



THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

July 2020

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 29, Number 7

ERPPD - ELECTRIC VALUE


Has the coronavirus pandemic changed your perspective on value? For example, do you value work a little more? Time with family? Your health?

One value that remains fairly constant is the value you get from electricity. As you can see from the graphic to the right, the average cost to power your home is less than the average cost of one fast food burger meal.


The graphic below shows that nationally, electricity, compared to other common expenses over the last 5 years, has increased only 0.4%! That is pretty much an unchanged value.

ERPPD provides a stable value, too. Our customers have not had a general rate increase in the last seven years. Residential rates are unchanged from 2018 at 9.6 cents per kWh, below the state average of 10.7 cents and well below the national average of 12.9 cents. (See the February 2020 Wire).

THE VALUE OF ELECTRICITY



\$5.30
average cost of a Big Mac® value meal



\$3.87
average daily cost of power

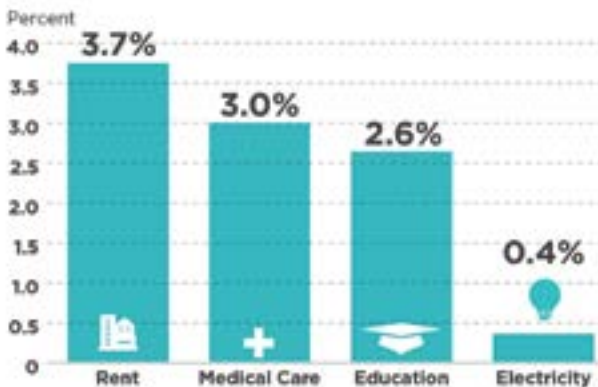
Electricity is expressed on a daily basis using EIA 2018 Average U.S. Monthly Residential Bill of \$17. Big Mac® is a registered trademark of McDonald's Corporation. McDonald's Corporation does not endorse or sponsor this material.

Sources: Economist.com and EIA, 2018 data.

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value!

Average Annual Price Increase 2014-2019



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index



ERPPD offices will be closed on Friday, July 3, in observance of Independence Day.

ERPPD FUND ANNOUNCES CHANGE

In response to a customer suggestion, the Elkhorn Rural Public Power District Community Development Fund (Fund) board of trustees voted to amend their bylaws to extend the service territory by 1.5 miles.

This extension will now allow non-profit organizations in the towns of Foster, Orchard, Pierce, Raeville and Royal to apply for Operation Round Up monies through the Fund.

“It was a suggestion from a customer that lead to the decision,” states Sarah Ahlers, chair of the Fund board of trustees, “they voiced a concern about not seeing funding that they were contributing to go to the community they called home, and then they offered a solution - extend the boundary.”

The boundary described in the bylaws was for the ERPPD service territory. (See service territory map.)

The ERPPD board of directors considered the matter as well and offered guidance to the Fund trustees. The ERPPD board felt that it was a fair request that could be equitably and consistently applied. They then recommended that the trustees amend the bylaws.

“We are looking forward to the applications from organizations in those communities,” said Ahlers.

The Fund was created after the ERPPD board of directors voted to adopt the Operation Round Up program in January 2018. Customers have their bills rounded up to the nearest dollar and the “change” goes to a fund that non-profit organizations can apply to. Each organization can apply for up to \$1,000 per year.

As of May 2020, the Fund has contributed to 48 different organizations and a total of \$51,760.

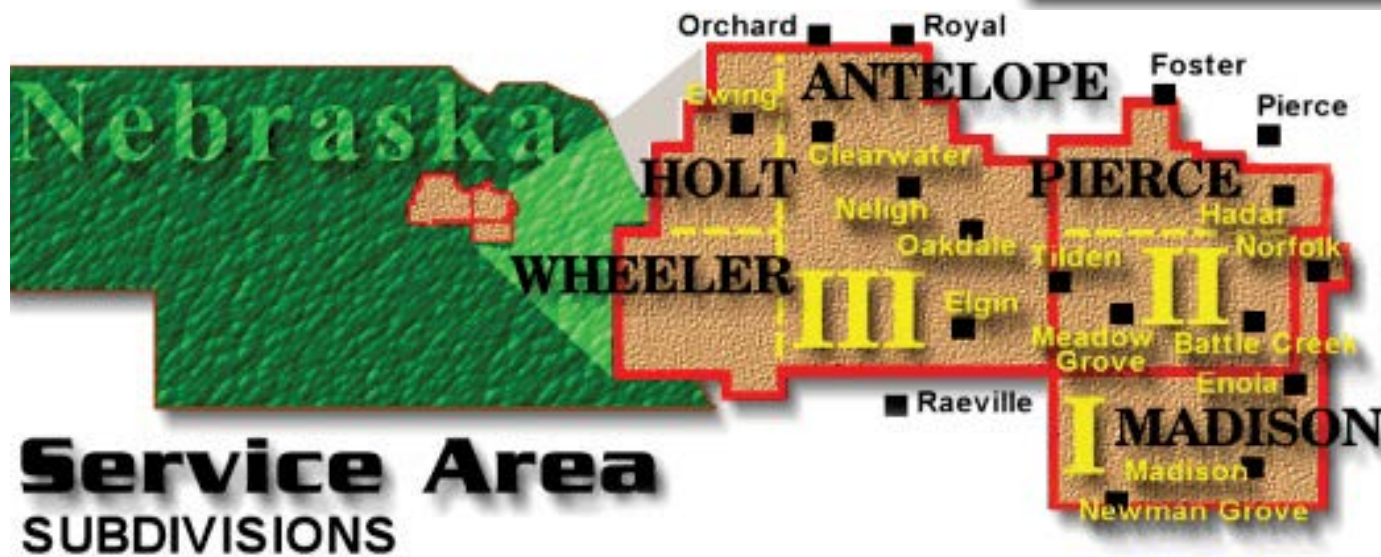
Non-Profit organizations in the following communities can now apply for funding:

