



THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

September 2017

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 26, Number 9

NEW MECHANIC



Chris Sovereign started as Elkhorn RPPD's new mechanic on July 31. Chris has over 16 years of experience in automotive repair

and maintenance.

He has worked most recently at Norfolk GM Auto as the "diesel guy". Prior to that he worked at Caterpillar and Rapid Chevrolet in South Dakota.

He is a graduate of Southeast Community College's General Motor ASEP program.

Chris is a Battle Creek native - graduating from Battle Creek High School. He and his wife, Angie and their two sons, Barrett, 6, and Blake, 3, moved back to Battle Creek about a year and a half ago to be closer to family. Angie is from the McCook area and works at Faith Regional.

Chris has always had a passion for working on motors and "tinkering." In addition to his experience, he brings a can-do attitude, and a great work ethic -even though he had orientation and a lot of paperwork- he tuned up a chain saw and lined up some repair work on his first day!

He also enjoys creating furniture from trees. In Rapid City he had a business called Sovereign Rustic

Creations. He would make chairs, chests of drawers, coffee tables - you name it. He also made bed frames that have a signature Y foot board.

Chris and his family want to be involved and better their community. They are creating the "Crow's Nest Pumpkin Patch and Corn Maze" to bring the whole family to this fall.

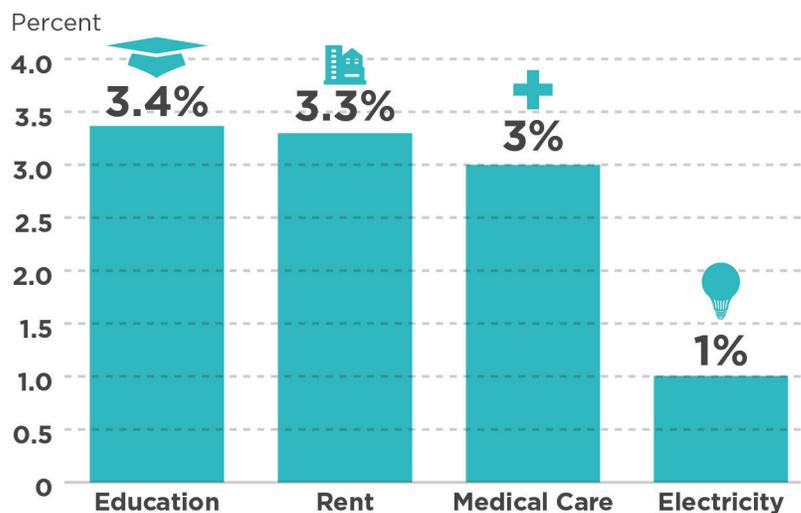


ERPPD offices will be closed Monday, September 4, in observance of Labor Day.

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises at a slower pace than many of your typical expenses. Compare the average price increase of these expenses each year over the last five years, and the value of electricity shines.

Average Annual Price Increase 2011-2016



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index

DID THE "RURAL VOTES COUNT" CAMPAIGN WORK?

Last year in conjunction with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), Nebraska Public Power Districts participated in a campaign called Co-ops Vote and Rural Votes Count. ERPPD participated by providing regular updates to our customers; hosting District 40 candidate, Tom Briese, at a board meeting to educate him on public power; Face Book and website posts; and we went to the state capital to speak with our representatives and provided written testimony at legislative hearings on retail choice.

PROUD 5-STAR ELECTRIC CO-OP



On the federal level, we met with our representatives in Washington D.C and with aides that were out in the field, giving them the public power perspective on issues like the geothermal heat pump tax credit. For these efforts we were honored with a 5-Star Electric Co-op badge. (See above.)

"Between 2008 and 2012, rural

voter turnout dropped by 18%. In 2016, America's Electric Cooperatives came together to promote the Co-ops Vote campaign in an effort to reverse that trend by getting rural voters out to the polls. It worked, as turnout increased throughout rural America." - Vote.coop

The NRECA and Co-ops Vote have released data showing just

In 2017, we will want to continue to focus on local and state issues to keep the momentum of the campaign and continue to build our political strength.

Some issues that we are monitoring on a state level include, retail choice, net metering, renewable energy and broadband/cellular services.

We do this through our grassroots



how much change there was in the rural vote.

On the map to the left, below, you can see that in Nebraska alone, the percentage of voters increased by 2 - 2.9 %. And the map to the right shows the number of rural voters was actually higher than the number of urban voters in Nebraska.

So, yes, these campaigns helped to get the rural vote out.

efforts, monitoring legislation and regulations that we believe will affect our customer's electrical safety, reliability or cost effectiveness.

If you would like to sign up for our grassroots alerts to take action on specific issues that affect you, please contact Jennifer Adams at jadams@erppd.com or call the office at (402) 675-2185.

