

# THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

February 2012

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 21, Number 2



Megan Steskal

Ivy Prater

Briley Wiese

## Three Students to Attend the 2012 Washington, DC, Youth Tour

Elkhorn RPPD is proud to announce that three area students will be representing our district on the 2012 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. in June. They are Megan Steskal of Clearwater, Ivy Prater of Elgin, and Briley Wiese of Lindsay.

The Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) coordinates the Youth Tour for approximately 20 students representing public power districts and electric cooperatives throughout the state of Nebraska. The Youth Tour has brought high school juniors and seniors to Washington, D.C. every June since the late 1950s.

Students on the tour learn about rural electric systems, American history, and U.S. government, and walk away with a greater understanding of their role as a citizen. They have an opportunity to visit with their senators and representatives, and also explore the sights around the nation's capital.

To be eligible for the tour, students must have attended the NREA Youth Energy Camp, which is held at the Halsey 4-H camp at Halsey. Students are then either selected by their local power district through an application process or, they are selected by their peers at the Youth Energy Camp through a week-long competition consisting of a series of speeches and activities.

Briley and Ivy entered the competition at the Youth Energy Camp and they won two of the three possible Youth Tour seats. They will be sponsored by the NREA. Megan submitted her application to ERPPD and was chosen by a selection committee to participate on the 2012 Youth Tour.

Congratulations to Megan, Ivy, and Briley for being chosen to represent ERPPD and Nebraska on the 2012 Washington, D.C. Youth Tour.



Larry Lindahl (left) and Greg Weidner (right) receive their certificates from Board President Rod Zohner

## Lindahl and Weidner Earn Board Leadership Certificates

Elkhorn RPPD directors Larry Lindahl and Greg Weidner each earned Board Leadership Certificates in 2011. The certificates were awarded by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

In order to attain the Board Leadership Certificate, a director must first complete the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate, which consists of five required courses: Director Duties and Liabilities, Understanding the Electric Business, Board Roles and Relationships, Strategic Planning, and Financial Decision Making.

After completing the CCD certificate, the director must complete a total of 10 credits from the list of BLC courses. The courses range from Rules and Procedures for Effective Board Meetings, Political Action Plans, New and Emerging Technologies, When Disaster Strikes, Bylaws-Guiding Principles and Current Issues, Policy Development, Ethics and Governance, Developing Effective Boardroom Decision-Making, Understanding the New World of Power Supply, The Role of Renewables in Power Supply, Rate Strategies for 21st Century Challenges.

Congratulations Larry and Greg on completing the requirements of the Board Leadership Certificate.

## Account Number Expanded

Due to a billing software upgrade, we have changed your account number. The change is very minimal and consists of adding another placeholder zero before the last two digits. For example, if your present account number is 123401, it will become 1234001. If your account number is 65432101, it will become 654321001. You may need to contact your bank if you pay your bill electronically. Please contact our office at 1-402-675-2185 or 1-800-675-2185 if you have any questions.

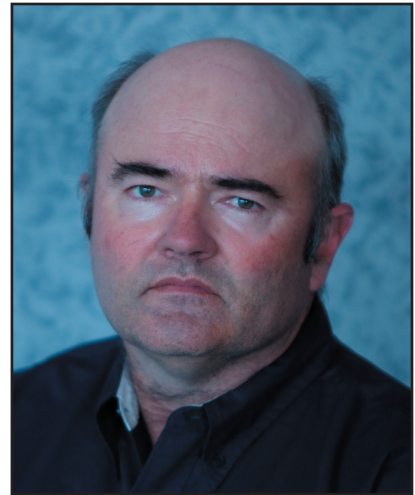


**Eric Scranton, Lineman First Class, 10 years**

## **Years of Service Awards Presented**

Elkhorn RPPD is proud to present the following years of service awards. The awards are presented to employees and directors every five years. Following are the recipients of the Years of Service Awards for 2011: Dan Schrage, 30 years; Garland Goracke, 10 years; Eric Scranton, 10 years; Travis Wiebelhaus, 10 years, and John Paul 5 years.

Congratulations and may you have many more years of service.



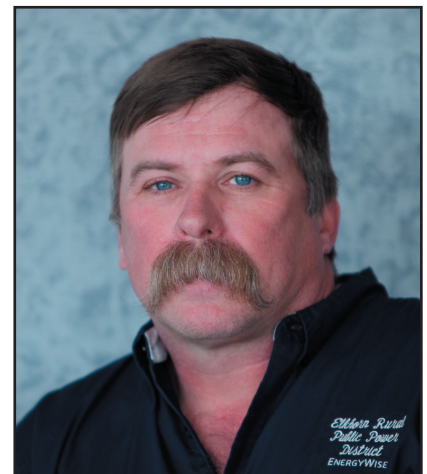
**John Paul, Meter Technician, 5 years**



**Travis Wiebelhaus, Lineman First Class, 10 years**



**Dan Schrage, Lineman First Class, 30 years**



**Garland Goracke, Warehouseman, 10 years**

## **ERPPD Promotes Safety at Farm Show**



**Safety demo team showing the power of electricity as it takes a shortcut to the ground.**

they will not become part of that shortcut to the ground.

