

## 85 YEARS OF SERVICE CELEBRATED



**Kenn Capler**  
Retired  
40 years



**Patrick Hintz**  
Staking Eng. Tech.  
15 years



**Andy Starman**  
Staking/Meter Assist.  
10 years



**Tom Rudloff**  
General Manager  
10 years



**Kyle Kester**  
Journeyman Lineman,  
10 years

The employees pictured above were recognized at Elkhorn's annual awards banquet for their years of service. Continued on page 2.

## POWERING FORWARD PART II

*~From the General Manager*

Hopefully, you had a chance to read the "Powering Forward" article in last month's *WIRE*. If not, you might want to rush out and buy a copy! Oh wait, we provide them to all our awesome customers. Thank you for being our customer! Now back to the powering forward story. Last month, we shared a little about the what, when, and why of the power purchase agreement for 6.5 MW of solar energy, as well as a little background information on renewables. This month we will be covering the where and how of the solar project. I'm sure you have heard someone say "location-location-location" sometime in your life, implying how important location can be. That is

very true for our solar project...I guess you could say projects, as our 6.5 MW of solar will consist of three separate projects spread throughout the district. There will be a 1.5 MW project west of Elgin, a 2 MW project north of Battle Creek, and a 3 MW project a little south and a little west of Norfolk. The reason for three separate projects in different locations came down to engineering and economics. Our electrical system peaks in the summer and there is substantial usage across the entire system. At other times of the year, the loads can be relatively low in some areas. Therefore, placing these three projects in the locations mentioned above, effectively utilizes the energy produced on a consistent basis,

maximizing their electrical impact. Additional reasons for the three sites include: 1) electricity must be used at the time it is generated, unless you have some sort of storage; and, 2) as part of our power contract with our wholesale power supplier, any renewable energy produced needs to be consumed at the local level. Having the three locations spreads out the supply to meet the demand in different areas, at the right times, and provides cost savings for all of our customers.

As you can see, adding solar to our energy mix fits into the public power model. Elkhorn can provide solar collectively for customers at an economy of scale which keeps rates cost effective.

continued on page 4

# CELEBRATED, CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE



Also celebrated was Elkhorn's safety record. We have over 500 days without a lost time incident. We are dedicated to sending our employees home to their families and appreciate the support of our customers in safety. Dan Belt, general foreman (top left) and Travis Wiebelhaus, journeyman lineman (top right) with Board President Mark Miller were recognized for serving on the Safety Committee. Also pictured are, lower left, Ryan Kittelson, safety director/journeyman lineman, for completing OSHA 30 hour and accident investigation training, and lower right, Garland Goracke, warehouse clerk for train-the-trainer forklift safety training. Bottom right, Mark Miller thanks the employees for their hard work over the last year and congratulates them on their safety record. He reminds them to continue to make safety a priority and "cross the finish line" for their life goals.



**HELP KEEP ELECTRIC LINE WORKERS SAFE**

Be patient when the power goes out. Workers need to work efficiently and safely to restore power.

**ZONE IN ON SAFETY**

Respect roadside work crews.

Don't drive distracted. Reduce your speed. Change lanes.

Learn more at [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)

**DON'T** post signs on utility poles.

Foreign objects can tear utility workers' protective clothing, which is the first line of protection from an electric shock.

1 work zone crash occurs every 5.4 minutes

70 work zone crashes result in injuries each day

12 work zone crashes result in at least 1 fatality each week

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY INCENTIVES

It is a new year and time for Do It Yourself projects and home improvements.

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District offers many energy saving tips and incentives for everything from lighting to irrigation and from residential to commercial.

A new program being offered this year is a \$500 rebate for refurbishing all primary outlets on an irrigation system. The system must be four spans or longer and have a minimum of 5 years since it was new or refurbished to qualify.

Although we aren't thinking about warm weather right now, it will be right around the corner. Receive a \$30 rebate for a cooling system tune-up performed by a qualified HVAC technician.

In the market for an EV (electric vehicle)? You could get \$4,500 back with the purchase of an all electric vehicle and installation of a charging station.

See all of these incentives and more at [www.erppd.com/energy](http://www.erppd.com/energy) or call Brian Suckstorf during business hours at 402-675-2185 to see how these incentives might benefit you.

**ENERGYWISE**  
Use less. Spend less. Do more.

IT  
PAYS

\$

to make energy efficient choices

**Financial incentives are available**

to qualified customers that help cover costs related to a variety of energy-efficient upgrades.

- Residential**
  - High Efficiency Heat Pump
  - Cooling System Tune-up
  - Attic Insulation
  - Heat Pump Water Heater
- Commercial**
  - Prescriptive & Custom Lighting
  - Variable Frequency Drives
  - HVAC Systems
  - Industrial Process Incentives
- Agricultural**
  - Corner Pivot Variable Frequency Drive
  - Irrigation Pump Efficiency
  - Hog Heat Mats

Contact us for more information.

