

THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

April 2015

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 24, Number 4

ERPPD is dedicated to providing **SAFE, RELIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE** electricity for **ALL** customers.

Transmission Line Project Completed

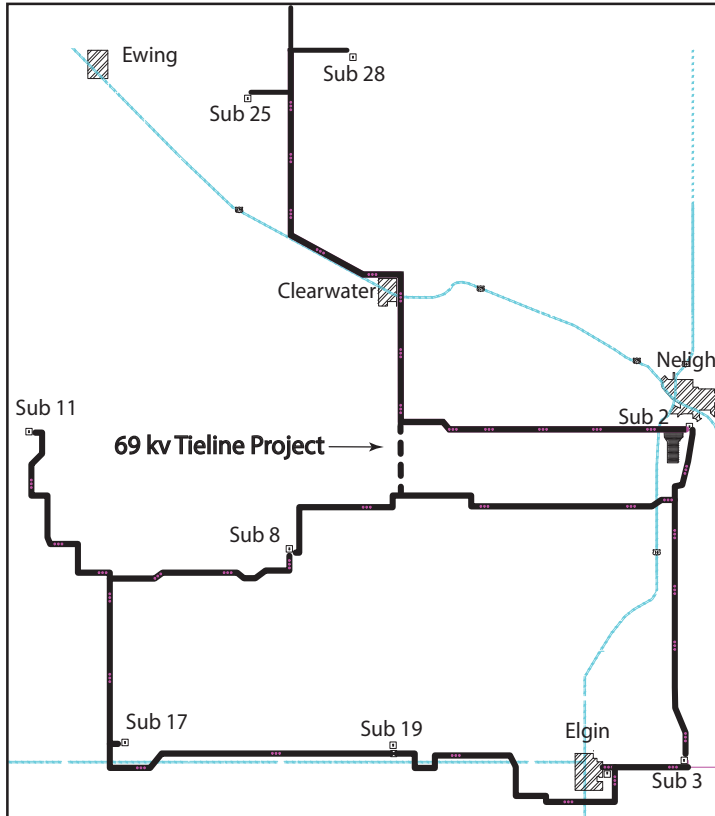


Diagram of 69 kv Transmission Tieline Project, showing the ERPPD west 69 kv transmission line system.

The operations department recently completed the construction of two miles of 69,000-volt (69kV) transmission line south of Clearwater. The project was designed to strengthen the backbone of the electrical transmission system for the district.

The tie line will provide for an alternate feed for towns of Clearwater, Ewing, and also two rural substations in the northwest part of the district. It will also provide an alternate feed for the city of Elgin and five rural substations in the southwest part of the district.

ERPPD to Celebrate National Lineman Appreciation Day

America's rural electric systems have designated the second Monday of April as National Lineman Appreciation Day.

On April 13, 2015, Elkhorn Rural Public Power District will honor the hard working men [and women] who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on.

The full text of the resolution, which the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Board adopted unanimously, follows:



"Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure;

Whereas linemen are the first responders of the rural electric family, getting power back on and making things safe for all after storms and accidents; and

Whereas there would be no rural electric systems without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of linemen;

Therefore be it resolved that NRECA recognize the Second Monday of April of each year as National Lineman Appreciation Day and make available to electric cooperatives, materials and support to recognize the contributions of these valuable men and women to America's Electric Cooperatives."

We proudly recognize all electric linemen for the services they perform around the clock in dangerous conditions to keep power flowing and protect the public's safety.

"Electric linemen do not often receive the recognition they deserve," said General Manager Thomas Rudloff. "They work all hours of the day, often in hazardous conditions, going above and beyond to restore power to their communities. Our linemen, as well as linemen from across the nation, truly deserve this special day of recognition."

ERPPD invites its customers to take a moment to thank a lineman for the work they do. Use #ThankALineman to show your support for the men and women who light our lives.

Grassroots Begins With You

A message from Kristen Gottschalk, Legislative Liaison for Nebraska Rural Electric Association and your spokesperson on electrical issues in the legislative arena:

The term "grassroots" refers to individuals on the front lines of the issues we face. Grassroots support provides direct communication between elected officials and those they are elected to represent. It is the directors, employees, and customers of Nebraska's public power systems that are impacted by legislation and regulations, and it is these individuals that can be a powerful tool in advocating for or against these issues.

