



# THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

April 2020

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 29, Number 4

## NOW AND THEN - 80 YEARS OF ERPPD

On April 29, Elkhorn Rural Public Power District will be celebrating 80 years of providing safe, reliable, cost effective electricity to our customers.

And who would have thought that history would be making itself even as this article is being written?

Currently, most school districts are closed for two weeks, pending further closure, if the spread of the coronavirus that causes the COVID 19 illness becomes rampant.

The Nebraska University System has canceled classes for the rest of the semester and will provide the curriculum remotely to students.

Major sporting events are being played without fans or canceled altogether.

And citizens are being urged not



*The first home to get electricity from Elkhorn RPPD on April 29, 1940, was this one, A.H. Dederman's, about nine miles northeast of Norfolk.*

to leave their homes except for work and necessities.

ERPPD has had to weather storms - some of them pretty extensive, but separating crews because of potential illness? Now, it seems, we have seen it all.

Throughout ERPPD's 80 year history, we have thrived in the face of adversity.

At the beginning, rural electric

associations started in adversity.

It was the Great Depression and things were pretty bleak in rural Nebraska. The dust bowl had wiped out many farmers and the economy wasn't making much headway. But a determined group of farmers worked together to help rural communities move into the 20th century. You can read

*Continued on page 2*

## WAYS TO PAY WITHOUT GOING OUT

Please see the list below as a reminder of the services we offer for your convenience at any time. A bonus is that you don't even have to leave your home.

**\*Pay Online.** Go to erppd.com and click on the online bill pay tab or graphic.

**\*Pay by App.** Download the app and access your account and make payments right from your phone or smart device.

**\*Pay Through Automatic Drafts.** Set up an automatic withdrawal from a checking or savings account. Set it up once and your payment will never "get lost in the mail" or forgotten.

**\*Pay by Phone.** Call the office at 800-675-2185 and speak with our friendly customer service reps. They can take payment for your account over the phone.

Please make use of our easy and convenient payment options! These options provide service for you and help us to keep your rates cost-effective.

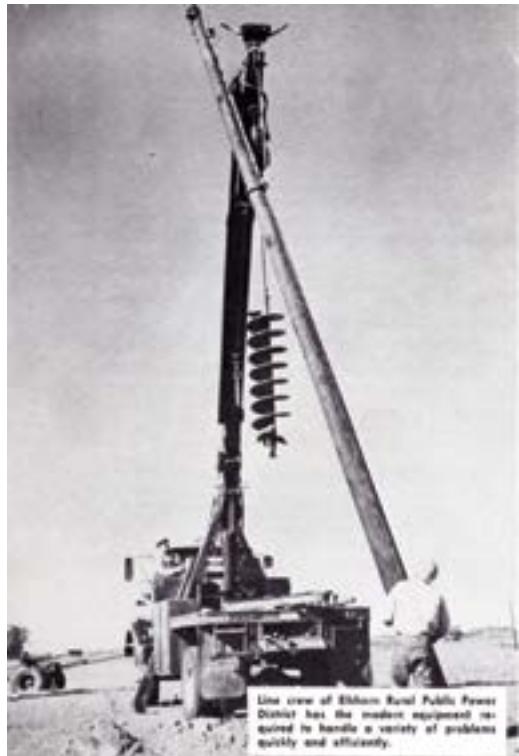
## 80TH ANNIVERSARY CON'T.

the whole story at erppd.com under the "About Us" tab.

Our history is about community and banding together to help each other and we have continued with that tradition to the benefit of our customers.

As can be seen by the service comparison table below, ERPPD has changed a bit in our 80 years as far as size and services. But as for the value of serving our communities and providing value for our customers, that is a constant.

We are looking forward to serving you for many years to come.



Through the pictures, you can see the progression in technology for the linemen. The picture above shows how poles were set before equipment was developed or widely available. The first digger derrick emerged in the 1940s. Pictured far left: As the caption states, ERPPD utilized modern equipment for line building. Pictured left: ERPPD is able to set transmission poles (averaging 70 ft.) with the help of boom trucks.

