



THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

February 2017

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 26, Number 2

BOARD OFFICERS ELECTED

At Elkhorn's regular board meeting on January 10, three board members took the oath of office and new officers were elected.

Pictured to the right - Greg Weidner, sub-district I, Jerry Dolesh, sub-district II and Joe Thiele, sub-district III - had been re-elected in the general election in November. Tuesday they were sworn into office.



A new slate of officers was also elected.

- President - Greg Weidner
- Vice President - Mark Miller
- Secretary - Tim Means
- Treasurer - Dennis Kuchar

Rod Zohner had served as President for the past 12 years. A resolution was passed, acknowledging

his contribution to the board as president.

Larry Lindahl, past secretary, served in that position since 2009. He was succeeded by Tim Means, who had served as the vice-president since 2005.

Elkhorn's board is comprised of nine members, from three sub-districts, that are elected by our customers for a term of 6 years.

Board members currently serving, according to sub-district, are as follows: Dennis Kuchar, sub-district I; Mark Miller, sub-district I; Greg Weidner, sub-district I; Jerry Dolesh, sub-district II; Tim Means, sub-district II; Rod Zohner, sub-district II; Dave Hoefler, sub-district III;

Larry Lindahl, sub-district III; and Joe Thiele, sub-district III.

All of the directors are dedicated to serving our customers. They attend monthly meeting, quarterly association meetings, and yearly national meetings.

They also partake in board training that increases their knowledge and experience in the electric utility industry. All of Elkhorn's directors are NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Directors (CCD). Becoming a CCD requires completing five required courses on the basics of being a Public Power or Cooperative board member.

Further board training is available and seven of Elkhorn's directors have completed the Board Leadership Certificate (BLC). This certificate is earned by having your CCD and then completing 10 more courses in



New board president, Greg Weidner, presents outgoing president Rod Zohner with a resolution of appreciation from the board.



Service Area Subdivisions

various speciality areas, to ensure that directors have a diverse set of knowledge and skills relevant to governing. The speciality areas include:
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ENERGY MIX



Working for Nebraska

Base load vs. Intermittent Electricity

BASE LOAD:

is an electric generation resource that operates continuously and is available 24 hours a day.

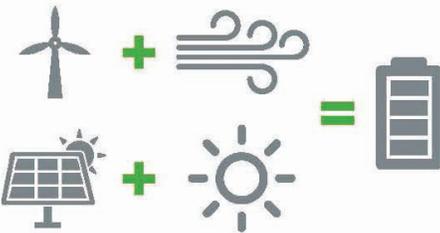
INTERMITTENT:

is any source of energy that is not continuously available due to some factor outside direct control.

INTERMITTENT RESOURCES

Such as solar and wind rely on certain weather conditions for power generation. This makes them unreliable.

PERFECT WEATHER



IMPERFECT WEATHER



BASE LOAD RESOURCES

Such as coal, natural gas and nuclear power can be actively controlled to follow load and meet consumer demand!



Balancing environmentally responsible, reliable and low cost electric service
One More Way Rural Electric Systems are Working for Nebraska

Articles in the September and October 2016 *Wire**, explained how energy generation works and what goes into base loads, intermittent loads and where renewables fit into the “generation mix”. The infographic above shows the contribution of renewables to the generation mix. At this point renewables can supplement the base load. Public Power prides itself on providing our customers with the most reliable electricity we can at a cost-effective price (NE is one of the 10 lowest in the nation and Elkhorn’s average residential rate is lower than that!) We will continue to advocate for realistic development and use of our renewable resources for electricity generation. *Go to erppd.com for archived issues of the *Wire* under the “About Us” tab.

continued from page 1 Communications, Public Power Model; Finances, Governance, Grassroots, Power Supply, Risk Management and Technology.

As you have recently seen in previous *Wire* articles, four of our directors, Larry Lindahl, Joe Thiele, Greg Weidner and Rod Zohner, have also earned NRECA’s newest credential, Director Gold. The Director Gold certificate recognizes directors that continued their board education after receiving the CCD and BLC certifications. To receive the Director Gold certification, a director must take an additional three courses from the BLC options. The Director Gold designation must be maintained by completing three additional educational credits in two years.

Elkhorn’s board, along with the staff, work hard to excel at our mission to provide safe, reliable cost-effective electricity to you. The dedication and service of these individuals continues to make Public Power a viable and competitive option for our customers.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



A crackling fire in the hearth warms the house, but don’t let it heat up your electric bill! Caulk around the fireplace hearth and keep the damper closed when a fire is not burning.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy

RETAIL CHOICE FOR NEBRASKA

Consider the “Rest of the Story”

Recently, you may have read on the internet, in the *Omaha World Herald* or *Lincoln Journal Star* about non-profit organizations, Wind is Water and Americans for Electricity Choice, looking for support in the Nebraska Legislature to provide citizens in Nebraska the “right” to choose their electrical supplier. Gary Aksamit, chief executive of Aksamit Resource Management, a Texas based energy development company with projects in Nebraska, is spearheading this effort.

