

THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

May 2013

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 22, Number 5

Utility Line Students Set to Begin Summer Internship in May

A cooperative internship program between the state's public power districts and the Utility Line program of the Northeast Community College of Norfolk will allow three students to gain practical, on-the-job training at Elkhorn Rural PPD during the summer.

Starting May 9, Anthony Lund of Norfolk, Michael McAlevy of Sutton, and Taylor Pokorny of Clearwater, Utility Line students at NECC will spend their summer days working with ERPPD line crews. They will be doing a variety of utility functions, gaining valuable experience in the utility line industry. Michael and Anthony will be assisting crews from the Battle Creek headquarters, and Taylor will be assisting crews from our Neligh outpost.

The internship is a Win-Win program. It gives the students a chance before graduation to find out if they really want to make a career out of utility line work, and the district benefits from the added labor force. The program is part of the curriculum of NECC, and is a requirement for graduation. The internship is scheduled for the summer between a student's freshman and sophomore year of the two-year Utility Line Program.



Anthony Lund



Michael McAlevy



Taylor Pokorny

May is National Electrical Safety Month

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District is dedicated to promoting safety in all that we do. Spring planting season is a great opportunity to remind everyone of the dangers of contact with high voltage lines. Farm equipment is getting larger and taller each year as farmers try to cover more ground in less time to improve efficiencies. Along with larger equipment comes increased risk as sprayer booms, planter arms, and bigger disks fold up taller and swing wider on turns. Be aware of the dangers and always remember the safety motto "Look Up and Live".

If you do have an accident involving contact with the high voltage lines or hitting one of the poles, be sure to stay in your equipment or vehicle and call our outage line (800-675-2185), or call 911 and the emergency personnel will contact our crews to secure the scene so you can safely exit. **DO NOT** make contact with the ground and the equipment at the same time. **STAY CALM** and take time to assess the situation. You may be able to carefully back out of the situation, but you still need to call our office at 800-675-2185, so we can check out the poles and wires.

For a demonstration on high voltage safety, just log on to our web site, www.erppd.com. You can click on the button on our home page entitled SafeElectricity. This link will take you to www.SafeElectricity.org, where you can click on a Live Line Demo link. This 30 minute video-streamed program and other safety video productions are among thousands of resources available on the web site dedicated to educating people about electrical safety.

If you have any electrical safety-related questions, or if you wish to schedule a high-voltage safety demonstration for your school or civic club, please contact Wayne McCormick, safety director for Elkhorn RPPD, at (800) 675-2185.



Memorial Day

ERPPD offices **will be closed** on Monday, May 27, in observance of Memorial Day.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Operation and Maintenance Department 2012 Summary

Following are some highlights of 2012 from the Operations Department (construction and maintenance):

- Built 37 miles of primary line (single-phase and three-phase)
- Installed 4.5 miles of primary underground line
- Installed 1,101 crossarms and 1,148 poles
- Built service to 23 new homes
- Built service to 12 new grain bins
- Built service to 116 new irrigation pumping or center-pivot services

The following projects are just a few of the many major projects completed during 2012:

- Changed all meters in Clearwater, Elgin, Ewing, Hadar, and Woodland Park
- Agronomy Supply-3-phase blender and pump
- Upgraded Substation #20 (northeast of Tilden)

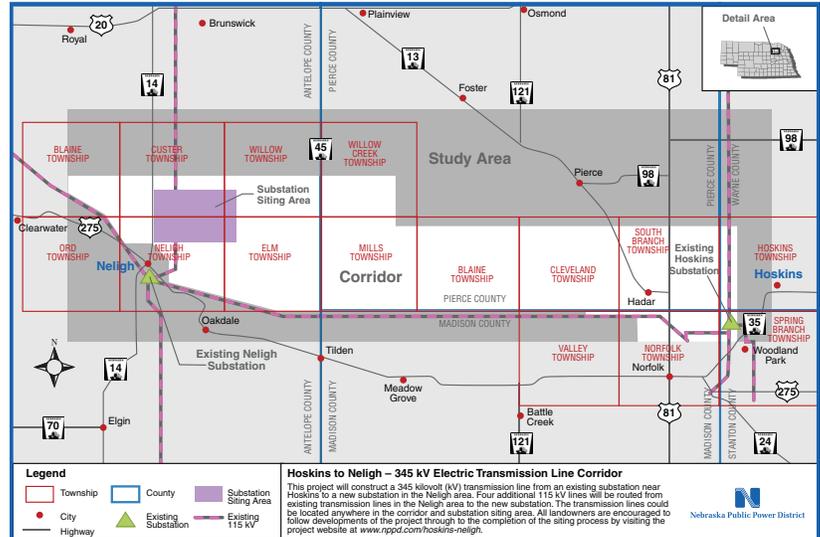
In addition to the major projects, the operations department stays very busy on a day-to-day basis with routine maintenance, tree cutting, line construction, building new services, pole replacements as indicated through our pole inspection program, and many other projects as needed. As you can see, the Operations Department continues to maintain and construct facilities (lines and substations) to improve the reliability of the electrical distribution system.

