



THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

December 2018

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 27, Number 12

WE WISH YOU A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

From all of us here at Elkhorn Rural Public Power District, we sincerely wish you the best in this holiday season and for the coming year. It is our greatest honor and privilege to serve you and provide safe, reliable, cost-effective electricity.

Thank you for your input and participation, by getting out and voting for your representatives on the board of directors. Dennis Kuchar, Sub-district I; Rodney Zohner, Sub-district II and Raymond Payne, Sub-district III were all elected

to 6-year terms. See below for district boundaries and pictures of the directors.

Local control is one of the hallmarks of the Public Power Model. You have a vote, voice and say in how your electric service is provided. Voting for board members is one way you get to exercise that right.

We value your input and customers are welcome to attend our public board meetings, the 2nd Tuesday of the month. A public comment period is held at 10:05

a.m. if you have an issue or concern you would like to let the directors know about.

You can also see us out in the community, since we live and work right here where you are. We are accountable to you, our customers, not to shareholders, who do not live here and are motivated by making profits.

As we reflect on the passing year and look ahead to the new year, we count as a blessing having such great customers to serve.



Service Area Subdivisions

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District
will be closed
Tuesday, Dec. 25,
Christmas Day
and
Tuesday, January 1
New Year's Day



*Dennis Kuchar, Madison
Sub-district I Director*



*Rod Zohner, Battle Creek
Sub-district II Director*



*Ray Payne, Elgin
Sub-district III Director*



RECYCLING AND GIVING BACK



Pictured above: Quilt made by Rena Hoelscher out of worn out lineman jeans.

What do you do with worn out clothes, especially jeans - that aren't good for work, but still have a bit of life in them? We were able to give jeans used by our linemen to Rena Hoelscher.

She took the jeans from Elkhorn and created the quilt pictured to the left. It was donated to the Rescue Mission for a fund raiser.

Elkhorn provides clothing to the linemen that are fire resistant (FR) and part of the personal protection equipment (PPE) needed to do the job safely. Once the clothing is worn out it is turned back to the company for disposal, or in this case, recycling for a very good cause.

RELIABILITY

Reliability is important to Elkhorn, because it is important to our customers. In 2017 (most current data available), Elkhorn had a 99.98% reliability rating and Nebraksa has been ranked number one for electrical reliability in the nation! (See the August *Wire* for the complete story by visiting our website www.erppd.com).

One way that Elkhorn keeps the lights on is to have an inventory of materials that are available when needed in an outage situation.

To the right you can see a substation transformer being unloaded in the pole yard.

This transformer is a spare substation transformer with dual voltage so that it can be used in multiple locations to cut down on inventory costs. Because these types of transformers have significant lead time to order, having one on hand



Pictured above: Crane unloading a substation transformer. It is part of ERPPD's plan for reliability.

makes sure we can get up and going in an outage situation.

Elkhorn works with other area public power districts to share

high dollar equipment like substation transformers, so that we can all keep costs down; another public power advantage.

ELKHORN RECOGNIZED

Elkhorn Recognized for PCB Program

At the Regulatory Compliance Services, Inc. (RCS, Inc.) 27th Annual Conference in Springfield, Missouri, in October, Elkhorn was recognized for our polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) testing program and for completing the testing program this year.

RCS, Inc. has provided PCB management consultations, education and training workshops and PCB record-keeping assistance for electric utilities for the past 32 years.

Elkhorn was commended "as an environmentally conscious electric utility for developing, implementing and completing a PCB removal and reduction program to eliminate electrical equipment contaminated with PCBs."

PCBs were widely used as dielectric and coolant fluids in electrical apparatus, carbonless copy paper and heating transfer fluids. In the late 1970's prolonged exposure to PCB was found not to be good for people or the environment and production was banned. (Source: en.wikipedia.org)

In the 1980's Elkhorn implemented a PCB program to test our electric equipment, mostly transformers, to identify any PCBs and to replace the oil and dispose of any contaminated oil.



Pictured left to right: Todd Knutson, operations manager, Jim Ridder retired, and John Paul, meter tech, with the PCB program certificates.

