



THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

June 2026

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 35, Number 6

RISING ELECTRIC RATES NATIONWIDE



From the GM - Mark Johnson

You've likely seen the headlines about rising electricity rates across the country. The reasons

behind these increases are complex and the result of a combination of long-term pressures affecting utilities nationwide (see infographic below). At ERPPD, we are actively managing these challenges while continuing to deliver safe, reliable, and cost-effective electricity to our customers.

One of the key areas of rate pressures is supply chain and material costs. We saw the start of the disruptions with the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Global supply chains were severely impacted, driving up costs across many sectors. For electric utilities, the impact was particularly significant on essential raw materials like steel, aluminum, and copper. These materials are fundamental to manufacturing transformers, conductors, poles, and other critical grid components. The numbers tell a striking story. A 37.5 kVA transformer that costs \$890 in 2020 now costs \$1,880 following our most recent purchase. That is over a 110% increase. Strong national and interna-

tional demand for this equipment continues to keep prices elevated.

Another key area of increased costs is demand. Electrical demand is growing steadily. Population growth, economic development, and the electrification of homes, farms, and businesses are all contributing to higher usage.

At the same time, new large loads are coming online. Stricter regulatory standards are also requiring utilities to maintain higher levels of generation capacity. These factors are driving major investments in new power generation resources and grid infrastructure, while utilities also face the ongoing need to main-

tain and replace aging generation assets.

Despite these nationwide pressures, ERPPD has so far successfully limited the impact on our customers. This year's 1% overall rate increase is the first we have implemented in 13 years. In fact, we decreased rates in both 2022 and 2023 by a total of 6%. Several factors have helped us keep rate impacts low, most notably the competitive wholesale electricity prices we have received from our partners at Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD). Sound, long-term financial management, hardworking and dedicated staff, and strategic **Continued on page 4**

Why is the Demand for Electricity Rising?

Demand for electricity in the U.S. is booming. Recent data shows that power consumption nationwide is set to increase by at least 38 gigawatts (enough to power more than 30 million homes) between now and 2028. Meeting this new demand will require a combination of new power plants, grid upgrades and energy storage technology advancements. Here are the key factors that are driving increased demand.

- 1 Increased Electrification:** Electric vehicle adoption, electrification of home heating and industrial electrification are increasing overall U.S. energy consumption.
- 2 Data Centers:** Driven by explosions in AI, cryptocurrency and cloud computing, total U.S. data center load is projected to increase by 65% by 2050.
- 3 Economic Growth:** Residential power consumption is expected to increase by 14% to 22% through 2050 due to increases in population and steady economic growth.
- 4 Manufacturing Growth/Onshoring:** New, expanding and "onshored/reshored" manufacturing capacity driven by federal incentives is expected to increase industrial demand by 13,000 GWh per year.

CHANGE THAT CONTRIBUTES



At the heart of every Operation Round Up donation is change that contributes. Each time you round up your

bill, you are doing more than adding a few cents to a transaction; you are helping make meaningful improvements in the communities you call home. Those small acts of generosity come together to fund grants that support local organizations, meet important needs, and create lasting impact.

One recent grant is making a real difference for Northern Hills Child Care. The application submitted read: "Northern Hills Child Care is seeking funding to install a new water softener system to address a critical health and safety concern identified during our recent health inspection. Our facility currently experiences significant hard water buildup, especially within our commercial dishwasher. According to the health inspector,

the mineral deposits from the hard water interfere with proper sanitation, create buildup on dishes and equipment, and pose an unsanitary condition that must be corrected to remain compliant with state health regulations".

The thousand dollar grant from the ERPPD Community Development Fund enabled Northern Hills Child Care to purchase and install a new water softener, helping them be better able to take care of the children in their charge.

This grant is a powerful reminder that generosity does not have to be large to be life changing. When you round up, you become part of something bigger, a shared commitment to caring for neighbors and investing in the well-being of local families. Your compassion is helping organizations like Northern Hills Child Care address critical needs and continue serving children with the safe, supportive environment they deserve. Every



Kara Kratochvil, director at Northern Hills Child Care, accepts the check from the ERPPD Community Development Fund for a new water softener.

rounded-up cent tells a story of community, kindness, and the incredible good we can do together.