**FOSTER
ORCHARD
PIERCE
RAEVILLE
ROYAL**

For more information, funding application and a complete list of guidelines visit www.erppd.com/community-fund.

**APPLICATION FOR
FUNDING DEADLINE
JULY 20, 2020**

WWW.ERPPD.COM



**July is National Ice Cream Month
July 16, is National Ice Cream Day**

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE

Generally speaking, maintenance is the state of maintaining something, be it a vehicle, equipment or electronics. The goal of preventive maintenance is to maximize the useful life of any particular asset.

Case in point: If you neglect to change the oil in your vehicle every 5,000 miles, it probably won't last as long. Breaking down on the side of the highway isn't just inconvenient and costly it can be dangerous. It is important to perform maintenance routinely.

At ERPPD, we have maintenance programs for our equipment, buildings and electrical distribution system. For the electrical distribution system that includes yearly pole testing, vegetation management, line patrol, blink counts etc.

Recently, we had a tower firm inspect and map our communications tower. The pictures to the right show maintenance for the anchors to the tower.

The tower is important to our communications and this impacts how we provide electricity to you. Maintaining it, and other aspects of our system, come down to these four basic rules of thumb:

Increase Safety - When equipment isn't working at peak performance or wire is frayed or poles are rotten, it creates unsafe working conditions for employees and customers. With a preventative maintenance program, equipment and assets are monitored to ensure safety.

Efficiency - A preventative maintenance program includes routine maintenance such as inspections and part replacements. When an asset is not maintained, it begins to naturally degrade over time. With preventative maintenance, a little time now can save time and money down the road, with less outage time and damage to assets. For example, with pole testing, replacing one unsound pole now may prevent having to replace more poles during a severe storm due to the cascading effect.

Reliability - Taking advantage of a preventative maintenance program, helps ensure that you have electricity when you need it. ERPPD has a 99.92% reliability rate, in part due to our maintenance and “hardening” the system to help it withstand the Nebraska weather.

Decrease Equipment Downtime - With a preventative maintenance program, ERPPD can plan maintenance tasks at the best possible times so any “downtime” can be managed. “Waiting” for an outage to occur is inconvenient and could be potentially dangerous to our customers.

Our routine maintenance of the electrical distribution system and equipment, helps to save you money in the long run and keeps us on our mission to provide safe, reliable, cost-effective electricity.



Pictured above: Needmore Tower Service exposed the anchors at ERPPD's communication tower to inspect the integrity of the shafts. The anchor shafts are 20' long imbedded in concrete blocks that are 8-feet deep and are 2' x 2' x 11' long. (Picture credit: Brian Suckstorf)

IRRIGATION SAFETY



Irrigation systems are important to farms. However, they carry many risks farmers should be aware of.

*Do not allow irrigation water nozzles to spray on power lines. A water stream hitting a power line could energize the entire system, creating a shock hazard to anyone nearby or in contact with the equipment.

*Always know the location of nearby electrical lines when working with irrigation equipment. Any contact between the irrigation equipment and nearby electrical lines could be fatal or cause serious injury.

*Stay away from the piping during any lightning activity. Install lightning arresters to protect your equipment. If fuses continually blow or circuit breakers repeatedly trip, have a professional electrician check the wiring. This could indicate a potential electrical hazard.

*Always shut off and lock the master electrical control switch before servicing the machine.

*If an irrigation pipe comes in contact with a power line, never try to remove it yourself. Stay away and call ERPPD at (800) 675-2185 for help.

We are here to help you have a safe and effective irrigation season.

Summer Energy-Saving Tips

Costs associated with cooling your home can make up a large portion of your summer electric bills. Stay cool and save money with these energy efficiency tips!



NO-COST TIPS

Close blinds and drapes during the day to keep heat out.



Set your thermostat to 78 degrees when you are home. Set it to a higher temperature when you are away.



Turn off lights and ceiling fans when you leave a room.



LOW-COST TIPS

Plant trees and shrubs to shade the exterior of your home.



Replace disposable air filters (or clean permanent filters) once a month to maximize efficiency.



Use solar lighting to brighten up your outdoor space.