

THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

November 2008

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 17, Number 11

Buyer beware is rule for electric products

There are many products on the market today that make claims that seem really, really good in light of today's rising energy costs. The promotional material says things like, "save money on your electric bills," "cut your energy bills in half," and "uses as much energy as an electric drip coffee maker."

There is an old adage that should cause every shopper who reads such literature to stop and ponder the actual meaning of the message. That saying is this: "If it seems to good to be true, it probably is." Buyers should definitely use caution and apply another old axiom before entering into a purchase agreement with the vendor: caveat emptor or, in English, "Let the buyer beware."

September and October are the months of year when we are seemingly inundated with direct mail pieces, newspaper advertisements, and Paul Harvey radio spots that tout the next great energy-efficiency or energy-saving device on the market.

Here are some important points to remember.

1. **A watt is a watt.** If a 1,500-watt, large-size, \$400 infrared heater claims to heat your room for less, beware. The small 1,500-watt space heater for \$39 at a local retailer uses the same amount of energy and can do almost as good a job. Can you be equally satisfied for about \$361 less? Probably.
2. **Know what you want the item to do.** If you purchase a heated ceiling fan for use during the winter in an unheated, enclosed area of your home, you will most probably add to your comfort in that area, but you also must realize that you will also add to your electric bill. In addition, a 1,500-watt heated ceiling fan uses just as much energy as that large, 1,500-watt room heater and that small 1,500-watt space heater.



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3. **Make sure you compare "apples to apples."** A 1,500-watt coffee maker uses 1,500 watts of energy to brew a pot of coffee. The

brewing process takes a minute or two. Wouldn't it be great if one of those 1,500-watt heaters could use that same 1,500 watts to heat a living space in our home in only one or two minutes? In reality, one of these heaters must engage its 1,500 watts for a much longer period of time than that 1,500-watt coffee maker. For the two minutes that the 1,500-watt coffee maker brews and for the two minutes that the 1,500-watt heater heats, they cost the same to use.

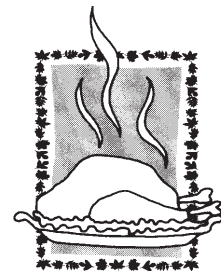
4. **Consider your combined energy purchases.** Some people reduce natural gas or propane use by using an electric space heater in one or more areas of their home. They cut their fossil-fuel bills; they very likely reduce their overall energy consumption; but they should realize that their electric bills will probably go up—not down.

If you need more information about various electric products on the market today, call ERPPD.

Closed for the November holidays!



The ERPPD office will be closed Tuesday, Nov. 11, for Veterans Day and Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27 and 28, for Thanksgiving.



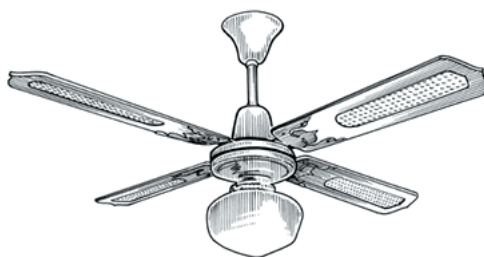
EFFICIENCY AND COMFORT

Used properly, ceiling fans aid comfort, efficiency

As the seasons change, make sure the blades on your ceiling fan are spinning the right way. Reverse your ceiling fan motors to blow upward in winter. This helps to disperse the warmer air that rises and pools near the ceiling, distributing it throughout the room.

Fan direction is normally controlled by a switch on the side of the motor housing. Usually, the "up" position corresponds to upward air flow and the "down" position to downward air flow. With blades stopped, flip the direction switch from summer to winter and turn the fan back on.

How can you be sure which direction is up and which is down? For most fans, a counter-clockwise movement blows the air up. You can check this by standing under the fan when it is running at full speed. If you can feel the air hit-



ting you hard, then it's blowing down and is in the summer position. Stop the fan, change the direction switch, and compare the difference. Gentler air movement lets you know the switch is in the winter position.

Changing the fan direction twice a year will pay for itself in improved comfort and energy savings.

Additional energy-saving tip: Fans cool people not rooms (during the summertime). In other words, when you leave the room, turn the fan off.

This rule-of-thumb applies during the winter, too, but it applies a little differently. In the winter, heated air rises to the ceiling. When you enter the room, turn the fan on. It takes only a few moments to move that air around the walls of the room and begin the process of conditioning the room.

CFLs

ERPPD gives CFLs at office

To increase energy efficiency at the residential level, ERPPD is giving away up to three compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs to any residential customer who visits the office and asks for them. For every 20-watt CFL (equivalent to a 75-watt incandescent bulb) that ERPPD gives away the utility is reimbursed for the bulb, costing the power district nothing and increasing efficiency within the district. Come in and get three for your household while supplies last.

