

THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

December 2012

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 21, Number 12



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the Employees and Directors of Elkhorn Rural Public Power District

“Thank You for Being our Customer”

“Dedicated to providing SAFE, RELIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE electricity for ALL customers”



Elkhorn Rural Public Power District

will be closed

Monday, Dec. 26,
for the **Christmas Holiday**
and

Monday, Jan 2
for the **New Year's Holiday.**



OPERATIONS REPORT

Projects Completed or In Progress

1. Meter changeouts in Ewing, Clearwater, Elgin, Woodland Park, and Country Village Trailer Court. This project replaces the meters that were installed in 2000 with TWACS meters, the same meters we are using in the rural areas. The present meters were due for costly equipment upgrades, so it was a good time to switch to the same style meters recently installed in the rest of the district. This helps our technicians focus on one style of meter. As of the end of November, all residential meters have been replaced in Elgin, Ewing, and Clearwater. The techs will begin to change out the residential meters in Woodland Park and Country Village Trailer Court in the first week of December. The targeted completion date is December 31, barring any adverse weather issues.
2. Upgrade three miles of 3-phase north of sub 9 (north of Clearwater). This project replaces older conductor with larger conductor capable of handling the present and anticipated power requirements in the area north of Clearwater.
3. Upgrade three miles of 3-phase west of sub 2 (southwest of Neligh). This project also replaces older conductor with larger conductor capable of handling current and future power requirements west and south of Neligh. The overhead portion of this job is completed. There is about a half-mile of underground to do before next summer.
4. Highway 35 line move for expressway construction from Benjamin Ave to the Red Bull corner. This project included re-burying 2 miles of underground on the west side of the current highway further to the west to avoid the right-of-way of the new expressway.
5. Improvements on electrical feeds into the Woodland Park area: Along with the re-bury mentioned in project #4, ERPPD personnel replaced about a half mile of aging underground and overhead lines, which have caused some problems over the past several years. In addition to the replacement, we have changed some feeds in Woodland Park to enable alternate routes to feed power in case the primary feed is compromised.
6. ERPPD personnel have already started to complete work necessary, line builds and pole adds, to connect up to 93 new irrigation services for 2013. Approximately 2 miles of line have been constructed, with another 16 miles to go.

These are just a few examples of the ongoing projects to insure reliability of service for our customers.

IRRIGATORS

Irrigation Customer Meetings January 24-25, 2013

Elkhorn RPPD will host two irrigation customer meetings in January. The meetings, which are scheduled for January 24 and 25, will begin at 10:00 am and will end at 12:00 noon.

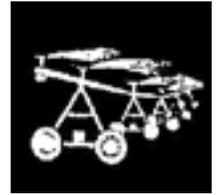
The January 24 meeting will be held in the Farmers' Pride meeting room, located 2 miles south of Battle Creek on Highway 121.

The January 25 meeting will be held in the Clearwater American Legion Club.

Irrigators may attend whichever meeting fits into their schedule.

Topics to be covered include: 2012 season wrapup, 2013 irrigation growth, power factor corrective capacitors, 2013 irrigation season, irrigation cost comparison, text messaging for individual well control status, etc. A question and answer period will also be included.

Letters of invitation with a detailed agenda will be sent out in late December or early January to all current and new irrigation customers.



SAFETY NEWS

Stay Away From Downed Power Lines

The recent deaths of three members of a California family demonstrate the dangers associated with downed overhead power lines. Authorities believe high winds caused the 12,000 volt line to topple into the back yard of a San Bernardino residence. At that location a 43 year old man apparently was electrocuted either by contact with the wire or by the voltage radiating from the point where the wire touched the ground.

Authorities believe the man's wife and their 21 year old son were subsequently in turn electrocuted when they

attempted to rescue those previously overcome by the deadly current.

Safe Electricity urges everyone encountering downed power lines to assume that they are live. Always assume that they're hot and never go close. Since it is impossible to know if a power line is energized or not, one should always avoid it. Electricity is always looking for a path to the ground, and from the point where a wire contacts the earth, deadly voltage will radiate for an unknown distance.

Firefighters found the bodies of the three family members at the San Bernardino home, but said it was too dangerous to immediately free them.

The firefighters had to wait until the utility linemen cut the power and the bodies could be recovered.

The Safe Electricity program puts great importance on always knowing where power lines are located around you. Anyone on foot can become fatally injured, whether touching a low hanging power line or being near one on the ground.

If you see an overhead power line out of place, quickly notify your local utility or emergency personnel.

For more electrical safety tips, click on the SafeElectricity link on our web page, www.erppd.com.

