

News from the Northeast Nebraska Public Power District

February 2013

Operation Round-up helped nearly 75 local organizations with donations of \$24,000

All of the local fire and rescue units received money from the District's operation Round-up program in its first year of giving. As did all of the High Schools, several of the public libraries, senior centers, ministerial associations, local food banks and other organizations trying to make life better in Wayne, Dixon, Dakota, Pierce, Thurston and Stanton Counties. Operation Round-up is the *voluntary* giving program where customers of the Power District can elect to round up the loose change on their electric bill each month to support local needs. When a customer chooses to participate they can expect to donate about \$6.00 a year. Operation Round-up is a unique opportunity to literally turn pennies into enough money to make a difference in the viability of some of our community organizations and efforts. It has been broadly supported by about 6,000 of our customers because all of the money goes to local efforts and there are no administrative costs for collecting or giving out the money. A separate local Board of Directors (not part of the Power District) accepts appeals for support and determines the merits of those appeals. A full listing of organizations that received support is on the District's web page at www.nnppd.com. If there are customers who were reluctant about participating, but have friends or family that have benefitted from any of these donations then please call the District and ask to participate now in Operation Round-up. We at the Power District felt it was a unique opportunity to offer this program. We appreciate the broad support from our customers and look forward to more good work being done in 2013.

Retail Rate increase is 3.6% on average for 2013

For residential customers the increase will be slightly less at 3.2% on average. Individual bills will vary. Most of the increase will be seen in the summer months with almost no increase in winter prices in 2013. This increase in price is to cover the 3.75% increase in the cost of bulk power purchased from NPPD and delivered through NeNPPD's wires to homes, farms and businesses.

NPPD is inquiring about a new power supply contract

NPPD out of Columbus, NE has long been the supplier of bulk power to Northeast Nebraska PPD. Locally we contract for the purchase of this bulk power supply on behalf of our customers. Our present contract has 9 years remaining, but NPPD is asking if NeNPPD (and other bulk customers) would consider renegotiating the terms of the contract in 2013. NPPD is specifically seeking a longer period over which the contract is binding. Generally, the Board of Directors at Northeast Nebraska PPD questions if a new contract is necessary at this time and if uncertainty about big future policies on climate change and market competition make it a difficult time to decide on any long term purchase arrangement. To learn more about these issues and the Board's approach to working with NPPD, then go to our web page at www.nnppd.com and read the two reports to customers on future bulk power purchase decisions.

Why are there minimum bills?

Customers have asked: "How come I still get a bill when no electricity is used?" There are customers with seasonal service to pumps, cabins, camper sites, rental homes, etc. that may not use power or may even have disconnected the power and still get a monthly bill. An account that doesn't use any power may save the District on its wholesale power bill, but the cost of the wires, poles, substations, and meters all still have to be paid if this equipment remains in place. This equipment isn't cheap. Anytime someone wants to keep the right to land, equipment or utility service, then some rent is due.

Just as a phone bill has to be paid even when folks are on vacation and no calls are made, or the rent on a vacation camper space has to be paid monthly even when the space may only be used a couple of months a year. An investment has been made in electric equipment and a minimum amount is due for availability. Our minimum bills are very reasonable and often are a fraction of a month's phone bill or cable bill.

Welcome New Faces at the District

Congratulations to Jessica and Kyle Schmale, and big sister Kynlee on the birth of their new baby girl named Aubree. Jessica is a billing clerk in our office. Welcome Kevin Pollard who is the District's Electrical Engineer. Also helping the engineering efforts of the District is Steve Loftshult who joins us as an Auto-Cad technician responsible for mapping, surveying, and line design. Diane Newton of Hubbard has joined the District's Board of Directors representing the Jackson-Hubbard area between Emerson and South Sioux City. Kenndra Dunker and Abbey Schnoes are two Wayne State College students who help us part time. We are proud to have these folks join our company.

Reminder that old '3 wire' farm services need to be converted prior to May 2014

About 40 years ago, electric service wires to irrigation pumps and other farm loads were wired by customers with what is called a '3 wire corner ground' scheme. Modern electric codes for customer owned wires no longer permit this kind of wiring because it presents an electrocution hazard to the farmer and because it creates unacceptable low voltage 'brown outs' when the power is out on portions of the electric line. This low voltage can damage other people's electric appliances. Because people today own a lot of valuable electric gear in their homes, these brown outs can cause lots of trouble. The District's Board of Directors has set a deadline of May 2014 for customers with this very old wire to convert to a modern '4 wire wye' connection. Letters have been mailed to those needing this work. The District will change out its transformer banks at no cost to get these situations corrected. This will provide better and safer service to everyone. Farmer's are also reminded to have capacitors installed on all motors over 20 HP to avoid rate penalties.

Please keep your phone number and street address current

Our 24 hour dispatch service can help you much better if you let us know of any changes in your contact information. Most customers when reporting an outage appreciate the call back offered to verify the power is restored. If we have an old phone number, then this can't happen. With time the District has been calling and writing customers to collect the 911 address for each account. Even with farm bins and pumps a road address helps our crews go to the exact place where there is trouble. Customers can report any changes 24 hours a day by calling 800-750-9277.

The Board of Directors and Manager are:

Don Larsen, President	Paul Bodlak, Vice President	Tom Gustafson, Treasurer	Dan Gansebom, Secretary
Diane Newton	Sy Kneifl	David Lebsock	Larry Silhacek
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