



THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

October 2017

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 26, Number 10

WHY LOVE PUBLIC POWER?

There are so many reasons to love public power and for Public Power Month here are some reminders:

Benefits of Public Power:

Cost-Effective Power

- Nebraska's average electric rates remain among the lowest of all 50 states. Nebraska ranked 15th in the nation for lowest electrical rates. The average amount it takes to run a home in NE for a day is \$3.40.

Reliable Service

- Millions of dollars are invested annually to maintain and upgrade the states' electrical infrastructure. Elkhorn's reliability is over 99%

Local Control

- Citizens have a direct and powerful voice in utility decisions and policies, both at the ballot box and

in open meetings where business is conducted.

Not-For-Profit

- Public power's success is measured by how much money stays within the community through low rates and not by how much is paid to shareholders.

Taxes

- As not-for-profit political subdivisions of the state, public power utilities are exempt from income or property taxes. However, in-lieu-of tax, gross revenue tax, distribution system lease payments, municipal discounts and other payments are made to state, county and local governments. Those payments amount to about \$100 million that go back to the communities we serve.

Community Involvement

- The employees are local citizens that participate in their communities and are your neighbors. We provide countless hours of volunteer time through Volunteer Fire Departments, EMT, coaching different sports, serving on boards, helping with fund raisers, etc.

Customer Services – Energy Efficiency

- Public power utilities help customers understand their energy needs and assist them in developing and implementing ways to manage their energy resources efficiently and cost-effectively. For more information on energy efficiency go to erppd.com or call Brian at 402-675-2185.

OPERATION ROUND UP



Earlier this year the ERPPD board of directors approved starting an Operation Round Up program for our customers.

Operation Round Up is a nationwide program that can be used by PPDs and coops to allow customers to give back to their communities by 'rounding up' their bills to the next dollar. Community organizations and causes can then apply for the use of these funds.

We want to make it as easy as possible to participate, so everyone will be enrolled in the program. This allows our busy customers the convenience of not having to do a thing to give back to local causes.

Starting in January of 2018, your bill will be rounded to the next dollar. For example if your bill is \$60.43 it will be rounded up to \$61 and the additional 57 cents will be put in a fund. The average amount it costs each customer is about 50 cents per month or \$6.00 a year. If you receive more than one bill from ERPPD, each bill will be subject to the rounding.

This money then will be available to community organizations and causes through an application process.

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ENERGY DEMAND - WHAT IT MEANS

Ever wonder how decisions are made about how much electricity to generate on any given day? It is based on energy demand and you might be interested to learn how demand impacts your utility bill.

To start, it is important to understand how electricity is made and how it is delivered to your home. Before Elkhorn Rural Public Power District can send electricity to your home, that electricity needs to be generated by our wholesale power supplier. We negotiate a contract with our wholesale supplier through the Nebraska Generation and Transmission Association, which is made up of 19 Public Power Districts and 1 cooperative. This allows us to get cost effective rates for electricity because we negotiate larger loads.

Once the electricity has been generated, it travels over high-voltage transmission lines to substations, where the voltage is reduced to a voltage that more cost-effective and

eaier to distribute. The electricity then travels over distribution power lines and finds its way into your home. So, while you pay your bill to us – your public power district – we don't actually generate the electricity you use. We build and maintain the wires, poles and equipment that brings the electricity to your homes and businesses.

We do help to determine how much electricity our members need to power their homes and businesses, and you play a big part in determining how much electricity needs to be created in order to keep the lights on. That is where these terms “consumption” and “demand” come in.

Consumption is measured in kilowatt hours (kWh). (See the graphic below for where Americans used the most electricity) Demand is measured in kilowatts (kW).

When you come home in the evening and let's say you turn on a 1000 watt heater. When you turn on the heater that is 1 kW of demand for the system. If you run the heater for an hour you consume 1 kWh of electricity. Your demand (kW) only goes up or down with the number of different appliances you run at any give time. Your consumption (kWh) depends on how much and how long you run your

appliances. If you want to get an idea of how much electricity you are using for what appliances,

you can visit ERPPD's website at erppd.com and click on the Energy tab at the top of the page. You can complete an energy audit and get ideas on how to save energy and money.

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District purchases kilowatt hours from our wholesale supplier based on the average demand of our members. Peak demand refers to the time of day when the demand for electricity is highest.