A good grassroots program mobilizes individuals, increases their knowledge of the issues, and provides the resources necessary for these individuals to become involved in the political process. By organizing electric ratepayers to contact representatives, attend forums, and vote; the issues most important to the electric industry will receive greater attention and ultimately we will see more favorable policy outcomes.

The strength of any organization is in its membership. In the legislative arena, the key difference between successful organizations and those who are not, is the active involvement and participation of its membership. Members of the Nebraska Rural Electric Association serve more than 400,000 consumers which collectively can have a powerful voice in government.

The biggest obstacle any grassroots movement has to overcome is apathy. Too often, I have talked to individuals who believe their voice gets lost in the democratic process. Representatives care what their constituents think, and with proper organization and education our members can have a strong influence on policy outcomes.

I invite you to consider what you can do to become more involved and to take advantage of the opportunities presented to you. Participation is vital to the success of any grassroots program, and unless every member takes an active role, the grassroots program will see only limited success. Rather than a single voice, the grassroots program will mobilize a movement of Nebraskans concerned about energy issues and affordable electric rates.

▶ SAFETY IS ALWAYS IN SEASON



This season, before work on the farm reaches its peak, spend a little time locating all overhead power lines and electrical facilities. A quick look around could be a life saver.

Look Up and Live

We value you as a customer and want you to stay safe around electricity. Equipment is getting bigger and has more reach to cover more ground faster, so lines that were once safely out of reach of farm equipment are now within the danger zone. Call our office at (800) 675-2185 for more safety suggestions.

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

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Spring is a great time to think about giving your home's cooling system a tune-up. Typically, tune-ups on cooling systems that have been neglected for a few years can provide 5-15% energy savings, or more. Not to mention the unit can better perform from a comfort and equipment longevity standpoint.

Fortunately, there is a \$30 EnergyWise incentive available for homeowners that have their cooling system (central air, air-source heat pump, or ground-source heat pump) tuned up. Call our office at (800) 675-2185 for more details, or visit our website, www.erppd.com, and click on the EnergyWise link to download an incentive form. Once it is determined that your cooling system qualifies, all you have to do is submit the application to receive a \$30 credit on your electric bill.

ONGOING MAINTENANCE

S&L To Test Poles

As part of ERPPD's continued commitment to provide the most reliable service possible, S&L Pole Testing, Inc., will inspect about 3,000 distribution poles, many of which were last inspected in 2002 and 2003. The process will begin in April.

ERPPD began testing poles in the mid-1970s and completed the first inspection of the district's 2,500 miles of line in 1995. The program helps find weak links in the distribution system which, after completing any needed maintenance work, has resulted in fewer outages due to faulty poles. ERPPD's present goal is to test enough poles each year to cover the entire district every 15 years.

This year, contractors will be testing poles in the following areas: east and northwest of Battle Creek, northeast of Tilden, northeast of Madison, and south of Neligh.

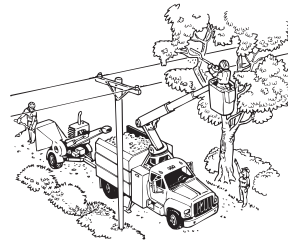
Testing occurs as follows:

1. Check pole's age; test any pole older than 15 years.
2. Dig down about 18 inches all around the pole.
3. Pole is "sounded" with a hammer.
4. Pole is drilled in four spots to check the core.
5. Pole is treated at ground level and holes are filled with treatment rod.
6. Each pole is passed/rejected and its condition recorded.
7. A work order is made for ERPPD crews to replace rejected poles.

Please call 1-800-675-2185 if you have questions.

Tree Trimming

ERPPD has contracted with Wilson Tree Service to cut or trim trees in the power line rights-of-way in the Norfolk and Madison areas.



Landowners will be contacted before cutting or trimming is done.

There are three main reasons for trimming and cutting trees. The first is safety (SAFE). Children love to climb trees and sometimes do not look around first to see if the tree has grown

up around the power lines. The power lines carry 7,200 volts or more of electricity and accidental contact would be fatal.

The second reason to trim trees is for reliability of the electrical system. (RELIABLE) Trees are a good conductor of electricity and whenever a tree branch touches the power lines, electricity travels through the tree into the ground, causing blinks or outages if the contact is enough to open the breakers on the line.

The third reason to trim trees away from the lines is to cut down on line loss (COST-EFFECTIVE). Line loss is electricity that we all pay for and no one benefits from. Trees contacting the lines provides a path to the ground for the electricity.