Outage information for 2012

- 9,313 total customers
- Total outage time was 9,681 hours (*calculated by taking the total number of customers out times the number of hours out, e.g. a line outage affecting 30 customers for 1 hour would be 30 outage hours*)
- Outage time per customer was 1 hour and 2 minutes for the year out of a possible 8,760 total hours in a year, which equates to a system reliability of 99.99988%

Following are the top 3 outage reasons, which include both individual and line outages:

1. Transformer or fuse out
2. Broken conductor
3. Accident/vandalism



Map showing the study area and corridor of NPPD's Hoskins-Neligh 345,000-volt transmission line.

NPPD's Hoskins-to-Neligh 345,000 volt Transmission Line Project

Nebraska Public Power District, NPPD, our power supplier, plans to construct a 345,000-volt transmission line from their Hoskins substation, located next to Nucor Steel, to a new substation to be sited near Neligh. In addition, four 115,000-volt transmission line segments will connect the new substation with their existing transmission lines in the Neligh area.

The approximately 50-mile-long Hoskins-Neligh line will enhance operation of NPPD's electric transmission system and provide additional opportunities for development of renewable energy projects. Specifically, this project will help serve customers' electricity demands in north central Nebraska, including the Elkhorn Rural Public Power District.

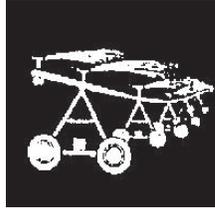
NPPD uses a four-step process to determine a line route. They first determined a Study Area (see the map above) for the proposed line and held open houses for public input in October of 2012. The second step was to narrow the study area down to a Corridor (see the map above) based on public input. A series of open houses was held in February of 2013, to seek input from landowners within the corridor. The third step is to study those comments, determine some alternate routes based on that input, and then host another series of open house in mid-May. Finally, after the final route is determined, there will be a public hearing in the summer of 2013 on the proposed final route.

The line is projected to be in service for the summer of 2016.

IRRIGATION

Tips for Irrigators

- **Check Fuses:** Perform a system check before the irrigation season begins to make sure you have power. With all the lightning we have had, there may be fuses that need replaced.
- **Motor Savers:** Have your electrician install a motor saver on your system. Most three-phase pump motors detect a blink on only one phase, which can allow the motor to continue to operate on two phases resulting in motor damage. A motor saver monitors all three phases and shuts down the system if any one of the phases blinks.
- **Power Factor Corrective Capacitors:** Capacitors installed at the pump panel will lead to several important customer benefits, such as:
 - Guarding against low voltages on startup
 - Assisting in keeping your system's voltage at a proper level while running.
 - Reducing service amperage and heating due to a poor power factor.
 - Lessening the chance of dimming your neighbor's lights when the motor starts
 - Prolonging the life of your motor and electrical equipment
 - Reducing the demand (measured horsepower) of your well
 - Reducing consumption of kilowatt-hours by utilizing more efficient practices
 - Maximizing the output of the electricity purchased.
- **Autostart:** An autostart component installed on your system can maximize the amount of pumping by automatically starting your system following a period of control, or following a blink on the electrical system.
- **Text or Email Control Notifications:** We can use this service to notify you by text or email when the radio signal has been sent to control your individual well. Another notification will be sent when the radio signal has been sent to restore the individual system at the end of the control period.



If you have any questions on these items, or questions on energy efficiency, please call our Energy Services Representative, Mark Gronau, at (800) 675-2185.

Irrigation Control Switch Inspections

ERPPD personnel will be performing their annual inspection of irrigation control switches. The inspection was started in April and will finish sometime in May. The techs may need to energize the panel to test the switch, but will put everything back as it was found.

With the switches subject to severe weather such as thunderstorms and lightning, it is very important that we make sure each switch is working properly.

