

THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

January 2016

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 25, Number 1

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

As we enter the new year, it is a time of reflection. What does the new year hold for us? What will we accomplish?

It is fresh and exciting and since we live in Nebraska, we are equipped to do great things!

Pollina Corporate Real Estate, Inc., a site-selection firm in Chicago, ranked Nebraska No. 2 in its latest study of the most pro-business states. Utah was named the No. 1 state for the fourth consecutive year, while neighboring Kansas (No. 5), Wyoming (No. 8) and Missouri (No. 9) also made Pollina's top ten. The study's author writes that in 2015, Nebraska provided one of "the best examples of how economic development should be

done" -- and "should be commended for creating an extremely balanced environment in which businesses can thrive." The study notes that Nebraska scored "very high" in its Stage I (Labor, Taxes & Other Factors) and Stage II (Incentives and Economic Agency Factors) comparisons.

According to a recent web article Nebraska ranks No. 1 for places to live. The criteria included low crime, solid education, great weather, things to do, and a stable economy. The article noted that the median income for the state is \$57,000, which is the fourth highest in the nation. The average commute time for Nebraskans is 18 minutes as compared to 27 minutes for the rest of the nation.
--Homesnacks.net.



Public Power is also a reason why Nebraska is a great place to live and have a business. We provide the power that keeps the lights on and the machinery working. We do that efficiently, reliably, with local control, community involvement, and with safety for our customers as a priority.

We look forward to another year of serving our customers and our great state.

GRASSROOTS - BE A PART

Nebraska is such a great state because its citizens are involved in the democratic process. They know and are engaged with their representatives at the local, state and national level.

For example, in the last part of 2015, there were two action alerts; one from the Nebraska Rural Electric Association NREA and one from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

Both action alerts had to do with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Power Plan (CPP) ruling.

The first alert was asking for citizens

to write the President and encourage him to delay the implementation of the CPP until the courts could decide the constitutionality of the ruling.

According to James Dukesherer, Assistant Director of Gov. Relations and Grassroots Coordinator at the NREA, Nebraska led all the other states in responding to the call to action.

The other call to action was in support of resolutions from both the Senate and the House in repealing the CPP rule. Nebraska had 400 citizens contact their representatives in a very short time frame expressing their support of the resolutions.

Thank you for your participation! These issues are very important to you as a customer as they will effect the reliability and cost effectiveness of your electricity.

Please continue to be informed on the issues, engaged with the candidates, and be part of the governmental process, whether it be on the local, state or federal level.

If you want to know how to get involved, please contact Jennifer Adams, ERPPD's grassroots coordinator or go to www.erppd.com and click on the *Grassroots, Join Our Team* link on the left.

IRRIGATION

Time to Request Irrigation Service

It is already that time of year to start planning for the summer irrigation season.

2015 was a very busy year for irrigation. From mid-June when a letter went out to customers, letting them know that we were taking irrigation services, we have had over

150 requests.

As of mid-December, 10 miles of line has been built and 58 irrigation wells have been completed.

By the time this newsletter is published, 66 wells will have been completed.

We are expecting the 2016 spring construction window to be as busy, especially if the weather is mild.

If you are planning on a new elec-

tric irrigation service, please contact Elkhorn RPPD at (402) 675-2185, as soon as possible so you can have the best opportunity to get it completed before the irrigation season.



CLEARING A PATH FOR RELIABILITY

Trees and power lines don't mix. Trees are involved in approximately 30 percent of all outages. In 2003 a tree limb in the power line cut power to 55 million people in eight northeastern states and Canada. There are now federal requirements and financial penalties for non-compliance to increase the reliability of the electric grid.

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District has a vegetation management program designed to keep your electricity on and keep you safe by clearing the power line right-of-way. The right-of-way or ROW is a strip of land under or around power lines that ERPPD has the responsibility to maintain.

Trees, in addition to creating power outages, can also provide a path for electricity to reach the ground, which can be a hazard and damage property.

Staff patrols over 2,800 miles of line each year and they are currently clearing trees out of the power line right-of-way. Elkhorn RPPD contracts the spraying of the right-of-way with herbicide to



keep vegetation from growing into the line.

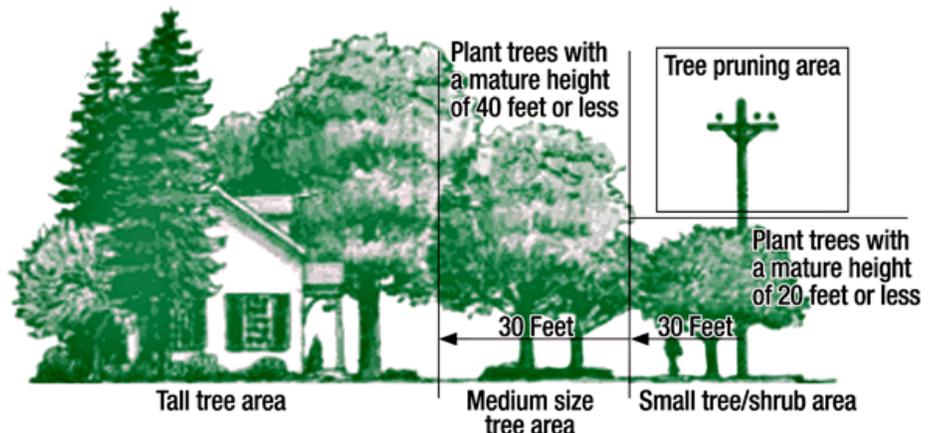
If you have trees or vegetation in the right-of-way of the power lines, please call ERPPD at (402) 675-2185, we will trim or remove it to ensure your safety.

