



# THE WIRE



CURRENT NEWS FROM THE ELKHORN RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

September 2023

Serving the Elkhorn River Valley since 1940

Volume 32, Number 9

## NOTE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

As the new General Manager of Elkhorn Rural Public Power District, I would like to take a moment to introduce myself. I officially started my new role on June 26th. I have enjoyed working with and getting to know the ERPPD staff and board as well as meeting community members outside the office. It's been an information packed few weeks as I start to familiarize myself with this great organization.

Prior to joining ERPPD, I was employed by two different distribution electric cooperatives. Most recently, I served as the Member Services Manager at St. Croix Electric Cooperative in Hammond, Wisconsin. As the Member Services Manager, I was a member of the Executive Team and was responsible for overseeing many aspects of the utility. Before moving to Western Wisconsin, I worked in the Member Services Department at Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light & Power Association in Montevideo, Minnesota.

My wife, Miranda, and I are excited to get settled into our new community. We look forward to forming new relationships and making this area our home. Both Miranda and I grew up in rural Midwest communities. Miranda's family lives in the country outside of a small town in Western Minnesota. My father worked for rural



Above left to right: Operations Manager, Todd Knutson, General Foreman, Dan Belt, and General Manager, Mark Johnson, observe the mock mayday drill in July. Below Mark is pictured as a judge for the Battle Creek 150th Celebration Parade. Photo credit - Tiffany Porkorny

electric utilities his entire professional career. Our family made a few moves between Minnesota and Iowa as he took on new roles at different rural electric cooperatives. He recently retired as the General Manager from Agralite Electric Cooperative in Benson, Minnesota.

As I start this new journey, I have countless people to thank. First and foremost, I want to thank the top-notch staff at ERPPD. I am beyond grateful for their warm welcome and extensive knowledge of our industry. I thank our Board of Directors for entrusting me with the responsibility of leading this organization.

Their support and leadership, throughout the years, has helped position ERPPD as a strong and stable electric provider. I would like to thank my predecessor, Tom Rudloff, for his years of service at ERPPD. I wish Tom the best in retirement!

I am committed to following ERPPD's mission statement of providing SAFE, RELIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE electricity for ALL customers. As a Rural Public Power District, our responsibility is to serve you, our customers. I thank all our customers for their participation in our utility and their continued support of ERPPD. I look forward to meeting you and encourage you to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. You are always welcome to stop by our Battle Creek office and talk in person. Otherwise, I can be reached at the office by phone at (402) 675-2185, or by email at [mjohnson@erppd.com](mailto:mjohnson@erppd.com).

Until next time, *Mark Johnson*



Elkhorn Rural Public Power District

will be closed in observance of

Labor Day Monday, Sept. 4, 2023



# CARBON CAPTURE

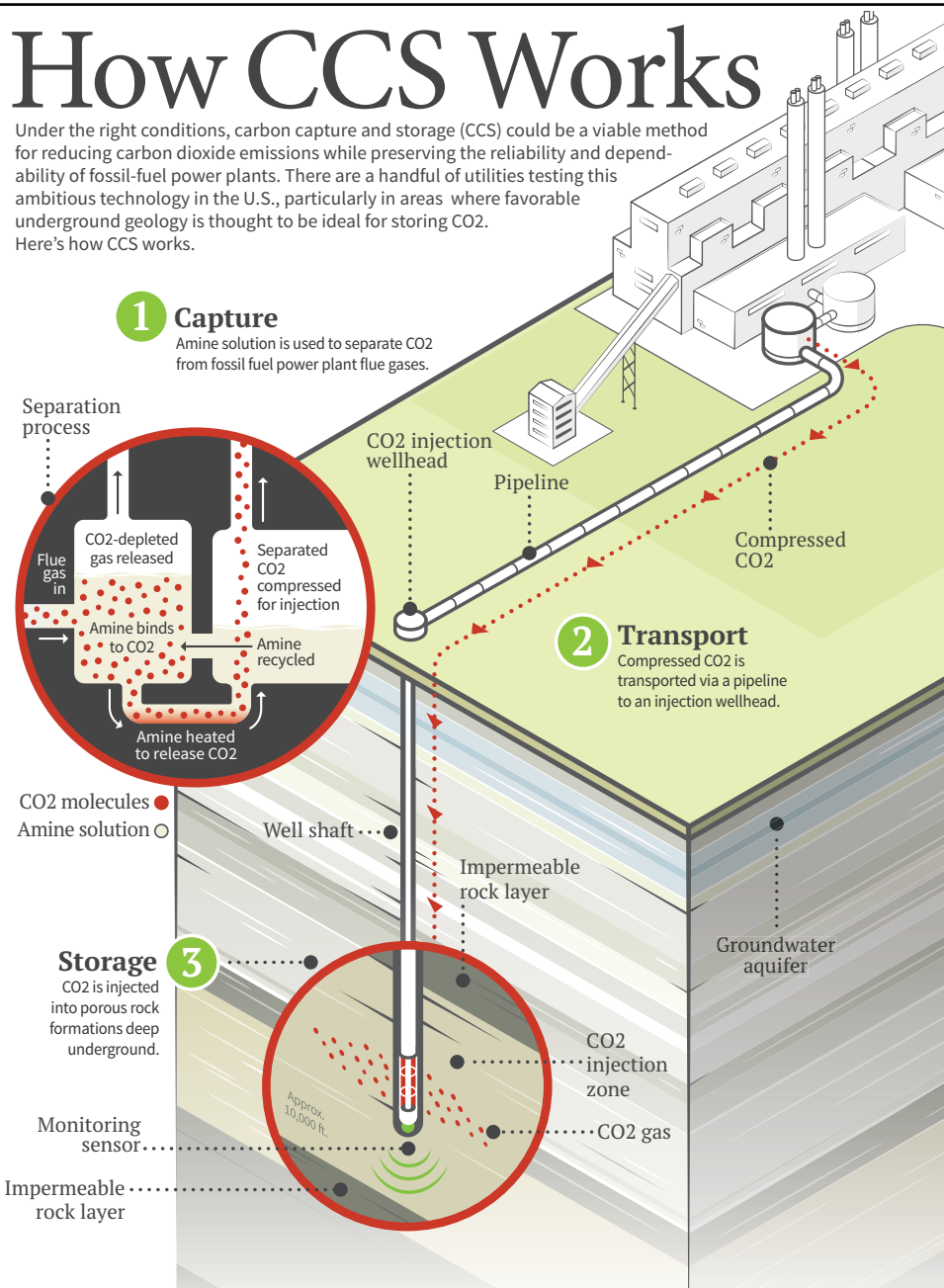
Diversifying the energy mix to include carbon-free and renewable energy sources is one way that generation is changing to meet demand and environmental goals.

