



THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

January 2025

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

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IRRIGATION SEASON RECAP



From the GM – Mark Johnson
Nebraska’s agricultural roots run deep, and irrigation is a cornerstone of our state’s

farming success. Here at Elkhorn, providing reliable and cost-effective electricity to our irrigators ties directly to our mission.

Every irrigation season provides some challenges including unpredictable weather driven sales, building service to new installations, periods of peak demand on our system, and managing our load control program. Yet, through it all, our team works closely with producers to keep the lights on and the water

flowing when it matters most. It is a collaborative effort that underscores the importance of communication, preparation, and flexibility.

Irrigation sales, of course, are largely dependent on weather. We started with a wet spring that led to lower than average sales in May and June. Load picked up and we had strong steady sales in July and August and ended the season with above average sales in September and October.

Overall, our irrigation services used just under 116 million kWh in 2024. You can see in the chart

below this number was slightly higher than our 2023 sales and below the high we set in 2022.

Each year, our team is busy tackling all the work required to bring new systems online. For the 2024 season, our crews built 20 miles of new three phase lines. We also hired a powerline contractor to build an additional 10 miles. These new facilities delivered power to 78 new services. In the last ten years we’ve energized 506 new irrigation services across our territory. It truly takes a team effort to add that many new services. Beyond the work of our

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Irrigation Stats

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Customers	2,289	2,352	2,429	2,505	2,583
Total kWh used	93,995,355.00	98,047,341.00	139,234,950.00	114,415,508.00	115,743,978.00

JOHN PAUL RETIRES



John Paul, meter tech, retired on Thursday, January 2, 2025. John started with Elkhorn on January 30, 2006, as a journeyman lineman with crews at the Neligh outpost. He remembers cleaning up after the 2005-2006 ice storm and being in the 2006-2007 ice storm. After a year, he joined Jim Ridder in the metering department and has been in that role ever since.

He has seen the technology for meters evolve from manual gears that had to be set by hand to electronic components and programming, and from manual reads to instantaneous spreadsheet reports. In addition, there is less field work and more computer work. He has enjoyed it all.

John said, “I enjoyed the challenge of using the technology to help the crews by finding trouble spots to fix before they have to go out on an outage.” Working with the metering system, allows **Continued on page 2**

IRRIGATION SEASON CONTINUED. . .

crews, our team needs to design each line build, complete all the required paperwork (contracts, easements, billing paperwork, etc.), order the materials, install load control switches, and much more. Completing all these steps requires communication with our customers throughout the entire process.

Our irrigation load control program is one of the key tools we use to help provide reliable and cost-effective electricity throughout the summer season. During each summer, ERPPD goes through periods of peak demand on our system. Heavy irrigation load on top of the usage from all our other residential, commercial,

and industrial services drives our system load to levels substantially higher than other times of the year.

When the demand for electricity spikes during hot summer days, it places strain on the entire system and increases the cost of power. Through our load control program, we can strategically decrease our system load during peak demand periods. Producers enrolled in the program benefit not only from lower electric rates but also from knowing they are contributing to a more reliable power system.

As we move into a new year, we remain committed to strengthening our programs and operations

to better serve our customers.

We're exploring new technologies to make the load control program even more efficient and user-friendly for producers. Agriculture is the backbone of our community, and at ERPPD, we're proud to partner with Nebraska's farmers to ensure a strong future for everyone we serve.



RETIREMENT CONTINUED . . .

him to pin point some of the voltage problems before they become an outage.

John started his electric utility career as lineman with the City of Wayne in 1984. He moved to the city of Neligh in 1990 and served there until 2005, with a short stint with NPPD before coming to Elkhorn.

After he retires, he plans to do some house projects while the weather is cold, and then he will hit the golf course once the weather is nice.

We wish John the best for the next part of his journey.



ONE RED APPLICATIONS OPEN



The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) announces the opening of the 2024-2025 ONE RED Irrigation Engine Rebate Program.

Applications will be accepted for rebates to assist farmers with the replacement of agricultural irrigation pump diesel engines with all-electric equipment.

Applications must be submitted to NDEE by Jan. 16, 2025, to be considered.

NDEE will reimburse 60% of the cost of the electrical equipment, installation, and required electric utility costs up to a maximum rebate of \$23,000.



