



THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

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Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

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YOUR CHOICE

How Much Electricity?

With the new year, comes New Year's resolutions. This year why not make your resolution to cut down on your energy consumption and your electric bill?

There are not many bills that you can determine what the amount is going to be. If you think your electricity bill is too high, you can reduce it by taking some pretty simple steps.

Three steps are listed in the graphic to the right.

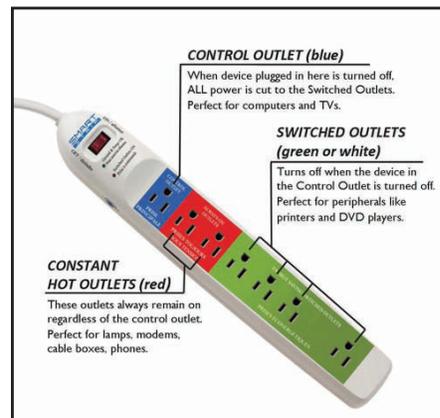
Here are some tips for winter weather. As the temperature drops lower with the onset of winter, schedule a service appointment for your heating system to ensure it is operating at an optimal level.

Other low-cost or no-cost steps for energy savings include taping or affixing heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against cold air. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration. Use a programmable thermostat to set the temperature as low as is comfortable when you are



home (ideally around 68 degrees). When you are asleep or away, turn the temperature down 10-15 degrees for eight hours. According to the Department of Energy, this small adjustment can help you save approximately 10 percent a year on heating costs.

Knowing what sort of energy load you have, also could be an easy way to save money. Studies show that 5 to 10 percent of the average home's energy use is from "vampire loads". The only way to stop this is to unplug the power adapter when it is not in use or employ smart



Smart strips like the one above save you money on your electric bill.

3 STEPS to ENERGY EFFICIENCY



1 Identify ways to save energy when using appliances and electronics in your home. Buy ENERGY STAR-rated appliances when possible and turn off electronics, such as computers and gaming consoles when not in use.



2 DIY projects can help you save energy. Caulk around drafty windows, use LED bulbs and check insulation levels in your home.



3 Do an energy audit of your home at erppd.com and call Elkhorn Rural PPD about energy saving incentives and programs.

power strips.

These look like the typical power strip but with a twist—only one socket gets power all the time. When the device or appliance connected to it turns on and starts using power, the remaining sockets receive power too. This is perfect for entertainment systems, computer set ups and a variety of other situations.

Buying new energy efficient appliances, can also be a way to save on your electric bill. Technological advances have steadily

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Con't from front page increased energy efficiency and reduced purchase prices. On its face, this seems like a good thing. Unfortunately, when replacing a product at the end of its life, the tendency is to go bigger, or continue to use the old tech, also known as "technology reincarnation".



For example, flat screen television prices have plummeted as technology has evolved—and so has the amount of electricity they use. Consumers wander into the big box store and are dazzled by walls of giant, brilliant televisions. What they used

to pay for the paltry 32" model now might net them a 50" giant. And who doesn't want to see their favorite show or sports event in near life size? But if you spring for the bigger TV, you won't benefit from the increased energy efficiency of the newer technology. The bigger model uses as much juice as the older, smaller TV, which likely ends up in another room (reincarnated in another setting) still using power.

Or refrigerators. These are the showpieces of the evolution of smart appliances. Many new models include touchscreens and cameras;

they communicate over the internet and probably even keep food cold and make ice. Yet what often happens is the old refrigerator ends up in the basement or garage, reincarnated as a dedicated beverage unit or overflow.

Elkhorn RPPD is also here to provide value. Call and set up an energy audit or take advantage of the Energy Efficiency Incentives suggested below.

You can also call Mark Gronau at (800) 675-2185 or e-mail mgronau@erppd.com or visit our website erppd.com and click on the EnergyWise logo.

