

# THE WIRE

CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

September 2014

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

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## Six area students represent ERPPD at the NREA Youth Energy Camp



*Clockwise (from top): Max Dederman, Cassidy Steskal, Jaime Hoefler, Rebekah Rast, Kala Rast, Karissa Dicke*

Six area students represented the Elkhorn Rural Public Power District at the 2014 Nebraska Rural Electric Association Youth Energy Camp. The event is held annually at the State 4-H Camp in the Nebraska National Forest west of Halsey. This year's camp was held July 14 through July 18.

Those from the area attending as campers were: Karissa Dicke (Elgin Pope John High School), Max Dederman (Battle Creek High School), Jaime Hoefler (Elgin Public High School), Rebekah Rast (R Place Christian Academy), Kala Rast (Newman Grove High School) and R Place Christian Academy, and Cassidy Steskal (Clearwater-Orchard High School).

Torie Wiese, a former camper from Lindsay, returned to the camp this year to represent ERPPD as a camp

counselor.

Campers were treated to educational sessions on electric safety, energy efficiency, career opportunities, and public power in Nebraska. They visited the Gerald Gentleman coal-fired generating facility near Sutherland, and the Kingsley hydroelectric station at Lake McCaughey near Ogallala. The week was intermingled with fun activities, including sports tournaments, canoeing, dancing,

a get-acquainted party, socializing and making new friends.

While at the camp, campers also had an opportunity to compete for a spot on the 2015 National Rural Electric Youth Tour, which will be held in June, and be sponsored by the Nebraska Rural Electric Association.

These students are eligible, after they return from camp, to apply for the opportunity to represent ERPPD on the National Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington D.C., held in June of 2015. Students who have attended the NREA Youth Energy Camp may complete an application and one will be selected by ERPPD to be our Washington Youth Tour representative for 2015.

Above all, they enjoyed a great time with other high school students from across the state.

## 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

## Husker Harvest Days Sept 9-11

Elkhorn RPPD will share a booth at Husker Harvest Days in Grand Island along with other public power utilities. The booth will be staffed with energy efficiency experts from various public power utilities. Also featured during the three days will be high-voltage safety demonstrations. Stop by the booth and learn how you can stay safe around electricity and how you can conserve energy and save money!

**ERPPD Offices will be closed Monday, Sept. 1 for Labor Day**

## What does the proposed EPA CO2 emissions rule mean for Nebraskans?

In June, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a proposed rule to cut carbon dioxide emissions from existing stationary electricity generating units (EGUs). The goal of the rule is to decrease the amount of CO2 emissions by 30% compared to 2005 levels by the year 2030. In an attempt to try to make the rule flexible, the EPA looked at each state separately.

For example, the levels set for Nebraska would require a lesser 26% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2030, but the base year is 2012 instead of 2005. To more fully understand the impact of this rule, the Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD), our power supplier, is working with the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ), the Nebraska Power Association (NPA), and other agencies to help develop Nebraska's State Implementation Plan.

Available options for reducing CO2 emissions range from reducing the amount of electricity generated from low cost coal plants and adding more renewables, converting existing coal-fired resources to natural gas or another fuel source, and/or implementing new energy efficiency measures to lower the overall consumer demand for electricity, and ultimately, lowering the emission rate per kilowatt generated.

NPPD is already generating 40% of its electricity with carbon-free EGUs,

including nuclear, wind, and hydro, so it is difficult to accept a one-size-fits-all rule which may have a huge negative impact on our ratepayers with very little positive impact on the environment.

In fact, the following information highlights the numbers affected by the rule:

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**FACT:** The EPA's proposal will have practically no effect on global climate change.

**WHY?** Because U.S power plants are responsible for only a small fraction (4 percent) of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. EPA's proposal will reduce global GHG emissions by a tiny amount (less than 1 percent) at a cost, according to the EPA, of \$4.2 billion to \$8.8 billion **per year**.

This insignificant reduction in global GHG emissions means that:

- Atmospheric CO2 concentrations will be reduced by less than 1 percent.
- Global average temperature increase will be reduced by 0.016 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Sea level rise will be reduced by 1/100th of an inch, which is the thickness of three sheets of paper.

**OTHER FACTS:**

- China and India together emit more than 20 percent of all global GHG emissions.
- Because of its growing economy, China emits more CO2 in one month (more than 800 million tons) than the maximum amount EPA's proposal will reduce in one year (approximately 550 million tons).

