



THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

October 2026

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 35, Number 10

POWERED BY LOCAL VALUES



*From the GM,
Mark Johnson*

When we think about electricity, it is easy to take it for granted. We flip a switch,

turn on an appliance, or start a piece of equipment, and we expect the power to be there when we need it. Reliable electricity is something we depend on every day, whether it is powering our homes and farms, supporting local businesses, or keeping our communities connected. That reliability is at the heart of public power and the reason it continues to play such an important role in our lives.

**OCTOBER IS
PUBLIC POWER MONTH**

Join us for an
OPEN HOUSE

Where: The Office - 206 N 4th Street, Battle Creek
When: Monday, October 12th 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
What: Celebrate Public Power, Refreshments, & Giveaways

Yet, this seamless access to electricity was once a distant reality for many Nebraskans. During the early 20th century, many rural areas of Nebraska lacked access to electricity from private utilities, prompting the state to establish a public power system to serve all communities. In the 1930s, the Nebraska Legislature passed legislation allowing for the creation of public power districts, such as Elkhorn Rural Public Power District, to bring electric service to rural areas not served by private utilities. Public

power districts deliver more than electricity; they add significant value to the quality of life within the communities they serve. Now, Nebraska is the only state in the country with a fully public power electrical system.

Unlike investor-owned utilities, public power is owned and operated by public entities, including cooperatives, public power districts, and municipalities. Public power operates on a not-for-profit basis, allowing utilities to reinvest revenue in the electric system. Since public power is operated by public entities, it allows for local control that fits the community's needs.

Public power provides great value to the community, and we take pride in **continued on page 2**

PUBLIC POWER
Month
POWERING OUR COMMUNITY.

Celebrating Public Power Month
 We take great pride in serving as your public power provider, and we couldn't do it without your support. Public power empowers local communities to make crucial decisions and ensures a steady energy supply. Thank you for being a customer of Elkhorn Rural Public Power District!

LOCAL PEOPLE. LOCAL DECISIONS. LOCAL POWER.

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serving as your public power provider. This October, we celebrate Public Power Month and the value of local people, local decisions, and local power in the communities we serve.

Local People

Public power begins with people. At ERPPD we recognize the importance of service and being active in our local communities. Our employees and board members live and work throughout the area, providing a thorough understanding of the needs of those we serve. Having local people serve the PPD allows us to directly connect with our customers and learn about their needs.

Local Decisions

Public power is built on local people making decisions that benefit the local community. Since PPDs are publicly owned and governed by locally elected board members, PPDs prioritize community and district needs over shareholder profits. This structure ensures our customers

have a direct voice in how the utility operates and plans for the future.

Additionally, our Board of Directors regularly meets to discuss the future of the public power district. Not only do we hold monthly board meetings, but our directors also participate in community meetings, industry conferences, and other trainings to ensure they have all the resources they need to fully serve our community.

Local Power

Public power districts operate for the benefit of their customers, making every investment a direct contribution to service quality and the long-term prosperity of our community. PPDs continually invest in infrastructure, including substations, power lines, poles, transformers, and technology, to ensure safe and dependable electric service. These investments help maintain reliability today while preparing for the future needs of our homes, farms, businesses, and industries.

Local power also plays a vital role

in supporting economic growth as well. Access to reliable electricity is a key factor for businesses, as it helps create opportunities for growth, new investments, and provides local jobs.

This Public Power Month, we celebrate the importance of public power and the value of keeping it local. From the lights in our homes to the critical infrastructure that drives our local economy, public power is the steady and reliable source for our communities. Thank you for trusting us to power what matters most to you.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Don't let phantom energy haunt your electric bill this October. Many electronics continue using electricity even when they're turned off. TVs, gaming systems, coffee makers and phone chargers can quietly draw power around the clock. While each device uses only a small amount, the energy waste can add up over time. Before heading out for Halloween fun, unplug devices you don't use regularly or plug them into a smart power strip that automatically cuts power when equipment is off. It's a simple trick that can help keep phantom energy waste in check.