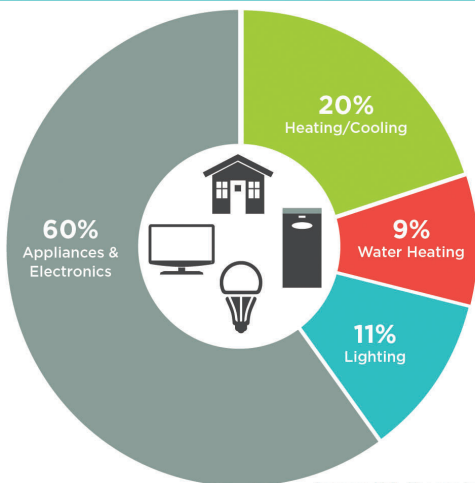
Using electricity during this peak demand period often costs more to both ERPPD and to our customer/ owners. We counteract this scenario in the summer by utilizing load control during irrigation season. The program works by having farmers with irrigation sign up for load control. We then work with our power supplier to manage the load and peaks and keep the cost of electricity lower for all our customers.

Generating and distributing power can be a tricky and complicated business, but rest assured, Elkhorn Rural Public Power District will always meet the necessary demand to provide safe, reliable and cost-effective electricity to your family.



How Americans Use Electricity

The latest data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows that appliances and electronics account for the largest amount of electricity consumption in American homes.



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2015 Annual Energy Outlook. *U.S. residential sector electricity by major end uses.

SAFETY

ALERT TODAY, ALIVE TOMORROW: HEADS UP FOR FARM SAFETY



Stay safe around downed power lines. Consider all lines, equipment and conductors to be live and dangerous.



If you must exit the machinery...

If you can safely drive away...

If you are inside farm machinery that makes contact with a downed power line, know what to do!

If you can drive safely away from the power source without bringing down the utility pole and lines, travel at least 40 ft. before exiting.

If you are unable to drive the machinery due to injury, obstacles or it is inoperable, do NOT exit. Call for help and warn anyone nearby NOT to approach.

40 ft. radius safe distance

If the vehicle is on fire, or you must exit for other safety reasons, follow these steps:

1. Jump clear of the vehicle. Do not let any part of your body or clothes touch the ground and the machinery at the same time.
2. Land with feet together and hop away in small steps to minimize the path of electric current and avoid electric shock.
3. Keep going until you are at least 40 ft. away.
4. Call for help. Make sure no one gets within 40 ft. of the downed line.
5. Do not re-enter the area or vehicle until emergency responders and your electric co-op crews determine it is safe.

SCAM ALERT

Scams continue to be in the news - customers being called by someone saying that their electricity is going to be shut off unless they pay their bill immediately and then a payment method is given - pre paid card, green dot card, or cash.

If you call the 800 number that they give you to verify the information, the scammers have gotten very clever and have recorded the utilities answering message, so they sound very legitimate. And they have someone ready to “answer your billing questions”.

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District will not call you asking for your personal information, such as credit card numbers, social security information, or ask you to pay with a prepaid card.

We will, however, send a payment reminder or make an automated call reminding customers that a monthly payment is due.

Then, you can initiate a call to our office and feel very comfortable that your information is secure.

If you ever receive a call regarding “energy-saving” products, “energy-

audits”, bill payments, threats of disconnect unless payment is made over the phone, etc., in which the caller requires a credit card number to proceed, please hang up and call our office at 800-675-2185 (not the number given to you on the phone), or local law enforcement or call the Better Business Bureau of Nebraska at 800-649-6814.



FOND FAREWELL



We wished Larry Lindahl, Sub-District III Director, a fond farewell at the September board meeting with some cake and a resolution from the board, thanking him for his leadership and his service over the last 18 years. Larry also served as secretary of the board for 10 years. We wish you all the best!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

with Board position and subdivision

Greg Weidner
President..... I
Mark Miller
Vice President ... I
Tim Means
Secretary II
Dennis Kuchar
Treasurer I
Jerrell Dolesh
Director II
Dave Hoefler
Director III
Joe Thiele
Director III
Rod Zohner
Director II

MANAGER

Tom Rudloff

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**

Operation Round Up continued from first page
The Elkhorn Rural Public Power District Community Development Fund has been created to receive and distribute these funds. The Fund will have a 5 member board of Trustees that will consist of one member from each of the 3 sub-districts and 2 at large members. Please contact the office if you or someone you know would be interested in serving on this board of Trustees.

We are excited to be able to participate with our communities in this very tangible way. The Operation Round Up Program has collected millions of dollars nationwide and helped countless communities, organizations and individuals. And for you, it is only a little change.

If you do not want to give back to your community through the Round Up program, or don't want certain meters in the program, you can opt out at any time, by calling 402-675-2185, e-mailing erppd@erppd.com or filling out the form in your November or December bill and sending it in with your payment.