- As of late 2012, more than 65,000 megawatts of new coal-fueled generating capacity had been announced or planned in Europe.
- Russia recently announced it will construct the largest coal-fired power plant in the world (8,000 megawatts) and sell the electricity to China.

*Source: American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity*

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*"What Can I Do? I am but one voice!"*

This is a question we all ask, but we can add our voice to thousands of others just like me. There is power in numbers, so let's all join together to 'rein in' the runaway EPA. Congress cannot do it, so it must come from the grassroots of America.

The proposed rule has not been finalized, so there is still time to voice your opinion to the EPA. We have options to make it convenient for you to send your comments to the EPA. The EPA honestly believes they are speaking for the majority of Americans when they proposed this costly rule, so it is important that the "Silent Majority" speaks up and lets them know.

If you have internet access, the easiest way to send your comments is by navigating to our website, [www.erppd.com](http://www.erppd.com), and clicking on the TAKE ACTION link in the news story.

If you do not have internet access, you can complete the card on page 4 and return it to our office. We will submit your comments in your behalf.

### Energy Efficiency

### *Tip of the Month*

When it's hot outside, appliances and lighting can actually heat up our homes more than we think. To save energy, minimize the activities that generate additional heat, such as burning open flames, continuously running a computer, or using hot-hair devices like curling irons. This will ultimately keep your house cooler.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

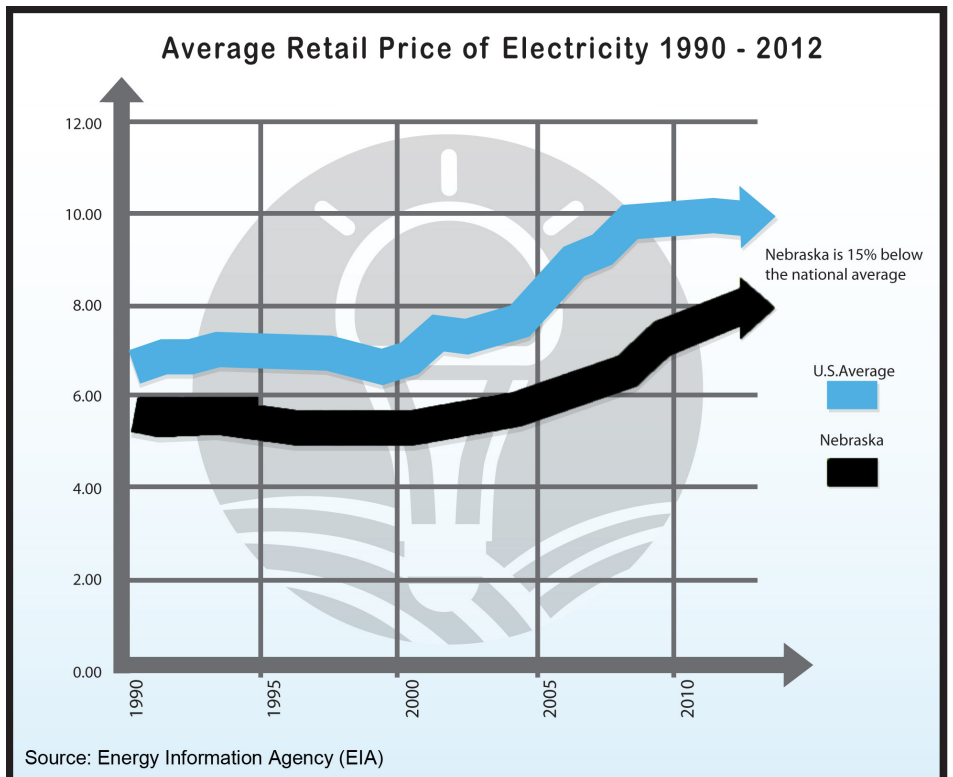
## Electricity is One of the Few Great Bargains Left

This is a statement I make with reservation. It is hard to fathom this concept when we may struggle to make ends meet and then here comes the monthly electricity bill. It may strain our budget a little or a lot, but rest assured that we are working very hard to control our costs so that we can keep our electricity rates as low as possible.

