

THE WIRE

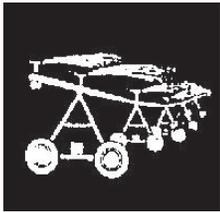
CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

April 2012

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 21, Number 4

New Notification Service for Irrigation Load Control



ERPPD is proud to announce that we are implementing additional load control status notification service

to our irrigation customers that are participating in load management.

The new service will allow operators to receive notice via cell-phone text or email regarding the status of load control.

There are two new options and customers may sign up for either or both options.

Option 1: Customers who sign up for the service will receive a general message at the start of the day that states whether or not the day is a control day or a waived day.

Option 2: Customers who sign up for this option will receive a message whenever their well has been shed and another message when their well has been restored. These messages will be sent as soon as the shed or restore signal has been sent.

If you have any questions or are interested in signing up for the new services, please call our office at 1-800-675-2185.

These new services are in addition to our past notification system, which we will continue to maintain.

- Irrigation Control Status Hotline at 1-800-238-0185
- Website control status link at www.erppd.com.

New Miller Substation Under Construction



Temporary sub 25, built in 2003, dismantled in 2012



New sub 25 under construction by Watts Electric of Waverly

ERPPD has contracted with Watts Electric Company of Waverly, Nebraska, to construct a new substation on the same site as the present temporary Miller Substation (Sub 71-25), 4 miles east of Ewing on Summerland Road. The temporary substation was constructed in 2003 to accommodate additional electrical load in the area. It was built with structural steel from an abandoned substation north of Battle Creek. This was a very economical way to satisfy the load requirements at the time.

Why wasn't the sub built permanent in 2003? Even though there was enough load at that time to justify a substation, our engineers needed time to study the future growth in the area to make sure that the substation was located as close to the load center as possible. With the addition of new electric services in the area, it turns out that the substation was actually sited very near the load center, but needed to be upgraded with larger transformers. The substation was added to the five year plan and was approved in the 2012 budget. The low bid of \$639,888.22 for the substation was submitted by Watts Electric Company, and approved by the ERPPD board of directors at the regular board meeting in December, 2011.

ERPPD crews took the temporary substation out of service on February 28, and then dismantled the sub in preparation for the new substation construction. Watts Electric moved construction equipment into the area on March 5 and began the site preparation on March 7. The first concrete footings were poured March 8. The projected completion date for the sub to be in service is May 5.

Will there need to be scheduled interruptions of electrical service in the area?

ERPPD will schedule an outage for the city of Ewing on either April 22 or 29, for approximately 5-6 hours, so line crews can install a new 34.5-Kv transmission line tap pole to serve the city. The 34.5 Kv transmission line is the main feeder line for both the Miller Substation and the city of Ewing substation. Other than this planned outage, customers should see no interruptions of service.

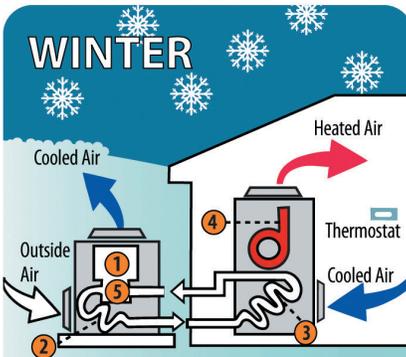
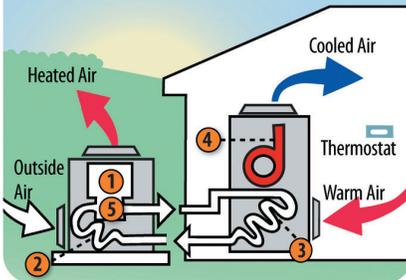
Please be cautious when driving in the construction zone.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

How Do Air-Source Heat Pumps Work?

By transferring heat between a house and outside air, these devices trim electricity use by as much as 30 percent to 40 percent in moderate climates.

SUMMER



1 Compressor

Increases refrigerant/freon pressure to accept the maximum heat from the air.

2 Condenser

Coils move freon (and with it, hot or cold air) to or from outside air.

3 Evaporator

Coils move freon (and with it, hot or cold air) to or from outside air.

4 Air Handler

Fan blows air into a home's ducts.

5 Reversing Valve

Switches the direction of the freon flow, changing the heat pump's output to hot or cold air (controlled by thermostat).

Source: NRECA

Operating and Maintaining Your Heat Pump

Like all heating and cooling systems, proper maintenance remains the key to efficient heat pump operation. The difference in electric use between a well-maintained heat pump and a severely neglected one ranges from 10 percent to 25 percent!

Remember not to set back a heat pump's thermostat if it causes any backup heating system to kick on; they are usually more expensive to operate. Continuous indoor fan operation can also hurt heat pump performance unless you use a high-efficiency, variable-speed fan motor. Operate your heat pump with the "auto" fan setting on your thermostat.