That testing program was completed in the spring of this year. Jim Ridder, recently retired operations manager, was instrumental in starting the program. John Paul, meter tech, along with other

staff, did the testing and compliance for the program.

Elkhorn will continue to monitor for PCBs in our equipment as we will continue to be good stewards of the environment.

ELECTRIC GENERATION HIGHEST SINCE 2008

America's electricity generation reached the highest level since before the economic recession, just-released US Energy Information Administration (EIA) data shows.

Why it matters: Electricity generation in the U.S. has been largely stagnant for a decade, fueled by a slow-growing economy after the 2008 financial crash and the resulting lackluster electricity demand. That's starting to change, recent data from the EIA demonstrates (see graph to the right).

"We learned to do less with less during the Great Recession, then we learned to do more with less in the low-energy recovery that followed. Now it looks like America is doing more with more." — Kevin Book, managing director, ClearView Energy Partners.

Yes, but: Chris Cassar, an electricity expert at

the EIA, notes that weather may be at play too. He said this summer was a lot warmer than last year's, which would have increased the need for electricity generation. "It is very hard to completely separate weather from the economic factors affecting the change in electricity generation." (Source: Axios.com Amy Harder, Naema Ahmed Oct 30, 2018)



Electrical Safety Checklist

Nearly half of all home fires occur during winter months. Take a few minutes to identify and correct any potential electrical hazards to ensure the safety of your home.

SWITCHES AND OUTLETS

- **Are any switches or outlets warm to the touch?** YES NO
Warm switches or outlets indicate an unsafe wiring condition.
- **Are any outlets or switches discolored?** YES NO
Discoloration indicates dangerous heat buildup at these connections.
- **Do plugs fit snugly into outlets?** YES NO
Loose-fitting plugs can cause overheating and fires.

CORDS

- **Are any cords cracked, frayed or damaged?** YES NO
Damaged cords can expose wires, causing shock or fire hazard.
- **Are any cords pinched by furniture or windows, or attached to anything with staples or nails?** YES NO
Pinching and/or stapling cords can damage the insulation, causing shock or fire hazard.
- **Do you use extension cords on a permanent basis?** YES NO
Extension cords should only be used temporarily.

ELECTRIC PANEL

- **Do you have recurring tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses?** YES NO
If yes, this could indicate you're exceeding a safe level of electrical current.
- **Do you have arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs)?** YES NO
AFCIs provide greater fire protection. Check your circuit breakers for the AFCI label.

Please note this is not a comprehensive safety checklist. Visit ESFI.org for more information. Source: ESFI



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Heading out of town for the holidays? Remember to unplug electronics that draw a phantom energy load. Some gadgets, like TVs, gaming consoles, chargers and DVD players use energy when plugged into an outlet, even when they're not in use.

Source: energy.gov



Winter Travel Tip

511.Nebraska.gov is one of the best winter driving sources we have here in the state.



You can log onto to the web, download the app or call them at 800-906-9069 or 511 (from in the state).

Time to Winterize Your Car

Here are three tips to help your winter trips go off without a hitch:

- 1) Check your battery. Without a good battery, you could have problems starting your vehicle regardless of the weather. The cold doesn't help, however. It slows down the chemical reaction that creates electricity in the battery. In a worst-case scenario, there won't be enough energy to turn over your engine. So you want to make sure your car's battery is up to the task.
- 2) Give your entire car a check up. Make sure everything is in working order. Start with your owner's manual for details, but you'll definitely want to focus on the areas you'll need most for winter driving. For instance, your brakes should be ready to handle slippery roads, and you should have the proper air pressure in your tires. Check wiperblades and that all fluids are good and topped off. You also might want to change the type of oil, going to one that will work better in cold weather.
- 3) What about snow tires? Consider getting snow tires; the rubber used in winter tires is engineered to stay softer in cold weather. That allows the tires to better grip the road. Winter tires also rely on tread designs that are created specifically to cut through snow and slush to reach the pavement below. These tips, along with watching the weather and having an emergency safety kit, will help get you where you need to go this winter. (Source: carfax.com)