

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

March 2009

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

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Redesigned www.erppd.com on web—

ERPPD site has 2 energy audits to choose from

The new website that Elkhorn Rural Public Power District introduced recently offers not just one, but two, great energy audit features for residential customers.

When residential customers go to www.erppd.com, they will find many interactive features that can help them save energy and money. Clicking on the Energy drop-down will reveal many of these useful features.

A click on the Apogee Home Energy Suite, and another click on Calculators,

will show a home energy audit system that allows users to enter some specific information about their home and receive some practical ideas and very informative data, graphs, and charts as a result.

After clicking on Touchstone Energy Audit, users are asked to enter their own zip codes and some other pertinent details about their homes. The resulting data, graphs, and charts are helpful in planning upgrades and remodeling ventures that would make the best use

of the time and money involved.

Other features under the Energy Audit header include an interactive efficient house, where users can see and read about energy savings appliances and features. Touchstone Energy programs and energy saver tools also offer valuable energy information.

The Energy tab also hosts an interactive site for children, a listing of energy-saving brochures, and some very informative interactive energy-use calculators.

DNR: Lower Elkhorn fully-appropriated; LENRD responds with stay on new wells

More than 350 area residents attended a public meeting to hear information about a plan to place a moratorium on water use and a stay on all new irrigation wells. The meeting was held Thursday, Jan. 8, on the campus of Northeast Community College in Norfolk. Staff from the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Lower Elkhorn Natural Re-

sources District (LENRD) presented the information and were available to answer questions.

Recent actions by the DNR and the LENRD will temporarily limit the construction and use of large-capacity wells and any increase or expansion of irrigated acres with existing wells until further information can be gathered and public hearings held, and could ulti-

mately place the “fully-appropriated” tag and resulting moratorium on the lower portion of the Elkhorn River.

By Jan. 1 of each year, the DNR is required to assess the availability of unappropriated water in each of the state’s river basins. This assessment includes all surface waters in the basin and any groundwater determined to be hydrologically connected to surface waters. On Dec. 16, 2008, DNR Director, Brian Dunnigan, made a preliminary determination that the Lower Platte River Basin—which includes the LENRD—is fully appropriated.

Area farmers should be advised that, as a result of DNR’s determination, the

See ‘DNR and LENRD’ on page 4

ATTENTION IRRIGATORS:

Irrigation form letters containing billing information, horse-power, and current rate will be mailed to you in early March. Please look them over carefully to verify the accuracy of the information. If any changes are to be made, it will be necessary to fill in the new information on these forms and to return them to ERPPD prior to April 1, 2009.

DNR AND LENRD

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law imposes an immediate “stay” on certain water development activities within the hydrologically connected area. This means that, effective Dec. 16, 2008, there was an immediate stay on the following activities within this hydrologically connected area:

- (1) the issuance of new water well construction permits by LENRD;
- (2) the construction of new water wells for permits issued before, but for which construction had not commenced by, Dec. 16, 2008; and
- (3) the expansion of irrigation with existing wells beyond those acres historically irrigated.

The LENRD is authorized to grant exceptions and variances – as defined by Nebraska Statute – to the stay on a case-by-case basis.

There are eight types of wells where exceptions or variances can be made:

- test holes;
- dewatering wells with an intended use of one year or less;
- monitoring wells;
- wells constructed pursuant to a ground water remediation plan under the Environmental Protection Act;
- water wells designed and constructed to pump 50 gallons per minute or less may be connected to serve a single project (such that a collective pumping would exceed 50 gallons per minute);
- water wells for range livestock;
- water wells necessary to alleviate an emergency situation involving the provision of water for human consumption or public health and safety; and
- replacement wells provided that the consumptive use does not exceed the historic use.

In response to this action by the State—and in order to consider what steps the LENRD should take and what policies to adopt—the LENRD Board

of Directors voted Dec. 22, 2008, to adopt a temporary stay for up to 180 days on new water wells, the issuance of new well permits, and the increase of acres historically irrigated. This stay applies to all areas of the LENRD not included in the areas the DNR has declared to be fully appropriated.