Clean or change filters once a month or as needed, and maintain the system according to manufacturer's instructions. Dirty filters, coils, and fans reduce airflow, which will decrease system performance and possibly damage the compressor. Clean outdoor coils whenever they appear dirty; occasionally, turn off power to the fan and clean it; remove vegetation and clutter from around the outdoor unit. Clean the supply and return registers within your home, and straighten their fins if bent.

You should also have a professional technician service your heat pump at least every year. The technician should do the following:

- Inspect ducts, filters, blower, and indoor coils for dirt and other obstructions
- Diagnose and seal duct leakage
- Verify adequate airflow by measurement
- Verify correct refrigerant charge by measurement
- Check for refrigerant leaks
- Inspect electric terminals, and, if necessary, clean and tighten connections, and apply non-conductive coating
- Lubricate motors and inspect belts for tightness and wear
- Verify correct electric control, making sure that heating is locked out when the thermostat calls for cooling and vice versa
- Verify correct thermostat operation.

To learn more about heat pumps, visit www.energysavers.gov.

Energy Efficiency

Month Tip of the

Don't get your electric bill caught in a spin cycle! When doing laundry, use cold water. If your dryer has a moisture meter, use it to prevent over-drying clothes—50 minutes often works best for a full load. And remember to check your lint filter each time before you run a load to help your dryer run more efficiently (and save energy).

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

ENERGYWISE
Use less. Spend less. Do more.

It PAYS to tune up your cooling system

COOLING SYSTEM TUNE-UP PROGRAM

A \$30 incentive

is available to qualified customers who have their current cooling system inspected and tuned-up by an HVAC contractor.



Contact us for more information.

ONGOING MAINTENANCE

S&L To Test Poles

As part of ERPPD's continued commitment to provide the most reliable service possible, S&L Pole Testing, Inc., will inspect about 3,200 distribution poles, many of which were last inspected in 1996 and 1997. The process should begin sometime in June.

ERPPD began testing poles in the mid-1970s and completed the first inspection of the district's 2,500 miles of line in 1995. The program helps find weak links in the distribution system which, after completing any needed maintenance work, has resulted in fewer outages because of faulty poles. ERPPD's present goal is to test enough poles each year to cover the entire district every 15 years.

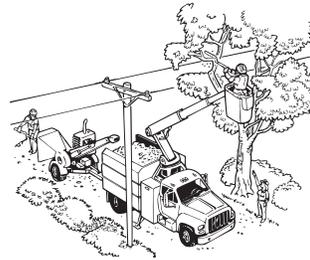
This year, contractors will be testing poles in the following areas: south and west of Battle Creek and north of Clearwater. Testing occurs as follows:

1. Check pole's age; test any older than 15 years.
2. Dig down about 18 inches all around the pole.
3. Pole is "sounded" with a hammer.
4. Pole is drilled in four spots to check the core.
5. Pole is treated at ground level and holes are filled with treatment rod.
6. Each pole is passed/rejected and its condition recorded.
7. A work order is made for ERPPD crews to replace rejected poles.

Please call 1-800-675-2185 if you have questions.

Tree Trimming

ERPPD has contracted with Wilson Tree Service to cut or trim trees in the power line rights-of-way in the areas around Norfolk.



Landowners will be contacted before cutting or trimming is done.

There are three main reasons for trimming and cutting trees. The first is safety. Children love to climb trees and sometimes do not look around first to see if the tree

has grown up around the power lines. The power lines carry 7,200 volts of electricity and accidental contact would be fatal.

The second reason to trim trees is for reliability of the electrical system. Trees are a good conductor of electricity and whenever a tree branch touches the power lines, electricity travels through the tree into the ground, causing blinks or outages if the contact is enough to open the breakers on the line.

The third reason to trim trees away from the lines is to cut down on line loss. Line loss is electricity that we all pay for and no one benefits from. Trees contacting the lines provides a path to the ground for the electricity.

Please welcome the tree contractor and we appreciate your cooperation in this project.

Please call 1-800-675-2185 if you have any questions.

SAFETY NEWS

Help Keep Our Employees Safe From Chemical Exposure

Help our linemen avoid exposure to pesticides, herbicides, and other potentially dangerous chemicals you may use on your crops.

If you use dangerous chemicals in your fields, PLEASE FLAG THE FIELD ENTRANCE AND INCLUDE THE CHEMICAL NAME AND DATE APPLIED. Our line workers, meter technicians, or our SCADA technicians may need to enter your field to do service work or install load management switches. We request your help for our safety.

Call Before You Dig!

Are you planning to install a fence, build an outdoor shed, plant a tree, or some other project that requires excavation on or near your property?

If so, call Diggers' Hotline of Nebraska at 811, or call 1-800-331-5666 at least two days before you start. The one-call notification center will contact all of the utilities in your area to make sure that any underground facilities are marked before you begin your work.

