



# THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

December 2023

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 32, Number 12

## MISSION PART III - COST-EFFECTIVE

Note from GM, Mark Johnson

This month will be the final part of highlighting our mission statement – ERPPD is dedicated to providing SAFE, RELIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE electricity for ALL customers. This month we will be focusing on how Elkhorn provides cost-effective electricity to our customers.

As a public power district, we are not driven by profit but rather driven by the responsibility of serving you, our customers. It is this responsibility that powers the decisions made by our Board of Directors and staff. Providing cost-effective electricity is a fundamental part of our commitment to the communities we serve.

We have all felt the impact of inflation in our everyday lives. In a period of increases in everything from food to fuel and health care to building

costs, I'm happy to report ERPPD has not had a rate increase in over a decade and has even managed overall rate decreases in 2022 and 2023. ERPPD has continued to remain in a stable financial position. This allows us to be adaptive when challenges or opportunities arise and highlights the leadership of our staff and directors, both past and present.

In the overall landscape of the energy industry there are several factors that impact the cost of the electricity we supply.

• *Wholesale Power Cost* – The largest expense to the overall cost of services is our purchased power. This makes up around 70% of our organization's expenses (see graph below). Much of our purchased power (around 97%) is supplied by Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) who

owns and operates a diverse mix of energy resources. NPPD has been able to offer reliable and very competitively priced wholesale electricity. They have done a great job navigating all the challenges that face the generation of electricity by focusing on the same set of values we do. In 2020, Elkhorn signed a purchase power agreement (PPA) with a third-party developer on 6.5 MW of solar energy. This PPA is locked at a low fixed price and has additional financial benefits by helping to lower our system load during peak times in the summer. Our customers also actively participate in helping manage wholesale power costs *continued on page 4*

2022 Cost to Serve by Expense Category



owns and operates a diverse mix of energy resources. NPPD has been able to offer reliable and very competitively priced wholesale electricity. They have done a great job navigating

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us to all of you!



Jennifer Adams  
Marc Ahlers  
Kevin Baker

Coltin Bauer \* Galen Beckman  
Grady Bellingtier \* Dan Belt  
Chris Bentley \* Carmen Christensen

Brad Doffin \* Garland Goracke \* Brian Hain  
Patrick Hintz \* Jeremy Holecek \* Dawson Kaap  
Kyle Kester \* Ryan Kittelson \* Todd Knarson  
Carter Lammers \* Jason Lyon \* Blake Papik \* John Paul  
Quinton Ries \* Teresa Schwarzing \* Eric Scranon  
Dominic Smedra \* Chris Sovereign \* Andy Starman  
Brian Sackstorf \* Jared Sackstorf \* Chris Tillotson  
Jim Wennekamp \* Travis Wibelhaus \* Alex Wiemers  
Nate Wright \* Stacie Young \* Kevin Zobner \* Xuan Zoubek

Mark Johnson

Derrell Dolesh Hunter Frisch  
Dave Hoefler Dennis Kachar  
Tim Means Mark Miller  
Ray Pagne Joe Thiele  
Rodney Zohner

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District

will be closed

Monday, December 25, and  
Tuesday, December 26  
in observance of Christmas

and

Monday, January 1, 2024  
in observance of New Year's Day

# NEW FACES AT ERPPD



Nathaniel "Nate" Wright started at ERPPD on November 3, as Warehouse Coordinator. Nate has nine years of warehouse experience with Nucor, with the last three years as Lead Warehouse person. Prior to that, he worked at Vulcraft as a rigger/welder. Nate is a Neligh native and currently lives south of Meadow Grove with his wife Crystal and their four kids. Amelia - 11; Stella - 9; Mason - 6; and Lainey - 2 years of age. Nate likes to be active and he loves camping, hunting and fishing. We are excited to welcome Nate to ERPPD.



Spencer Albers is a first year student in the Northeast Community College Utility Line program. He will be joining the Neligh crews on Fridays and will have his internship with us next summer in Neligh. Spencer is a Hartington, NE native and graduated from Cedar Catholic High School. He is a hard worker, and still had time for football all four years, Academic All State and Class C-2 State Runner-Up in 2022. He had time for church activities, too. Welcome Spencer!

## Don't Fall For Utility Scams

The colder weather and the holidays can bring about an increase in utility scams as well as scams in general. Below are tips on how to spot a scam and what to do if you are targeted.

