

# CURRENT FLASHES

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cedarknoxppd.com

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## From the Desk of the Manager

### NEW CHALLENGES FOR CKPPD

From vehicle computer chips to toilet paper, we have all had to learn how to deal with shortages and extended wait times to purchase today's goods and services. While rates are one of the few things we have been able to keep steady thus far, material and equipment are quite the opposite. As a result, we have had to learn to plan and think much farther ahead than ever before. We now look at our forecasted equipment replacements and work plan projections up to five years out to help us place orders, potentially delivered three years from now.

The staff has been taking a proactive approach on materials for over a year now, trying to accumulate a substantial amount of essential inventory for infrastructure upgrades, storms, and growth. Just a few years ago, we were cutting back on inventory to avoid the overhead cost that comes with keeping a large quantity of materials on hand. Now, just trying to get certain things can be challenging. For example, transformers and conductors are two things that the electrical industry has been struggling to obtain.

Along with the struggles of supply shortages, we are seeing 30%+ increases on cost to supplies and in most cases cannot even get a locked in price until delivery is made, as manufacturers are also feeling the effects of variable cost. These challenges are being discussed at local, state, and federal levels to try to assist with relief on the demand and rising costs that follows. Our staff continues to be proactive in staying ahead of material shortages, ordering items far in advance to give manufactures the lead times needed to build the products, as well as working together with other suppliers and systems to help each other out when shortages occur, helping everyone maintain growth and service when needed.

On the equipment side of things, we were once able to approve a purchase of a large truck with aerial boom and receive the unit within 6-9 months. Now, we are looking at getting on a list to receive trucks in 2024 and 2025 to ensure we receive replacement units when needed; while one boom supplier is now having lead times of 3+ years to receive an aerial unit. These

lead times, coupled with no guarantee of price or delivery, have made us look at things much differently than before. Maintenance is also becoming an area of concern. As many of you have witnessed, when machinery breaks down, finding the parts to make repairs is also becoming a challenge. For us, this leads to loss of a unit for weeks or months at times, affecting the fleet and the amount of work we can do.

In these challenging times, please know, we are diligently working to ensure we try to maintain our equipment and stock materials into the future. Cedar-Knox is proactively looking at the constant battle of supply and demand to control costs wherever we can. Our hope is to alleviate as many issues as we can for growth and maintenance, to preserve the same high standard of reliable and affordable customer service you are accustomed to.



Mike Lammers



**This Spring Season, Don't Put Your Life on the Line**



Today's farm equipment is bigger, taller, and more automated, making the danger of working around power lines greater than ever. Use caution when completing farm activities around power lines this spring. It can save your life!

Keep these safety tips in mind as you prepare for planting and spraying:

- Locate and stay away from overhead power lines around the farm and fields
- Don't fold or unfold equipment near a power line
- Stay in place and call 911 if you contact a power line
- Don't attempt to move or drive around a downed power line
- Don't touch anything or anyone in contact with a power line

**SUMMER HOURS START MAY 31ST**

Our office will be open 7:00 to 4:30 Monday through Friday.

### Paperless Billing Contest

Through our most recent promotion we doubled the number of customers utilizing this service. We thank these customers that made the switch to the electronic method. This can be a convenience to those who want to reduce paper or receive their bill sooner.

**Carl Guenther of Crofton was the lucky winner of the \$50 bill credit & a CKPPD travel cup.**



# DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT

Get to know who represents you. Continue to watch future issues to meet others each month!



**Randy Papenhausen**  
CEDAR-KNOX PUBLIC POWER BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
SECRETARY

**AREA SERVED:** Division 2 (Cedar County South of Hwy 84)

**YEARS OF SERVICE:** 27 years

**FAMILY:** Wife, Lisa - 4 children - 9 grandchildren

**OTHER ASSOCIATIONS:** NREA Board Member & past President, NRECA Nebraska Representative on

the National Board, Former School Board Member, Former Church Council

## WHAT INTERESTED YOU INTO RUNNING FOR THE CKPPD BOARD?

I thought I would find it interesting to be involved with a company that provides an essential product and service for our local area in a professional way with the best interest of our consumers as the base of all decisions.

