

THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

November 2010

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 19, Number 11

Irrigation Waiting List Update

If you are waiting for your irrigation service to be connected to electricity, the wait is getting shorter. With our mailing in July, nearly 200 names were removed from the list.

At its October meeting, the board of directors authorized management to send letters of intent forms to the next 100 names on the irrigation waiting list.

The letters will be mailed in early November and will have a January 31, 2011, deadline for return. Barring unforeseen weather problems, customers that want to proceed will be eligible for service for the 2011 irrigating season.

ERPPD employees have been working very hard to calculate cost estimates for each of the 100 potential services. These will only be estimates, but they should be relatively close to actual costs and can be firmed as needed.

It is very important that these letters be returned by Jan 31 to avoid the names being automatically removed from the waiting list.

Will we have the affordable electricity we need in the future?



Our Energy, Our Future
A Dialogue With America

Start the dialogue with your elected officials at:

www.OurEnergy.coop

or contact our office for a postcard to get signed up.

Grassroots Advocacy Initiative

What is the Grassroots Advocacy Initiative and why is it important to me?

Nebraska Rural Electric Association Manager Jay Holmquist states, "Energy is the most pressing issue facing America. With increased consumption, declining resources, and a push for "green" energy alternatives, ensuring Americans continue to have an affordable and available source of electricity is increasingly difficult. As Congress and the Nebraska Legislature debate this issue, we have a responsibility to ensure the concerns of rural electric providers and consumers are heard by our elected representatives."

"With the advent of term limits in the Nebraska Unicameral, and with powerful lobbying organizations advocating without regard to the costs their propositions may impose on consumers, we have a difficult task ahead of us. Now is a historic time for our industry, and we must work together to ensure a balanced debate occurs and a greater understanding of our issues is developed by our elected officials."

Elkhorn RPPD has joined with other power districts and electric cooperatives in Nebraska to provide a unified voice to our elected officials for our customers. One way for you to get involved is through the "Our Energy, Our Future" campaign, hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, our voice in Washington, D.C. If you have internet access, you can connect with the "Our Energy, Our Future" campaign through a link on our web site at www.erppd.com. If you do not have internet access, call our office and we will send a postcard for you to fill out and send in to sign up for the campaign.

We will do our best to keep you informed of important energy issues that affect the affordability and reliability of your electricity, so you may contact your elected officials and voice your opinion.

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District

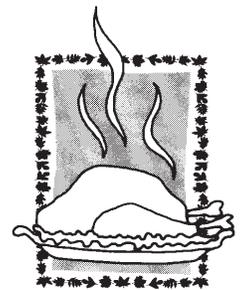
will be closed

Thursday, Nov. 11,
for Veterans Day

and

Thursday & Friday,
Nov. 25 & Nov. 26,

to celebrate the Thanksgiving weekend.



Trimming Future Problems

Autumn heralds some annual traditions at my home. At least one weekend, my wife and I take a drive and enjoy the vibrant fall foliage. Sometimes on these trips, we will notice where our line crews have trimmed tree branches growing too close to power lines.

I enjoy the beauty trees add to our region, especially at this time of year. But I also enjoy the comfort of knowing power will be available when I need it. At Elkhorn Rural Public Power District, we're committed to providing you with reliable power. There are some things we can't stop—high winds, ice storms, lightning strikes—but we do what we can to prevent other outage culprits.

As you can probably guess, weather-related events cause the majority of power outages for rural electric utilities—a whopping 19 percent according to a survey by our national service organization, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. But vegetation—trees, shrubs, brush—growing too close to power lines and distribution equipment leads to 15 percent of power interruptions.

