

# THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

October 2014

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 23, Number 10

## October is Public Power Month

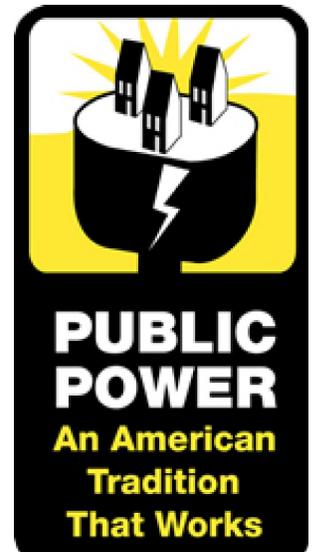
LOCAL CONTROL: YOU HAVE A SAY! IT'S YOUR PUBLIC POWER.

Local control is one of the greatest benefits of Nebraska's all public power model. In 1935, when rural electric systems began organizing in rural Nebraska, only about seven percent of Nebraska's farms had access to electrical service. The Investor Owned Utilities (IOU's) that were serving the densely populated cities saw no profit in delivering electricity to the sparsely populated areas of rural America. But, by 1958, 95 percent of Nebraska's rural farms were receiving power, thanks to the rural farmers who, without access to the power market, came together and developed rural electric cooperatives and public power districts. This was made possible through the passage of the REA (Rural Electrification Act), championed by U.S. Senator George Norris of Nebraska. The decisions governing these electric utilities were made, and continue to be made today, by member-owners and locally elected board members. There are no majority shareholders making decisions that will ensure the greatest profits, only local individuals that receive the same level of service as their constituents.

With local control also comes access. Unlike profit driven shareholders controlling an IOU, public power districts and electric cooperatives are governed by board members that are publicly elected. In a rural power district, this means you probably know the board member representing you and you know how to reach them with any concerns you may have. In addition, public power districts are required to comply with the Open Meetings Act which gives us all access to these meetings and the public information they discuss.

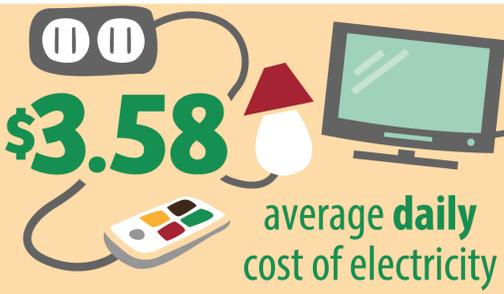
Local control means your public power utility knows you and has deep roots in your community. Governing board members have a stake in every decision they make and a sincere interest in the local economy. Every year Nebraska's public power systems, including NREA's member-systems, pay more than \$100 million in taxes or in-lieu of tax payments in the communities they serve, and employ more than 6,000 Nebraskans across the state, many of these in rural Nebraska.

*LOCAL CONTROL STRENGTHENS CUSTOMER SERVICE, PROMOTES A CULTURE OF SAFETY, INCREASES COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE ELECTRIC UTILITY AND ITS CUSTOMERS AND IS JUST ONE MORE WAY NEBRASKA'S RURAL ELECTRIC MEMBER-SYSTEMS ARE WORKING FOR NEBRASKA.*





### Working for Nebraska

|   |   |
|---|---|
|  <p><b>\$4.62</b><br/>average cost of a Big Mac meal</p> |  <p><b>\$3.58</b><br/>average daily cost of electricity</p> |
|---|---|

Visit [www.workingfornebraska.org](http://www.workingfornebraska.org) to learn more about Nebraska's rural electric systems

### Public Power Benefits

- Affordable
- Reliable
- Local Control
- Eco-Friendly

# OPERATIONS NEWS

## Tree and Brush Spraying

In a continuing effort to control tree and brush growth in the power line rights-of-way for reliability purposes, ERPPD has again contracted with Midwest Spray Team and Sales, Inc., to treat vegetation in the ROWs.

