

THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

July 2011

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

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Kami Hackerott selected for trip to nation's capital



Kami Hackerott

Kami Hackerott of rural Madison (Humphrey St. Francis High School) recently was selected by Elkhorn Rural Public Power District to participate in the Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) Washington Youth Tour, a seven day tour in Washington, D.C., with eleven other students from across rural Nebraska.

Each year in June the NREA and local power districts sponsor high school students from across Nebraska for an all-expense-paid trip to the Washington, D.C. Youth Tour. The trip gives participants an opportunity to learn first-hand about our nation's history and the pressing issues facing the energy industry. In addition, the experience fosters the student's appreciation for the democratic process, builds leadership skills, and educates the students about the role rural electric systems have in the national economy.

While on the Youth Tour, Kami visited a number of our nation's capitol historic sites including the Capitol building, the National Mall and Smithsonian Institution, the Holocaust Museum, Mt. Vernon, and Gettysburg battlefield. Students attended the Nebraska Breakfast with the entire Nebraska congressional delegation and had private meetings with Senators Mike Johanns and Ben Nelson and Representatives Jeff Fortenberry and Adrian Smith.

To be selected for Youth Tour, students must first attend the NREA Youth Energy Camp in Halsey, NE, a weeklong leadership program for rural youth. At camp they can be selected by their peers to serve as an Ambassador to the Youth Tour or they may be selected by their local electric system to serve as a delegate. Kami was selected by ERPPD to attend the tour.

In addition to taking in the sights of the nation's capital, 1,500 students from rural areas across the U.S. convened for National Youth Day to learn from public figures and other inspirational speakers. This year's Youth Day agenda included Mike Schlappi, a four-time Paralympic medalist and two-time world Champion Wheelchair Basketball champion. Schlappi shares his inspiring message for every American, young or old: "Just because you can't stand up, doesn't mean you can't stand out." Students were also given a presentation on the history of rural electrification from the Father of Rural Electrification himself, Senator George Norris, played by former Nebraska state senator Dave Landis.

The NREA Youth Tour has been a joint effort of local rural electric providers, the NREA, and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association for more than 45 years. Since 1964, more than 40,000 high school juniors and seniors have participated in the program.



Independence Day is Monday, July 4.

ERPPD Offices *will be closed* as our employees and their families remember the day in history when our American forefathers first made their Declaration of Independence.

ONGOING MAINTENANCE

S&L To Test Poles

As part of ERPPD's continued commitment to provide reliable service, S&L Pole Testing, Inc., will inspect about 3,200 distribution poles, many of which were last inspected in 1996 and 1997. The process will begin sometime in June. For your peace of mind, S&L vehicles working in the area will be marked with the S&L Pole Testing, Inc., emblem.

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: west and northwest of Elgin up to north of Clearwater, south and southwest of Battle Creek, and east and south of Norfolk.

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.

Call 1-800-675-2185 if you have questions about the pole inspection operation.

Wilson Tree Service Trimming Trees for ERPPD

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District has contracted with Wilson Tree Service of Norfolk to cut and trim trees in the ERPPD power line rights-of-way east and south of Norfolk.

The contractors will assess the right-of-way and then contact the property owner if trees on their property need to be cut or trimmed. If at all possible, it makes the most economic sense for ERPPD to cut trees down if they are growing under the power lines. We understand that this is not feasible for all situations, but it does mean an added cost to revisit the area to keep the trees out of the lines.

Please help us keep rates down by allowing our contractors to cut the trees back as much as possible, or by allowing the contractor to cut the entire tree down.

"Our Energy Our Future" Campaign

Elkhorn RPPD has joined with other power districts and rural electric cooperatives to provide our customers with a unified voice to our elected officials. You can get involved through the "Our Energy Our Future" grassroots campaign, hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, of which ERPPD is a member.

The "Our Energy Our Future" campaign works to ensure that Americans have an affordable and reliable source of electricity for years to come. The campaign works like this: if there is legislation being debated in Congress that has a direct bearing on the rural electric industry, either favorable or detrimental, you will receive a "Take Action Alert" via email. This email will provide instructions on how you can voice your concerns to your Congressmen. Simply complete the form below and return it to our office. Please contact Wayne McCormick at ERPPD, 800-675-2185, if you have any questions.

Start the Dialogue With Your Elected Officials

Name _____
Home Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____
Home telephone _____ Cell Phone _____ Is this your primary phone? ____ Yes ____ No
Email address _____
Signature _____

You can mail this form in with your bill payment or drop it off at our office. You can also email your information to us at erppd@erppd.com or call in the information during business hours at 1-800-675-2185.

SAFETY NEWS

Area Farmer Avoids Serious Injury

ERPPD would like to thank this individual for allowing us to share his story with you, our valued customer, in the name of safety.

An area farmer avoided serious injury by following the rules he had learned about high voltage lines. He was maneuvering his sprayer around the end of the pivot when the raised boom hit the 7,200 volt power line. He realized something was wrong when the tires on the tractor started on fire as the electricity found its way to the ground. He tried to back up, but the boom was caught in the wire.

His first thought was to grab the fire extinguisher to fight the fire, but fortunately he remembered the high voltage safety training he had received from farm safety seminars, including high voltage safety demonstrations sponsored by ERPPD and Stanton Co. PPD at the Northeast Nebraska Farm Show. He called our office with his cell phone and explained the situation, stated that he was safe, and that he was planning to stay in the tractor until we could get to the scene to shut off the power.

As the farming equipment gets bigger and bigger, it becomes even more important that operators take the time to look out for overhead power lines. We realize that these incidents do happen, and if they do it is important that the operator stay in the tractor or vehicle until our personnel have the power shut off. If there is danger of fire and you must exit, jump free and land with both feet together and bunny hop or shuffle away from the vehicle. Do not touch the ground and the vehicle at the same time. One of the mottos we stress at our high-voltage safety demonstrations is to "Look Up and Live".

For more safety information, go to our website at www.erppd.com, click on the SafeElectricity link, and check out the materials and videos in the TLC (Teach, Learn, Care) safety campaign.



Tractor tire flat from burning



Note the wire entangled in the boom.



Note the four burn marks from the tractor tires.

ENERGY NEWS

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Does your home have a window air conditioner? Make sure that your window unit is properly weather stripped and clean the filter monthly. Keep "fresh air" vents on window A/C units closed.

Source: Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives



We need your help so we can better serve you!



CSR Konnie Beutler assisting a customer

We have several new services to help better serve you, our valued customer, but we need your assistance to move forward. There are times when our Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) need to contact our customers about service problems, billing questions, tree cutting schedule, planned outages, payment reminders, etc.

In order to implement these services, we need your current phone number. We also need your email address if you want to receive automatic account alerts and reminders, or if you wish to make your payment online. Please take a few minutes to complete the form below, providing us with your current home phone number, cell phone number, and email address.

Please help us maintain updated contact information for your account

Name (as it appears on your bill) _____

Account # _____

Home telephone _____

Cell Phone _____ Is this your primary phone? _____ Yes _____ No

Email address _____

You can mail this form in with your bill payment or drop it off at our office. You can also email your information to us at erppd@erppd.com or call in the information during business hours at 1-800-675-2185.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
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Director I

David Hoefler
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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