Source: Dept. of Energy



Elkhorn Rural Public Power District
October 2026

Elkhorn Rural Public Power District
is dedicated to providing
SAFE, RELIABLE, and COST-EFFECTIVE
electricity for ALL customers.

LOCAL PEOPLE. LOCAL DECISIONS. LOCAL POWER.

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CYBERSECURITY MONTH

As the leaves begin to change and we settle into the routines of fall, it's a good time to take stock of a few things around the house as you prepare for cooler weather like checking your heating system, window seals, and batteries in your smoke detectors. It's also a good time to refresh your cybersecurity habits.

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, but protecting your personal information is something that deserves attention all year long.

At ERPPD cybersecurity is a critical part of providing safe, reliable electric service. While much of our focus is on protecting the physical systems that operate the electric grid, we also work to protect the systems and information that help us serve you, which includes online accounts, payment systems, member portals, and outage communications.

Unfortunately, scammers are becoming more sophisticated, too. Artificial intelligence (AI) is making it easier for cyber criminals to create convincing emails, text messages, websites and even voice messages that can look and sound legitimate. The FBI has warned that generative AI can make fraudulent schemes more believable by eliminating many of the errors that once helped us identify a scam.

That matters when it comes to utility scams.

A scammer may impersonate ERPPD and claim your account is past due, your service is about to be disconnected, or you need to make an immediate payment. The message might even include ERPPD's logo, use professional-looking language, or direct you to a website that appears legitimate. With AI helping scammers create more convincing communications, simply looking for spelling mistakes or other obvious warning signs may no longer be enough. And these scams are not a small problem.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, consumers reported losing \$3.5 billion to imposter scams in 2025, making these types of scams the most commonly reported type of fraud. Nearly one in three fraud reports involved an imposter scam.

So, what should you do if you receive an unexpected message claiming to be from ERPPD?

If a message creates a sense of urgency or threatens immediate disconnection, take a moment to verify it. Don't click the link or call the phone number provided in the message. Instead, contact ERPPD directly using our trusted methods.

You can also take steps to protect your online accounts before a scam occurs. Start with your password. Longer is generally better than simply adding more special characters. Choose a long, unique passphrase that is difficult for others to guess, and don't reuse the same password across multiple accounts.

If the accounts you access online offer multifactor authentication (MFA), consider using it. MFA adds an extra layer of protection by requiring an additional way to verify your identity, such as a code sent to your phone or an authentication app.

Most importantly, remember that you don't have to make a payment simply because someone tells you that you do. We want you to have an opportunity to verify any unexpected request.

ERPPD is committed to protecting the systems that help us deliver your electricity and serve our members. You can help by protecting your own account, slowing down when something seems urgent and contacting us directly when you're unsure.



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"LOOK UP AND OUT"

In September, Marc Ahlers, SCADA tech, Patrick Hintz, staking engineering tech, and Aiden Norman, apprentice line tech, were at Northeast Community College with the live line safety demo. The safety demo shows how different materials conduct electricity and how it arcs between two points of contact - top photo. In the bottom photo, Patrick shows a student how electricity runs through a hot dog, which simulates a human being.

The electrical safety demo is also used to communicate what to do if you are ever in an accident with an electric pole and lines are down. Stay in your vehicle. If you need to exit, jump clear and hop or shuffle with your feet close together to safety.

Please remember to "Look Up and Out" for power lines this harvest season.



206 N 4TH ST

PO Box 310

Battle Creek, NE 68715

Office Hours: M - F

7:30AM - 4:00 PM

Customer Service: 402-675-2185

For Outages: 1-800-675-2185



WWW.ERPPD.COM



SCAN ME

General Manager: Mark Johnson

CFO/Office Manager: Carmen Christensen

Operations Manager: Todd Knutson

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- Rod Zohner, Director

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