If you would like to have ERPPD put on a safety demonstration for your organization or school, please contact ERPPD Safety Director Wayne McCormick at our office (1-800-675-2185).

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District employees, in partnership with employees from Stanton County Public Power, participated in the Northeast Nebraska Farm Show on January 11-12. The show was held at the Northeast Community College Ag Complex. ERPPD employees Mark Gronau, Brian Suckstorf, and Jim Wennekamp, along with Stanton Co PPD employees demonstrated the dangers of high-voltage electricity, using a demonstration trailer co-owned by several area public power districts. The trailer features actual high-voltage (7,200 volts) and actual equipment-poles, wire, transformers, reclosers, fuse cutouts, and a grounding platform. The crew can simulate various scenarios to show how electricity wants take a shortcut path to the ground anywhere along its route to serve the customer. The intent of the demonstration is to keep people out of harm's way so

## Irrigator Informational Meetings Scheduled

Irrigators, please plan to attend one of two informational meetings this spring. The meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, February 21, at the ERPPD headquarters office boardroom. The ERPPD headquarters is located at 206 N 4th St (Hwy 121) in Battle Creek. The second meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 22, at the American Legion Hall in Clearwater. The Legion Hall is located at 507 Main Street. Both meetings will begin at 9:30 a.m. and end at approximately 11:30 a.m.

Topics to be discussed include the following:

- Discussion of irrigation growth
- Overview of Load Management
- 2012 Irrigation Rates
- Power Factor Corrective Capacitors
- Rollout of new load control notification options
- Demonstration of Irrigation Expense Calculator (energy source cost comparison, what-if scenarios, located on ERPPD website)
- Communication
- Customer Input session

Attendees will have a chance to work with the Irrigation Expense Calculator on one of several laptop computers provided at the meeting sites.

Invitations will be mailed to current irrigation customers, so please watch your mail. If you are considering a new electric irrigation service or converting an existing irrigation system to electric and do not receive an invitation, consider this your invitation to attend one of the meetings.

If you have any questions, please call us at 402-675-2185 or 800-675-2185.

## 2012 Energy Efficiency Incentive Program

### Residential

• Cooling System Tune-up	A/C or Heat pump tune-up	\$30
• Dealer Incentive		\$50
• Low Flow Showerheads	Complimentary for electric water heaters	up to \$10/head reimbursed
• Low Interest Loan (NEO)	Loans for residential heat pumps	2.5%
• Attic Insulation	Attic insulation (all-electric homes)	\$0.15/sq. ft. (up to 2,000 sq. ft.)
• Heat Pump (incentive is doubled if the heat pump replaces an air conditioner)		
	14 SEER	\$100
	15 SEER, 12.5EER, 8.5 HSPF	\$300
	16+SEER, 12.5 EER, 8.5 HSPF	\$300
	Ground Source HP-any EER	\$400
	Outdoor HP unit only (14 SEER min)	\$100

### Commercial/Industrial

For commercial and industrial incentive information, contact our Energy Services Representative, Mark Gronau, at 1-800-675-2185. Following is a list of categories that have incentive programs available:

- Commercial HVAC
- HVAC System Optimization
- Custom Process
- Custom Lighting
- Prescriptive Lighting
- Variable Frequency Drives

### Agricultural

- Irrigation Pump Efficiency Program (call Mark Gronau at 1-800-675-2185 for details)

# Energy Efficiency or New Power Plants?

It is very uncommon for a company in the business of sales to encourage you to use less of their product, however that is the case with the public power industry and electricity. With the cost of electricity expected to increase in the future, energy efficiency is going to be more critical.

Energy efficiency can be viewed as a resource for additional capacity in much the same way as building a new power plant. Conserving electricity can delay the need to invest huge dollars in power plants to satisfy the growing demand for electricity. By promoting energy efficiency and conservation, public power can keep rates from increasing as much as they would if new plants needed to be built.

The upward spiral in the future cost of electricity is largely due to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) large list of regulations aimed at coal plants and which are due to take effect over the next few years. Each of the regulations comes with a cost that ultimately will be passed on to the consumer.

Other factors driving the cost of electricity include fuel costs, transportation costs, maintenance of an aging transmission and distribution infrastructure, and the addition of expensive renewable energy.

We in the Midwest have enjoyed some of the lowest electric rates in the country, largely due to the public power structure, and also to the close proximity to the coal fields of Wyoming. However, environmental regulations targeting coal plants are beginning to have an adverse effect on the cost of our electricity.

At Elkhorn RPPD, we will continue to do what we can do internally to try to hold the line on costs, but we have little control on the above-mentioned factors. We will continue to try to convince our elected officials to control the actions of the EPA, and we could really use your help in this effort. Your senators and representatives really do pay attention to their constituents who contact them. Contact Wayne McCormick at Elkhorn RPPD to see how you can help.

**Energy Efficiency**  
*Tip of the Month*

Air is drawn into your home from low areas, so inspect your foundation for potential air-infiltration points. Fixing these leaks makes a bigger impact on your electric bill than sealing doors and windows! Caulk all cracks and gaps around your home including spaces around wires for telephone, electrical, cable, and gas lines, water spigots, and dryer vents. Find more ways to save at TogetherWeSave.com.

*Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association*

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

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**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**