Within the 180 days, LENRD Directors will decide whether to exempt from the stay the construction of wells for which permits were issued on or before Dec. 22, 2008.

Three public hearings are being held in mid-to-late February or early March. The one for the Elkhorn basin was held in Norfolk on Feb. 23; the others are being held in the Platte basin (in Lincoln), and in a Loup basin community.

For more information, contact Rick Wozniak, LENRD water resources manager, 402-371-7313.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

USDA grants, loans help irrigators, small businesses

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) rural development group is providing several grant and/or guaranteed loan programs which benefit farmers, ranchers, and small businesses that promote energy efficiency and renewable energy.

The program offers a 25% grant on all eligible project costs and can provide financing up to 75% of total improvement costs.

Potential eligible energy efficiency projects include: irrigation motor conversions, grain dryer upgrades, ventilation system improvements, and other energy efficiency upgrades.

Potential eligible renewable energy projects include: solar, wind turbines, geothermal, hydrogen, digesters, and

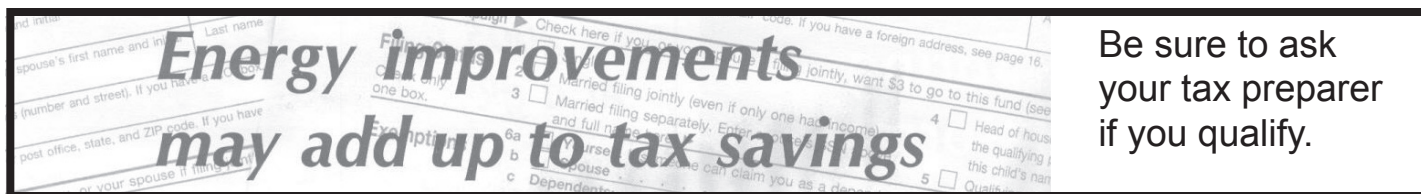
biomass.

Eligible projects are for business purposes only; residential improvements are not eligible.

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District works closely with Nebraska Public Power District to complete the energy-audit portion of the grant/loan application.

The USDA's Norfolk office is currently accepting applications for the 2009 season. Projects must be completed within two years of the application, but they cannot be started prior to submitting a full application. A brochure is available from the USDA that provides more information about the programs.

Contact Korey Young or Bill Sheppard at the Norfolk USDA office by calling 402-371-5350, ext. 4.



Energy Improvements
may add up to tax savings

Be sure to ask your tax preparer if you qualify.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATES

Earn a rebate for installing an electric heat pump

How does a customer become eligible for a heat pump rebate?

Three possibilities exist. A residential customer can:

- 1.A. Convert to a qualified air source heat pump or
- 1.B. Convert to a water source/geothermal heat pump;
2. Build new and install a qualified heat pump; or
3. Upgrade from a lower-SEER heat pump to a qualified higher-SEER heat pump.

How does the residential customer get the rebate?

The heat pump installer must complete a verification form for a heat pump that meets the minimum equipment standards (see below). The verification ensures that the new unit is operating within 10% of manufacturer specifications. The dealer must sign the form; the customer must sign it; then it must be submitted to Mark Gronau at ERPPD.

Air Source Heat Pump Rebates

Energy Star, 14 SEER, 8.2 HSPF	\$200
Energy Star, 15 SEER, 8.2 HSPF	\$250
Energy Star, 16 SEER or higher, 8.2 HSPF	\$300

Water Source or Geothermal Heat Pump Rebate

Energy Star-qualified	\$400
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Commercial, industrial lighting get efficiency rebates

4-Step To-Do List

1. Discuss potential C&I Lighting projects and guidelines (at right) with ERPPD's Mark Gronau and get an application form. Call ERPPD at 800-675-2185.
2. Select a contractor; install any of the systems identified in the listing below.
3. After installation, complete the application form.
4. Within 90 days of installation, submit the signed application (along with copies of the proof-of-purchase identified in the application's terms & conditions) to Elkhorn Rural Public Power.