### Spot a Scam:

- \*Be wary of immediate payment demands with threats of disconnection.
- \*Watch for payment methods: We will not ask for payment with a pre-paid card or gift card.
- \*Is the caller asking for sensitive financial information? We will not call you to ask for credit card information. We may call with an automated reminder and offer payment options.
- \*Do some research: ask for a call back number and where the person is calling from.
- \*Call the office at 800-675-2185, if you have questions or concerns about a call or your bill.
- \*Report any scam activity to the Nebraska Attorney General's office on-line: <https://protectthegood-life.nebraska.gov/report-scam> or by calling (402) 471-2682.



Do not provide any information or agree to immediate payment; instead hang up and check with your utility by using the phone number listed on your power bill.



**PROTECT THE GOOD LIFE**

# 2023 - FIVE YEARS OF GIVING!



THANK YOU!! to all our customers that round up each month!

We have had a very successful year of providing monetary help to area non-profits because of your generosity!!

2023 marks five years since Operation Round Up for ERPPD customers and the ERPPD Community Development Fund began its contributions to worthwhile community organizations and projects.

"By the Numbers" shows what an impact you have had on different organizations and communities since 2018 when Operation Round Up was first initiated.



Pictured clockwise top left: Cole Uzzell, Marg Brungart, Jane Uzzell and Smantha Hahn Big Bang Boom 2023; Wanda Cornett and Sharon Kinman for the Oakdale Volunteer Fire Dept.; Neligh 150th fireworks display put on by the Neligh Young Men's Club, Eldon Peters, Trustee, with Briggs and Barrett during the Big Give; crowd at the August 3, Music in the Park; and the Clearwater Rodeo. All were all recipients of funding from the Community Development Fund this year.

Community Development Fund Requests and Awards November 2023

Organization	Project	Location	Amount Awarded
Birthing of Norfolk	Aiding Moms in Need	Norfolk	\$1,000.00
Heritage Park Revitalization Committee	Phase 2 - Movie House Renovation; sidewalk; security cameras; permanent panels	Battle Creek	\$1,000.00
Lied Battle Creek Public Library	Replacing 5 Patron Computers and Fiber	Battle Creek	\$1,000.00
Clearwater Public Library	Floor for the Library	Clearwater	\$1,000.00
Elgin Community Center	Carpet Fund	Elgin	\$1,000.00
Elkhorn Valley Museum	Verges Park Natural Playground	Norfolk	\$1,000.00
Gracefully Giving Back	Holidays with Gracefully Giving Back	Norfolk	\$1,000.00
Orchard Historical Society	OHS Yearbook Digitization	Orchard	\$500.00
S.M.I.L.E.	Scholarships, Horses and Ponies	Madison	\$1,000.00
Summerland Public School	A Cookie Cutter Christmas	Ewing	\$500.00
St. John Early Learning Center	AED for Early Learning Center	Battle Creek	\$750.00
Teammates of Summerland	Teammates Mentoring	Ewing	\$750.00
Toys for Tots	Campaign 2023	Norfolk	\$1,000.00
			\$11,500.00

First Quarter	Application Deadline January 22, 2024	Board Meeting Date: February 5, 2024
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## BY THE NUMBERS:

**\$188,896.99** - Total funds collected since the beginning of the program to September 2023.

**\$180,854.45** - Total funds distributed from August 2018 to November 6, 2023.

**110** - total number of organizations helped since 2018

**231** - total number of project applications submitted for funding since 2018

**70** - The % of customers that round up

**50** - average number of cents per service that is rounded up each month

**Priceless** - the gratitude of the organizations and people helped through the Operation Round Up program. Thank you!

# 2023 LOAD CONTROL SEASON

The numbers are in and it was a good load control season this year. After a record year last year (see the January 2023 *Wire* for more information on the 2022 season), 2023 was much closer to “average” for ERPPD.

There were 11 days of control compared with 19 days for 2022 and a total of 100 hours control compared to 136 hours in 2022.

Our wholesale provider charges for power by the demand rate set by the highest four averaged days of peak demand in the summer.