CO-OPS VOTE 2016 RURAL TURNOUT



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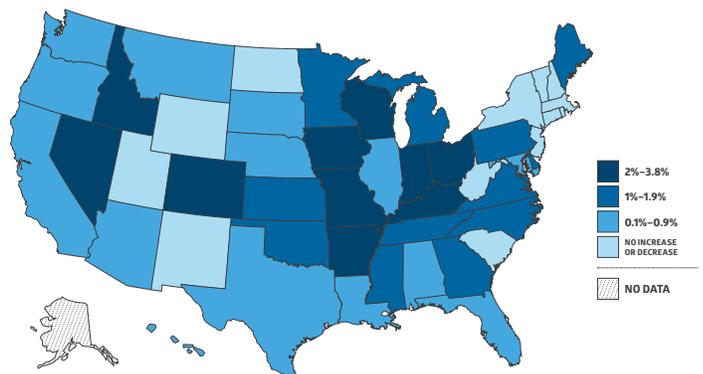
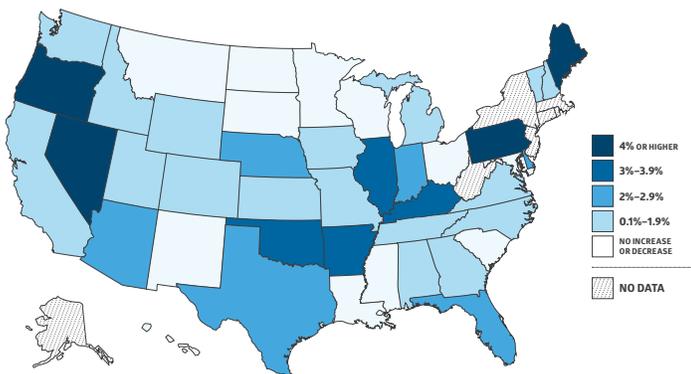


PERCENTAGE GROWTH OF RURAL VOTER TURNOUT: 2012-2016

This data demonstrates the percentage growth in voter turnout in rural counties from 2012 to 2016.

RURAL VOTE vs. URBAN VOTE

This data demonstrates where rural counties had a higher voter percentage turnout in 2016 than their urban and suburban counterparts.



ELECTRICAL UTILITY ECONOMIC IMPACT

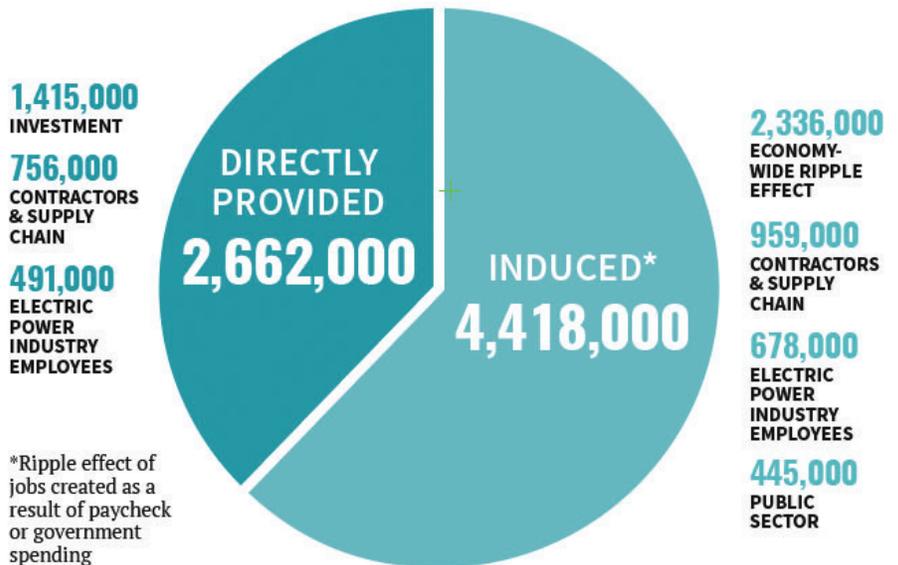
A recent report from M.J. Bradley and Associates that was commissioned by the Edison Electric Institute (EEI), American Public Power Association, (APPA) and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) highlights the economic impact of the public power and cooperative model.

The study shows that 2.7 million jobs, employees, contractors and supply chain, are directly related to the electric utility industry. More than 4.4 million additional jobs are supported through the induced effects of the jobs listed above. These jobs are high-quality positions that have a real impact on the communities they serve. Each job directly provided by the industry supports an additional 1.7 jobs in our communities.

The report also reinforces that the electrical power industry supports other sectors of the economy, contributing \$880 billion annually to the US GDP or 5 percent of the total GDP.

“Affordable and reliable electricity is the heartbeat of the American

THE ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRY SUPPORTS **OVER 7 MILLION JOBS**



Source: *Powering America: The Economic and Workforce Contributions of the U.S. Electric Power Industry*, August 2017, M.J. Bradley & Associates LLC

economy and is essential to the nation’s economic growth,” said Jim Matheson, NRECA CEO. “. . . Our broader purpose is to empower local communities to thrive. [We] are proud to con-

tinue recruiting top-tier talent from local communities as we work to meet tomorrow’s energy needs.”

At ERPPD, we too, are proud to contribute to the communities we live in and serve. With our strategic succession planning, (see the August *Wire* for more on ERPPD’s succession planning) we continue to provide for our customers’ energy needs and to fulfill our mission to provide safe, reliable, cost effective electricity to our customers.