Coupons in stores until Dec. 31

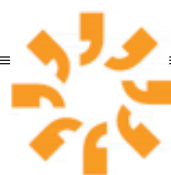
If the three free CFLs are not enough to satisfy your home's energy efficiency transition, many retailers in Nebraska are in the midst of an in-store coupon promotion. This event allows a store customer to convert as many as five coupons into up to five single-pack or multi-pack EnergyStar-qualified CFLs. Select retailers in Elgin, Clearwater, Ewing, Neligh, and Norfolk that sell CFLs are taking part in this event.

A single \$1-off coupon is good for an at-the-cash-register discount on one EnergyStar-qualified CFL single pack of any wattage. The \$3-off coupon is good toward the purchase of any EnergyStar-qualified multi-pack of CFLs, any quantity of two or more and any wattage. The sale ends Dec. 31.

Nebraska State Patrol Winter Road Conditions

Hotline: 511

On the web: www.safetravelusa.com
Or call: 1-800-906-9069



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ENERGY EFFICIENCY \$\$\$

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 or 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.

Call ERPPD for specific details.

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL LIGHTING REBATES		Per fixture
What does the customer have now?	What is the customer changing to?	Rebate
• High Bay Lighting Replace Metal Halide fixture	with Fluorescent High Bay fixture	\$50-\$75
• Exit Signs Replace or retrofit Incandescent Exit Sign	with LED Exit Sign	\$20
• 4-ft Fluorescent Tube Lighting Replace or retrofit T12 fixture (w/ 2,3,4 lamps)	with T8 and electronic ballast fixture	\$10-\$20
• 8-ft Fluorescent Tube Lighting Replace or retrofit any T12 fixture	with T8 and electronic ballast fixture	\$15
• Area Security Lighting Replace Mercury Vapor lamp	with comparable High Pressure Sodium	\$20-\$40

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Grant funds available for Antelope, Holt Counties

CORE Development Inc. (CORE) has grant funds available! CORE is a non-profit organization that was formed to assist the rural areas in Antelope and Holt County by encouraging business development and job retention, and improving the quality of life through improvement of housing, recreation, and community development.

At the present time, CORE has down payment assistance funds available for income eligible home buyers that are looking to purchase a home within one of the eleven communities that are within the CORE service area. The eleven communities include: Brunswick, Chambers, Clearwater, Elgin, Ewing, Inman, Neligh, Oakdale, Orchard, Page, and Royal.

If you have questions regarding the grant funds or would like an application please call the Housing Adminis-

trator, Randy or Leigh Alexander, of Community Development Services, at 402-582-3580.

The CORE Development, Inc. Board of Directors has been a recipient of CDBG, Affordable Housing Trust Funds, and HOME funds for the past 10 years. These funds were used for both housing rehabilitation and home ownership down payment assistance for persons of low-to-moderate income status and very low income, as determined by the most recent income limits for Antelope and Holt Counties. CORE has submitted regional grant applications which allow for participation of all member communities, along with adjacent rural areas.

The results of completed Housing Rehabilitation and Down Payment Assistance projects are immeasurable

and are expected to continue to greatly benefit the member communities. Not only has there been an effect on improving housing stock, but local communities have also benefited. Impacts and continued expected results include additional jobs for contractors and suppliers, motivation for homeowners and renters to improve their properties, additional businesses, families relocating to CORE communities, upgrading living standards, and improving community and self pride.

CORE is a wonderful community organization and would like to assist their member communities in promoting home ownership through the use of down payment assistance funds they have been awarded.

Call Randy or Leigh Alexander at 402-582-3580 to find out more!

When you have an emergency, our people are standing by!

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 your neighbors to see if they have electricity. 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 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 Battle Creek office, 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**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

with Board position and subdivision

- Rod Zohner
President.....II
- Tim Means
Vice President..II
- John Thiele
Secretary.....III
- Dennis Kuchar
Treasurer.....I
- Robert Kee
Director.....II
- Larry Lindahl
Director.....III
- Mark Miller
Director.....I
- Joe Thiele
Director.....III
- Greg Weidner
Director.....I

MANAGER
Terry Carson

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.

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• **Communicate Electronically** •
• **With ERPPD** •
•

• **Internet: www.erppd.com** •

• **E-mail: erppd@erppd.com** •
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**It's the law!
Call 811 Before
You Dig!**

Or 1-800-331-5666

“Diggers Hotline of Nebraska”