



THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

June 2017

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

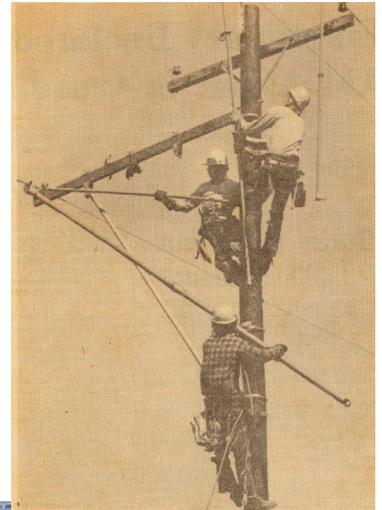
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MARK GRONAU RETIRES AFTER 43 YEARS

Mark Gronau started with Elkhorn Rural Public Power District as an apprentice lineman in 1974, although they didn't use that terminology then.

He was going to go into auto mechanics after high school, but there was a waiting list for that program. He was approached by Al Ehlers, original line school instructor, who said that they were starting the utility lineman program at Northeast Community College and would he be interested in that. Mark had worked for a couple of summers for Battle Creek Light and Power with Roger Borchers and Chip Guenther and thought it could be an interesting field. He was pictured (right) in the Lincoln Journal Star in 1974 in an article about the program.

Mark worked as a lineman, co-running the largest basket truck for a time and then the service truck and then in 1983 he moved into metering. He stayed with that until 1998 when he went into Customer Services - helping customers with



Students at the Utility Lineman's School learn to work with "hot sticks" in handling energized power lines. At work are (upper right) Mark Gronau, Battle Creek; (upper left) Rex French, Waverly, and Glenn Bowen, Lincoln.



usage problems and energy efficiency. He was also in charge of large power accounts. In 2000 he took the Energy Services Representative position and has been working at that ever since. His duties now include: operating the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI); Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA) system and load management; billing for large power; and overseeing the EnergyWise - energy efficiency - program.

Mark remembers his greatest accomplishment in his tenure at ERPPD was spearheading the effort in getting a safety trailer here at Elkhorn. He was at the Madison County Ag show when he first saw the high voltage demonstration trailer. At the time there was a group that had the trailer and you could rent it for demonstrations. It was decided that Elkhorn should have its own trailer and Mark was put in charge. The team suggested some modifications - having a meter loop and a trailer close to the ground for easier access and that **con't on page 2**

Retirement continued from front page is the trailer we have today. The High Voltage Demonstration Trailer is used to educate customers on the dangers of contact with high voltage lines and what to do in situations where contact might happen, like a car accident involving a utility pole coming down.

Safety is very important to Mark and he is very proud that he was instrumental in helping educate our customers on electrical safety.

Over the years that he has been with ERPPD, Mark has noticed that everything is becoming more automated and integrated. He expects those trends to continue.

He remembers being at a conference on meters in 1980 and asking a Westinghouse rep if they would be able to meter single phase the way that they were metering three phase and the rep basically laughed at him. We are able to monitor our system in many different ways now.

Mark is looking forward to more time with his two sons, Michael and Ross, taking an auto body class, fixing up some cars he has accumulated over the years, and perhaps doing some volunteering in the community.

Mark's time with ERPPD was celebrated with a retirement gathering on May 31.



Mark is pictured with his vintage meter collection

SAFETY PREPAREDNESS

June is National Safety Month and it is a reminder that being safe is about being prepared.



Here at Elkhorn we prepare every day to be safe. We conduct tailgates about the jobs we are going to conduct, so

that if there is any questions about the job or the safety of the situation it can be addressed. We also make sure that we are aware of our surroundings and know what the weather forecast is and contingency plans for severe weather. We also wear and check our Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to make sure it is working properly.

Communication is a key element in safety. Each job site has the address/911 location written on the tailgate sheet. In an emergency, an employee can refer to that sheet to let first responders know where they are.

You also can have a communication plan for your family in case of an emergency. With family members in different places, it is a good idea to have a way to get a hold of loved ones during and after an emergency.

Ready.gov suggests answering the following questions to help prepare for an emergency:

- *How will my family/household get emergency alerts and warnings?
- *How will my family/household get to safe locations for relevant emergencies?

continued

2017 INTERN

Taylor Peters from Baldwin City, Kansas, and first year student in the NECC lineman program, joined ERPPD May 15th.



Taylor will be working out of the Neligh office.

Taylor's work experience includes: a roof builder at Great Dane; a driver for CVA in Ainsworth and a farmhand at Sipp Cattle Company in Rushville for two summers.

He played sports and was in the Future Business Leaders of America in high school.

His uncle inspired him to be a lineman. He is looking forward to learning all he can during his internship.

Safety Preparedness Con't

*How will my family/household get in touch if cell phone, internet, or land line doesn't work?

*How will I let loved ones know I am safe?

*How will my family/household get to a meeting place after the emergency?

You can visit www.erppd.com for more safety preparedness information under the safety tab.