A study commissioned by the groups and conducted by Goss and Associates Economics Solutions seems to indicate that competition would lower electric bills. The study estimates that Nebraskans could save \$250 million a year if the market was open to competition.

Besides the obvious question of “why is this energy developer from Texas pushing for “retail choice” in Nebraska and how will he benefit? - is “where is the evidence that Nebraska would benefit from competition in electricity?”

Depending on what study you look at, Nebraska ranks between 10th and 15th in the nation for the lowest electricity rates at approximately 10.60 cents/kW. The fluctuations depend on what data is included - an average of all rates or just commercial or residential for example.

Elkhorn’s residential per kilowatt rate in 2015 was 9.78 cents.

Rates aren’t the only benefit of Public Power. You get reliability -

Elkhorn’s reliability factor is 99.98 percent. You get local control - the board of directors is elected by the customers. Employees live in the communities we serve and the rates that are charged to customers stay here and are not given to investors or shareholders elsewhere. You can still stop by the office to pay your bill or ask questions. A very knowledgeable customer service representative answers the phone during business hours; not a machine. We take great pride in serving our customer/owners and provide prompt courteous service.

You are not guaranteed that with retail choice. You are not guaranteed a low rate either. Wind tax subsidies may end, natural gas prices will increase, other fuel alternatives may come on the market.

Nebraska has consistently been a low cost provider of electricity. In 2009, the large electric generators in the state joined the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) a regional power system to remain competitive. In 2014, the pool

launched a wholesale marketplace for electric sales. The basic idea is that all power generators bid their electricity into the pool, then buy out what they need for resale for customers. The SPP marketplace has saved members \$1 billion by making cheap electricity available throughout the region. That looks to continue. Elkhorn signed a wholesale agreement with NPPD for them to provide us electricity for the next 20 years and we think it is a sound strategy. The contract incentivizes NPPD to stay in the lowest quartile of energy producers and provides a mechanism for utilities to go to a lower cost generator if NPPD’s costs are out of line with our mission of providing cost-effective electricity.

Being a public power state, Nebraska is where you, the customer, can dictate the future of electricity.

Please carefully consider the “rest of the story” before being swayed by promises of “lower rates”.

Sources: *Lincoln Journal Star*, *Omaha World Herald*, *Grand Island Independent* and NPPD talking points.

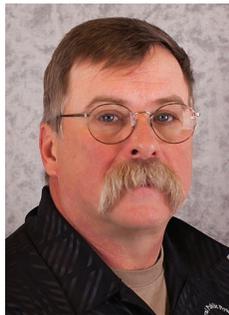
SAFETY



110 Years of Experience Working for the Customers of ERPPD



Dan Schrage
Journeyman Lineman,
Neligh
35 years



Garland Goracke
Warehouse clerk,
Battle Creek
15 years



Eric Scranton
Journeyman Lineman,
Battle Creek
15 years



Travis Wiebelhaus
Journeyman Lineman,
Battle Creek
15 years



Mark Miller
Director
15 years



John Paul
Lead Meter Tech
10 years



Jerrell Dolesh
Director
5 years

Employees and directors were recognized for their years of service for 2016 at the annual awards banquet in January. This service and dedication are what make ERPPD a great organization. Thank you for all you do!

Board members and staff were also acknowledged for training and other opportunities outside of work at Elkhorn. Patrick Hintz and Joyceln Vogel were recognized for two years of service on the employee safety committee. Elkhorn, as an organization, was recognized by NREA for a year of no lost time accidents (2015) and by the Action Committee for Rural Electrification for 100% board and manager enrollment.

IRRIGATION MEETINGS SCHEDULED

District irrigators are invited to attend one of two Irrigation Meetings:

- 1) **February 9th** - Battle Creek Farmers Co-op Headquarters - 83755 S. Hwy. 121, Battle Creek
10:30 a.m.- 11:30 a.m. or
- 2) **February 10th** - American Legion - 507 Main St., Clearwater
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Topics will include:

- *Electrical Safety;
- *Building services for new irrigation (questions on conversions);
- *Capacitors;
- *Communication methods;
- *Hours of Control (how to manage peaks and save **you** money); and
- *How can we serve you better? (customer feedback and questions)



Dan Gillespie, no-till specialist with the USDA, will be providing information on water conservation, best farming practices etc. at the meeting in Clearwater on February 10th.