

# THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

September 2009

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 18, Number 9



ERPPD's 2009 Youth Energy Camp representatives were, from left, Keely Odell, Vitoria Wiese, Taylor Kester, Eric Schiltmeyer, Adult Counselor China Wiese, and Taylor Pokorny.

## 2009 Energy Camp wraps up

Five campers and one adult counselor represented Elkhorn Rural Public Power District at the annual statewide Youth Energy Camp in July.

Adult Counselor China Wiese first attended camp on behalf of ERPPD in 2003. She answered ERPPD's call when the camp staff at the Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) was having difficulty getting other public power districts in the state to provide female adult counselors.

The five 2009 campers were Keely Odell, Taylor Kester, and Taylor Pokorny, who attend Clearwater High School; Eric Schiltmeyer, who attends Elgin Pope John; and Vitoria Wiese, who attends Holy Family High School in Lindsay.

The annual camp is held west of Halsey, Neb., at the State 4-H camp during the second or third week of July. It is sponsored by the NREA together with 35 rural public power districts and electric cooperatives throughout the state.

Campers attend classes on such varied topics as electric safety, public power in Nebraska, energy efficiency, leadership skills, and teamwork. They visit Gerald Gentleman Coal-Fired Station near Sutherland and Kingsley Hydroelectric Station near Ogalalla. They also have a chance to compete for a chance to win a scholarship to the National Youth Tour in Washington, D.C.

## Energy Efficiency – 1 Question; 3 Answers

Elkhorn Rural Public Power promotes energy efficiency.

**Question:** Why is it that a utility that sells electric energy wants to encourage selling less energy?

**Answer 1:** Energy Efficiency is the least-cost energy resource. It costs NPPD nearly 4 cents/kwh to generate electricity at its coal-fired power facilities. If ERPPD can offer programs that encourage using less energy AND cost only 2½ cents/kWh, we can put off construction of a multi-billion dollar base-load facility for several years.

**Answer 2:** Investing in Energy Efficiency – over the long run – makes sound business sense. It helps the customer operate more efficiently, using less energy, so they save money on their monthly energy bills.

**Answer 3:** As environmental awareness continues to grow, using less energy makes sense. There are no commercially-viable technologies available to capture some of the elements and compounds emitted from a coal-fired power plant, so reducing the energy is a way of reducing those emissions.

So, the **Energy Wise**<sup>SM</sup> programs that ERPPD offers provide opportunities for customers to save energy, save money, and help the environment.

These programs are detailed on **WIRE-Page 2**. If you have questions about any of them, contact Mark Gronau at ERPPD, 1-800-675-2185 or [mgronau@erppd.com](mailto:mgronau@erppd.com).

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS

## EnergyWise<sup>SM</sup> incentives reward energy savings

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District, in partnership with Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) and its other wholesale customers, is offering energy efficiency programs to assist customers in becoming more energy efficient. The purpose of programs under the EnergyWise<sup>SM</sup> logo is to make electric customers more aware of ways they can use electrical energy more efficiently and the savings that come with these practices.

### Residential High-Efficiency Heat Pump Incentive

Homeowners who install a qualified heat pump (14 SEER or higher cooling ratio and 8.2 HSPF or greater heating ratio) will be eligible for a variable rebate, depending on the SEER of the unit. ERPPD customers who replace a window or central air conditioner with a qualified heat pump will earn a double rebate.

Heat Pump Qualifying Installation	NPPD Basic Rebate	ERPPD Replace A/C Unit
14 SEER	\$200	\$200
15 SEER	\$250	\$250
16 SEER (& up)	\$300	\$300
Geothermal Unit	\$400	\$400

The installing HVAC dealer will also receive an incentive payment if the new unit operates within 10% of manufacturer's specifications.

### Residential High-Efficiency Heat Pump Low-Interest Loan

A low-interest loan (2.5%) is an option that gives the homeowner a choice of the incentive or the loan (but not both). Contact ERPPD, then work through the local lender of your choice.