Carbon capture and storage technology, is another option being explored. Below is an infographic from the *RE Magazine* July 2023 issue showing how carbon capture and storage works.

As the electric industry and government continue to work toward a low-carbon future, this type of technology will be integral to cost-effective and reliable electrical generation.

## How CCS Works

Under the right conditions, carbon capture and storage (CCS) could be a viable method for reducing carbon dioxide emissions while preserving the reliability and dependability of fossil-fuel power plants. There are a handful of utilities testing this ambitious technology in the U.S., particularly in areas where favorable underground geology is thought to be ideal for storing CO2. Here's how CCS works.



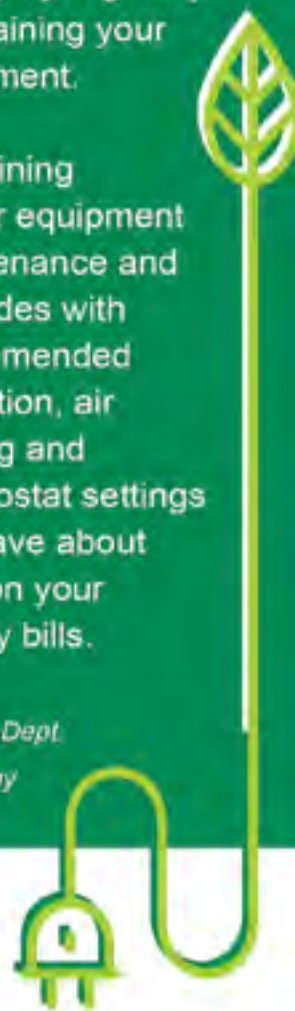
(Source: RE Magazine July 2023 Online Edition: <https://www.cooperative.com/remagazine/articles/pages/infographic-how-carbon-capture-and-storage-works.aspx>)

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know fall is the perfect time to schedule a tune-up for your heating system? Home heating accounts for a large portion of winter energy bills, and no matter what kind of system you have, you can save energy and money by regularly maintaining your equipment.

Combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings can save about 30% on your energy bills.

Source: Dept. of Energy



# BE A PART OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS



National Voter Registration Day is **September 19**. And even though it is not a presidential election year, it is still important to be registered and ready to vote on local races or ballot issues that effect you. Below are three easy ways you for you to participate in the democratic process.

1. Don't assume your voter registration status is up to date. Visit <https://www.votercheck.necvr.ne.gov/voterview/> to check your registration. If you are not registered visit: <https://www.nebraska.gov/apps-sos-voter-registration/>.
2. Get informed. In addition to ensuring your registration is up to date, learning about local policy issues and candidates is one of the best ways you can prepare to vote. Local control is one of the advantages of public power and an informed, engaged electorate is very important to its success.
3. Vote! It's the easiest—and most important—way you can exercise your civic duty. Voting is a form of personal empowerment that gives you the opportu-

nity to voice your opinion on the issues that matter most to you and it makes a difference.

The rural vote has increased in recent years and made a difference in elections - both locally and nationally.

As part of the ERPPD Political Action Plan, the board stays informed on regulation and legislation that could affect the district and our customers' service by inviting area legislators to board meetings to thank them for their service, hear from them on issues that may effect the district and to let them know about issues we are monitoring.



Pictured above is Nebraska District 40 Senator, Barry DeKay, at the August ERPPD board meeting. Below left to right front row: Senator DeKay, with directors Hunter Frisch, Ray Payne, Rod Zohner, Dennis Kuchar. Back row: Tim Means, Dave Hoefer, Joe Thiele, Jerry Dolesh and Mark Miller.





# HARVEST SAFETY TIPS FOR FARMWORKERS

- **Maintain a 10-foot clearance** around all utility equipment in all directions.
- **Use a spotter and deployed flags** to maintain safe distances from power lines and other equipment when doing field work.
- **If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, contact us immediately** by phone and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab, without touching it at the same time, and hop away to safety.
- **Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle.** Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipe and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

*Source: Safe Electricity*



*Pictured above - Crews digging a hole for a pole for a 34.5 kV transmission line build project.*



*Pictured above - Crews setting a pole for the 34.5 kV transmission line build project.*



*Pictured above - Poles set and ready for stringing.*