WIRE

Page 2

*Elkhorn Rural Public Power District
December 2012*

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Save 50% Energy While Keeping Warm? Tough to Do!!!

Magazine, newspaper and even television advertisements are claiming you can save up to 50 percent on your heating bill by using their attractive and special space heater! Initially, you might think, "Wow! I spent a lot of money keeping warm last winter. I can cut that amount in half."

Then, you see the special offer. Originally \$499.95, you can order now for \$299.00! You are convinced you will save that much in one winter. This is an incredible deal!

But before you rush out and buy one of these miracle heaters, look closer at what you are going to have to do to achieve those savings. The fine print says that savings to your heating bill comes from setting the main thermostat in your house to as low as 50 degrees and moving the space heater to a single room. In doing so, the savings does not come from operating the heater, but rather from turning down the thermostat for the rest of the house. In fact, if you use a miracle heater and don't lower your thermostat, you can actually spend more heating your home!

This practice of using space heaters to warm individual rooms is known as zone heating. If used correctly, it can provide some benefit. For example, if you are consistent in turning down your main system's thermostat and use the space heater to heat just the room you occupy, you can save money. Also, if you



have an area of your home that is hard to heat, a space heater will make that area more comfortable. However, it will cost you more for the additional heat.

In reality, very few homeowners achieve the maximum savings portable heater manufacturers claim.

After one heating season, homeowners are usually disappointed they did not save more and are frustrated that they paid a lot of money for a heater that performed the same as one they could have purchased for under \$100.

A portable heater can improve comfort in hard-to-heat areas, but it does not guarantee you will save in heating costs. Note that most homeowners can achieve greater savings by investing in insulation, weather stripping, servicing their heating and cooling equipment, changing filters, installing compact fluorescent lamps, using programmable thermostats, purchasing ENERGY STAR® appliances, or setting back the thermostat when not at home.

For more information on steps homeowners can take to improve the efficiency of their homes, contact our Energy Services Representative, Mark Gronau, at 800-675-2185, or visit the ENERGY STAR® Home Advisor at <http://www.energystar.gov/homeadvisor>.

Many more energy savings tips are also available at www.erppd.com.

COOL YOUR HEATING COSTS



This winter, save money and energy by setting your thermostat to the lowest temperature comfortable for your family. For each degree you lower your thermostat, you reduce seasonal heating costs by 3 to 5 percent.

Contact Mark Gronau, Energy Services Representative, at (800) 675-2185, for more energy saving tips.

In partnership with our supplier, Nebraska Public Power District, we deliver energy to you.

Energy Efficiency

Month Tip of the

Did you know a computer can draw as much electricity as a new refrigerator? Turn it off when not in use or switch on its energy-saving mode. Also, cell phone and mp3 player chargers as well as plasma TVs and entertainment centers pull power even when they're off. Unplug these and other appliances to save on your electric bill. Find more ways to save at TogetherWeSave.com.

Source: NRECA

Five-Year Financial Projection Approved in November--2013 Rates to be set in December

The ERPPD board of directors and management staff heard a presentation on the Long Term Financial Projection and Rate Track performed by Mark Beauchamp of Utility Financial Services, Inc.

The board had retained his services to assist in the following areas: 1. Determine ERPPD's revenue requirements for fiscal year 2013; 2. Recommend rate adjustments needed to meet targeted revenue requirements; and 3. Develop retail rates to be implemented in 2013

Mr. Beauchamp took the following into account in his projection: 1) anticipated power costs, 2) anticipated demands based on peaks set in July-August of 2012, and 3) capital improvement projects currently un-

derway and scheduled over the next five years.

Mr. Beauchamp will develop the 2013 rates, based on a review of the study. The approved overall rate adjustment will be applied to the current retail rates with efforts to move customer classes towards the results of the cost of service study. Based on the financial projection and the cost of service, the average rate increase will be 3.3%, with the majority of the increases falling between 1.3% and 5.3%.

The 2013 rates will be approved at the December board meeting, and will be effective January 1, 2013. We will publish a few representative rates in the January issue of the WIRE newsletter, and all rates will be published on the ERPPD website at www.erppd.com.

ERPPD has utilized a rate consultant

Budget Hearing Set for December 11

The annual budget hearing will be held at 10:00 am on Tuesday, December 11, just prior to the regular December board meeting.

The hearing and the board meeting will be held at the ERPPD headquarters, located at 206 N. Fourth St., in Battle Creek. The budget hearing is open to the public, as are the monthly meetings.

since 2000 to make sure that the rates are fair and equitable for all classes and reflect the true cost to serve each rate class. In other words, each rate class pays its fair share of the total cost of service.

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
DirectorII
- 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**