In addition, as you plan for the spring planting season, it is impor-

tant to know what kinds of plants and trees are acceptable to plant around power lines. We want to protect your investment in landscaping and protect your safety and reliability of your electricity long term.

When you are planting around power lines think "grow low." There are many species of plants and trees that are compatible with power lines and it will save you money in the long run to invest a little time and effort up front.

For more information on what to look for when planting around power lines, please visit www.erppd.com/safety.



SAFETY NEWS

Electrical Safety for Children

Who doesn't have fond memories of climbing trees as a child? What we need to be mindful of is children climbing trees that are too close to power lines.

"Help keep your kids out of harm's way when they play outdoors," said Molly Hall, executive director of Safe Electricity. "Children often do not understand the dangers of electricity. Make them aware of overhead power lines and electrical equipment, and emphasize they should never climb or play near them."

Safe Electricity recommends that children be taught to follow these rules:

- Never climb trees near power lines. Even if the power lines are not touching the tree, they could touch when more weight is added to the branch.
- Fly kites and model airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines. If a kite gets stuck in a tree that's near power lines, don't climb up to get it. Contact ERPPD at (402) 675-2185 for assistance.
- Never climb a utility pole or tower.
- Don't play on or around pad-mounted electrical equipment.
- Never go into an electric substation for any reason. Electric substations contain high-voltage equipment, which can be deadly. Never rescue a pet or retrieve a ball or toy that goes inside. Call ERPPD at (402) 675-2185 to inform us, so that we can get it out for you.



When designing an outdoor play area for your children, do not install playground equipment or swimming pools underneath or near power lines. Protect all family members from serious shock and injuries by installing and using outdoor outlets with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI). Use portable GFCIs for outdoor outlets that don't have them. Be careful using electrical appliances outdoors, even if plugged into GFCI-equipped outlets.

---Safe Electricity

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

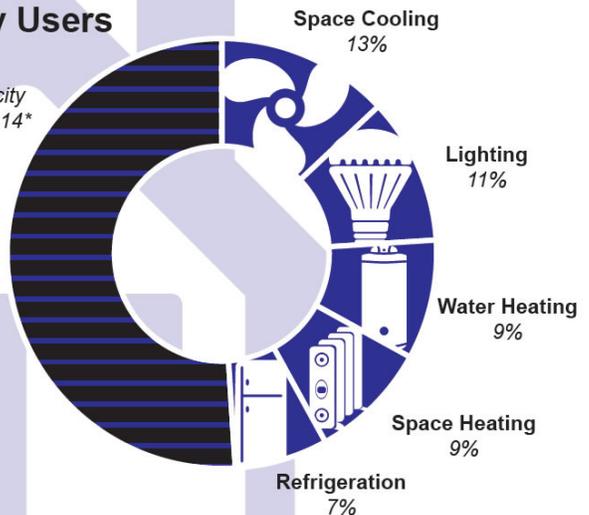
Save energy and money by lowering your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. This will also slow mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.

Source: energy.gov

Top Five Energy Users in U.S. Homes

Estimated residential electricity consumption by end use, 2014*

Other uses include TV, set-top boxes, home entertainment and gaming systems, monitors and networking equipment, clothes dryer, small electric devices, heating elements and motors.



*Source: EIA

HAPPENINGS AROUND THE DISTRICT



The transformer for the 345 kV Antelope substation outside of Neligh was delivered on November 24. The transformer is part of the NPPD line build from Hoskins to Neligh. The new line is on schedule to be operational by June 1, 2016.



Director Recognized



David Hoefler, Elkhorn RPPD Subdivision III Director, was recognized at the Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) annual meeting held in

Kearney, December 3.

David has earned his Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate (CCD) and Board Leadership Certificate (BLC).

The CCD and BLC are educational programs for directors through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). They provide education and training on topics and issues that public power and cooperative governing boards

will encounter.

The CCD provides training in director basics such as board operations, strategic planning and financial decision making.

The BLC builds on that foundation. Directors take 10 classes in 8 different core areas to increase their knowledge and expertise in governing.

Participating in these courses and getting the certificates helps board members understand their role; keep up to date on issues facing the district, and prepare for the challenges ahead.

Customers benefit from a well informed board, because they will make sound decisions effecting the safety, reliability, and cost effectiveness of your electricity.

Kilowalking

Sounds like something from The Walking Dead, but it is actually a new Working for Nebraska video on what the general public knows about public power and electricity.

A NREA representative stopped random people on the streets of Lincoln during a Nebraska football game and asked them questions like: "What is public power?" What kinds of fuels are used to generate electricity?" What is electricity? And, "How much does it cost for a days worth of electricity?"

You will probably be surprised and definitely entertained by some of the answers.

Go to www.erppd.com. to see how much you know about public power and electricity in Nebraska!!