Guidelines

- All replaced/retrofitted lighting equipment must be permanently installed.
- Only commercial and industrial customers qualify for the energy-efficient fluorescent fixture incentives.
- All incentives sought that are \$5,000 or greater require a pre- and post-installation inspection to be conducted by Elkhorn Rural PPD.
- An equal number of lighting fixtures will be impacted when compared to the number of fixtures considered for retrofit or replacement. Only existing lighting systems qualify for upgrade. New construction or addition of more light fixtures in a facility or facility addition do not qualify.
- Area lighting may be metered or unmetered.
- Area lighting may be customer-owned or utility-owned via a rental/lease agreement.
- *A custom program is available if the prescriptive measures don't apply. Call ERPPD for specific details.*

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL LIGHTING REBATES		Per fixture
What does the customer have now?	What is the customer changing to?	Rebate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Bay Lighting Replace Metal Halide fixture 	with Fluorescent High Bay fixture	\$50-\$75
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exit Signs Replace or retrofit Incandescent Exit Sign 	with LED Exit Sign	\$20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-ft Fluorescent Tube Lighting Replace or retrofit T12 fixture (w/ 2,3,4 lamps) 	with T8 and electronic ballast fixture	\$10-\$20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8-ft Fluorescent Tube Lighting Replace or retrofit any T12 fixture 	with T8 and electronic ballast fixture	\$15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Security Lighting Replace Mercury Vapor lamp 	with comparable High Pressure Sodium	\$20-\$40

IT'S WORTH IT TO PAY ON TIME!

Making payment by the due date avoids BIG charges, penalties

A customer using 2,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh) in a given month, on a single-phase farm service, who pays his-or-her bill in a timely manner, would have an electric bill of \$153.50 in the winter(w) and \$199.40 in the summer(s). The numbers below show how this hypothetical customer's bill is figured:

Winter (w) – Oct. through May	Rate	Charge	Summer (s)– June through Sept.	Rate	Charge
Monthly charge	—	\$ 15.00	Monthly charge	—	\$ 15.00
First 500 kWh	\$0.087	\$ 43.50	First 500 kWh	\$0.087	\$ 43.50
All over 500	\$0.058	\$ 87.00	All over 500	\$0.087	\$130.50
Sales tax	5.5%	\$ 8.00	Sales tax	5.5%	\$ 10.40
		\$153.50			\$199.40

Additional charges—some quite large—can be incurred if certain dates are missed by this same customer:

If payment is not to ERPPD on the 25th of a month, ERPPD charges a late pay of \$5. **Add \$5.00 past due charge**

For customers who must submit a meter reading, if the reading is not in the ERPPD office by the 25th of a month, there is a \$2.00 late charge. **Add \$2.00 late meter reading fee**

If payment has not been received or arrangements for the payment have not been made by the due date on the reminder notice, there will be a service call collection fee. **Add \$30.00 for a service call**

For a customer who is disconnected, service will not be reconnected until settlement is made including a reconnection fee: \$50 during business hours; \$100 after hours. **Add \$50 or \$100 for reconnect**

Also required with reconnection is a meter deposit adjustment from \$50 to \$200 or the highest monthly electric charge adjusted to nearest even dollar amount during the past 12 months (which ever is greater) and depending on credits status and current deposit. **Add \$50 to \$200 to the deposit**

The total for one month's penalties and after hours reconnection can be \$287.00.

Thus, in the winter, the total electric bill of this hypothetical customer can go from \$153.50 to \$440.50 just by being late; in the summer it can jump from \$199.40 to \$486.40. And it gets worse if one month becomes two or more.

Call ERPPD as soon as circumstances are known that may affect ability to pay on time.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
with Board position and subdivision

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Director I

David Hoefer
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 that 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., 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 and current meter reading. 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