

THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

July 2013

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 22, Number 7

What is the Nebraska Power Association?

There is a button on the left of our web page, www.erppd.com, that serves as a link to the Nebraska Power Association (NPA), but just what is the NPA and what is its purpose?



The NPA is comprised of the 167 utilities that produce and deliver electricity to Nebraskans. You may recognize some of the members: Elkhorn Rural Public Power District, Nebraska Public Power District, Lincoln Electric System, Omaha Public Power District, and city municipalities, such as Battle Creek, Pierce, Madison, and Neligh, just to name a few.

All of the NPA member utilities are publicly-controlled utilities, since they are governed by a board of directors or council members elected by their customers in a public election. In fact, 100% of all homes and businesses in the state of Nebraska are served by publicly-controlled utilities, the only state in the union that is able to make that claim.

Even though the NPA membership is made up of a diverse mix of utilities, all members share a common goal: To provide the citizens of Nebraska with adequate, reliable, and low-cost electric service, consistent with sound business practices; as is directed by the policy of the State of Nebraska.

To learn more about the NPA and public power in Nebraska, just click on the Nebraska Power Association button on the left side of the Elkhorn Rural Public Power District web page. You can learn about the NPA and its stand on issues such as: legislative bills, climate change, wind energy, net metering, nuclear power, just to name a few of the issues that affect the electrical industry.

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District's membership in the NPA is consistent with our mission statement, which reads as follows:

"Elkhorn Rural Public Power District is dedicated to providing SAFE, RELIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE electricity for ALL customers."



Independence Day is Thursday, 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.

NPPD CEO Pat Pope Responds to Wind Power Ads

Turn to page 3 to read Nebraska Public Power District President and CEO Pat Pope's response to a series of ads that claim NPPD should be doing more to promote the wind industry.



Nebraska Public Power District
Always there when you need us

Two major projects catch the spotlight this month.

Automatic Distribution Line Capacitor Installation

ERPPD crews are busy installing new remote-controlled capacitors on the 7,200 volt distribution lines to improve the efficiencies of our power delivery. The capacitors will be used to improve the power factor of the system, thus reducing line loss.



ERPPD employee Patrick Hintz; waiting to secure the three-phase capacitor bank to the pole and to make the connections to each of the three phases.

The district has been using capacitors on the system for many years, but our employees had to drive to the site to switch them in or out. Due to the expense of mileage and manpower, the capacitors were only put in service in the spring, prior to the irrigation season, and then taken out of service in the fall after the irrigation season. The new capacitors can be switched from the office, using radio-controlled switches similar to the irrigation control switches.

The power factor of the distribution system is most affected by live motor load, so it is most efficient to have the capacitors switched in when motors are running, and switched out following a rain, when fewer motors would be operating. We have not switched capacitors during the season in the past because of the logistics and cost, but we will now have the ability to automatically read the power factor and control the capacitors.

This is another example of innovative ways our employees can use existing electronic systems to accomplish tasks that would have been impractical in the past, staying with our mission statement of providing **SAFE, RELIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE** electricity for **ALL** customers.

The district has also adopted a policy to encourage irrigation customers to install Power Factor Corrective Capacitors on all irrigation motors. These individual capacitors will work hand in hand with the district's capacitors to optimize the power factor, reduce line loss, and ultimately keep rates as low as possible.

69,000-Volt Underground Transmission Line Project Past Neligh Airport Completed

ERPPD contracted with Mid-Plains Power, Inc., to install 4,700 feet of underground transmission line to replace the aging underground transmission line that runs east and west along the north side of the Neligh airport.

The underground transmission line consists of three wires, each of which is approximately 2 3/4" in diameter. Each wire is designed to carry over 69,000 volts. We will use the line to carry 34,500 volts at present, but future work plans call for the line to be converted to 69,000 volts to increase the carrying capacity of the line.

The decision was made to replace the line following several faults during the summer of 2012 and prior years. Replacement of transmission line is not taken lightly due to the great expense, but it became evident after uncovering several hundred feet of the cable that it could and probably would fail in other spots. This was a very proactive approach to avoiding future outages, especially when they could occur during the most extreme weather conditions.



ERPPD employees preparing the terminations (connections) for the east end of the new 69kv underground transmission line, under the watchful eyes of the cable manufacturer trainers.

Since ERPPD does not have the equipment required to efficiently handle and bury the wire, it made the most economic sense to hire a contractor to bury the wire.