When you call Diggers' Hotline of Nebraska, anytime 24-hours a day, seven days a week, an operator will answer and ask for some or all of the following information: name, address, telephone number; type of work being done; city and county; and township, range, section.

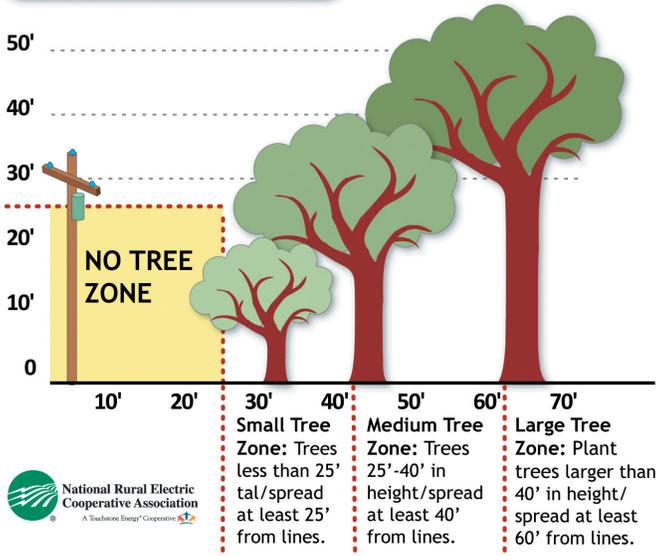
The information is entered into a computer and your "locate request" is sent by fax, e-mail, or phone to each utility (including ERPPD) that has underground facilities in the area. Each utility uses a flag of a different color, for example, electrical wires are marked with a red flag.

Diggers' Hotline is a free service to you, and ERPPD's response to locate requests is also free. We want to make it as painless as possible to keep you and your workers safe.

48 Hours Before You Dig Anything Anywhere
Call 811 for Diggers Hotline
or visit the website at ne-diggers.com

Right Tree--Right Place

Tree Planting Guide



If you are landscaping your backyard, preplanning is the best insurance for your future tree and shrub planting effort. Ensure the oak or maple tree you planted for future generations does not have to be removed by utility tree trimming crews before its benefits are realized. Careful placement of trees and taller shrubs is necessary to avoid interference with overhead and underground electric utility lines.

Arbor Day on April 27, the last Friday in April, is a perfect time to teach the younger generation the benefits of tree planting, selection of the proper species for your location, and how to correctly plant a tree and foster its growth. However, one element of the lesson should be to teach youngsters that trees can interfere with overhead electric lines and safety can be compromised when limbs contact the wires. The same lesson can be taught about roots which may be cut, if buried electric lines have to be repaired or replaced.

Trees conduct electricity and can create a safety hazard if limbs grow too close to electric lines. Power outages or momentary interruptions can occur when trees and branches come into contact with overhead lines.

Another concern is the safety risk when children climb trees near power lines. Accidental contact of electric wires with a tree limb or person playing or trimming around the tree could be fatal. Also, trees growing near power lines must be pruned to maintain a safe distance from the wires. This results in increased right-of-way maintenance costs and ultimately rate increases. If you have trees that appear to be growing into power lines, contact us at 1-800-675-2185. Never try to prune them yourself.

To learn more about which trees might work best in your yard, visit www.arborday.org, or call ERPPD at 1-800-675-2185.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

with Board position and subdivision

- Rod Zohner
President.....II
- Tim Means
Vice President ..II
- Larry Lindahl
SecretaryIII
- Dennis Kuchar
Treasurer I
- Jerrell Dolesh
Director II
- Mark Miller
Director I
- Joe Thiele
DirectorIII
- Greg Weidner
Director I
- David Hoefler
DirectorIII

MANAGER

Tom Rudloff

For Emergency Service or Outage Reporting

1-800-675-2185

After Hours Note:

The entire 800-number *must* be dialed, even for a local call.

Communicate Electronically With ERPPD

Internet: www.erppd.com

E-mail: erppd@erppd.com



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

**It's the law!
Call 811 Before
You Dig!**

Or 1-800-331-5666
Diggers Hotline
of Nebraska

Outage Checklist

In the case of an outage:

- First check to see if the fuses below the meter are good.
- If you have breakers, make sure they are on and have not kicked out.
- If you have a double-throw switch for standby power, make sure it is in the correct position.
- Check with neighbors to see if they have power. By doing this before calling us, we can determine if it is a line or an individual outage. This can help cut down on outage duration.
- Please, be prepared to give the name on the account, plus the consumer number and/or the legal location. This will assist us in sending our crews to the correct place.

Questions about your bill?

Please call the ERPPD office at 402-675-2185 or toll-free, 1-800-675-2185, during office hours, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. M-F, in regards to billing questions. When calling the office concerning billing problems, it will save time if you would have your meter serial number or customer account number. Remember to call the Battle Creek office if you have billing questions. All account payments should be mailed to:

**Elkhorn Rural
Public Power
District
P.O. Box 310
Battle Creek, NE
68715**