The Midwest Spray Team started in mid-September and will be treating power line rights-of-way in the western third of the district. The area will encompass Townships 23 to 27 in Ranges 8, 9, and 10. In general, the area is south of Orchard, west of Clearwater, surrounds Ewing, and extends south to the area west and southwest of Elgin.

If you have any questions or concerns or have a request not to spray, contact ERPPD Operations Manager Jim Ridder at our Battle Creek office, 1-800-675-2185.

Tree and brush control is an integral part of meeting our goals of service reliability and cost management.

## Major Upcoming Power Line Relocation Project

Elkhorn RPPD operations, engineering, and staking personnel have been planning and designing lines and securing right-of-way easements necessary for moving our distribution lines out of the path of NPPD's Hoskins to Neligh 345,000-volt (345kv) transmission line project and related 115,000-volt 115kv transmission lines.

ERPPD construction crews will begin the work of retiring old line and building new lines as soon as the crops have been harvested, to minimize the inconvenience to our customers. The costs of the relocation projects will be borne by NPPD, who will reimburse ERPPD for expenses related to the project.

NPPD's Hoskins to Neligh 345kv project is critical for continued growth in the central part of the state, including the western part of the ERPPD service territory. We have over 220 irrigation service requests that are waiting for the added capacity. As soon as the 345kv Hoskins to Neligh project is completed, ERPPD can begin to connect the irrigation services in the order the requests were received.

NPPD expects the entire Hoskins to Neligh transmission line project will be completed and in operation for the summer of 2016.

# ENERGY NEWS

## Step into the light. Make the switch to LED lamps. Collect a \$5/lamp rebate from ERPPD.

In recent years, LEDs have taken the lighting industry by storm. Simply put, an LED is a chip of semiconducting material that releases energy in the form of light. LEDs are used just like ordinary bulbs. However, not all LED products are created equal. They may vary in quality, energy use, and life span. Be sure to do your research before purchasing, and look for the ENERGY STAR label.

More about LEDs:

- They last up to 35 times longer than incandescent lights and often, four or more times as long as fluorescents.
- They produce more light per watt than incandescent bulbs.
- They light up instantly and many are dimmable.
- They waste little energy because most of the light may be directed where it is needed.
- They do not contain mercury.
- They generate almost no heat, which can help reduce air conditioning costs.

To collect your \$5/lamp rebate for up to 10 bulbs, simply bring your receipt for the purchase of the LED bulbs in to our office and fill out an Incentive Form, or you can download the Incentive Form from the home page of our website, [www.erppd.com](http://www.erppd.com). Complete the form and mail it to our office at the following address: Elkhorn Rural Public Power District, Attn: Energy Services, PO Box 310, Battle Creek, NE 68715. Please call 1-800-675-2185 if you have any questions.



### Energy Efficiency

### *Tip of the Month*

Fall is here, and that means colder months will be here before we know it. Is your home prepared for the drafts that may enter? Tight-fitting insulating drapes or shades are a perfect way to keep the heat in and the cold out. Source: U.S. Department of Energy

# FALL SAFETY NEWS

## Harvest Safety Tips

Farmers and farm family members face dangers every day. Although tragedies such as tractor rollovers and grain bin suffocation receive the most attention, electrocution and electrical burn accidents also occur on farms. Please make electrical safety one of your priorities during the fall harvest.

*“Did You Know... that each year 3.6 percent of the deaths of youths under age 20 on farms are caused by electrocution? Electrocution is quick and deadly and is one of the most overlooked hazards of farm work. The most common cause of electrocutions are portable grain augers, oversized wagons, large combines, and other tall equipment that come into contact with overhead power lines. Every year 62 farm workers are electrocuted in the United States.”-U.S. Department of Labor*

The simple movement of a portable grain auger from one bin to another can have tragic results if the individuals involved are not extremely careful. The use of tractors with large cabs and antennas and oversized grain wagons can also result in preventable electrocution incidents.

