

# THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

September 2011

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 20, Number 9

## LB 164-Bill to “provide notification requirements before moving oversize objects on a county or township road” took effect August 26, 2011

Bill Summary:

- LB 164 requires that any individual moving a building or object over 15’ 6” in height or wider than the roadway on a county or township road notify the local authority and the electric utility responsible for the roadway infrastructure.
- Notification must be made at least 10 days prior to the move.
- Notification shall describe the width, height, and weight of the object to be moved; the route to be used; and the time of the planned move.

LB 164 is a very important bill for the rural electric systems in the state. Moving large objects down county roads can pose a significant risk to those involved and cause damage to electrical lines and utility equipment. As oversized objects such as buildings, grain bins, or large agricultural equipment are moved down Nebraska side roads, often the risks posed by power lines are dismissed. Electrocutation is a direct threat to those involved in moving such objects and it is vital to the safety of those involved that they notify local utilities of their desires to move such objects so the utility may be present to clear the way of any power lines or equipment which may obstruct the move, or suggest an alternate route.

ERPPD supported the bill because it fits very well into our mission statement: “ERPPD is dedicated to providing safe, reliable, cost-effective electricity for all customers.” By being proactive rather than reactive, we can avoid accidents, avoid costly repairs, and avoid outages for our customers.

LB164 was passed by the Nebraska Legislature on March 10, 2011, and was signed by Governor Heineman on March 16, 2011. The bill took effect on August 26, 2011, exactly 3 months after the legislature adjourned.

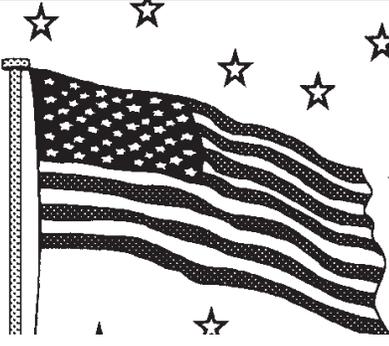


*ERPPD personnel assisting with a building move near Battle Creek.*

## Correction

In the August WIRE newsletter, it was incorrectly reported that Ivy Prater was a student at Elgin Pope John. She is a student at Elgin Public Schools.

Ivy was one of two youth energy camp participants to be chosen to represent Nebraska on the Washington, DC, Youth Tour in June of 2012.



## Labor Day is Monday, Sept. 5

ERPPD offices **will be closed** for employees and their families to remember the day that's dedicated to the workers of America.

# ONGOING MAINTENANCE

## Tree and Brush Control

Evidence for the need to control growth of trees along power line rights-of-way is easy to see in rural areas. Overgrown rights-of-way can cause problems during severe weather and can make it difficult to reach trouble spots to make repairs.

In a continuing effort to control tree and brush growth, ERPPD has hired Midwest Spray Team and Sales, Inc. to treat vegetation in power line rights-of-way with governmentally-approved herbicides. They will start the program the first part of September, using the foliage herbicides of Krenite S and Escort, which are foliage absorbed and are non-volatile. The herbicides will be applied with a hand-held nozzle. Midwest Spray Team and Sales, Inc. will follow up in the fall with a basal treatment, using Tahoe 4E, Stalker, and basal oil to treat the areas they could not foliage spray. Growth in county road ditches will be sprayed, but if the Midwest crew has any questions, they will attempt to contact the landowner before spraying.

This year, Midwest Spray Team crews will be treating power line rights-of-way in our service area west and north of Neligh. If you have any questions or concerns or requests not to spray, contact Jim Ridder at our Battle Creek office, 1-800-675-2185. You can also contact Midwest Spray Team by mail at:

Midwest Spray Team and Sales, Inc, PO Box 65668, West Des Moines, IA 50265

Tree and brush control is yet another way that ERPPD can attain our goals of service reliability and cost management. As trees grow into the lines, electricity can track through the tree to the ground, causing blinks and outages. The electricity that travels to ground through the tree is electricity we have purchased but cannot sell, a phenomenon we call line loss. The lower we can keep that line loss number, the more efficient our system operates. Controlling trees when they are small is much more cost-effective than sending a crew out to cut or trim the trees after they have grown into our line.

## ENERGY NEWS

### EnergyWise Program Update

We have been notified by our power supplier that there will be some changes in the Energy-Wise Incentive program for 2012. I have listed those changes in the chart on the right.

In order to qualify for the 2011 program, the project must be completed before December 31, 2011. Projects in progress at that time will be subject to the 2012 guidelines.

If you have any questions please call Mark Gronau, our Energy Services Representative.