No reimbursements will be made for any expenses incurred before the recipient has signed a project agreement with the Department.

For more information and an application please visit <https://dee.nebraska.gov/resources->

[services/one-red-opportunity-nebraska-reducing-emissions-decarbonization/one-red-irrigation-engine-program](https://www.nebraska.gov/resources-services/one-red-opportunity-nebraska-reducing-emissions-decarbonization/one-red-irrigation-engine-program).

For questions please email ndee.airgrants@nebraska.gov or ndee.onered@nebraska.gov

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Taking steps to help your home heating system run more efficiently can reduce energy use and lower your winter bills. Check to see if any air vents around your home are blocked by furniture, curtains or other items. Obstructed vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and can increase pressure in the ductwork, causing cracks and leaks to form. If necessary, consider purchasing a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture or other obstructions.

Source: energys.gov



ENERGYWISESM

Use less. Spend less. Do more.

Residential Heat Pump Water Heater

\$400 for air source with EF>1.9
\$650 for ground source with EF> 28

High Efficiency Heat Pump

\$400-\$3,000
Minimum SEER 16, EER 12.5 & HSPF 8.5. Includes Air-to-Air and Water/Ground source

Residential Attic Insulation

\$0.30/sq. ft. maximum \$600

Cooling System Tune Up

\$30

We offer a wide range of EnergyWiseSM incentives and rebates designed to help you SAVE ENERGY and MONEY, and contribute to a more sustainable future for all Nebraskans. Listed below some of the incentives. Visit www.erppd.com for more information and incentives.

Beneficial Electrification

- Induction cook top or range
20% incentive for a purchased new cook top or range with a 30" minimum width.
- Lawn and garden
20% incentive for new battery-powered or corded electric lawn mower.
Battery powered chain saws, tillers, and snowblowers are also eligible.
- Smart Thermostat
Up to \$100 for a qualified thermostat

Ag Systems

- Irrigation Moisture Sensors
\$300 for installing moisture sensor with an irrigation management program
- Automated Grain Aeration
\$0.011 per bushel of bin capacity
- Irrigation System Updates
\$500 for the replacement of all existing outlet components such as sprinkler heads, sprayers, rotators, plates, pads and nozzles and regulators on qualified systems

NO OVERALL RATE INCREASE!

We have done it again. Since 2013, there has been no overall rate increase for Elkhorn Rural Public Power District customers!

In addition to holding our rates steady, in 2022 and 2023 there was a combined six percent rate decrease! As in the past, individual bills will vary based on rate class and usage patterns. It takes all of us working to-

gether to achieve this record.

Thank you for trusting us to deliver safe, reliable, cost effective electricity to you.

The board understands the importance of stability and affordability to our customers and provides the leadership and direction needed.

Our employees work tirelessly to manage and optimize resources, working efficiently to build

and maintain the system and our organization.

We will continue to maximize our efforts to deliver the quality and value you have come to expect.



EMPLOYEES AND DIRECTORS RECOGNIZED



Pictured above is Mark Johnson, general manager, with Garland Goracke, retired warehouse coordinator who was recognized for his 22 years of service at the 88th Annual Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) Annual Meeting in Kearney, Nebraska, on

December 5.

Pictured below is Jerrell Dolesh, subdivision II director, with Rick Nelson, general manager of NREA. Jerrell was recognized for his service on an NREA committee and meeting the requirements



of a Director Gold Certificate.

Recognized and not pictured were Joe Thiele, subdivision III director, for Director Gold Certification, Mark Johnson, for completing NRECA MIP Select training, Mark Miller, retired subdivision I director, for 22 years of service; Teresa Schwarting, retired CSR, for 32 years of service and John Paul, meter tech, for his 19 years of service.

At the NREA annual meeting, 1,256 years of service were recognized across the 35 member districts and cooperatives for directors and employees.



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Todd Knutson

Connect with us Online:



WWW.ERPPD.COM



SCAN ME

Customer Service: 402-675-2185
For Outages: 1-800-675-2185

Board of Directors

Subdivision I

- Dennis Kuchar, Treasurer
- Hunter Frisch, Director
- James Geyer, Director

Subdivision II

- Tim Means, Secretary
- Jerrell Dolesh, Director
- Rod Zohner, Director

Subdivision III

- Joe Thiele, President
- David Hoefler, Director
- Raymond Payne, Vice President