

# **News from the Northeast Nebraska Public Power District**

December 2004

This newsletter is to keep you informed of how the Board of Directors, Management and Employees of the Northeast Nebraska PPD are working to serve you. We want to continue to make ourselves available for your comments and suggestions. Please let us hear from you by calling **800-750-9277**.

## **Holiday Office Hours**

The General Office in Wayne will be closed on Friday December 24 and Friday December 31 in celebration of the Holidays. Of course, in the event of a power outage we work 365 days a year and will be ready to answer your call and dispatch repair crews should you need us. Whenever there is an outage call **800-750-9277**, 24 hours every day of the year.

## **Dakota County Customers to get New Rate Charts**

For the convenience of our 'self read- self bill' customers in Dakota County, we will soon mail new rate charts which will reflect the revised sales tax amounts. These charts should be used for payments sent after January 1, 2005. Dakota County residents who reside in Villages and who receive a bill by mail will also pay the revised tax amounts, but we will reflect the amount as part of the bill.

## **No Electric Rate Increase again for 2005**

We are please to remind all of our customers that again this year there will be no increase in the retail price of electricity. We set out two years ago to become more efficient with our work practices. We have had to change, but the payoff is for your benefit. The Board of Directors of NeNPPD hasn't raised rates since early 2003 when we had to pass along the cost of a wholesale rate increase from NPPD. NPPD is raising the price of wholesale power in 2005 by 2.75%, but we are not passing this cost increase along to retail customers. We have seen the price of poles and wire increase this year due to the demand for materials in Florida. As you know the price of fuel continues to be at an all time high and wage rates increase each year. Even so, we have met our financial goals and have the ability to absorb these costs increases. All employees of the NeNPPD have put forth a good effort this year to get their work done more efficiently.

## **Board Sets compensation for Transmission Line Right of Way**

At the October meeting of the NeNPPD Board of Directors, a policy was established for the fair and consistent payment of right of way when needed for the construction of high voltage transmission lines. Typically, the Power District places transmission poles along roadways one foot onto private land. This allows work to be done from the road but avoids the necessity of moving the poles later due to road maintenance. The compensation is \$100 per pole location and \$150 per guy location. We surveyed most of the other Power Districts in the State and believe we have compensation set at a generous amount.

## **Annual Meter Readings**

The electric meter is the same to us as a cash register is to a retail store. To keep costs low, we ask customers to help us read these meters on a monthly basis. Good business practice requires that we visit each meter at least once a year to verify the readings and to visually inspect the meter. To improve efficiency we plan to do this annual meter reading on bad weather days when our crews can not be outside doing regular maintenance work on the lines. Our meter reading work has begun and some customers are beginning to get adjustment notices in the mail. We typically find about 1 out of every 10 customers are either ahead or behind in their readings. The letter we are sending with these adjustment notices simply asks that the amount of the adjustment be paid along with the next month's bill. Should you get an adjustment notice and have any questions, then please call the office.

## **NeNPPD signs agreements with Wayne and Emerson to assist with Storm Damage work**

Power companies like NeNPPD and the systems operated by Emerson and Wayne, NE, typically try to support each other in the event of major storms and outages. Since planning for such occasions needs to happen prior to being hit by a big storm, we have entered into agreements whereby Wayne, Emerson and the Power District will support one another to restore power should that be necessary in the future. These agreements are often called 'Mutual Aid Agreements'. The agreement simply says that we will provide

men, material and equipment when requested to help get power restored and that we can ask the same in return. Each of the power companies will be responsible to pay for whatever assistance is received.

#### **Election Results for NeNPPD Board of Directors**

Mr. Sy Kneifl of Newcastle was returned to the Board as was Mr. Paul Bodlak of Emerson. Mr. James Decker of Ponca was elected for his first time to the NeNPPD Board of Directors. All three directors will begin their new terms on January 25, 2005. Mr. Verlyn Roeber is retiring from the Board after 26 years of service to the people of Northeast Nebraska. NeNPPD Directors are normally elected for six year terms and these terms are staggered among the nine Directors on the Board.

#### **Change of Billing Address for DBS Payments**

Please note that payments for satellite TV programming should be mailed to: P.O. Box 209, Creighton, NE 68729. We will continue to accept payments at the office in Wayne, at Drop Box Locations and mailed with electric bills, but we can not guarantee that DBS-TV payments will be credited by the late payment date. To offer better customer service, Northeast Nebraska PPD and several other PPD's in the area teamed up to form a new call center to provide a higher level of expertise than could be possible individually. DBS bills are now processed in Creighton and to assure that any payments are not late, bills should be mailed directly to the address above.

#### **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, the Northeast Nebraska Public Power District is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write:

USDA, Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, Stop 1510, 1400 Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 2050-1510.

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination.

#### **Mandy Backer and Michael Wiltse join NeNPPD**

We are pleased to have two new employees join our company. Mandy Backer has been hired in the position of accountant. Mandy lives in Randolph with her husband Bruce and will graduate from Wayne State College this May.

Michael Wiltse has been hired as an Apprentice Lineman. Mike is a graduate of the Northeast Nebraska Community College and resides in Wayne.

#### **New Construction Projects**

You may have noticed new power lines being constructed north of Jackson. This line completes a project started several years ago to improve the capacity for load in the area. Also, south of Wayne and near Hoskins we are building new 'tie lines' which connect substations together. When we can connect our substations to one another, we have more options available to restore power when the lights go out. We are using a heavy grade of pole and wire that is designed to better withstand the forces of wind and ice.

#### **The Board of Directors and Manager are:**

Larry Silhacek, President	Paul Bodlak, Vice President	Sy Kneifl, Treasurer
Dan Loberg, Secretary	Lowell Birkley	Dan Gansebom
Tom Gustafson	Don Larsen	Verlyn Roeber
Mark Shults, Manager		