg office, which will require additions and revisions to the existing building, he said. The NERC will likely require additional security improvements at Central's hydroplants and other structures within the project.

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A preliminary cost estimate for phased improvements at the Gothenburg office is approximately \$1.2 million.