

# THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

July 2012

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 21, Number 7

## Three Area Students Represent ERPPD in Washington, D.C.-- Ivy Prater of Elgin Chosen to Represent Nebraska on the Youth Leadership Council

Ivy Prater of Elgin, Briley Wiese of Lindsay, and Megan Steskal of Clearwater were recently selected to participate in the Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) Rural Electric Washington Youth Tour. Megan was sponsored by Elkhorn Rural Public Power District (ERPPD), and Ivy and Briley were sponsored by the NREA to attend the seven day tour in Washington, D.C. with seventeen other students from across rural Nebraska.

Each year in June the NREA sponsors 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 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, the students 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 their representatives.

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. At energy camp Ivy and Briley were selected by their peers to serve as an Ambassador to the Washington, D.C. Youth Tour. Megan was selected to represent ERPPD by a selection committee at the system.

The NREA Youth Tour has been a joint effort of local rural electric providers, the NREA, and the National Rural Electric



Ivy Prater



Briley Wiese



Megan Steskal

Cooperative Association for more than 45 years. Since 1964, more than 40,000 high school juniors and seniors have participated in the program.

Ivy Prater received an extra honor during the tour. She was selected to represent Nebraska on the 44-member Youth Leadership Council (YEC) of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). She was chosen from among 18 Nebraska students that attended the Youth Tour. She will next attend the YLC Conference, July 21-25, 2012, in Washington, D.C.

"I'm so excited to go to Washington, meet students from across the country, and learn more about the energy industry and America's political system," Prater said. "It's an incredible opportunity."

YLC members will also participate in the 2013 NRECA Annual Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana. They will provide assistance to NRECA staff and delegates, participating in the Parade of States at the opening General Session, and take part in a variety of educational forums.

ERPPD Offices will be closed on Wednesday,  
July 4, for Independence Day.  
Please call 1-800-675-2185 if you have an  
outage to report.

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY NEWS

## SET YOUR THERMOSTAT TO SAVE



You don't have to freeze in the winter or sweat in the summer to save money on your energy bill. Install a programmable thermostat and set temperatures based on your daily routines. This simple switch could lower your energy bill by up to 33 percent.

For more information on energy-saving techniques contact Mark Gronau, ERPPD Energy Services Representative, at 1-800-675-2185

In partnership with our supplier, Nebraska Public Power District, we offer energy savers.

### Energy Efficiency

#### *Tip of the Month*

Water heating ranks as one of the top three energy-related expenses in your home. Save energy and money by installing a water heater blanket, using low-flow showerheads and faucets, and lowering the thermostat on your water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Learn more at EnergySavers.gov.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

### Home Office Energy Efficiency Tips from EnergyWise<sup>SM</sup>

Consider the following energy-saving tips when operating your home office computer:

- Activate power-management settings. Home office electronics have multiple power modes: active (or “on”), active standby (“on” but consuming less than 100 percent power), and passive standby (or “off”), according to the nonprofit American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE), which promotes energy efficiency to consumers and government policy makers. You can instruct your computer to move into lower-consumption modes automatically when you’ve stopped using it temporarily -- during a lunch hour or phone call, for instance -- yet also wake up when you’re ready to resume working. Such tactics can reduce your computer-related electricity costs by \$25 to \$75 per machine annually.
- Use a power strip for your computer, printer, copier, and other peripherals. If you plug office electronics into a power strip, you can switch all of them fully off (versus leaving them in “standby” mode) with one button. Power strips cost around \$3 to \$12. Assuming your home office equipment represents about 4 percent of your electricity bill, you could save up to \$4 per year.
- If you are investing in new computer equipment, look for ENERGY STAR®-rated computers, small servers, copiers, fax machines, and adapters. ENERGY STAR estimates that using these rated electronics in your home office can save \$115 over the products’ lifetimes.
- Consider a laptop over a desktop. Laptops use one-third the power (22 watts) of a typical desktop (68 watts) when in active mode, according to ACEEE. Annually, a laptop could save you about \$19 compared with a desktop.
- Opt for a flat-panel versus a CRT monitor. A cathode-ray tube monitor consumes about 70 watts of power, while an LCD or flat-panel uses only 27 watts, according to ACEEE data.