### Service Comparisons

As of April 29 (by year)	Other Vital Statistics				
	1940 First day	1965 25 years	2000 60 years	2015 75 Years	2020 80 Years*
Miles of Distribution Line	116	1,855	2,460	2,650	2,662
Miles of Transmission Line	---	51	176	199	207
Substations	1	8	24	27	28
Customers	148	3,471	8,386	9,449	9,793
Average monthly kWh per customer	64	674	1,357	2,222	2,200
Counties served	1	5	9	8	8
Employees on Payroll	3	17	37	40	38

\*2020 numbers are through February 27, 2020

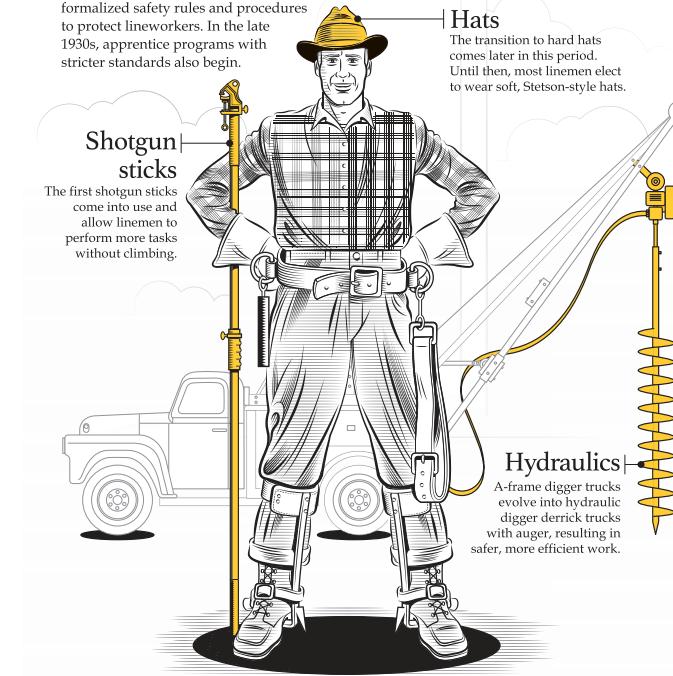
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## SAFETY NEWS

### 1926-1950

#### Safety training improves

The electric industry develops more formalized safety rules and procedures to protect lineworkers. In the late 1930s, apprentice programs with stricter standards also begin.



### 1991-present

#### Watching out for workers

OSHA begins requiring utilities to provide lineworker clothing to protect from arc flashes and "fall protection" devices like body harnesses and fall-arrest lanyards.



The illustrations above show the evolution of safety equipment over the 80 years that ERPPD has been providing electricity. When ERPPD first started serving the district, much of the safety equipment did not exist and most of the work - digging holes, setting poles stringing wire etc. was done by hand. Today there is more technology used to do the work and keep workers safe. (Source: RE Magazine, April 2018 - Thank you to Northwest Lineman College Senior VP Alan Drew, author of *The American Lineman*, and NRECA's Bud Branham and Robert Harris for their extensive assistance in the completion of these illustrations.)

## SPRING PLANTING SAFETY

### Cultivate safety

Remember to look up and look out for overhead power lines this planting season.

Today's farming operations involve bigger equipment, which can make you more productive. However, failure to notice overhead power lines can be a deadly oversight. This planting season, remember to look up and look out for overhead power lines.

