

THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

October 2013

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 22, Number 10

October is Public Power Month

Back in the 1930s, 90 percent of rural America was without electricity—while virtually all urban areas were being served. Investor-owned utilities opted not to serve the rural areas, deeming it too expensive to set poles and string line. They said that there just wasn't enough profit to be made.

Rural residents came together to build their own electric companies. The work they did was literally from the ground up—setting poles, stringing line, and bringing power to their friends and neighbors. In the spirit of neighborly help and determination, each local electric utility worked for the benefit of its consumer-owners.

Today your local public power district has the strength that comes from the unity of 600 public power districts and electric cooperatives nationwide, serving over 47 million customers. Together, these electric utilities pledge a higher quality of customer service, have state-of-the-art technology at their fingertips, and have as a resource the largest electric utility network in the United States (the National Rural



Electric Cooperative Association). Suddenly a small public power district with 9,400 customers has a huge voice with the policymakers in Washington, DC.

Electric customers in Nebraska get the best of both worlds—friendly size and personal service backed up with the resources of the NRECA.

One of the advantages of a locally operated public power district is that the board of directors, the management, and the employees are your neighbors, working to provide **SAFE, RELIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE** electricity for **ALL** customers.

In the 1930s, it was estimated that a farm home would use about 50 kWh per month. Today, that usage averages about 20 times greater. Your local public power district has always worked and will always work to keep up with that growth.

This October, take a few minutes to imagine what life in your corner of Nebraska would be like without public power, then look around you and say a quiet “Thank You” for the benefits you get from it.

Benefits of Public Power

Low-Cost Power

- Nebraska’s average electric rates remain among the lowest of all 50 states.

Reliable Service

- Millions of dollars are invested annually to maintain and upgrade the states’ electrical infrastructure.

Local Control

- Citizens have a direct and powerful voice in utility decisions and policies, both at the ballot box and in open meetings where business is conducted.

Not-For-Profit

- Public power’s success is measured by how much money stays within the community through low rates and not by how much is paid to shareholders.

Taxes

- As not-for-profit political subdivisions of the state, public power utilities are exempt from income or property taxes. However, in-lieu-of tax, gross revenue tax, distribution system lease payments, municipal discounts and other payments are made to state, county and local governments.

Community Services – Economic Development

- Public power utilities refer to local, regional and state economic development organizations to position communities and regions for economic growth, to assist with the expansion and retention of existing industry, and to attract new businesses.

Customer Services – Energy Efficiency

- Public power utilities help customers understand their energy needs and assist them in developing and implementing ways to manage their energy resources efficiently and cost-effectively.

ERPPD Personnel Staff Public Power Booth at State Fair

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District sent two employees to assist in the public power information booth and high-voltage safety demonstrations at the Nebraska State Fair, held in Grand Island. The booth was sponsored by the Nebraska Power Association and its members.

ERPPD employee Mark Gronau worked in the booth on the opening day of the State Fair. Activities in the booth included a solar panel display, a water wheel display, a hand-powered generator connected to a toy train, a mechanical electric meter display, a rheostat generator display, a synchroscope display, an interactive generation plants map, and an irrigation center pivot display.



ERPPD employee Ken Capler teamed up with two Stanton County PPD employees to operate the high-voltage simulation trailer. They demonstrated the dangers of contact with high voltage electrical lines. The crew talked to several groups of kids and adults about electrical safety.



Power Association for coordinating the many public power utilities to highlight the benefits of public power at the Nebraska State Fair.

Lives On The Line

Linemen have a very hazardous job that comes with many potential life threatening dangers. It is very important for linemen to practice safety procedures and to be prepared for the worst. Linemen often work in two man crews, so; it makes sense to practice 'Hurt Man' Mayday procedures as a two man crew. What this means is that if one lineman is down, there is only one lineman remaining, who must be able to both call in for help and then rescue the partner. This is a worst case scenario, to have only one able lineman on scene of a life threatening accident. It is extremely important for every lineman to be trained on pole top and bucket rescue and it is also very important for linemen to practice so that they can improve their skills in rescuing a fellow lineman.



In the event they should need the skills, they will know exactly what to do to have the best possible outcome in potentially life threatening accident/event.