This program works in conjunction with the local lender, the Nebraska Energy Office, and NPPD.

## ENERGYWISE<sup>SM</sup>

Use less. Spend less. Do more.

### Cooling System Tune-Up

An incentive of \$30 is available to homeowners who have their cooling systems tuned up. Eligible systems include air conditioners, air source heat pumps (regardless of back-up source), and water source heat pumps. Contact your HVAC dealer.

### Commercial and Industrial Lighting Efficiency Program

Customers have an opportunity to earn incentives for upgrading to qualified, more efficient lighting. Incentives are available for both indoor and outdoor technologies. Lighting applications developed over the last decade can help cut lighting costs by 30% to 60%, while enhancing lighting quality and reducing environmental impacts.

Prescription and custom programs are available. Contact Mark Gronau at ERPPD to discuss the one that is right for your business, then contact the lighting contractor of your choice.

### Refrigerator/Freezer Recycling Program

The goal of this program is to remove old, inefficient, operating secondary refrigerators or freezers from ERPPD's distribution system. Customers receive a \$35 incentive for qualifying up to two working units they arrange to recycle.

This program is administered through a third party, JACO Environmental, who specializes in utility refrigerator recycling programs.

Interested customers should call JACO (toll-free 1-866-444-9160) for information or to arrange an appointment for pick-up.

### Irrigation Energy Efficiency

This program seeks to help irrigators utilize water and electric energy in the most energy efficient and cost-effective manner. It is designed to provide customers with financial incentives to help assess irrigation system performance and improve areas of inefficiency.

The incentive is \$0.20 per kWh saved per year.

### Premium Efficiency Motors

For some businesses, energy consumption by electric motors may represent more than half their electricity costs. One way to reduce that cost is to reduce the amount of energy used by upgrading to premium efficiency motors.

Premium efficiency motors are up to 8% more efficient than standard motors, and they are designed to meet or exceed standards set forth by the National Electric Manufacturer's Association (NEMA) in NEMA's MB1-1993 publication.

Incentives are prescriptive and range from \$20 to \$400 based on motor size. Those who qualify for irrigation incentives cannot qualify for this incentive.

Contact Mark Gronau at ERPPD for more information.

### Variable Frequency Drives

Variable frequency drives (VFDs) can be especially effective at reducing power and energy consumption to centrifugal equipment such as pumps and fans. Incentive is \$30 per horsepower. Those who qualify for irrigation incentives cannot qualify for this incentive.

Contact ERPPD to see if a VFD is right for you and if it can be used on your lines.

**Ask a tax preparer if your efficiency improvements can qualify for tax deductions or credits.**

# YOUR ELECTRIC METER

## ‘I send valuable messages. Are you listening?’

*This is the second in a four-part series featuring thoughts from your electric meter—*

“It’s me again, your electric meter. I’ve been accused of many things—and many of the accusations are bad. People say I do things like running when nothing else in the house is operating, creeping, making too much noise, and even running at outrageous speeds.

“I’m really very capable. In fact, I’m one of the most accurate measuring devices known to man. I have a proven track record of performance.

“I work night and day in all kinds of weather, and I don’t have any ill feelings toward anyone. I only do my job of letting you know how much electricity has been used in your home. I just can’t understand why people blame me for high electric bills. My cousin is a gasoline-pump meter, and she never gets blamed for poor mileage in the family car. Maybe it’s because you can’t see electricity, but you can see gasoline.

“Sometimes, because of external factors, I get injured. Such injuries may cause me to labor under an added burden and slow down. A lightning strike may stop me in my tracks. But injuries almost never make me run faster.

“But some people still ask: ‘Why do you run so fast at my house?’ They say, ‘My neighbor has more appliances than I have, is home all day, has more family members, and his meter doesn’t run half as fast.’ I suppose that some people don’t realize that others may have different facilities, equipment, and habits than they do.