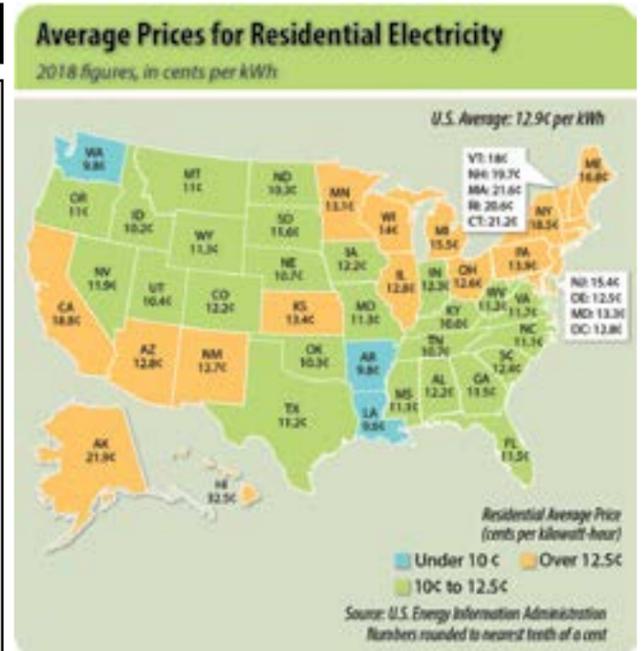
## VALUE

The U.S. Energy Information Administration released data from 2018 that shows that Nebraska continues to have lower than average residential electrical rates - see graph to the right.

That is even a decrease from 2017 rates which were 11 cents per kWh (see the January or September 2019 *Wire* for rate articles and last year's map at [erppd.com](http://erppd.com) under the About Us tab).

For Elkhorn, there has not been an overall rate increase in the last 7 years. The average cost for residential kWh is 9.6 cents. That ranks considerably below the national average of 12.9 cents and Elkhorn's residential rates are also below the Nebraska state average of 10.7 cents.

We are looking forward to another year of providing you with the value of safe, reliable, cost-effective electricity.

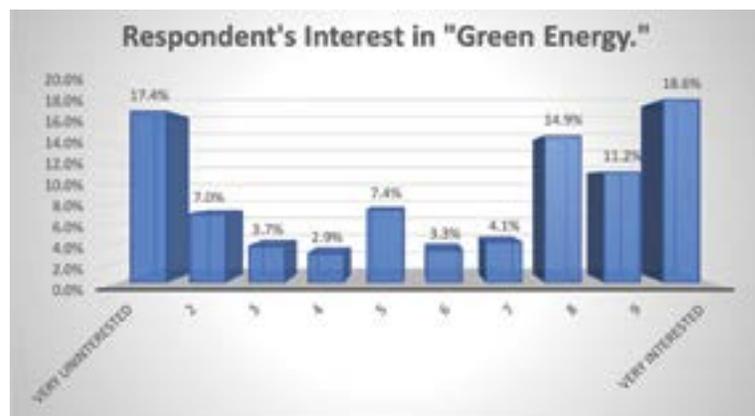
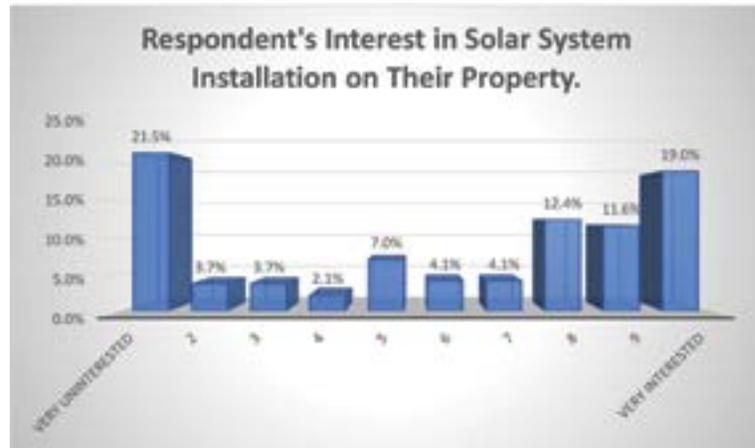


# POWERING, CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

tive for all. Also, as part of the public power model, our Board members listen to the desires of the customers they serve. One way they listen is through customer surveys. On our last customer survey, we covered a variety of topics. We shared some of the survey results in our August 2019 newsletter, which can be found on our [erppd.com](http://erppd.com) website under the "About Us" tab. Today, I would like to focus on some survey questions related to "Green energy and solar systems." As you can see from the three graphs, there really are diverse thoughts on renewables from our customers.

In all three of these survey questions, "very interested" and "very uninterested" received the highest marks. This provides a challenge for us in serving our customers in the solar/renewables arena, as views are quite varied. However, having diverse opinions is not all that uncommon and usually means we are thinking about the different options available, which can be very positive. So, where is the common ground for our customers on solar/renewables? As you are probably aware, because we talk about it often, our mission statement is the following: Elkhorn Rural Public Power District is dedicated to providing SAFE, RELIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE electricity for ALL customers. Although ALL the customers may not agree on their desire for renewable energy, they would agree that we should be looking for ways to bring safe, reliable, cost-effective electricity to them now and into the future. These solar installations provide that.

Our next step will be to focus on the construction aspect in order to have



these facilities up and running and added to our power supply mix. In the future, we will be deciding whether it is best to keep these solar farms as part of Elkhorn's overall energy mix. Another consideration might be to provide additional value to our customers by offering the electrical output of the solar facilities on an individual basis, rather than customers having to build and service their own renewable facilities. Time will tell, but rest assured that your Directors and Elkhorn staff will continue to focus on how best to serve you!