

# THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

December 2013

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 22, Number 12

## Budget Hearing Set for December 10

The annual budget hearing will be held at 10:00 am on Tuesday, December 10, 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.

## New Substation to be Constructed

A construction contract was awarded to Watts Electric of Waverly, Neb, for the construction of a new substation in the northwestern part of the district. The new substation, named the Trease substation, will be substation number 28 in our fleet.

The substation will be located 2 miles south and 3 miles east of Orchard, on land purchased from Wanda Trease.

The general location was chosen following a engineering load study showing significant growth in that area. The specific location was chosen to be as close to the load center as possible. Our new GIS mapping system was utilized in the siting process.

Construction on the substation is scheduled to begin on or before December 9, with an anticipated completion date of March 28, 2014.

Residents in the area can expect construction crews and vehicles in the area throughout the construction time period.

Please call our office at (800) 675-2185 if you have any questions.

*Elkhorn Rural Public Power District  
December 2013*

## Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

from  
all of us  
at

**Elkhorn  
Rural  
Public  
Power  
District**



Marc Ahlers

♣ Dan Belt ♣

Galen Beckman

♣ Connie Beatler ♣

Ken Capler ♣ Rick Cherington

Rich Eymann ♣ Garland Goracke

Mark Gronau ♣ Patrick Hintz

Jeremy Holecek ♣ Dave Hrabamek

Bill Hughes ♣ Jeff Kerkman ♣ Kyle Kester

Ryan Kittelson ♣ Todd Knutson ♣ Paul Lichty

Jason Lyon ♣ Wayne McCormick ♣ Dave Meyer

John Paul ♣ Steve Petersen ♣ Jim Ridder

Dan Schrage ♣ Teresa Schwarzing ♣ Eric Scranton

Bill Seifert ♣ Dominic Smedra ♣ Andy Starman

Brian Sackstorf ♣ Jared Sackstorf ♣ Carmen Thelen

Chris Tillotson ♣ Joyceln Vogel ♣ Jim Wennekamp

Travis Wiebelhaus ♣ Stacie Young ♣ Kevin Zohner

♣ Tom ♣

Rudloff

Jerrell Dolesh ♣ Dave Hoefler

Dennis Kuchar ♣ Larry Lindahl

Tim Means ♣ Mark Miller

Joe Thiele ♣ Greg Weidner

Rodney Zohner

## Elkhorn Rural Public Power District

will be closed

**Wednesday, Dec. 25,**

**Christmas Day**

and

**Wednesday, January 1**

**New Year's Day**

## OPERATIONS NEWS

# Construction and Maintenance Projects

Following are just a few of the latest highlights from the Operations and Maintenance department:

- Ewing Conversion Project: ERPPD crews are nearing completion of the Ewing city electrical system conversion from 2,400 volts to 7,200 volts. This project will provide a backup electrical feed for the city for both planned and unplanned outages.
- ERPPD crews replaced 1/2 mile of underground wire by the Nelig airport with larger wire to match the size of the new overhead wire in that area. The capacity of an electrical distribution feeder line is directly related to the smallest wire size in the feeder.
- Woodland Park-replaced a section of aging underground wire to improve the efficiency and reliability

of the system.

- Built 1-1/2 miles of single phase line southeast of Madison to provide voltage support in the area
- The contract for construction of the new substation south of Orchard was awarded to Watts Electric, who submitted the lowest bid of \$786,311. Construction will begin on or before December 9 and should be completed by March 28. The substation will take care of the increased demand for electricity in that area.
- The tree-trimming crew began work to trim and cut trees in the right-of-way in the eastern part of the district. This is a proactive, preventative measure to avoid blinks or outages caused by trees in the lines.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY NEWS

### EnergyWise Tip: Light Bulbs

When we used to shop for light bulbs, most of us related the amount of light a bulb produced to its wattage size. We expected a standard 100-watt incandescent bulb to be about twice as bright as a standard 60-watt incandescent bulb and chose accordingly.

These days, our choices are not that simple. With the phase-out of most standard incandescent bulbs and a store's lighting section being taken over by halogen bulbs, compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) and light emitting diode (LED) lamps, the world of light bulbs became a lot more complex.

Instead of thinking "watts", we need to consider lumens. Watts measure the amount of energy required to produce light, whereas lumens measure the amount of light produced. The more lumens in a light bulb, the brighter the light.

The following is a list of light output ranges of traditional incandescent lamps:

- 40-watt bulb = 350 - 749 lumens
- 60-watt bulb = 750 - 1,049 lumens
- 75-watt bulb = 1,050 - 1,489 lumens
- 100-watt bulb = 1,490 - 2,600 lumens

The Federal Trade Commission has worked with manufacturers to develop a new label to help consumers purchasing energy-saving bulbs. It looks similar to nutrition labels on food and will have more concise information about the bulb's output and energy savings.

The labels will include:

- Brightness (in lumens)
- Estimated Yearly Energy Cost
- Life-expectancy of the bulb
- Light appearance
- Energy used

Be sure that you read the label for particular applications. Some bulbs do not like heat, but do like cold. Some bulbs are dimmable, others are not. Some do not like cold, but work very well in hot environments, such as globe lights. Call our office at 800-675-2185, for more information on lighting options.



## Prepare for Winter Storms

No one wants to talk about winter storms for fear that talking about them will make them more apt to strike. I guess it is superstition or just not wanting to think about the inconvenience. But, I believe we should do everything we can to be prepared for a winter storm, just in case. It is better to be prepared and never need it than to wish we had after the fact.

