Current Flashes

Cedar-Knox Public Power District

P.O. Box 947, Hartington, NE 68739 • Phone: 402-254-6291 / 800-891-5196

cedarknoxppd.com | DECEMBER 2024 | Volume 24, Number 12

FROM THE DESK OF THE MANAGER:

THE FUTURE OF THE POWER INDUSTRY


Mike Lammers

Now that the election is over, no matter which side of the fence you were on, we can all likely agree on one thing: at least the ads and commercials have finally stopped. With the Trump administration taking office, unprecedented load growth predicted, and grid reliability concerns on the horizon, where does this leave the outlook for dependable and cost-effective power at CKPPD?

Grid Reliability Heading into Winter

First, let's discuss grid reliability as we approach the winter season. Nationally, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) has issued a report warning that winter energy shortages are a possibility again this year. This is due to growing demand for electricity, the retirement of older plants, and the increasing reliance on intermittent renewables. Jim Matheson, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), emphasized the need for action, stating, "This report clearly highlights the need to swiftly implement a pro-energy policy agenda with a focus on affordability and reliability for American families and businesses. Smart energy policies that keep the lights on are more important than ever."

Regionally, the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), our grid operator anticipates a 98.5% probability that it will have sufficient resources to meet projected peak electricity demand and maintain energy reserves throughout the upcoming winter season. While this is an improvement from last year, the remaining 1.5% chance of being short on power is still a concern.

The Challenge of Unprecedented Load Growth

As we look to the future, the potential for unprecedented load growth driven by rising demand for electricity—due to electrification and large industrial loads—poses a significant challenge for grid operators. To meet these demands in our state, Nebraska must continue expanding its energy infrastructure, including a diverse mix of resources, transmission lines, and flexible generation options. However, this expansion must be balanced with maintaining affordability for our customers.

New generation projects need to be carefully planned and coordinated with grid operators across the nation, such as the SPP, to ensure the system can accommodate increased demand. Since 2021, electricity demand in Nebraska—and across the U.S.—has risen sharply, driven by factors such as the growth of manufacturing, data centers, electric vehicles, and emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI). This load growth is fueled by industrial expansion and the push for clean, renewable energy sources, which creates challenges in balancing supply with demand.

Potential Implications of a Trump Administration

President-elect Donald Trump could have significant implications for the electrical power industry, particularly in terms of energy policy. During his previous administration, Trump supported deregulation and favored fossil fuel dominance, including coal, natural gas, and oil. If these policies are reprised under his leadership, they could stall progress on renewable energy initiatives like solar and wind. Additionally, his stance on climate change may lead to reduced federal support for clean energy technologies.

However, Trump may prioritize energy independence and infrastructure projects, which could provide a boost to power grid modernization and the expansion of fossil energy production. While these have been his positions in the past, only time will tell whether Washington will align with these priorities going forward.

Balancing Reliability and Affordability

As demand continues to rise, Nebraska, like many states, faces challenges in ensuring the reliability and affordability of the power grid. This is complicated by the ongoing retirements of coal-fired power plants, regulatory changes, and the growing reliance on intermittent renewable sources like solar and wind. While these renewable sources are essential for meeting emission reduction goals, they also introduce variability into the grid, making it more difficult to meet peak demand, especially during extreme weather conditions. As we move forward, it will be crucial for policymakers, utilities, and industry stakeholders to work together to find innovative solutions that ensure a reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy future for Nebraska and the nation.

Cedar-Knox PPD would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Our Holiday Office Hours:
Tuesday, December 24th 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Tuesday, December 24th 12:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. CLOSED
Wednesday, December 25th - CLOSED
Wednesday, January 1st – CLOSED

IRRIGATION FUNDING

The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) announced that funding is available to Nebraska farmers to replace agricultural irrigation pump diesel engines with all electric equipment. This program is funded by an EPA grant to NDEE to help reduce carbon emission output.

The diesel engine may be replaced with a new electric motor or by connecting an existing submersible pump directly to the electric grid. NDEE will reimburse 60% of the cost of the new electric motor, installation and/or required electrical infrastructure (including electric service line extension) up to a maximum rebate of $23,000. The diesel engine owner is responsible for the remainder of the project.

NDEE anticipates awarding rebates for 50 irrigation pump engine replacements. For eligibility, requirements, instructions and application materials visit the ONE RED Irrigation Engine Program web page: http://dee.ne.gov/publica.nsf/pages/17-016.

Application deadline is January 16, 2025.

Stay Safe on Winter Roads

Winter months can bring snow, ice and windy conditions, creating hazards for drivers. It is important to be prepared in case there is an accident.

Safe Electricity.org

Before a winter storm
Perform seasonal maintenance on your car to ensure:

- Batteries are charged.
- Tires have sufficient tread.
- Spare tire is inflated.
- Jumper cables are in good condition.
- A winterized car emergency kit.
- Windshield wipers work.
- Headlights, brake lights and turn signals work.
- At least a half-full tank of gas.

Prevent frostbite and hypothermia
If you are stranded in your car after an accident, observe the following precautions:

- Do not stay in one position for too long.
- Stay awake.
- Do not overexert yourself to avoid strain on your heart.
- Watch for signs such as a change in skin color, numbness, shivering, slurred speech, loss of coordination or confusion.

Winter storms and power lines
Always treat sagging and downed power lines as energized and dangerous. Keep at least 50 feet away from the area.

- If your vehicle hits a power pole, stay inside.
- Contact 9-1-1 and wait for the power to be shut off by utility workers.
- If your vehicle is on fire, jump clear with feet together, avoiding contact with both the vehicle and ground simultaneously.
- Shuffle or "bunny hop" away from the vehicle, keeping feet together to prevent different electric currents through your body.
- Never drive over a downed power line, which can cause additional hazards.

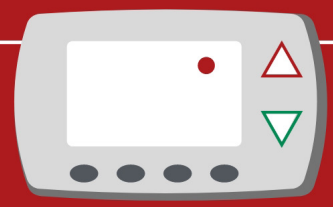
HOLIDAY FUN WORD SEARCH

Can you find all the words associated with holiday fun in the puzzle below? Use the word bank to check your work.

WORD BANK

Jingle bells	Santa Claus	Snowman
Candy cane	Mittens	Hot Chocolate

N	H	C	H	P	B	D	H	S	V	G	Z	H	T	M
A	C	C	F	Z	Z	A	T	F	N	V	D	Q	Z	Y
M	H	L	V	Y	M	J	N	P	D	E	T	V	F	S
W	P	W	H	F	W	I	H	K	S	C	T	G	B	K
O	Z	K	D	Z	L	N	O	K	K	H	Q	T	C	F
N	F	I	O	U	R	G	T	F	C	L	P	E	I	L
S	S	V	S	U	A	L	C	A	T	N	A	S	C	M
Z	C	V	P	C	E	E	H	R	P	W	U	A	Z	Z
F	C	F	J	C	H	B	O	G	C	Y	N	G	V	E
G	M	V	X	D	L	E	C	V	N	D	T	S	F	W
Y	A	X	V	N	U	L	O	H	Y	V	C	L	U	A
H	G	V	L	L	X	L	L	C	M	J	M	C	I	U
P	J	Y	F	E	R	S	A	Q	E	Y	G	H	C	A
D	W	O	R	D	T	N	T	Y	H	X	Q	L	E	S
U	W	H	R	U	E	V	E	B	Y	B	F	L	W	R



Mind the thermostat for more presents.

△ FEWER PRESENTS

▽ MORE PRESENTS

2025 CALENDARS ARE AVAILABLE AT OUR OFFICE.

Stop in today to get one while supplies last!