Please welcome the tree contractor and we appreciate your cooperation in this project.

Please call 1-800-675-2185 if you have any questions.

SAFETY NEWS

Help Keep Our Employees Safe From Chemical Exposure

Help our linemen avoid exposure to pesticides, herbicides, and other potentially dangerous chemicals you may use on your crops.

If you use dangerous chemicals in your fields, **PLEASE FLAG THE FIELD ENTRANCE AND INCLUDE THE CHEMICAL NAME AND DATE APPLIED.** Our line workers, meter technicians, or our irrigation control switch radio technicians may need to enter your field to do service work or install load management switches. We request your help for their safety and good health.

Call Before You Dig!

Are you planning to install a fence, build an outdoor shed, plant a tree, or some other project that requires excavation on or near your property?

If so, call Diggers' Hotline of Nebraska at 811, or call 1-800-331-5666 at least two days before you start. The one-call notification center will contact all of the utilities in your area to make sure that any underground facilities are marked before you begin your work.

When you call Diggers' Hotline of Nebraska, anytime 24-hours a day, seven days a week, an operator will answer and ask for some or all of the following information: name, address, telephone number; type of work being done; city and county; and township, range, section.

The information is entered into a computer and your "locate request" is sent by fax, e-mail, or phone to each utility (including ERPPD) that has underground facilities in the area. Each utility uses a flag of a different color, for example, electrical wires are marked with a red flag.

Diggers' Hotline is a free service to you, and ERPPD's response to locate requests is also free. We want to make it as painless as possible to keep you and your workers safe.

**48 Hours Before You Dig Anything Anywhere
Call 811 for Diggers Hotline
or visit the website at ne-diggers.com**

Right Tree--Right Place

If you are landscaping your backyard, preplanning is the best insurance for your future tree and shrub planting effort. Ensure the oak or maple tree you planted for future generations does not have to be removed by utility tree trimming crews before its benefits are realized. Careful placement of trees and taller shrubs is necessary to avoid interference with overhead and underground electric utility lines.

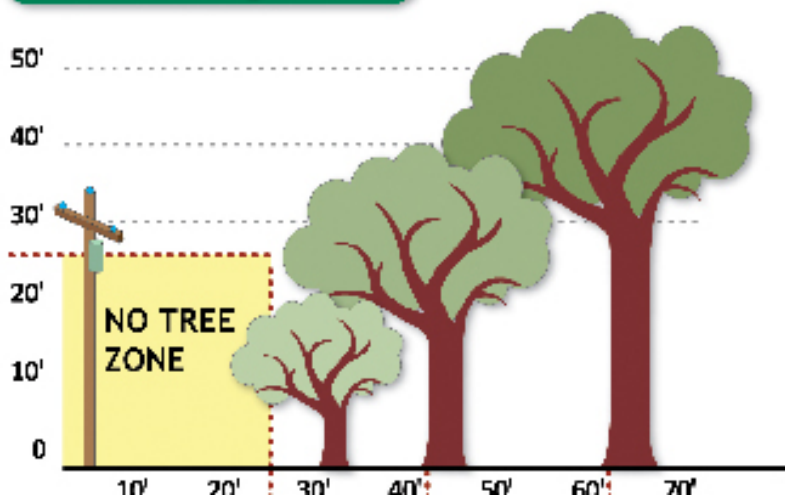
Arbor Day on April 24, the last Friday in April, is a perfect time to teach the younger generation the benefits of tree planting, selection of the proper species for your location, and how to correctly plant a tree and foster its growth. However, one element of the lesson should be to teach youngsters that trees can interfere with overhead electric lines and safety can be compromised when limbs contact the wires. The same lesson can be taught about roots which may be cut, if buried electric lines have to be repaired or replaced.

Trees conduct electricity and can create a safety hazard if limbs grow too close to electric lines. Power outages or momentary interruptions can occur when trees and branches come into contact with overhead lines.

Another concern is the safety risk when children climb trees near power lines. Accidental contact of electric wires with a tree limb or person playing or trimming around the tree could be fatal. Also, trees growing near power lines must be pruned to maintain a safe distance from the wires. This results in increased right-of-way maintenance costs and ultimately rate increases. If you have trees that appear to be growing into power lines, contact us at 1-800-675-2185. Never try to prune them yourself.

To learn more about which trees might work best in your yard, visit www.arborday.org, or call ERPPD at 1-800-675-2185.

Tree Planting Guide



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 Hoefer
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

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**