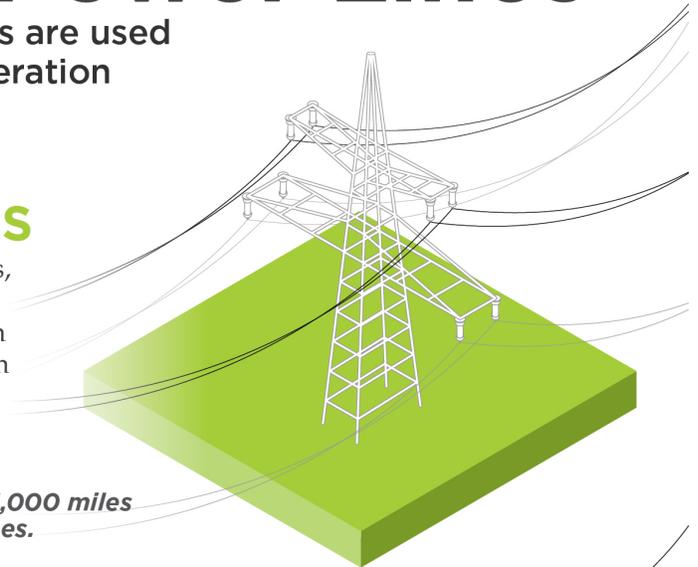
A Field Guide to Overhead Power Lines

High-voltage transmission lines are used to deliver electricity from generation plants to consumers.

HIGH-VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINES

Large amounts of power, measured by watts, are delivered by transmission lines. These lines are energized with very high voltage in order to move the power long distances with minimal losses. Insulators on the towers prevent the power from flowing to the towers or the ground.

Electric cooperatives own and maintain 65,000 miles (6 percent) of the nation's transmission lines.



SUBSTATIONS AND SUB-TRANSMISSION LINES

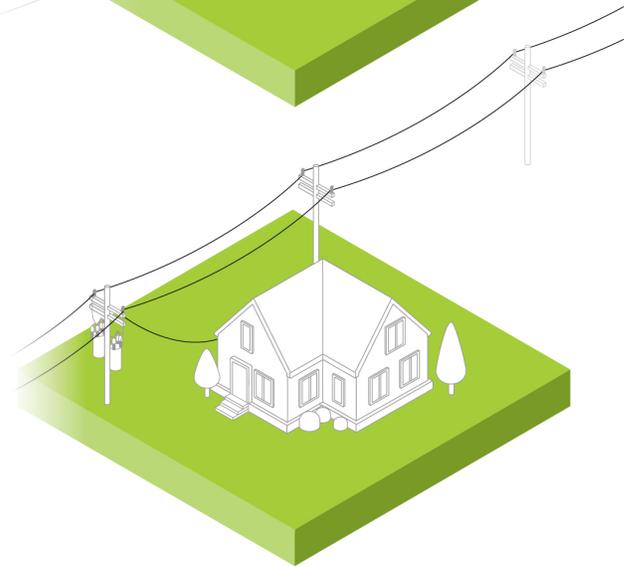
Transformers at transmission substations reduce the voltage from transmission levels to sub-transmission levels, typically ranging from 115,000 volts to 34,500 volts. Sub-transmission lines deliver power over shorter distances to distribution substations and large industrial sites. At distribution substations and large industrial sites, transformers reduce the voltage to a lower level, typically 7,200 volts or 14,400 volts.



DISTRIBUTION LINES

The lines typically seen along rural roads and next to homes are generally single phase distribution line, energized at 7,200 or 14,400 volts. Transformers on the utility poles lower the voltage to between 120 and 480 volts to serve residential homes and small businesses.

Electric cooperatives own and maintain 2.6 million miles (42 percent) of the nation's distribution lines.



Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

PUBLIC POWER ADVANTAGE

On April 30, Mother Nature provided a bit of a surprise with a late snow storm. Niobrara Valley Electric Membership Cooperative in the O'Neill area and Twin Valleys Public Power District in the Cambridge area were just a couple of areas that were hit hard. Thousands of customers were out of power and many miles of line needed to be repaired.

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District was able to respond to the call for mutual aid. Public Power Districts and coops in the state are able to coordinate resources to quickly respond to natural disasters such as the one at the beginning of May to restore power to our customers.

Mutual aid includes sharing information, equipment and manpower.

Elkhorn sent crews and equipment to the two locations in need. The districts that call for the mutual aid pay for the time and equipment.

If the disaster is severe and widespread the Nebraska Emergency Management Administration and Federal Emergency Management Administration will be involved.

Thank you to those that volunteered to go and help get the lights back on in those districts.

Jeff Kerkman, Kyle Kester, Andy Starman, Chris Tillotson, Dominic Smedra and Travis Wiebelhaus went to Niobrara Valley EMC.

Jim Wennekamp, Jeremy Holecek, Jared Suckstorf, Eric Scranton and Kyle Kester went to the Cambridge, Nebraska area to help out Twin Valleys PPD.

We shared pictures and progress of the storm and restoration from Twin Valley on our FaceBook page.



All photos courtesy of Twin Valley's FB page. Left and below conditions from the snow storm; bottom left crews working to restore power and bottom right road conditions four days after the storm in the Lebanon, NE area .



Elkhorn Rural Public Power District
offices *will be closed*
Tuesday, July 4,
in observance of
Independence Day.