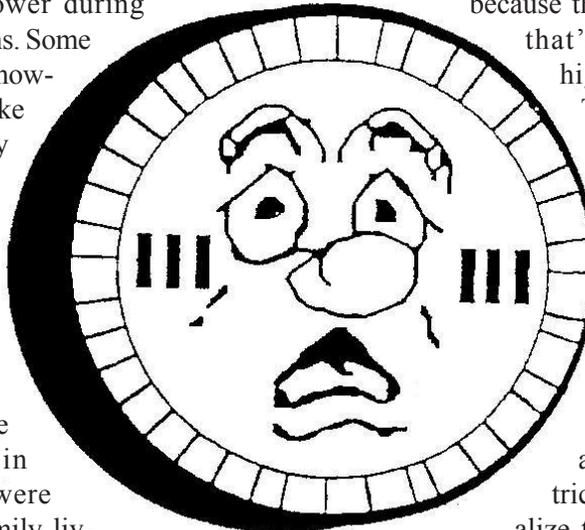
“If you think about it, you’ll realize that some families use more hot water, cook more, entertain more, set their thermostats higher during the heating

season or lower during the hot months. Some people take showers, others take baths. Many people have only one hot meal at home per day; others have three such meals. Even if all the appliances in the homes were identical, family living habits would still make

a difference in energy consumption. To further complicate the matter, I could mention differences in the construction of the home and in differing reactions to various weather patterns.

“Sometimes I get really depressed. I work tirelessly, I do a good job, and still I receive a lot of criticism.

Some customers even call Elkhorn Rural Public Power District and ask the friendly people there to test me



because they think it’s me that’s causing their high energy bills. The District will test me if you want them to, but there is almost NEVER anything wrong with me.

“When most people think about their electric usage, they realize that I do my job well, and that electricity is still one of the best values available today.

So you see, I am not a crook at all—and I only record the amount of work your electric servants do for you.

“You should learn to read and understand me. I can be one of your very best friends. Ignore me and you may be wasting your family’s money needlessly on energy.

“Thanks for listening. I really hope we can be friends from now on.”

## GRASSROOTS

### Cap-and-Trade is in the news about CO<sub>2</sub>

The Our Energy Our Future website is a place where ERPPD customers can go to register their concerns about what carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) controls—like cap-and-trade—will do to electric bills. Don’t miss a chance to tell your legislators what you think.



**Our Energy, Our Future**  
A Dialogue With America

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

**Start a dialogue with your elected officials at:**

**[www.OurEnergy.coop](http://www.OurEnergy.coop)**

**Elkhorn Rural Public Power District**  
**September 2009**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

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# IRRIGATION

## Irrigator's switch number is important

This irrigation season, an ERPPD irrigator who has occasion to call the utility should reference the system's switch number when giving information.

While account number and location are necessary components, it is the switch number that will best help district personnel to provide the irrigator with the fastest resolution to his or her situation.

See illustration below for location examples.

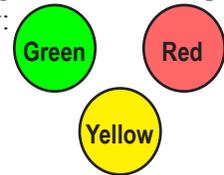


## Lights have meaning

Three LED lights on the control box have particular significance.

- Red - No Control
- Red and Green - Control
- Yellow - Signal Test (has no effect)

The light configuration on the display appears this way:



If the lights are not working, please check the fuses before calling ERPPD's outage number at 800-675-2185.

**Call for ERPPD's  
Load Control Status  
during the season.  
1-800-238-0185**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
with Board position and subdivision

Rod Zohner  
President.....II

Tim Means  
Vice President ..II

Larry Lindahl  
Secretary .....III

Dennis Kuchar  
Treasurer ..... I

Robert Kee  
Director ..... II

Mark Miller  
Director ..... I

Joe Thiele  
Director .....III

Greg Weidner  
Director ..... I

David Hoefler  
Director .....III

**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.

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## Communicate Electronically With ERPPD

Internet: [www.erppd.com](http://www.erppd.com)

E-mail: [erppd@erppd.com](mailto:erppd@erppd.com)

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**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., 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**