For more ideas on how you can be EnergyWise<sup>SM</sup>, please call and visit with Mark Gronau at Elkhorn RPPD (1-800-675-2185).

# OPERATIONS REPORT

## 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 began 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: ***northeast and west of Clearwater; and south and southwest of Battle Creek***

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.

POWER  
YOU CAN  
RELY ON

There's not a lot that stops power in Nebraska. The lights stay on due, in part, to the hard work and dedication of our crews. As a result, we enjoy some of the most reliable power anywhere.

This ad is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of our crews and staff at Elkhorn Rural Public Power District. We are proud of our employees and know that they work hard to fulfill our motto:  
"ERPPD is dedicated to providing **SAFE, RELIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE** electricity for **ALL** customers."

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

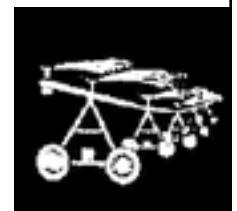
## Irrigation Load Control Text Notification Service Now Operational

ERPPD launched a new service for participants in the irrigation load control program. Irrigators were able to sign up to receive a text message or an email message for one or both of two options:

- 1) To receive the general status of the day, ie whether the day has been designated as a Control Day, or whether the day has been Waived (no control) by Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD), our power supplier, or
- 2) To receive a text message or email message when a particular well has been SHED (turned off), or when it has been RESTORED (turned back on)

There have been a few bumps in the road, mostly with the cell phone companies' settings, but most of the issues have been resolved. If you have signed up for the notifications, but have not been receiving them, please call the office. A phone number may have been entered incorrectly, or we may have had the wrong provider, eg Verizon, USCellular, Viaero, Sprint, etc. The only way we can tell if the service is working is through your assistance.

We are still learning and improving the service, so we welcome your input.



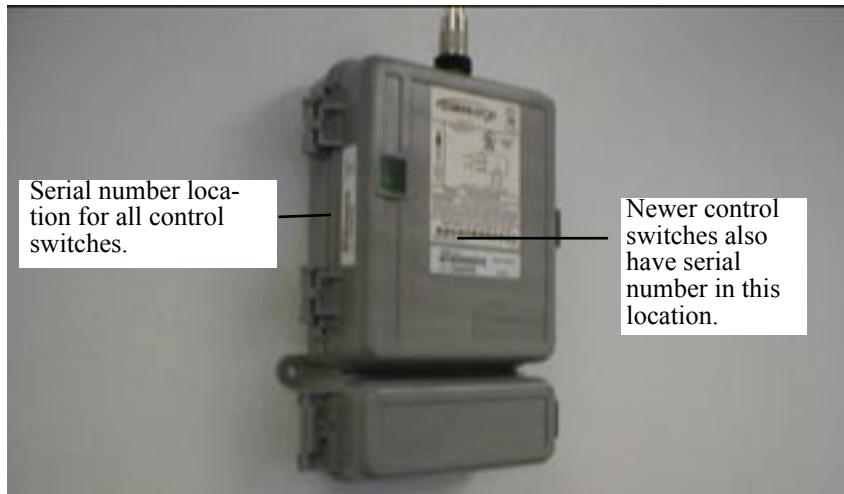
# IRRIGATION

## Irrigator's switch number is important

This irrigation season, an ERPPD irrigator who has occasion to call the utility should reference the system's switch number when giving information.

While account number and location are necessary components, it is the switch number that will best help district personnel to provide the irrigator with the fastest resolution to his or her situation.

See illustration below for location examples:



## Lights have meaning

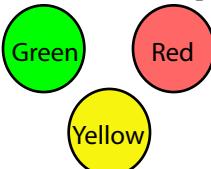
Three LED lights on the control box have particular significance.

Red - No Control

Red and Green - Control

Yellow - Signal Test (has no effect)

The light configuration on the display appears this way:



If the lights are not working, please check the fuses before calling ERPPD's outage number at **800-675-2185**.

### Check on Irrigation Control Status

—  
**June 1-Sept. 15**  
—

**Phone:** 1-800-238-0185  
OR

**Internet:** [www.erppd.com](http://www.erppd.com)  
(click on "Irrigation Control")

### 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 Hoefer  
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**