

# THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

July 2014

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 23, Number 7



*ERPPD personnel present a high-voltage safety demonstration at the Ewing Fire Hall.*

## High-Voltage Safety Demonstration in Ewing

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District personnel traveled to Ewing on May 21 to present a high-voltage safety demonstration for the area fire and rescue personnel at the new Ewing Fire and Rescue facility. Other citizens of Ewing also turned out for the demonstration.

ERPPD personnel involved were Ken Capler, Dan Schrage, Ryan Kittelson, and Marc Ahlers. Using props such as hot dogs, pickles, tennis shoes, car tires, and kite string, the group demonstrated the awesome power of electricity and talked about the extreme danger if it is not kept in its place. Electricity is always seeking the ground, and it does not care how it gets there. Using the hot dog, the demonstration illustrated what would happen to a human being if he/she were to become part of that path to the ground.

The high-voltage safety demonstration is available at no charge for any group within the ERPPD service territory. We highly encourage you to give us a call to schedule a presentation at your site. We also have a tabletop model for indoor meeting areas.

For more safety information, or to inquire about scheduling a safety demonstration, call Wayne McCormick at the ERPPD headquarters at (800) 675-2185.

**Elkhorn Rural Public Power District**  
**July 2014**



*ERPPD Mutual Aid volunteers helping Seward County PPD: (l-r) Dominic Smedra, Andy Starman, Chris Tiltonson, Jeff Kerkman, Eric Scranton, and Kyle Kester.*

## Elkhorn RPPD Linemen Travel to Seward to Assist in Storm Restoration

Six linemen from Elkhorn Rural Public Power District volunteered to travel to Seward to assist Seward County Public Power District in their storm restoration.

The Seward County area was hit by severe storms and tornadoes on Sunday, May 11. The storms caused extensive damage to Seward County PPD's electric lines and other infrastructure. The crews from ERPPD left on Sunday, May 17, and returned on Wednesday, May 21. Most of their work was done in the community of Beaver Crossing.

We really appreciate our employees for volunteering to assist others. I know from experience how much it means for the home system to have employees from other districts come in to help after a storm. It is quite overwhelming to look at rebuilding infrastructure, and no individual system can keep enough employees on staff or enough trucks in their fleet or equipment on hand to recover from a catastrophe in a timely fashion.

ERPPD is a member of the Nebraska Rural Electric Association and has signed a Mutual Aid Agreement to either provide assistance to other systems, or to request assistance from others when storms hit. This is another example of the silent, and many times unknown to the general public, benefits of public power. We just "Git-R-Done" without a lot of fanfare.

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## EPA's overreach inflexible for states

*The following editorial first appeared in the Omaha World Herald and was written by Jim Smith of Papillion. Mr. Smith is a state senator for District 14 and a former manager with the Omaha Public Power District. The editorial is reprinted here with Sen. Smith's permission.*

A recent study conducted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Bureau of Business Research found that electricity generated from coal, combined with the transportation of coal, generates nearly \$4.9 billion in economic output throughout our state.

The two industries also provide 22,800 jobs at power plants and rail yards throughout Nebraska and account for \$1.4 billion in labor income and \$142 million in taxes that support our school districts and communities.

Simply put, coal-based power generation is absolutely critical to the continued strength of Nebraska's economy. This is what I have witnessed throughout my career in public power in Nebraska and today as a state senator serving on the Natural Resources Committee.

We would never think of the Cornhusker State as a "coal state", but in 2013, Nebraska generated 72 percent of its electricity using coal, and Nebraskans, on average, paid utility bills that were 15 percent lower than the national average.

So, the findings of this study--that coal-based generation provides affordable electricity to Nebraska families and businesses, supports thousands of jobs and creates hundreds of millions in economic activity--cannot be overstated, especially when viewed through the lens of the aggressive regulatory agenda we see being pursued by the

federal government.

Last year, as part of President Barack Obama's Climate Action Plan, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) began working on proposals to drastically reduce carbon dioxide emissions from new and existing power plants throughout the country. The agency's proposed standard for new plants, introduced last September, could not be met by the cleanest, most efficient coal plant operating anywhere in the world today.

In June, the EPA will release another round of regulations aimed at existing coal power plants, which could trigger an energy crisis like we haven't seen since the 1970s, forcing a significant portion of the nation's remaining coal plants to shut down without a true alternative.

Natural gas is important and can play a role, but we are far off from developing the pipeline infrastructure and storage assets to ensure the fuel will always be where it needs to be to meet demand.

Nuclear power can play an important role, but it's largely cost prohibitive to bring new plants online. Solar panels and wind farms don't come close to generating the amount of energy our businesses, manufacturers and households require.

The EPA, without the consent of Congress, is systematically setting national energy policy through regulations that will alter our energy and economic trajectory for decades to come. To put it in perspective, Nebraska gets 1 percent of our electricity from natural gas and 5 percent from renewables like solar and wind power.