The full report, *Powering America: The Economic and Workforce Contributions of the U.S. Electric Power Industry*, is available at this link: <http://mjbradley.com/about-us/case-studies/powering-america>.

(Source: www.electric.coop - press release)

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Cooler temps will be here soon! No matter what kind of heating system you have in your home, you can save money and increase your comfort by properly maintaining and upgrading your equipment. Contact a licensed professional to inspect your system *before* the winter chill arrives.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy



HARVEST SAFETY

Harvest season is one of the busiest times of year for farmers – and among the most dangerous. Before taking to the fields, Elkhorn Rural Public Power District, urges farm workers to be aware of potential electrical hazards and take safe steps to avoid tragedy. We value you as our customer and your safety is very important to us. Please take note of the following tips to keep your harvest season productive and safe.

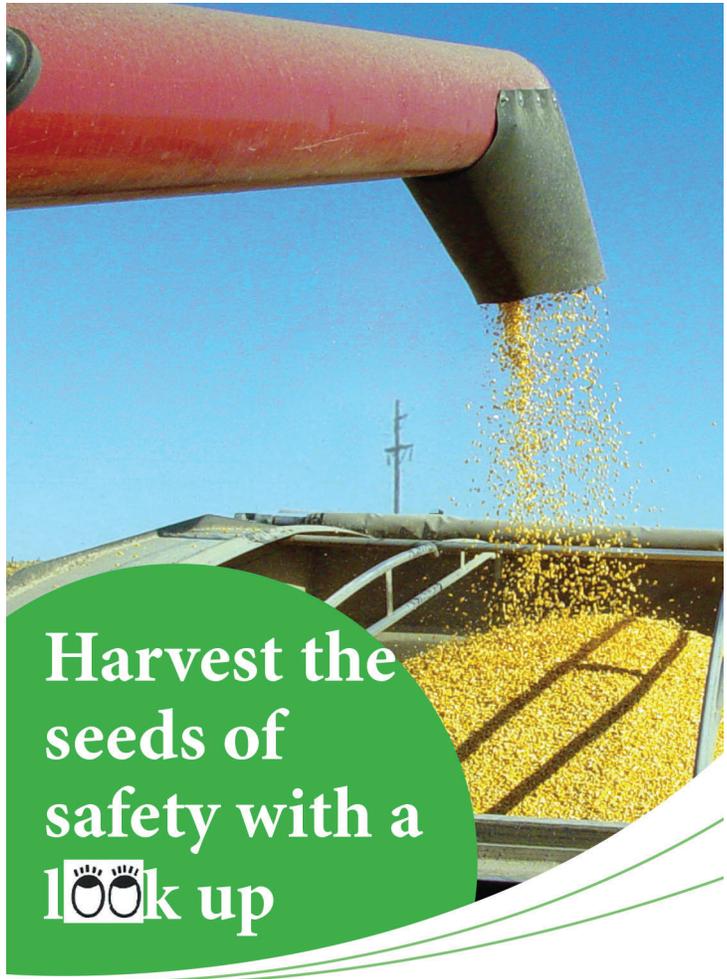
- Install ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to help prevent electric shock in areas that are exposed to weather and may potentially become wet. GFCIs should also be on outlets where electric tools are used.
- Examine all wiring and machinery regularly. Ensure that everything is grounded and working properly.
- Always check the weather forecast and never operate machinery when there is a risk for lightning. Make sure you're accounting for adverse weather conditions, and dedicating extra space for safety.
- Before working in the field, check the height of farm machinery and note of the location of overhead power lines. Plan your route to avoid them. Keep equipment far away from lines, at least 10 feet in all directions – below, above and to the sides. Use caution with ladders, poles and other extended machinery.

A tragic example of not utilizing harvest safety was reported by Safe Electricity. During harvest season last year, a father and son were killed when working on their family farm in Jordan, Minnesota. According to officials, the men were lifting a farm auger when

strong wind resulted in contact made with an overhead power line.

If contact is made between farming equipment and overhead lines, it's almost always best to stay in the cab. Warn others to stay away and call ERPPD at (800) 675-2185 or 9-1-1 to have dispatch call ERPPD and emergency services. **Do not get off** the equipment unless there is a fire or imminent risk of fire. In that rare case, the proper action would be to jump – not step – free and clear from the equipment landing with feet together. Do not touch the equipment and ground at the same time. Hop as far away as possible, as electricity radiates outward. (Source: Safe Electricity.org)

As another tool, you can pick up “Look Up and Live” stickers (left) to remind you to take a look around when you are using farm machinery; at the office or call (402) 675-2185 and we would be happy to deliver or mail you some. For more safety tips, please visit our web page at www.erppd.com.



Today's farming operations involve bigger equipment, which can make you more productive. However, failure to notice overhead power lines can be a deadly oversight. This harvest season, remember to look up and look out for overhead power lines.



LOOK UP AND LIVE
WATCH OUT FOR
ELECTRIC LINES

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