Below are the organizations and projects funded in May.

If you know of a local organization with a project, program, or special funding need, applications are available at www.erppd.com/CommunityFund.

Applications for third-quarter funding will be accepted through **July 20, 2026.**

Organization	Project	Location	Amount Awarded
Battle Creek Post Prom	Post Prom	Battle Creek	\$50.00
BC St. Patrick Catholic Youth Organization	CYO Weekly Gathering & Basement Remodel	Battle Creek	\$250.00
Battle Creek Summer City Fest	Annual Summer City Fest	Battle Creek	\$500.00
Briggs and Barrett Project	Monitoring Devices	Norfolk	\$250.00
Clearwater Chamber of Commerce	Clearwater Rodeo Concert Inflatables	Clearwater	\$500.00
Elgin Community Foundation	Scholarship Fund	Elgin	\$1,000.00
Grace Lutheran Childcare	Outdoor Playground Equipment	Neligh	\$500.00
Neligh Community Center	New Refrigerator	Neligh	\$250.00
Neligh Rescue	Update Training Equipment	Neligh	\$1,000.00
Norfolk Area Concert Association	New Computer	Norfolk	\$500.00
Norfolk Noon Rotary Club	Music in the Park 2026	Norfolk	\$500.00
Northeast Neb. High School Rodeo	High School Rodeo	Madison	\$500.00
St. John Ministries	Vacation Bible School	Battle Creek	\$250.00
St. Paul's Lutheran	Camp Messiah	Norfolk	\$250.00
Sportsman's Series	Purchase Loaner/Demo Equipment	Battle Creek	\$500.00
Trinity Lutheran Church	Little Food Pantry	Newman Grove	\$500.00
			\$7,300.00

Third Quarter Funding Applications Deadline: Monday, July 20

ELECTRIC LAWN TOOLS HAVE IMPROVED

The landscape of lawn and garden care is evolving, and electric equipment is at the forefront of this change. While electric lawn tools are not new, advancements in technology and more options mean prices have become more competitive, making electric equipment an accessible option for many consumers.

Electric lawn mowers have come a long way since the days of extension cords tethering you to an outlet. Battery-powered mowers offer the same freedom of movement as gas powered models but with reduced noise and maintenance.

Battery life was once a major drawback to making the switch to electric lawn tools. But today's growing demand for electric equipment has resulted in major advancements for lithium ion batteries, making them more reliable, cost-effective, and efficient. For most consumers, electric lawn tools can get the job done just as

ENERGYWISE
Use less. Spend less. Do more.

Earn a **20% incentive** on any new electric chainsaw, tiller, or lawn mower (includes riding, walk behind and robotic.)

well as gas-powered models.

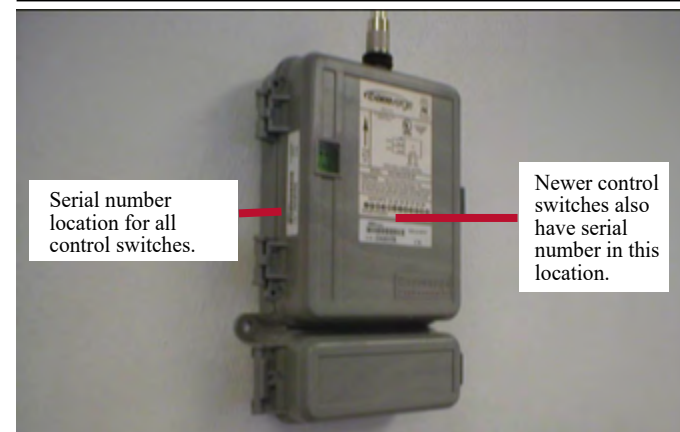
Like their gas-powered counterparts, electric mowers are available in push, self-propelled/walk-behind, robotic, and riding models. And there's no need to refill gas cans or change oil and air filters, resulting in less hassle and maintenance.