So, it's not hard to imagine how upcoming EPA regulations could jeopardize Nebraska's electricity supply and, in turn, our economic future.

However, under the Clean Air Act of 1997, power is given explicitly to the states to determine how best to regulate

greenhouse gases from existing power plants. This is a feature of the federal law that makes sense. As each state has a different mix of energy sources, each state should have the flexibility needed to improve the environment without inflicting significant damage on its economy.

To assert the primacy afforded to Nebraska under the Clean Air Act, and to compel the EPA to stay in its lane when proposing new regulations, the Legislature passed Legislative Resolution 482. The resolution declares that Nebraska should be able to adopt less stringent standards or longer compliance schedules for fossil-fueled power plants within our own jurisdiction, consistent with the Clean Air Act.

With so much at stake, we must take aggressive and proactive measures against the EPA to ensure that Nebraska can control its own energy and eco-

## How Can You Help??

We can connect you with a great Grassroots program for you to add your voice to the thousands of rural electric customers just like you. Numbers do count, especially since the environmental political action groups supporting the rule will be able to generate millions of comments from groups based on the east and west coasts, most of which will not be impacted by the rule.

I will be updating our website, [www.erppd.com](http://www.erppd.com), with the rural electric Grassroots comment connection. Please check the website often for any further updates.

# OPERATIONS NEWS

## ERPPD Western Project Complete

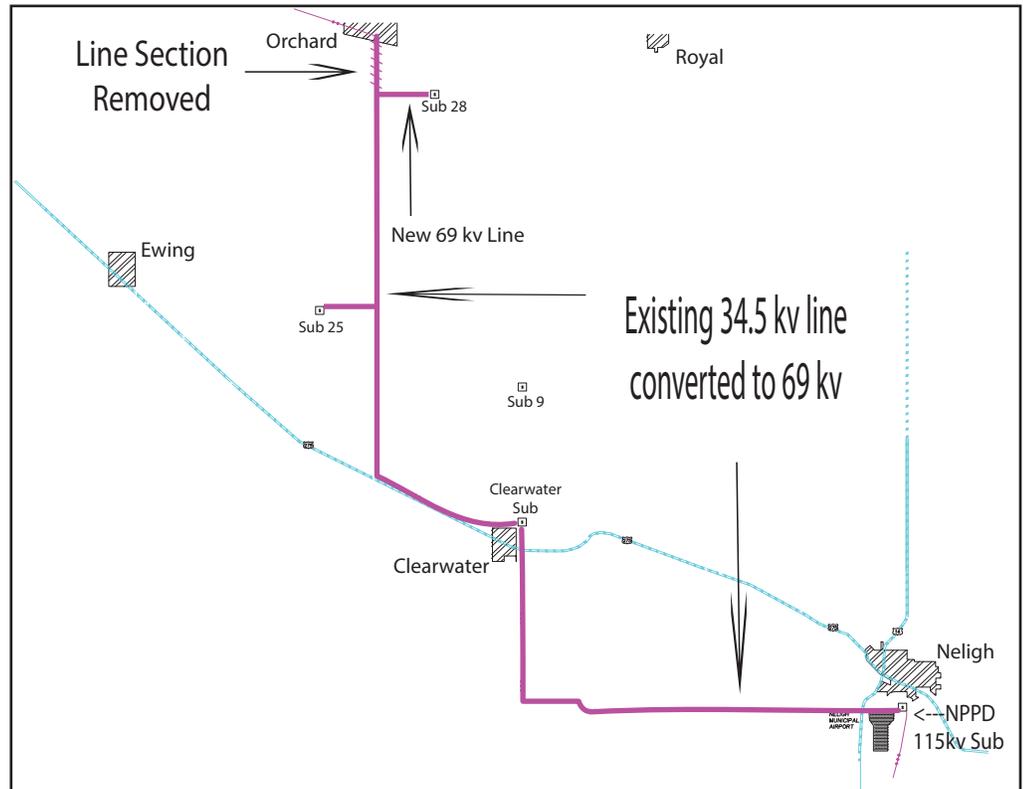
Elkhorn Rural Public Power District took advantage of the 2014 moratorium on new irrigation services by strengthening the backbone of the electrical transmission and distribution system west and north of Neligh. This project was comprised of several smaller projects which could have appeared independent, but were all related and dependent on each other to make them work.

The projects were supported by the fact that Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD), our power supplier, increased the capacity of their Neligh substation from 54 mw to 83 mw. NPPD's Neligh substation will be supplied by the new Hoskins to Neligh 345,000-volt (345 kv) transmission line, greatly increasing the capacity in the Neligh area. This project has been on NPPD's schedule for many years, but was moved up on the priority list after the summer of 2012.