Following is a list of basic items that all storm preparation kits should contain:

- Flashlights with fresh batteries
- Matches for lighting candles and gas stoves or clean burning heaters
- Wood for a properly ventilated fireplace
- Prescription medicines and baby supplies
- Food that can be kept in coolers and a manual can opener
- A non-cordless telephone and/or a fully charged cellular phone
- Bottled drinking water
- Battery-powered emergency lights and radio
- A home generator can also be helpful as long as you are familiar with safe operating procedures.

To be truly prepared you need more than supplies. You need to know what to do when a storm strikes. Winter storms can cause severe damage to power lines. Remember that downed power lines do NOT have to be arcing, sparking, or moving to be “live”--and deadly.

When the power is out during a winter storm, the experts at [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org) suggest the following:

- Stay inside, and dress in warm, layered clothing
- Close off unneeded rooms
- When using an alternative heat source, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards, and be sure to properly ventilate. Always keep a multipurpose, dry chemical fire extinguisher nearby, and know how to use it.
- Stuff towels and rags underneath doors to keep the heat in
- Cover windows at night
- Keep a close eye on the temperature in your home. Infants and people over the age of 65 are more susceptible to the cold. You may want to stay with friends or relatives or go to a shelter if you can't keep your house warm.

Winter storms can create hazardous and stressful conditions, but with the proper knowledge and preparation, you can stay safe and warm. For more information on winter outages, generator safety, and more, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## STAY AHEAD OF THE STORM



This winter, before the first snows hit the ground, take precautions. Assemble a power outage supply kit and create an action plan for your family. We want you to be safe and warm while utility crews restore power.

Stay safe and stay away from downed power lines.

Brought to you by the folks at  
Elkhorn Rural Public Power District  
1-800-675-2185

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

### Energy Efficiency

### *Tip of the Month*

Electric bills rise in the winter for lots of reasons—holiday parties, house guests, and shorter days and longer nights. Take little measures to help control costs like turning down the thermostat, washing clothes in cold water, swapping out lightbulbs for high-efficiency versions, and using microwaves or toaster ovens to cook. Find more ways to save at TogetherWeSave.

# Electricity for Irrigation-Convenient AND An Excellent Value

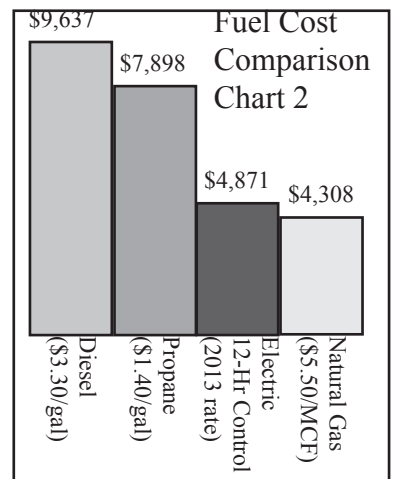
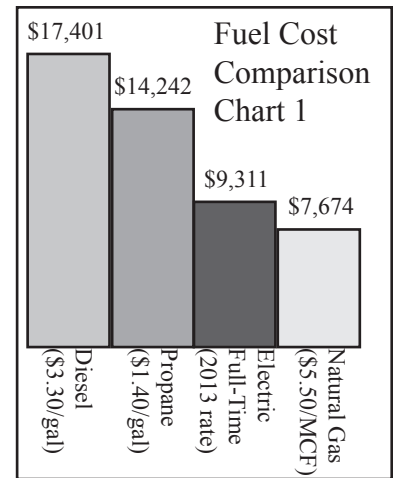
Each year we perform various comparisons to make sure that electricity remains competitive in the marketplace. One of the areas that we experience competition is in the powering of irrigation systems. Irrigators have a choice of electricity, diesel, propane, and sometimes natural gas. Electricity over the years has been the power source of choice due to its convenience and maintenance of motors, but it has not always been the cheapest. A big advantage of electricity is the stability of rates, whereas costs for other fuel sources vary with supply and demand. In a Public Power state, the customers are also the owners of the utility and rates must be based on cost-of-service. The rates are not structured to provide a profit for investors, therefore all margins are invested back into the system to maintain reliability.

The charts at the right are just two examples taken from our 2013 post-season analysis, using 2013 fuel prices. The charts were created using our Irrigation Calculator spreadsheet. You can find the calculator on our website at [www.erppd.com/irrigation\\_calculator.xls](http://www.erppd.com/irrigation_calculator.xls), if you would like to perform your own comparisons and “what-if” scenarios.

Chart 1 is a comparison of an electric irrigation system on our full-time pumping rate to various other power sources, given equal inputs for pumping hours (1,044), acre-inches (14.2), size of pivot (8 towers), etc. Chart 2 shows an electric system on our 12-hour control rate, using 599 pumping hours, 8.2 acre-inches, 8 towers, as compared to other fuel sources. As you can see, electricity is a great value for irrigation pumping at about one-half the cost of the most common fuel sources in our area.

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District staff will be monitoring the progress of the Nebraska Public Power District’s construction of the new Hoskins-to-Neligh transmission line to determine the optimal time to continue adding new irrigation services. The line is scheduled for completion for the 2016 irrigation season.

Please call our office at (800) 675-2185 if you have any questions.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

with Board position and subdivision

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

**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](http://www.erppd.com)  
E-mail: [erppd@erppd.com](mailto: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