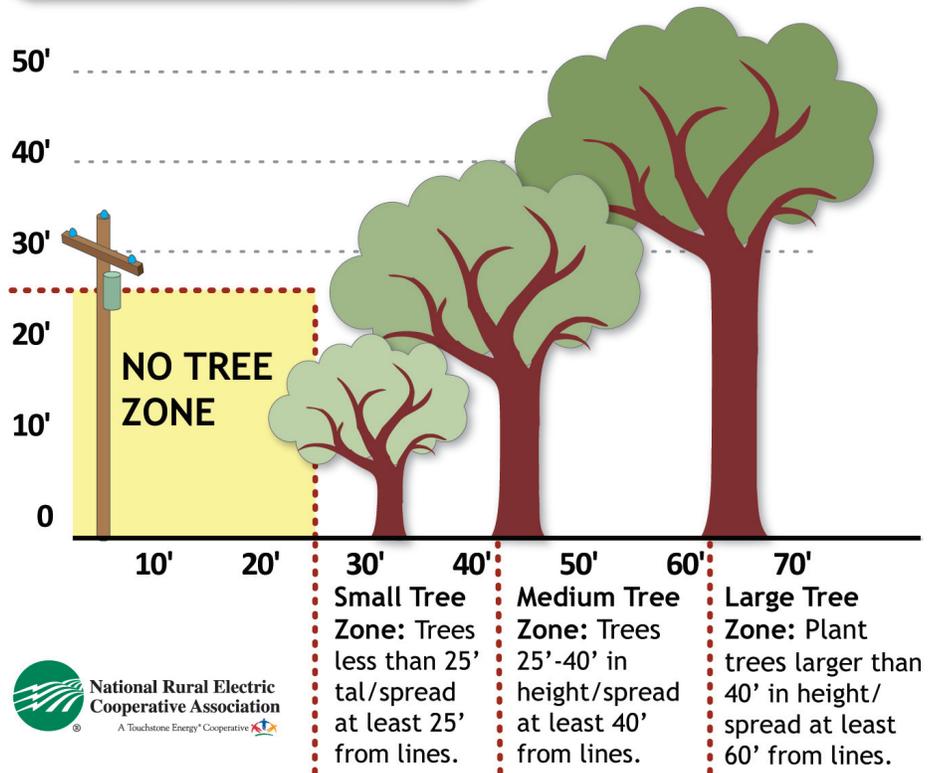
As important as outage prevention is to us at ERPPD, a more important consideration is the safety of our children. Children like to climb trees, which



could lead to a fatal accident, if the tree they are climbing has grown up through our lines.

To “cut back” on potential tree-re-

Tree Planting Guide



lated problems Elkhorn RPPD operates an aggressive tree trimming/right-of-way maintenance program. Our line crews look for foliage growing under lines, overhanging branches, leaning or other types of “danger” trees that could pull down a power line if they fall, and trees that could grow into lines. It's a job that's never done—by the time crews finish trimming activities along our 2,900 miles of distribution and transmission lines, vegetation has started to grow back at the starting point.

You can help us by working with our employees when they contact you about trimming trees on your property. When we trim trees, we have several options for cleanup, use a chipper to get rid of the branches and trees, pile up the brush and let it decay naturally, burn the pile, or to leave it lay for firewood harvesting. We can save time and ratepayer dollars and be more “green” if we can avoid operating the chipper and dump truck. Plus, the pile of brush also provides habitat for wildlife and helps us keep costs down which helps control

rates, and allows our crews to cover more line for better reliability.

In working to keep a safe, reliable, and affordable supply of power flowing to your home or business, we need your help. Let us know if you notice trees or branches that might pose a risk to our power lines. Even more important, before planting trees in your yard, think about how tall they may grow and how wide their branches may spread. As a rule of thumb, 25 feet of ground-to-sky clearance should be available on each side of our utility poles to give power lines plenty of space. Choose tree varieties with care and plant with power lines in mind.

Thanks for your help as we work together to keep electricity reliable. To report trees you think may pose a problem, call 800-675-2185. To find out more about proper tree planting, visit www.arborday.org.