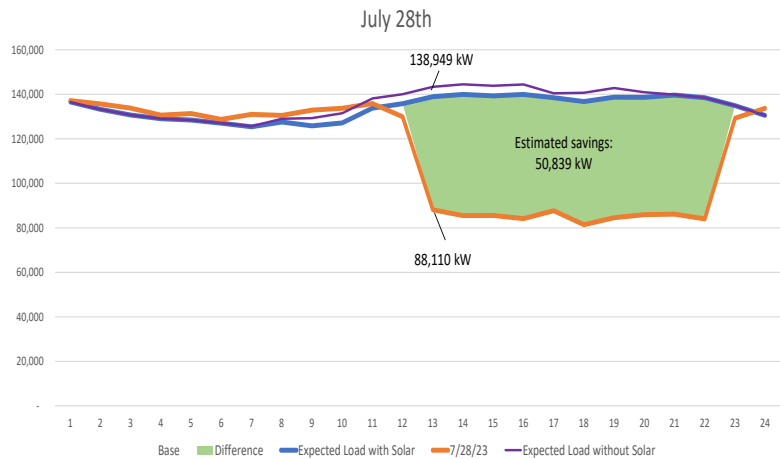
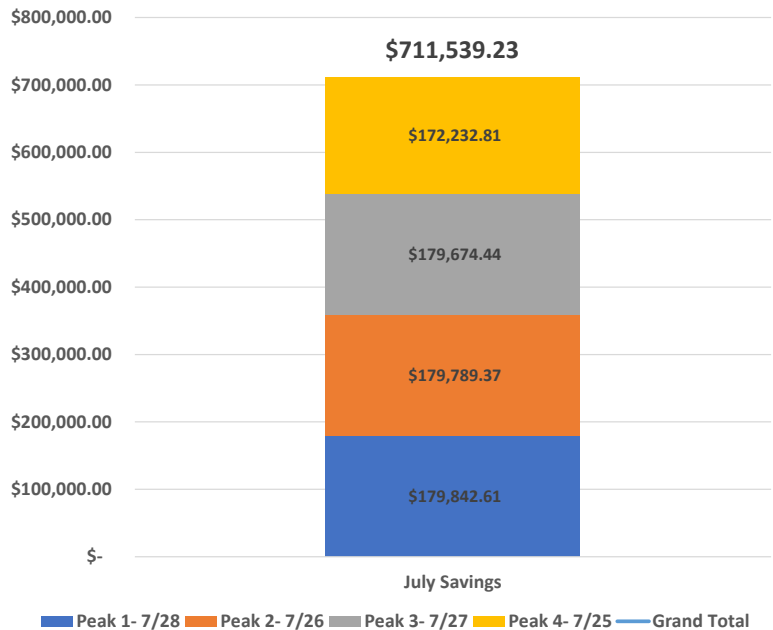
The graph to the right shows the savings received from our wholesale supplier during the four peak times in July.

You add those savings and the total over the four summer months of load control, it saved ERPPD and you, our customers, approximately \$2.4-2.9 million in production demand charges. Which as noted in the GM article, helps keeps rates low.

We have solar production that helps lower the peak, as well as, allows us not to have to control as much, as indicted by the blue line in the graph to the lower right.

The graph to the lower right is an example of a “typical” load control day and how much estimated load was shed during load control. As a summer peaking system, irrigation load control really helps to regulate our power costs and enables our wholesale supplier to manage its resources so that our rates remain competitive.

Estimated Total Savings with July Peaks



## Mission Part III continued from page 1

through our load control programs (see article above).

- *All other Operating Expenses* – The other 30% of our expenses come from the operation of our distribution system. This includes depreciation, payroll, construction and maintenance of our system, administration and general expenses, interest on long-term debt, and taxes. There are several things we do to manage each of these expenses while maintaining reliability and customer service. Some of these include:

- ◆ Having well-trained employees who work safely and efficiently.
- ◆ Paying down and restructuring debt while maintaining a high level of equity.
- ◆ Having well designed rate structures that fairly recover costs and reduce weather dependency.
- ◆ Investing in technologies that allow employees to work smarter, saving time and money.
- ◆ Having continued growth in our service territory.
- ◆ Developing long-term strategic objectives for the organization.

- ◆ Securing grants to pay for infrastructure.

- ◆ Historic investment in building and maintaining our system.

Our commitment to providing cost-effective electricity has not wavered over the almost 85 years we have been serving our customers. The electric industry continues to grow and change, yet the values displayed in our mission statement remain the same. We look forward to continuing to serve our customers through our mission and to a bright future.