Like mowers, electric blowers, string trimmers, tillers, and chainsaws have fewer moving parts, require minimal maintenance, and are

quieter. Because electric tools are generally lighter in weight, they're also more ergonomic and easier to maneuver. This feature is especially handy for projects requiring tools like chainsaws for precise work.

Use the QR code above or call the office at 800-675-2185 and ask for Brian Suckstorf for more information about energy efficiency incentives.

LOAD MANAGEMENT TIPS



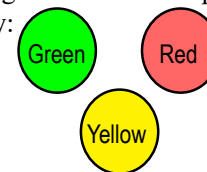
If you need to call the office with an issue with your irrigation system, please have the serial number of the switch or meter number available so that staff can assist you better.

Lights have meaning

Three LED lights on the control box have particular significance.

- Red - No Control
- Red and Green - Control
- Yellow - Signal Test (has no effect)

The light configuration on the display appears this way:



If the lights are not working, please check the fuses before calling ERPPD's outage number at 800-675-2185.

Check on Irrigation Control Status

June 1-Sept. 15

Phone:

1-800-238-0185

OR

Internet:

www.erppd.com
(click on the "Irrigation" quick link)

JUNE IS SAFETY MONTH



KNOW WHAT TO DO

If you are in an accident with a downed power line:



STAY
Do not leave the vehicle and warn others to stay away.

If you must leave the vehicle due to fire or emergency, never touch the ground and the vehicle at the same time.

Jump clear of the vehicle and hop or shuffle approx. 50 feet away from the downed power lines.



CALL
Call 911, have them notify the appropriate utilities.



WAIT
Do not exit the vehicle until a utility professional gives the all clear.

ERPPD
www.erppd.com
800-675-2185

STEP POTENTIAL HAZARD!



When an energized line makes contact with ground, the earth becomes energized, and the voltage dissipates in concentric circles away from the initial contact point.

**Never walk or run from a downed power line
HOP or SHUFFLE to safety**

LOOK UP AND OUT for power lines

 ERPPD
 www.erppd.com


For safety month, here is a reminder of what to do to stay safe around high voltage electric lines.

If you are in an accident with your vehicle that comes in contact with electric pole and have wires down, know what to do.

Assume that the power lines are

live. **Stay** in the car, **Call** for help, and **Wait** until the all clear is given by the electric utility.

Also, warn others that might come to help to stay back.

If you cannot stay in the vehicle due to smoke or fire, make sure you jump clear of the vehicle

and hop or shuffle with your feet close together to safety.

These instructions are depicted above in an insurance card size that can go in your car or the car of a loved one to remind them of what to do in case of an accident with high voltage power lines.

RISING RATES CONTINUED

continued from page 1 load growth in our service territory have also played important roles. However, as NPPD invests in new generation assets, built to power the growing demand in Nebraska, we anticipate

that this will likely require future rate increases in the years ahead.

We recognize that any rate increase affects households, farms, and businesses, we approach those decisions with care and account-

ability. Our focus remains on providing safe, reliable electric service while managing costs responsibly and planning prudently for the investments required to meet our customers' growing energy needs.

 <p>206 N 4TH ST PO Box 310 Battle Creek, NE 68715</p> <p>Office Hours: M - F 8:00AM - 4:30 PM</p>	 <p>General Manager: Mark Johnson CFO/Office Manager: Carmen Christensen Operations Manager: Todd Knutson</p> <p>Connect with us Online:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; gap: 20px;">   </div> <p>www.erppd.com  SCAN ME</p>	<p>Board of Directors</p> <p>Subdivision I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dennis Kuchar, Treasurer • Hunter Frisch, Director • James Geyer, Director <p>Subdivision II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim Means, Secretary • Jerrell Dolesh, Director • Rod Zohner, Director <p>Subdivision III</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Thiele, President • David Hoefler, Director • Raymond Payne, Vice President
<p>Customer Service: 402-675-2185 For Outages: 1-800-675-2185</p>		