(Source: NRECA StraightTalk)

Energy Efficiency Incentives

Elkhorn RPPD offers many incentives for residential, commercial and ag settings.

For residential the incentive include the following:

- *A/C or Heat pump tune ups
- *Attic insulation
- *New heat pump and heat pump water heater installation
- *And more.

Elkhorn will match the incentives if the heat pump replaces an existing air conditioning unit. An AHRI or Energy Star Certificate is required for all 15+SEER equipment that meets the requirement for the items above. If a certificate is not attached to the verification form the maximum incentive will be \$100.

All the specifics for the above incentives and the incentives for commercial and ag, can be found at erppd.com by clicking on the EnergyWise logo.





5 DISTRACTED DRIVING STATS YOU SHOULD KNOW



3,179



Number of people killed each year in vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers

(Federal Communications Commission, 2014)



1 in 4

The probability that a vehicle crash involved a cellphone

(National Safety Council, 2014)

60%



Percentage of people who use cellphones while driving

(Harris Poll, 2011)

21-24

 Age group most likely to send a text or email while driving

(Distraction.gov, 2012)



4X



How much using a cellphone increases your risk of crashing

(National Safety Council, 2014)



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

IRRIGATION NEWS

It has been a very busy year for irrigation. In July of 2015, the irrigation services waiting list was eliminated. This was due in part because the 345 kV transmission line from Hoskins to Neligh was to be completed and operational in June of 2016, therefore we would have the capacity for a larger summer irrigation load. At that time, we got about 250 requests for estimates on extensions for irrigation services. We built about 150 services over the remainder of 2015 and the beginning of 2016. The 2016 summer irrigation season went well with approximately 75,000,000 kWhs being sold. This was up from approximately 57,500,000 kWh that was sold in 2015. Many factors impact irrigation usage and weather is significant, when looking at usage over time.



Elkhorn RPPD will be hosting informational meetings for our irrigation customers early next year. These meetings will be information sharing regarding load control, communication options and control schedules, etc. It will also be a great time for you to provide feedback on the quality of service provided to you and what opportunities Elkhorn has to serve you better.

Now is a great time to plan for the 2017 irrigation season. If you are interested in learning more about converting to electric power for your irrigation service, we would be happy to talk to you about your needs. We also have an irrigation calculator on our web site at erppd.com that shows comparison costs of diesel, natural gas, propane, gasoline and electricity powering irrigation wells. Please contact Elkhorn RPPD at (402) 675-2185 as soon as possible to get the best opportunity to get the work completed before the irrigation season.

\$500 Reward Offered for Information.

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District is offering a \$500 reward for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of those who stole copper wiring and scrap from the Neligh Outpost.

Thieves cut through the fence and the building in the early morning hours of December 7, and stole copper wire and scrap.

Theft of copper has been trending downward as market prices have been much lower than in the past. There were a total of 35,961 claims for the theft of copper, bronze, brass, or aluminum submitted to the Insurance Services Office Claim Search between January 1, 2013 and De-

ember 31, 2015. Of the total claims, the vast majority (98%) pertained to the theft of copper. In the same time period Nebraska had 162 claims*.

Thieves tend to target construction sites, but will also strip copper from farm equipment such as irrigation pipes and other wiring.

Copper theft is a serious problem for utilities and is especially concerning when thieves try to steal it from sub-stations or other live electrical sources. It jeopardizes lives, as well as the costs incurred from the theft and damage to equipment and property.

Please contact local authorities or call 911, if you see any suspicious activity in or around sub-stations or other District property. (*National Insurance Crime Bureau Report)



Have you seen something unusual at an electrical facility, such as...

- an open substation gate?
- hanging wires?
- open equipment?

Contact local authorities immediately.

**HELP
STOP
COPPER
THEFT**

Safe
Electricity.org

Copper theft is not a victimless crime. Their actions have forced airport runways to temporarily shut down, required hospitals to run on generator power, and caused deaths from fires and explosions.