Electrical equipment around fields, such as power lines in the end rows, may get overlooked during such a hectic time of year as harvest. However, failure to notice overhead power lines can be a deadly oversight.

Most farmsteads could use a very careful overhead visual inspection of electric lines. Have you purchased taller and bigger equipment? Have you changed travel patterns through the farmstead? Have you added bins in new locations?

Today's farm equipment has a long reach when extended; and even when collapsed for roadway transport, many pieces of equipment may exceed the height of power lines. A daily check should be made of where equipment

**Elkhorn Rural Public Power District  
October 2014**



**LOOK UP  
AND LOOK  
OUT FOR  
POWER LINES**

Overhead power lines are common on the farm or in the field. However, failure to notice them can be a deadly oversight. Look up and look out for overhead power lines whenever you operate augers, move irrigation pipe or any other farm equipment.

This message brought to you by the folks at Elkhorn Rural Public Power District. For more electrical safety information, please contact us at  
**1-800-675-2185.**

will be moving to ensure that it will clear power lines. But don't take matters into your own hands. They may not be as high as they look. Always use a spotter, someone with a broad vantage point, when working in the vicinity of power lines.

Maintain a 10-foot separation from a power line completely around it, whether you are driving underneath or passing a grain auger near it.

In addition to conducting a field survey of power lines to locate potential hazards, employers should obtain safety information from utility companies for the benefit of their workers, if the lines are to remain energized.

Where possible, install electrical safety warning signage to prevent equipment and personnel contact with power lines. This will also be beneficial to your suppliers who may be making deliveries to your farm. Always keep in mind that electricity doesn't allow mistakes. And neither should you.

We have 3" x 5" "LOOK UP AND LIVE" stickers available at no cost to you. You can pick them up at our office, or we have distributed them to area implement dealers and grain elevators.



These free stickers should be placed on any equipment, such as grain augers, tractors with loaders, dump trucks, etc., that are capable of reaching the power lines. These stickers will serve as a reminder to operators to check out the surroundings for overhead power lines and to lower the equipment before moving, if necessary. You can pick up the stickers at our office, or call us and we can mail some out to you.

**WE WANT YOU TO STAY SAFE!!!**

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# ERPPD Personnel Staff Public Power Information Booth at State Fair

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District employees assisted in the public power information booth and high-voltage safety demonstrations at the Nebraska State Fair, held in Grand Island. The booth was sponsored by the Nebraska Power Association and its members.

ERPPD employees Tom Rudloff, Wayne McCormick, and Mark Gronau worked in the booth on three different days of the State Fair. Activities in the booth included a solar panel display, a water wheel generator display, a light bulb display, a video highlighting public power customers and their testimonials, and various posters touting the benefits of public power.

ERPPD employees Ken Capler and Marc Ahlers teamed up with two Polk County RPPD employees to operate the high-voltage simulation trailer. They demonstrated the dangers of contact with high voltage electrical lines. The crew talked to several groups of kids and adults about electrical safety.

We would like to thank our employees who worked at the Public Power Station, and also the Nebraska Power Association for coordinating the many public power utilities to highlight the benefits of public power at the Nebraska State Fair.



*ERPPD and Polk County RPPD employees demonstrating the dangers of electricity at the state fair.*

## 75th Anniversary Recipe Book

Do you have a favorite recipe, a unique recipe, a “handed-down” recipe, a time-saving recipe? We are asking you to submit a recipe or recipes for inclusion in the ERPPD 75th Anniversary Recipe Book, which will be given away at our open house in June of 2015.

Please submit recipes to: ERPPD, Attn: Wayne McCormick, PO Box 310, Battle Creek, NE 68715

### 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
- Jerrell Dolesh  
Director .....II
- Mark Miller  
Director ..... I
- Joe Thiele  
Director .....III
- Greg Weidner  
Director ..... I
- David Hoefler  
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

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October 2014*