ENERGY NEWS

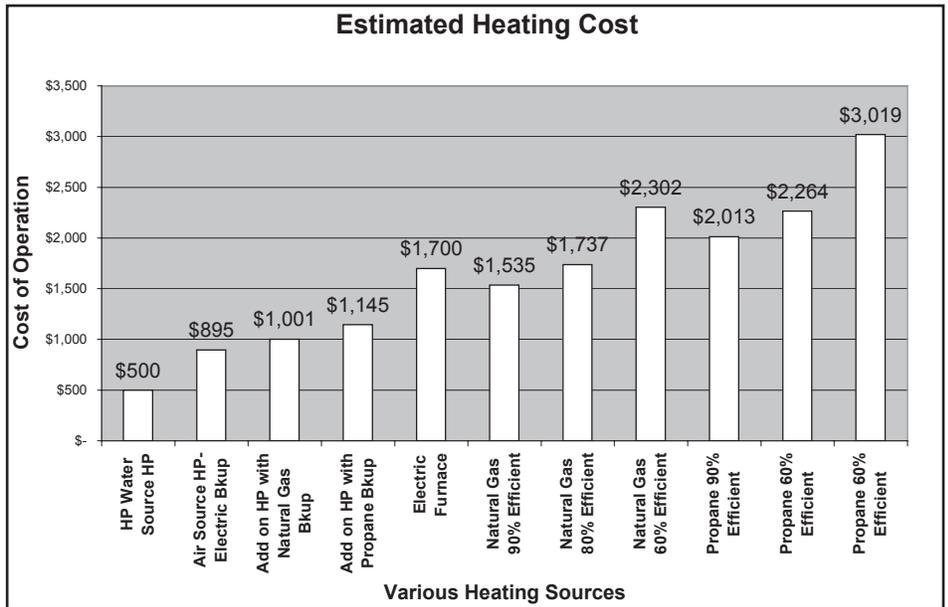
Electricity-Heating/ Cooling Value

The charts on the right of this page are included to compare electricity costs with the cost of other fuels for heating and to compare SEER ratings for cooling. They show that when electric heat is paired with a heat pump, the result is dramatic savings on annual heating costs.

Your numbers may be different from those shown, even though you may have the same size house. Every household has different lifestyles, so it is difficult or nearly impossible to compare households. What can be compared is the cost to heat a home with different fuels, given the Btuh heat loss and the number of heating degree days.

Keep in mind that these are heating costs only. Cooling costs would be the same for a house with a propane furnace as with an electric furnace, and are dependent only upon the SEER rating of the cooling unit. The chart at the right is a graph of cooling costs based on the SEER rating of the cooling unit. The minimum SEER allowed today is 13, while many of the older air conditioning units have a SEER rating of 6.

Utility costs seem to rise each year, but Elkhorn RPPD board, management, and employees are doing everything in their power to keep costs down to help mitigate the effects of future rate increases.



Assumptions for Heating graph calculations:

1,400 sq ft ranch style house

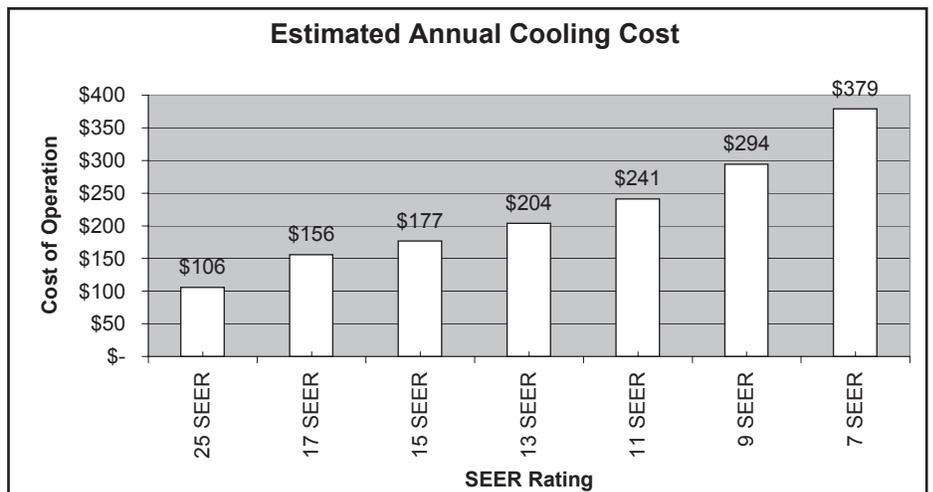
Electric kWh = 0.0525

Propane/gallon = \$1.50

75,000 Btuh Heat Loss

Natural Gas/Therm = \$1.25

Heating Degree Days = 6,500



Assumptions for cooling graph calculation:

1,400 sq ft ranch style house

Electric kWh = 0.092¢

36,000 Btuh Heat Loss

Full load cooling hours = 800

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

If your home is more than 10 years old, it likely needs more insulation. How much depends on a variety of factors, most importantly where you live. For example, insulation for a home in the Northeast will have a higher R-value rating than a home in Southern California. Check out www.simplyinsulate.com to find out more.

Source: Alliance to Save Energy



EnergyWiseSM Tip: Holiday Kitchen Energy Savings

Each year, from Thanksgiving to Christmas and through New Year's, friends and family gather to celebrate and enjoy the spirit of the season. While almost everyone knows they can save electric energy during the holidays by decorating with LED lights, most people do not consider the great energy-saving opportunities they have with another seasonal tradition: EATING! There are several ways to avert unnecessary energy use in the kitchen. Consider a few of these tips:

Refrigerators: Refrigerators and freezers get a real workout over the holidays. They are some of the larger energy consumers in your house, and they often account for as much as 15 percent of your home's total energy usage. Help your refrigerator and freezer to operate efficiently by keeping the doors closed as much as possible. Note, however, that leaving the door open while you take out the items is more efficient than opening and closing the door several times.

Keeping your refrigerator and freezer full during the holidays is easy and energy efficient. The mass of cold items inside the refrigerator reduces the appliance's temperature recovery time after the door is closed. Be careful not to cram them so

full that cool air cannot properly circulate around the food.

Ovens: Typically, the holiday turkey, or whatever your favorite meat may be, will roast for hours. Since it is a long, slow cook, there is no need to preheat your oven. As a general rule, unless you are baking breads or pastries, you usually do not need to preheat.

Do not open the oven door to take a peek! Instead, turn on the oven light and check on the cooking through the window. Slightly opening the oven door lowers the temperature inside by as much as 25 degrees. That increases cooking time and wastes energy.

Self-cleaning ovens use less energy for normal cooking because of the higher insulation levels built into them. Consider using the self-cleaning feature right after using your oven, to take advantage of the residual heat.

Stovetops: When cooking on the range top, match the size of the pan to the heating element. More heat will go into the pan and less will be lost in the surrounding air. Clean burners and reflectors provide better heating while saving energy. If you need new reflectors, buy quality ones. The best on the market can save as much as one-third

of the energy when compared to dull, non-reflective pans.

Other Ways to Cook: Do not overlook alternative cooking appliances during the holidays. Fast and efficient microwave ovens use around 50 percent less energy than conventional ovens, and they do not heat up your kitchen. They are especially handy and energy efficient when heating leftovers.

Slow cookers (crock-pots) are perfect for many dishes. On average, they will cook a whole meal for about a dime's worth of electricity. Also, electric skillet can efficiently steam, fry, sauté, stew, bake or roast a variety of food items, and some can double as serving dishes. If you are baking or broiling small food items, a toaster oven is ideal because they use, on average, one-third the energy of a bigger oven.

To get the most from the energy you use during the holidays, give these EnergyWiseSM tips a try. You can save a little on your utility bill, and you will have plenty to talk about over dinner.

ENERGYWISESM
Use less. Spend less. Do more.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

with Board position and subdivision

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Tim Means
Vice President ..II
Larry Lindahl
SecretaryIII
Dennis Kuchar
Treasurer I
Robert Kee
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 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