

Press Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2026 Urban Conference Hosted By North Platte Natural Resources District & KNEB Home and Garden Expo

The Board of Directors and staff of the North Platte NRD are pleased to announce an opportunity for all area residents of the District to attend an Urban Conference, presented in conjunction with the KNEB Home and Garden Expo. The conference will feature presentations by Scott Schaneman from the North Platte Natural Resources District, Crystal Powers from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Water Center, and Elizabeth Exstrom from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension.

Scott Schaneman grew up on an irrigated farm six miles east of Scottsbluff, Nebraska. That experience made it easy for him to choose a career in production agriculture. In 1986, he began farming on the same land, raising corn, dry beans, sugar beets, alfalfa, cows, calves, and sheep. In 2008, another opportunity arose, and Scott joined the North Platte NRD as a Ground Water Technician. His production agriculture background aligned well with natural resources management. Today, Scott serves as the General Manager of the North Platte NRD. He and his wife, Becky, still operate the family farm east of Scottsbluff. They have two children and their spouses: Brittany and her husband Jesse, along with their daughters Olivia and Dorothy, who live outside Gering, and Brandon and his wife Alaina and their sons Hayden and Ryker, who live west of Alliance, Nebraska.

Crystal Powers builds connections with research and extension faculty across the University of Nebraska system to support abundant, safe water for all Nebraskans. Based in Lincoln, she works statewide through the Nebraska Water Center, Nebraska Extension, and the Daugherty Water for Food Institute, partnering with water professionals throughout the state. In Extension, she serves as Program Area Lead for the Water and Cropping Systems team, providing coordination and coaching to strengthen Nebraska agriculture and food systems while enhancing the state's health and wellbeing. Her expertise includes water, systems analysis, and science communication. Crystal holds an M.S. in Biological and Environmental Engineering from Cornell University and a B.S. in Biological Systems Engineering from

UNL. She and her husband William, along with their two boys, Aiden and Liam, enjoy music, sports, and 4-H with their collection of pets and city chickens. She grew up a Husker in rural Nuckolls and Thayer counties, where her uncle still farms.

Elizabeth Exstrom is an Extension Educator with a horticulture focus, working with the Nebraska Extension office in Hall County. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Horticulture with a landscape design emphasis and her Master's Degree in Public Horticulture from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. Elizabeth provides horticulture programs for youth and adults, coordinates the Central Nebraska Master Gardener program, and answers horticulture-related client questions. She is a Certified Arborist through both the Nebraska Arborist Association and the International Society of Arboriculture, and she is a regular panel member on Nebraska Public Media's Backyard Farmer program.

On Saturday, April 18th, at the KNEB Home and Garden Expo, Scott, Crystal, and Elizabeth will discuss with attendees the essentials of protecting groundwater, health and your drinking water, and turfgrass management.

The presentation will begin at 9. There will be two sessions with the same content. The first one is from 9 to 12 and the second one is from 1 to 4. It is the hope of all of us here at the North Platte NRD that you can find some time to come out and spend the day with the presenters and the North Platte NRD Staff as we discuss these topics that are so important to the economic and natural resource health of our District. Don't forget to add to your calendar the Urban Conference on Saturday, April 18th, 2026, at Hotel 21 & Co. Gering, Nebraska. For more information about the Urban Conference, call the NPNRD office at 308-632-2749.

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