## WHAT HAVE YOU GAINED FROM BEING A DIRECTOR AT CKPPD?

I have a real appreciation of the complexity of the National Grid all the way down to the distribution to the individual meters.

## Five Years of Service

Mark Kuehn, Information Technology and Security Director, joined the Cedar-Knox PPD team five years ago. Mark is the Information Technology and Security Director. He also helps out in other areas such as irrigation load control and facility maintenance. Thank you Mark for your dedication to keeping our computer systems and network in great shape.



5 YEARS



INCENTIVES  
FOR  
YOUR HOME

## Did you know?

There is a **\$30** EnergyWise incentive available to homeowners that have their cooling system tuned up, regardless of what type or age it is (air conditioner, air or water source heat pump). Have your contractor fill out the application at: <https://cedarknoxppd.energywisenebraska.com/residential/>.

# RELIGHTING OUR DISTRICT

The quest for energy savings, improved light quality, reduced maintenance costs and federal regulations has driven the evolution of outdoor lighting.

Mercury Vapor (MV) area lights provided good lighting for our rural customers for over 80 years, but due to the Energy Policy Act of 2005, changes had to be made. The EPA prohibited the manufacturing and importation of Mercury Vapor ballasts after 2008. Due to the uncertainty in the evolving lighting industry, we stocked up on MV lights at that time.

Ten years ago, we installed our first Light-Emitting Diode (LED) light. Over the years we have tested multiple lights and in 2017 settled on what we believe to be one of the best options on the market for both cost and quality. These lights offer more lumens (measurement of light) of output than the previous Mercury Vapor lights and operate at 25% in Kwh usage. The lights do come with a higher cost at purchase which relates to a higher rental charge,

but with lower usage we estimate no noticeable increase to the total costs of what you pay. What are the benefits of CKPPD installing LED lights?

- Energy savings / easier on the power grid



- Directional lighting that eliminates light pollution into the atmosphere/ wasted energy
- The color of light produced is more appealing
- Longer life spans (estimated 20 years)/ less maintenance = cheaper rates over time

Although LED lights don't shine as far as many are

used to and have a sharp distinct cutoff line, they do produce the same number of lumens at the outer most lit area as they do at the pole. Mercury Vapor lighting fixtures depreciate in lumens with distance.

We now have over 2000 LED lights currently in-service between rural and town lights. When on your place for light maintenance we will likely be changing CKPPD rental lights to LED's and will eventually develop a lighting changeout plan to get all rural area lights changed to LED's. All lights in town requiring maintenance will be changed to LEDs also. We have established a changeout program in our budget to upgrade all towns in upcoming years. The lights in the town of Crofton have been changed to LEDs this year. We will change out all lights in a town or two each year in the future.

If you have any further questions on lights, please give us a call. We can address more technical information or can discuss adding or removing lights currently in place.

# May is Electrical Safety Month

Electricity lights homes and businesses, provides warmth and keeps appliances and equipment running smoothly. During Electrical Safety Month, Cedar-Knox PPD and Safe Electricity want to provide tips our customers can use to stay safe and informed.



## 1) Stay Away from Downed Lines

If you have an accident or come across a downed power line, be sure to stay away. Power lines may seem harmless, but they can be deadly.



## 2) Utility Equipment

Padmount transformers may seem harmless, but they should be left alone. Remember do not sit, climb, or plant anything near these.



## 3) Be Aware of Overhead Lines

Kids climbing trees or adults trimming branches should both be aware of power lines. Every time be sure to take the time to look at your surroundings.



## 4) Extension Cords

Extension cords should be checked for frays, cracks, or excessive wear. Also be sure the cord is rated for the job (indoor/outdoor).



## 5) Outlet Overload

Plugging in too many items can draw too much power on a circuit. Overdoing it can overload or overheat a circuit.

For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).