Low electric rates benefit all Nebraskans. Here, the average homeowner can meet all of their electric needs for about \$3.56 per day. This is less than the cost of a drive-thru meal to keep your home at a comfortable temperature, your lights on, and your appliances running. Nation-wide, Nebraska's electric rates are 15% below the national average, and we rank in the top 15 among all states for the lowest electric rates.

At a time when prices on everything are climbing, public power remains a great value for Nebraskans. In fact, since 1936 electric rates in Nebraska have only gone up five (5) cents per kilowatt hour on average.

Just one nickel's change since the Great Depression and the beginning of the Rural Electrification Program which brought electricity to Nebraska's most rural areas. Infrastructure upgrades, rising fuel prices, and federal regulation are all driving forces in increasing electric rates. To keep rates as low as possible, rural public power providers work diligently to keep overhead costs at a minimum. In fact, Nebraska's rural electric systems



employ just one individual for every 239 customers. Nearly 70 percent of your electric bill is the wholesale cost of power to rural power districts. This means the delivery of electricity and all of the work necessary to keep your lights on only makes up about 30 percent of your monthly charges.

As not-for-profit electric utilities, Nebraska's rural electric systems hold a distinct competitive advantage among other states when it comes to the rates you pay for electric service. Our rates are cost-based, there are no profits built into your electric bill. There are no out-of-state profit-seeking shareholders making decisions about the rates you will pay for electricity. We answer to you. Our focus is simply delivering an affordable and reliable product safely to you, period. Nebraska's public

power model has served us well, and the value of public power is apparent in every small town across the state. From the jobs provided and taxes paid to the rural economy to the community service projects our rural electric member-systems perform, NEBRASKA'S RURAL ELECTRIC MEMBER-SYSTEMS TRULY ARE WORKING FOR NEBRASKA. LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY.

[www.WorkingforNebraska.org](http://www.WorkingforNebraska.org)

For more information on the benefits of public power, please visit [www.workingfornebraska.org](http://www.workingfornebraska.org). The site contains interesting and informative videos, as well as statistics illustrating the advantages of living in a state that is served exclusively by public power utilities. In fact, Nebraska is the only state that is 100% public power.

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

# **\*SECOND CHANCE\* TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD**

If you have already submitted your comments, thank you. If not, you have until October 16 to submit them on this very important issue. Please add your voice to the thousands that have already commented.

On June 2, 2014, as part of President Obama's Climate Action Plan, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a proposed rule seeking to cut carbon emission from Nebraska's existing fossil fuel power plants by 26 percent by the year 2030.

Coal fired power plants provide two-thirds of our state's electricity. These plants provide an affordable source of electricity that can be depended upon around the clock. The proposed rule would force the closure of many coal fired power plants across the nation, placing in jeopardy the affordability and reliability of our electrical system.

The EPA is asking for public comment on this rule and we are asking you to Take Action. The public comment period will be a very important part of the rule-making process, and we need the EPA to know that Nebraskans are very concerned about the impacts of excessive regulations from the EPA.

We thank those of you that have participated in these Action Alerts in the past. Please continue to be active on these issues. The more you are aware of the impacts of these regulations on your pocketbooks, and the more active our rural membership is on these issues, the more likely we are to see the EPA listen to our concerns.

Take Action Now at [www.action.coop](http://www.action.coop). If you do not have internet, please fill out the card below and return it to our office and we will submit your comments for you.

Following is the text of the comment that will be submitted when you TAKE ACTION. There is an opportunity to add your own words to make it more personal. This comment will be sent on your behalf to Gina McCarthy, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Dear Administrator McCarthy,

I oppose the EPA's proposed greenhouse gas regulations for existing power plants because we need to balance our country's energy needs with environmental concerns. It's very important that we all have the electricity needed to run our lives and the economy.

The potential for these new regulations to dramatically raise energy prices and cost thousands of hard-working American jobs is too great.

I'm a member of my local not-for-profit public power district and these proposed regulations have me really concerned.

These new plans to regulate power plants don't work for my family, my community or our nation's economy.

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## ***PLEASE SEND THE ABOVE LETTER TO THE EPA ON MY BEHALF***

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_  
*(If you have an email address, please include it. This is the most cost-effective way for us to reach you in the future.)*

NAME (print) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Your contact information will not be used in any other manner except to contact you on critical issues impacting Elkhorn Rural Public Power District. You will be notified of these issues as the need arises. Thanking you in advance -- ERPPD, PO Box 310, Battle Creek, NE 68715, 1-800-675-2185.