The following projects were completed this spring to allow ERPPD to take advantage of that additional capacity for the continued growth in the western part of the district:

- Conversion of our main sub-transmission line west of Neligh from 34,500-volts (34.5 kv) to 69,000-volts (69 kv)  
This project involved the construction of three new miles of 69 kv line and the conversion of four miles of existing 34.5 kv line to 69 kv, along with the retirement of 1-1/2 miles of 34.5 kv line south of Orchard which will no longer be utilized.
- Conversion of the Clearwater substation from 34.5 kv to 69 kv  
Since the main sub-transmission was converted to 69 kv, the transformer and other equipment in the Clearwater substation was converted to 69 kv to take advantage of the increased capacity offered by the increased sub-transmission voltage. This project required an alternate feed for the city of Clearwater to be used during the conversion. This alternate feed will serve as a backup contingency for the city if the sub-transmission line needs to be taken out of service for maintenance.
- Construction of a new rural 69 kv substation southeast of Orchard  
ERPPD has seen continued growth in the area south of Highway 20 near Orchard, which prompted the district's engineers to recommend a new substation in that area to accommodate the growth. This substation was built to utilize the power supplied by the new 69 kv line, thereby increasing the electrical capacity in the area.

This project exemplifies our mission statement: *"Elkhorn Rural Public Power District is dedicated to providing SAFE, RELIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE electricity for ALL customers."*



*Map of the ERPPD west project, pointing out the transmission line conversion from Neligh to Orchard, the Clearwater city substation conversion, and the new transmission line built to serve the new Trease substation southeast of Orchard.*

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY

## LEDs: The Dimming Dilemma

“Keeping You EnergyWise”

Light-emitting diode (LED) lamps are more energy efficient, durable and longer lasting than conventional lighting technologies. An LED upgrade can help facilities save significantly on energy and maintenance costs. In addition to their many advantages, LEDs are also dimmable, potentially increasing energy savings and control flexibility. The dimming capabilities of LED products vary widely, however, and they may not always be compatible with existing control systems.



Why dim an LED lamp? Dimming saves energy on a one-to-one basis, which means that dimming a lamp by 50% correlates to a 50% savings in electricity. Dimming LEDs makes them run cooler, extending their useful life. Dimming also helps create ambiance.

Dimming LEDs can be challenging. Not all LEDs work with existing dimming switches. Effective LED dimming options are available on the market, but it is imperative to ask the right questions when considering an LED upgrade. Consider installing new dimming controls designed to work with LED lights.

For more information on dimming LEDs, or to inquire about the \$5 per LED bulb rebate, call Mark Gronau, our Energy Services Representative, at (800) 675-2185.

### Energy Efficiency

### Month Tip of the

Replacing your conventional power strips with advanced power strips (APS) can help reduce the electricity wasted when electronic devices are idle. These power strips are a convenient and low-cost way to save.

Source: Department of Energy

## Rebates in Place to Reward Customers for Energy Efficiency

Call Mark Gronau, ERPPD Energy Services Representative, at (800) 675-2185 for information on available rebates for lighting, heating, cooling, attic insulation, irrigation pumping, and more.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

with Board position and subdivision

Rod Zohner  
President..... II  
Tim Means  
Vice President ..II  
Larry Lindahl  
Secretary .....III  
Dennis Kuchar  
Treasurer ..... I  
Jerrold Dolesh  
Director .....II  
Mark Miller  
Director ..... I  
Joe Thiele  
Director .....III  
Greg Weidner  
Director ..... I  
David Hofer  
Director .....III

### MANAGER

Tom Rudloff

### For Emergency Service or Outage Reporting

**1-800-675-2185**

#### After Hours Note:

The entire 800-number *must* be dialed, even for a local call.

### Communicate Electronically With ERPPD

Internet: [www.erppd.com](http://www.erppd.com)

E-mail: [erppd@erppd.com](mailto:erppd@erppd.com)



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

**It's the law!  
Call 811 Before  
You Dig!**

Or 1-800-331-5666  
Diggers Hotline  
of Nebraska

### Outage Checklist

In the case of an outage:

- First check to see if the fuses below the meter are good.
- If you have breakers, make sure they are on and have not kicked out.
- If you have a double-throw switch for standby power, make sure it is in the correct position.
- Check with neighbors to see if they have power. By doing this before calling us, we can determine if it is a line or an individual outage. This can help cut down on outage duration.
- Please, be prepared to give the name on the account, plus the consumer number and/or the legal location. This will assist us in sending our crews to the correct place.

### Questions about your bill?

Please call the ERPPD office at 402-675-2185 or toll-free, 1-800-675-2185, during office hours, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. M-F, in regards to billing questions. When calling the office concerning billing problems, it will save time if you would have your meter serial number or customer account number. Remember to call the Battle Creek office if you have billing questions. All account payments should be mailed to:

**Elkhorn Rural  
Public Power  
District  
P.O. Box 310  
Battle Creek, NE  
68715**

*Elkhorn Rural Public Power District*

*July 2014*