While training linemen to rescue it is also important to train office personnel to respond to the Mayday call coming into the office. They need to be able to get the information correctly the first time so that the proper authorities can be dispatched in a timely manner. Linemen will give office personnel the location (911 address), the truck number, a brief description of the situation, the injured party's employee number and the condition of the injured. After the information is exchanged and verified, the lineman can proceed to rescue his partner while the office personnel call the proper authorities. Management is informed so they can contact the injured employee's spouse or other emergency contacts.

This all seems like a long process but all these actions need to take place in a matter of minutes. This stresses the importance of practice so if (hopefully never) a Mayday call comes in for a life-threatening emergency our staff will be professionals in handling the situation.

Every year ERPPD takes a morning to give everyone a chance to practice the pole top rescue, bucket rescue, and Mayday call techniques. The training usually will take place in the summer, during a regular safety meeting. Safety is our number 1 priority at ERPPD, as reflected in our mission statement: ***"ERPPD is dedicated to providing SAFE, RELIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE electricity for ALL customers."***

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Keep wintery drafts out of your home by sealing cracks and gaps. Weather stripping around doors and windows works well when you can see daylight between the frame and the wall or floor. Use caulk to seal around the frames where you see gaps. For more tips and tricks, visit TogetherWeSave.com.

Source: TogetherWeSave.com

FALL SAFETY NEWS

Harvest Safety Tips

Farmers and farm family members face dangers every day. Although tragedies such as tractor rollovers and grain bin suffocation receive the most attention, electrocution and electrical burn accidents also occur on farms. Please make electrical safety one of your priorities during the fall harvest.

The simple movement of a portable grain auger from one bin to another can have tragic results if the individuals involved are not extremely careful. The use of tractors with large cabs and antennas and oversized grain wagons can also result in preventable electrocution incidents.

Electrical equipment around fields, such as power lines in the end rows, may get overlooked during such a hectic time of year as harvest. However failure to notice overhead power lines can be a deadly oversight.

Most farmsteads could use a very careful overhead visual inspection of electric lines. Have you purchased taller and bigger equipment? Have you changed travel patterns through the farmstead? Have you added bins in new locations?

Today's farm equipment has a long reach when extended; and even when collapsed for roadway transport, many pieces of equipment may exceed the height of power lines. A daily check should be made of where equipment will be moving to ensure that it will clear power lines. But don't take matters into your own hands. They may not be as high as they look. Always use a spotter, someone with a broad vantage point, when working in the vicinity of power lines.

Maintain a 10-foot separation from a power line completely around it, whether you are driving underneath or passing a grain auger near it. A 53



**LOOK UP
AND LOOK
OUT FOR
POWER LINES**

Overhead power lines are common on the farm or in the field. However, failure to notice them can be a deadly oversight. Look up and look out for overhead power lines whenever you operate augers, move irrigation pipe or any other farm equipment.

This message brought to you by the folks at Elkhorn Rural Public Power District. For more electrical safety information, please contact us at **1-800-675-2185**.

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

year old Michigan truck driver who was cleaning sugar beets out of his truck unknowingly raised the bed into a 4,800 volt overhead power line. As he stood in the wet field and touched the energized truck bed, he was fatally burned.

In addition to conducting a field survey of power lines to locate potential hazards, employers should obtain safety information from utility companies for the benefit of their workers, if the lines are to remain energized.

Where possible, install electrical safety warning signage to prevent equipment and personnel contact with power lines. This will also be beneficial to your suppliers who may be making deliveries to your farm. Always keep in mind that electricity doesn't allow mistakes. And neither should you.

We have 3" x 5" "LOOK UP AND

LIVE" stickers available at no cost to you. These free stickers should be placed on any equipment, such as grain augers, tractors with loaders, dump trucks, etc., that are capable of



LOOK UP AND LIVE
WATCH OUT FOR
ELECTRIC LINES

ERPPD-1

reaching the power lines. These stickers will serve as a reminder to operators to check out the surroundings for overhead power lines and to lower the equipment before moving, if necessary. You can pick up the stickers at our office, or call us and we can mail some out to you.

WE WANT YOU TO STAY SAFE!!!



I AM THE PUBLIC IN PUBLIC POWER.

My public power utility puts Louis Dreyfus Commodities' business needs first. They aren't about profits, like some utilities in other states.

Allen Sievertsen
Elkhorn Valley Ethanol, LLC
Norfolk



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

with Board position and subdivision

Rod Zohner
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 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 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**