ERPPD employees were trained by representatives of the cable manufacturer and they actually installed the terminations on each end. They also spliced the cables together where one reel of wire ran out and the next one started. This training and experience will be very valuable in the future.

This project is another example of fulfilling our mission to provide **SAFE, RELIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE** electricity for **ALL** customers.

When it comes to how Nebraska's public power utilities serve customers, it is NOT a game.

By Pat Pope, Nebraska Public Power District President & CEO

A recent advertising campaign is claiming Nebraska should "get in the game" and invest more in wind energy. But serving Nebraskans with reliable electricity is NOT a game.



Nebraska Public Power District
Always there when you need us

At Nebraska Public Power District, we believe a diverse resource energy mix provides customers with the most affordable and reliable energy. Today, 40 percent of the energy we produce is carbon-free due to NPPD's investments in nuclear, hydro AND wind energy across the state. This energy, which is owned by Nebraskans, is the best carbon-free percentage in the region.

The ad ignores the fact NPPD and many other Nebraska utilities have goals to further increase power production from wind energy. At NPPD, our current goal is to produce 10 percent of our energy requirements from renewable energy by 2020. By the end of 2014, we will have partnered to receive the output from seven, new wind facilities in the state and will be more than 80 percent of our goal. Another fact: These seven wind projects are among 12 that public power utilities will have made possible across our state by the end of next year. These additions to Nebraska's public power system were made at a pace our customers CAN AFFORD.

Nebraska's electric rates are more than 15 percent below the national average, and NPPD's retail residential electric rates are more than 11 percent below Iowa's. Our power generating facilities meet or exceed ALL environmental and air quality emission standards. And, we have been proactive in adding additional emission control equipment to further reduce emissions, some more than 50 to 75 percent below the facilities' federally allotted emission rate.

The coal we buy from neighboring Wyoming is low in sulfur content, which is better for the environment, and

helps bring hundreds, or even thousands, of jobs to Nebraska. This nearby resource helps Gerald Gentleman Station, our largest generating facility, produce some of the lowest-cost power in the country for more than 600,000 Nebraskans.

Today, the public power industry in Nebraska employs around 6,000 Nebraskans. To imply a total of 14,000 jobs could be created in the state just by adding more wind generation, as claimed by the advertising campaign, would mean more than doubling the industry's current workforce.

Nebraska is not Iowa. We use a public model to serve customers, and we are not receiving the benefit of tax incentives for wind projects paid by the public through taxes charged to them outside of their electric rates. During the federal government's 2011 fiscal year, credits for electricity production from renewable resources amounted to \$5.3 billion. Those dollars come from the pockets of every U.S. taxpayer.

Public power exists to serve Nebraskans, and we are mandated to provide low-cost power. This service to Nebraskans is NOT a game. We respect this state's land, air and water, and use them prudently to meet our responsibilities. Here are some quick facts:

- Fact. Wind is a great resource and is one of many energy sources we use. But it does not blow all the time and requires back up resources, especially on still, hot summer days.
- Fact. Nebraska's residential rates are lower than Iowa's.
- Fact. Nebraska's public power utilities will not play a shell game with Nebraska's resources or its people.

Note: Elkhorn Rural Public Power District has a power purchase contract to purchase 100% of its electricity from Nebraska Public Power District.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

ENERGYWISESM

Use less. Spend less. Do more.

**IT
PAY**

to make energy-efficient choices



Financial incentives are available

to qualified customers that help cover costs related to a variety of energy-efficient upgrades.

- Residential
- Commercial
- Agricultural
- Industrial

Contact us for more information.

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District
(800) 675-2185

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

2013 Incentive Program

If you are considering replacing your furnace or air conditioner, either by choice or by need, we have rebates available to help with the purchase of qualifying air-source or ground-source heat pump units.

Rebates are also available for heating or cooling system tuneups, low flow showerheads, and attic insulation.

For more detailed information, check out our web site at www.erppd.com, and click on the EnergyWise rebates link. Or, you can call our office at (800) 675-2185 and visit with our Energy Services Representative, Mark Gronau.

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Lighting accounts for about 13 percent of the average household's electric bill—cut costs by choosing new lightbulbs that have increased output and longevity. Some cost more up front, but prices are dropping as technology advances. Options include color, brightness, and even dimming and multi-way functions. Combining lights with automatic sensors can cut costs further.

Source: NRECA's Cooperative Research Network

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

with Board position and subdivision

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- Tim Means
Vice President ..II
- Larry Lindahl
SecretaryIII
- Dennis Kuchar
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- Jerrell Dolesh
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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