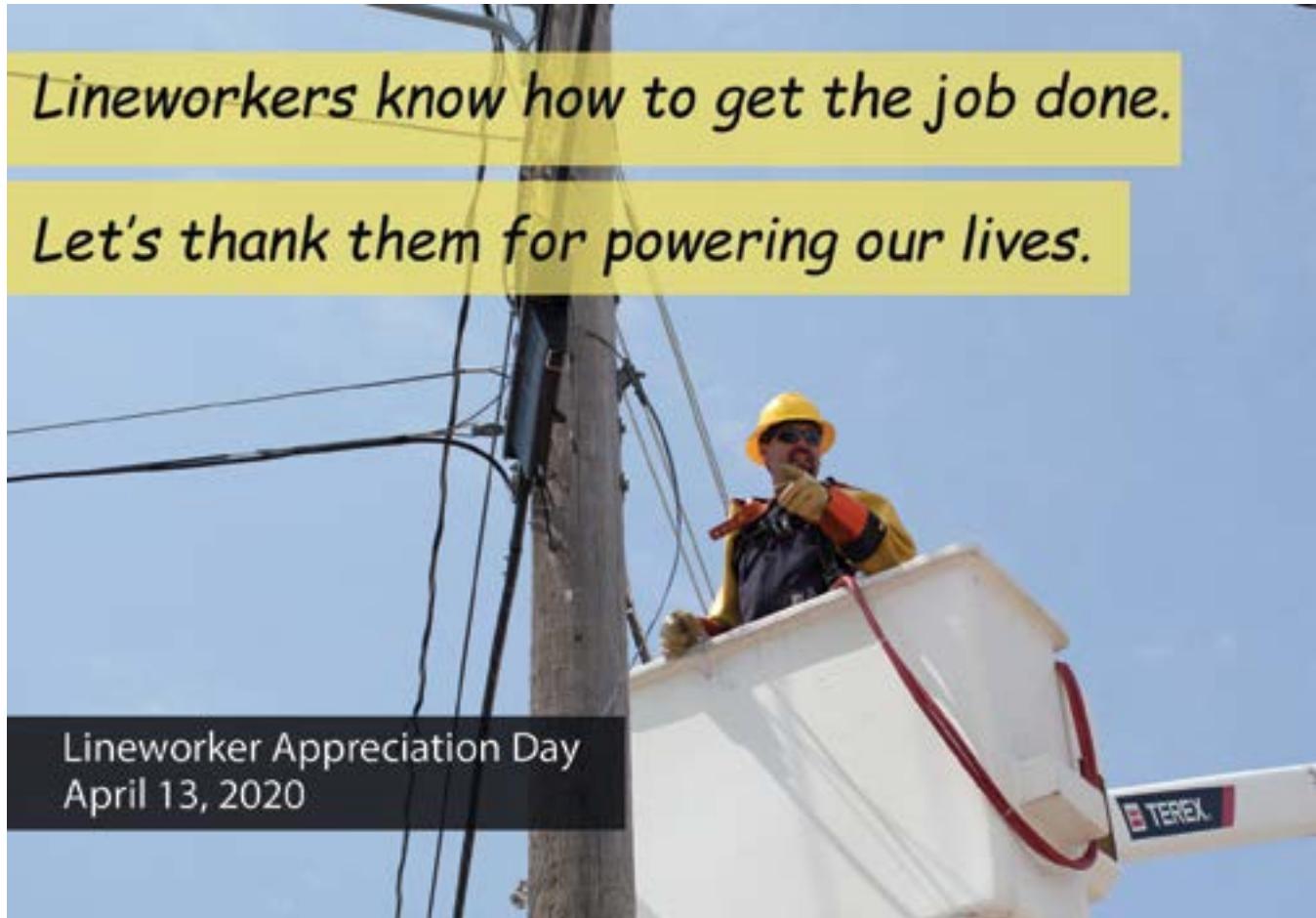
You can request stickers or window clings to put on your equipment to remind you to look around for power lines. Call the office at 800-675-2185 to request the stickers or window clings.

The window clings also have instructions of what to do if you do come in contact with an overhead line.

It is important to remember NOT to exit your equipment unless there is a fire. Some downed lines could still be live. If you do have to exit, try not to touch anything and jump clear with your feet together. Hop or shuffle, keeping your feet close together, away from the vehicle.

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# LINEMAN APPRECIATION



Elkhorn Rural Public Power District would like to  
and integrity in providing safe, reliable and cost -

honor our linemen for their hard work, dedication  
effective electricity to our customers.

Our line workers are:

Name	Position	Years of Service	Name	Position	Years of Service
Marc Ahlers	SCADA Field Tech	17	Blake Papik	Apprentice Lineman	2
Dan Belt	BC General Foreman	30	John Paul	Meter Tech	14
Grady Bellingtger	Apprentice Lineman	1	Steve Petersen	Neligh General Foreman	40
Chris Bentley	Apprentice Lineman	2	Eric Scranton	Foreman	19
Patrick Hintz	Staking Eng Tech	17	Dominic Smedra	Journeyman Lineman	18
Jeremy Holecek	Journeyman Lineman	18	Andy Starman	Staking Meter Assistant	10
Jeff Kerkman	Foreman	30	Taylor Stanley	Apprentice Lineman	2
Kyle Kester	Journeyman lineman	11	Jared Suckstorf	Journeyman Lineman	18
Ryan Kittelson	Journeyman Lineman	23	Chris Tillotson	Journeyman Lineman	22
Todd Knutson	Operations Manager	25	Jim Wennekamp	Foreman	25
Paul Lichy	Journeyman Lineman	27	Travis Wiebelhaus	Journeyman Lineman	19
Jason Lyon	Journeyman lineman	13			