

From the desk of the Manager

Rural Public Power Still Providing Great Value to Nebraskans



Dan Leise

While back I was discussing careers with my college-bound daughter and eventually our conversation shifted to my past experiences. As we talked about my years with Cedar-Knox and what our company is about, I began to realize that many of our children probably know little about the public power story here in Nebraska. It seems that until there is a major power outage, most of our younger generation hardly think twice about the source of their household electricity supply. The fact is that our state is envied by others for its all-public power structure that has produced many years of affordable, reliable electricity and that story needs to be passed on to the next generation.

Just a little more than a year ago we celebrated our 75th year of existence at the Cedar-Knox Public Power District and at our celebration we enjoyed conversations with long-time customers that stopped by to reminisce about when electricity first came to their areas of the district. Back in the day, most couldn't wait for the opportunity to utilize electricity on their farms and in their homes to help make their lives better and more productive. As power lines sprouted up across our service territory I'm sure many of the first consumers were

keenly aware of the scope and significance of electrifying our rural areas and the story of public power. In general, rural public power districts and cooperatives were formed so that rural America could experience the benefits of electricity when most profit-seeking private investor-owned companies were unwilling to invest the necessary capital it would take to serve sparsely populated rural areas.

Your Cedar-Knox Public Power system is non-profit and is driven towards low-cost service and reliability. Non-profit means that as a consumer, you are paying only the actual cost that it takes to provide electricity to your home, farm or business – not a penny more. If you were served by an investor-owned utility, part of your electric rate would include a profit margin for stockholders. The Cedar-Knox distribution infrastructure consists of just slightly more than 3.5 meters per mile of line and our consumers still pay some of the lowest electricity rates in the nation.

Another attribute to your rural public power system is that it is locally controlled by a board of directors that is made up of and elected by local consumers within the district. This benefit sometimes gets over-

looked but it is a huge advantage in keeping costs low and reliability high. Some of our recently completed projects that have greatly enhanced reliability to our local distribution system simply may not have happened in a utility looking to maximize profits to shareholders, or if we were part of a much larger system with urbanized decision making.

I'm convinced there's not a better economic development tool for Nebraska than affordable, reliable electricity. Our wholesale power supply makeup is diverse and environmentally responsible, with more than 40% of the electricity produced from generators that are free of carbon emissions. The fact that the younger generation think little about the source of their electricity probably says something about the service that Nebraska's public power districts have provided to consumers. My hope is that our children grow to understand the advantages that all Nebraskans have enjoyed for many years in being the nation's only all-public power state.

Stay safe and if you are headed to the fields this spring with large equipment, please be aware of overhead power lines.

LED Bulb Rebate Correction

In the last Cedar-Knox PPD Newsletter, (Jan/Feb issue) we introduced a new rebate program on LED light bulbs. Shortly after this introduction, we received word of a few guideline changes to the program.

The bulbs DO NOT need to be ENERGYSTAR to qualify as previously stated and the size can be equivalent to a 40 watt incandescent and up.

Sorry for the changes, but it actually makes it easier for you to take advantage of the \$5.00 per bulb credit rebate for up to 10 bulbs annually per qualifying account. Please contact us to take advantage of this program or let us know if you have any questions. Stop in or phone 402-254-6291.



Revolving Loan Funds Available at CEDAR-KNOX PPD

In October, 2007 Cedar-Knox PPD received a REDG (Rural Economic Development Grant) from the USDA. This grant was part of the necessary funding for the Providence Medical Center Physical Therapy Facility project in Laurel, NE that provides advanced physical and occupational therapy for area residents. We then loaned these funds to the Laurel facility. This was the initial step taken to establish a revolving fund, a pool of money used for the purpose of making loans to create and/or save jobs. As the repayment of these funds occur, the RLF fund becomes an ongoing or "revolving" financial tool.

We have revolved these funds to three local businesses. Burbach's Countryside Dairy and Trail Manor Mfg., both of Hartington, and DownTown Auto of Crofton have used this method to improve their businesses. Once again this financial program is accumulating funds from the repayments of the past loans, and is ready to revolve once again. The lending goal of the RLF program is to assist, and the goal of conventional lending is profit.

If you are interested in this economic development program, please contact Janet Albers at Cedar-Knox PPD for more details on this program.

Spring In To Action
 This Spring don't begin field work until you check your surroundings. Farm equipment and pivot systems should be checked for proper clearance. Just a minute can save an outage or injury.



Burrrr It's COLD Outside

"My bill has never been this high." "There must be something wrong with my furnace or the meter." We at CKPPD have been hearing these and similar comments this winter. We agree that it has been very cold, actually record setting cold winter, thus the extreme high bills. Maybe you bought one of those "miracle heaters" that are supposed to save you money. Unfortunately, overall cost savings are not usually recognized. Besides running this heater that only heats one room at a time, you would need to turn your furnace thermostat down to around 50 degrees. That does not sound like a very ideal situation.

More efficient appliances, weather stripping, attic insulation or turning your water heater down a few degrees are probably better ways to save. Cedar-Knox PPD understands your concerns and we are very glad that we were able to maintain rates for 2014 and not take an increase. We realize some of these bills are higher than usual and if finances are an issue, we are willing to work with you. Get in touch with us with your concerns, we are here to serve you.

One thing we can agree on, Spring cannot come soon enough!

NREA YOUTH ENERGY CAMP • July 14-18, 2014 in Halsey Nebraska

We are looking for students currently in 9th, 10th and 11th grades in high schools within our service territory. Please consider signing up for this camp as it has a lot to offer. Its free, you are going to make life-long friends, and learn about the electric industry trough

interesting workshops and demonstrations. You will tour Gerald Gentleman Station and Kingsley Hydo-Electric Power Plant. There is plenty of time for fun such as canoeing, sports contests, a banquet and dance. While there you have an opportunity to win a free trip the Washington, D. C.

So fill out the application and return to our office at Cedar-Knox PPD in Hartington by April 23, 2014.

For more information contact Carol McGregor at 402-254-6291 or carolmac@hartel.net.



2014 YOUTH ENERGY CAMP APPLICATION FORM

Name _____ Age _____ Current Grade _____

Address _____ Phone number (____) _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Name of parents or guardian _____

Sponsoring rural electric system _____