The irrigation load control program is very important for managing electrical rates. Keeping the peak demand down during the hot summer months saves the district hundreds of thousands of dollars in electrical power costs. These savings are reflected in all of our rates.

Homes and other businesses can also contribute to controlling the peak demand by using energy conservation, especially during the hot summer months.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in keeping rates as low as possible.

State Electrical Inspections Underway

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District requires an electrical inspection for all new services over 300-volts. Since most irrigation systems are 480-volt, the state electrical inspector will be in the area inspecting these systems. Due to the sheer number of new electrical services requiring inspections, in ERPPD territory as well as other districts and communities, the inspectors may not get to each irrigation system before it actually has been used.

Do not be alarmed if the electrical inspector is checking your irrigation system, he is only doing his job to keep you, your family members, and your employees safe from the dangers of unsafe wiring.

Call our office at 1-800-675-2185 if you have any questions about the required inspections.

Energy Efficiency

Month *Tip of the*

Properly installed shades can be one of the most effective ways to improve windows' energy efficiency. Lower them during summer; in winter, raise during the day and lower at night on south-facing windows. Dual shades, with reflective white coating on one side and a heat-absorbing dark color on the other, can be reversed with the seasons and save even more energy. Learn more at EnergySavers.gov.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Right Tree--Right Place

If you are landscaping your backyard, preplanning is the best insurance for your future tree and shrub planting effort. Ensure the oak or maple tree you planted for future generations does not have to be removed by utility tree trimming crews before its benefits are realized. Careful placement of trees and taller shrubs is necessary to avoid interference with overhead and underground electric utility lines.

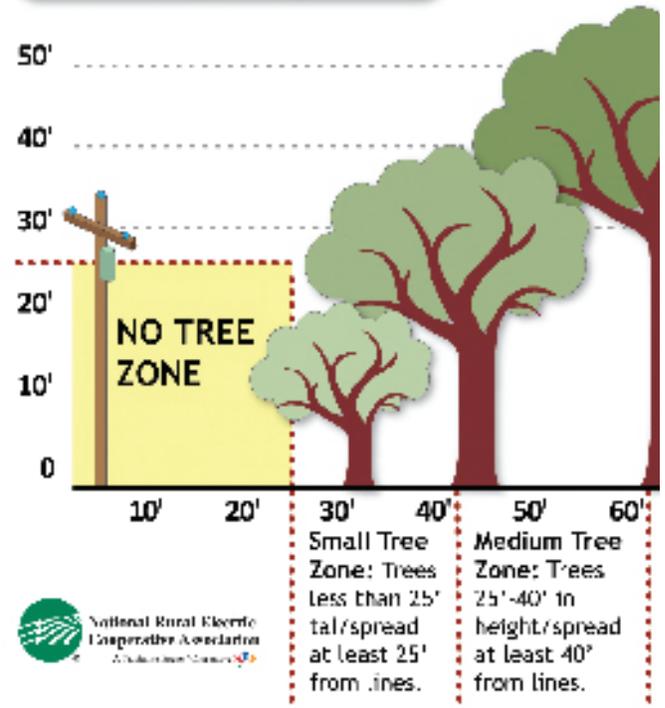
Spring is a perfect time to teach the younger generation the benefits of tree planting, selection of the proper species for your location, and how to correctly plant a tree and foster its growth. However, one element of the lesson should be to teach youngsters that trees can interfere with overhead electric lines and safety can be compromised when limbs contact the wires. The same lesson can be taught about roots which may be cut, if buried electric lines have to be repaired or replaced.

Trees conduct electricity and can create a safety hazard if limbs grow too close to electric lines. Power outages or momentary interruptions can occur when trees and branches come into contact with overhead lines.

Another concern is the safety risk when children climb trees near power lines. Accidental contact of electric wires with a tree limb or person playing or trimming around the tree could be fatal. Also, trees growing near power lines must be pruned to maintain a safe distance from the wires. This results in increased right-of-way maintenance costs and ultimately rate increases. If you have trees that appear to be growing into power lines, contact us at 1-800-675-2185. Never try to prune them yourself.

To learn more about which trees might work best in your yard, call ERPPD at 1-800-675-2185.

Tree Planting Guide



BOARD OF DIRECTORS
with Board position and subdivision

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President.....II

Tim Means
Vice President ..II

Larry Lindahl
SecretaryIII

Dennis Kuchar
Treasurer I

Jerrell Dolesh
DirectorII

Mark Miller
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**