#### Energy Efficiency

#### Month *Tip of the*

Is your washing machine more than 10 years old? According to the U.S. Department of Energy, families can cut related energy costs by more than a third—and water costs by more than half—by purchasing a clothes washer with an ENERGY STAR label. Choose a front-load or redesigned top-load model.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

### EnergyWise Program Changes for 2012

	2011	2012
<b>Residential</b>		
Refrigerator Recycling	\$35	Discontinued
CFLs	\$2/bulb	Discontinued
Dealer Incentive	\$100	\$50
<b>Heat Pump (Residential)</b>		
14 SEER	\$200	\$100
15 SEER	\$250	\$300
16+ SEER	\$300	unchanged
Outdoor HP unit only	\$200, \$250, \$300	\$100
<b>Commercial/Industrial</b>		
Custom HVAC		Discontinued
Custom Lighting	10¢/kWh saved	7¢/kWh saved
Custom Process	10¢/kWh	7¢/kWh
<b>HVAC (Commercial)</b>		
Air Source HP 14 SEER	\$200	\$100
Air Source HP 15 SEER	\$250	\$300
Air Source HP 16+SEER	\$300	unchanged
High Efficiency motors	\$10-\$400	Discontinued
Variable Frequency Drives	\$30/HP	\$30/HP, exc. HVAC
<b>Agricultural</b>		
Custom Irrigation	\$20¢/kWh saved	Discontinued

**ENERGYWISE**<sup>SM</sup>  
Use less. Spend less. Do more.

# CUSTOMER SERVICE INFORMATION

## Tips for Top Customer Service:

Customer service is very important to us and we are always looking to ways to improve the service we give to you. We have listed below a few ways you can assist us in attaining that goal. Some things we have done to help are adding online bill viewing and payment, added credit card and e-check payments, added email alerts and reminders that your bill is due, installed automatic meter reading so you do not have to read your meter, we can provide you with a historical graph of your daily electricity usage, etc. Along with everything we do to improve customer service and satisfaction, there are things you can do to assist our customer service representatives (CSR's) so they can serve you in the best customer service.

Please help us help you in the most efficient manner possible when you need assistance or service:

- Call the central office at 1-800-675-2185 (even though some of our employees carry cell phones, they are not monitored at all times, especially if the employees are gone to meetings or on vacation.)
- If you are calling from a cell phone, please make sure you are in an area with good coverage. (it really makes a difference when there is a good phone connection)
- Have your account number or meter number ready (if you are an existing customer)
- Be as specific as possible on the reason for your call (Asking for service could apply to several different departments, such as new service-engineering, transfer of service-billing, disconnect service-billing, interruption of service-operations)

## IRRIGATION

### Irrigation Cost Calculator

Have you ever wondered how the cost of operating your electric irrigation system compares to diesel, or how your propane system compares to electricity, or how natural gas would compare to all other power sources? Would you like to see these comparisons before you make a decision for powering a new irrigation system?

We have an **irrigation cost calculator** on our website, [www.erppd.com](http://www.erppd.com), which will give you a cost comparison of many of the common power sources available for irrigation systems. The calculator allows you to input the type of system (center pivot or other), pumping rate (gallons per minute), acres irrigated, water applied per acre, annual pumping hours, lift (feet), pressure, number of towers, motor name plate horsepower, power operating costs (fuel and repair costs) for diesel, natural gas, propane, electric, gasoline, engine oil, drive and electric motor oil.

After you have entered all the inputs, you have the ability to change the inputs to estimate the cost savings for system improvements or adjustments. You can also compare the final costs for each of our seven electric pumping rates, and compare those to pumping with other fuels.

If you have any questions about the Irrigation Cost Calculator, call our Energy Services Representative, Mark Gronau, at our Battle Creek office at 800-675-2185.

## Husker Harvest Days Sept 13-15

ERPPD will share a booth at Husker Harvest Days in Grand Island along with other public power utilities. The booth will be staffed with energy efficiency experts from various public power utilities. Also featured during the three days will be High-Voltage safety demonstrations. Stop by the booth and learn how you can stay safe around electricity and how you can conserve energy and save money!

# *“Take Action” To Help Keep My Electric Costs Affordable By Getting Involved With The “Our Energy Our Future” Campaign.*

Elkhorn RPPD has joined with other power districts and rural electric cooperatives to provide our customers with a unified voice to our elected officials. You can get involved through the “Our Energy Our Future” grassroots campaign, hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, of which ERPPD is a member.

The “Our Energy Our Future” campaign works to ensure that Americans have an affordable and reliable source of electricity for years to come. The campaign works like this: if there is legislation being debated in Congress that has a direct bearing on the rural electric industry, either favorable or detrimental, you will receive a ‘Take Action Alert’ via email. This email will provide instructions on how you can voice your concerns to your Congressmen.

Simply complete the form below and return it to our office. We will get you signed up for the campaign on your behalf. Then when the need arises, you will be ready to act. We want to make it as easy as possible for our customers to contact their representatives in Congress. Please contact Wayne McCormick at ERPPD, 800-675-2185, if you have any questions.

Remember, it truly is “Our Energy and Our Future” that is at stake, and we have a voice in Washington, DC.

## Start the Dialogue With Your Elected Officials

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Account # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Is this your primary phone? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No  
 Email address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

You can mail this form in with your bill payment or drop it off at our office. You can also email your information to us at [erppd@erppd.com](mailto:erppd@erppd.com) or call in the information during business hours at 1-800-675-2185.

### 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
- Jerrell Dolesh  
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.

• • • • •  
**Communicate Electronically**  
**With ERPPD**  
 • • • • •  
**Internet: [www.erppd.com](http://www.erppd.com)**  
**E-mail: [erppd@erppd.com](mailto: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**